

Longitudinal study and impact evaluation of early intervention centres in Sarawak for children with disabilities

1. BACKGROUND/ RATIONALE

The term “early childhood intervention” refers to early diagnosis, therapeutic therapies, learning activities and other types of community support (e.g. parenting skills) for children under 7 years old who experience developmental delays and/or have neurodevelopmental disabilities. Early childhood intervention services are vital in providing such children with the specialised support they need to grow, thrive and reach their full potential, and participate fully and equally within their communities. The services provide a pathway for inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream services and their communities. Early childhood intervention services cross the four main developmental domains – cognitive, physical, social-emotional, and language.

Having access to adequately resourced quality early childhood intervention enables:

- better developmental outcomes and early educational opportunities for the child
- improved carer-child relationships
- enhanced skills in caring and supporting the child’s needs for caregivers
- improved maternal health, and economic self-sufficiency for families of enrolled children
- increased likelihood of inclusion in mainstream services such as primary education, health, social welfare

In the Malaysian state of Sarawak, government and partners have collaborated to develop a few early intervention centres (EICs) for children with disabilities. Although of limited scope and number, the presence of EICs is a strong indicator of Sarawak’s commitment to the issue. Sarawak is further committed to identifying and demonstrating good practices that can be replicated and scaled-up both within Sarawak as well as across Malaysia. Despite this progress, there remain significant geographic disparities in accessing quality early childhood intervention services for children with disabilities. Various factors come into play, including inadequate budget, lack of availability and accessibility to services, over-reliance on civil society organisation (CSO) provision of services, over-reliance on private sector funding to fill the gap, hesitance in obtaining disability identification cards (due to stigma and process), and lack of clarity on the roles of concerned ministries (especially Health and Ministry of Women, Early Childhood and Community Wellbeing Development, or KPWK in Malay). A deeper analysis on fiscal space constraints reveals that a lack of data on prevalence of people with disabilities in Malaysia leads to poor visibility of the issue. This, combined with a lack of evidence on the impact of early child intervention on the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream services, as well as lack of evidence on the cost of raising a child with disabilities, and lack of cost-benefit analysis on early intervention investment, all contribute to weak state and federal budget allocations for this important area of work.

These terms of reference (TOR) outline the purpose, scope, objectives and proposed work for the initial phases of a longitudinal study and impact evaluation of early intervention centres in Sarawak for children with disabilities at the pre-primary level. The study and evaluation will assess progress

and success of the EIC approach at three locations in Sarawak: a One-Stop Early Intervention Centre (OSEIC) operated by the Sarawak Ministry of Women, Early Childhood and Community Wellbeing Development (KPWK) in Kuching, a long-standing non-governmental organisation (NGO)-led initiative at a location in Sibu called Agape Centre, and an OSEIC at a rural location in Dalat as operated by KPWK. Initial data and anecdotal evidence on these three initiatives has led UNICEF and partners to consider evidence generation in the form of a longitudinal study and impact evaluation to document key factors and value-add of the EICs and thus inform future scale-up across the state.

This evaluation will be a key contributor to the evidence base for social inclusivity in Sarawak. The Sarawak Post Covid-19 Development Strategy (PCDS) 2030 envisions that by 2030, all people in Sarawak will enjoy social inclusivity, meaning equal opportunities to participate in Sarawak's overall development and enjoy equitable distribution of wealth through jobs and business opportunities. EICs in Sarawak are a key contributor to this vision, in particular for children with disabilities. The timing of this study will also align with the budget planning process for the 13th Malaysia Plan (13 MP) at state level.

2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the longitudinal study and impact evaluation will be to generate evidence on the key success factors and outcomes of EICs (in terms of their implementation and contribution to a child's future inclusion in mainstream schooling and services), and thus inform future decisions by Sarawak and partners on future scale-up and replication. Specific objectives include:

- To identify key factors at family, community, EIC, pre-school and primary school level that contribute to achievement of EIC programme targets and long-term child outcomes
- To identify whether changes in child outcomes observed at EICs and in the mainstream pre-school / primary system can be attributed to the EIC intervention model, across different types of disability
- To build understanding among key stakeholders on whether the EIC approach is an effective means of transitioning children under 7 years of age into mainstream pre-schools and primary school, and supporting their continued advancement in the school system; to reference international best practice on EICs, where appropriate
- To inform future budget decisions in Sarawak around efficient and effective means to build school readiness for children with disabilities.

The longitudinal study and impact evaluation will assess Sarawak's EIC approach along a series of standard evaluation criteria but focusing on process and impact. Some key overarching questions could include:

- Impact: To what extent have key child outcomes (TBD¹) been achieved as a result of EIC interventions, for children with disabilities? To what extent are these outcomes achieved across different types of disabilities?

¹ Although definition of outcomes will take place collaboratively during the inception phase, as part of TOC development, one possible outcome could include: numbers of children from EICs attending different types of schools (such as mainstream government primary schools, PPKI, private schools, home schooling, private specialized centres – including those run by NGOs, remaining in PDK, no formal schooling.

- Effectiveness: To what extent have planned results² of the EIC models been achieved? Do children from rural areas experience differences in diagnosis and access to services, compared with urban children?
- Efficiency: To what extent do the EIC models represent a cost-efficient or timely way to achieve these results and outcomes? What conclusions can be drawn regarding cost-benefit differences between models, and among different programmes within each model?
- Sustainability: To what extent does capacity, budget and political will exist in Sarawak to sustain and scale-up the EIC model approach across the state? What happens to children who have passed through EICs after they enter the school system, and what factors need to be in place to support their long-term success?
- Coherence: How best can OSEIC and Agape Centre work closely with other early childhood development (ECD) key stakeholders (such as pre-school teachers, social workers and parents/caregivers) to support and enhance programme targets? How many children with disabilities in EICs attend preschool education (be it mainstream private / government or Pra Sekolah Khas) before entering primary one?
- Relevance: To what extent are the EIC model objectives and targets in line with goals and targets of the respective state and national development plans (including the Twelfth Malaysia Plan, the Malaysia Madani framework, and the Sarawak Post-Covid-19 Development Strategy).
- Gender: To what extent do girls and boys experience differences in diagnosis and access to services in EICs? To what extent do gender norms and expectations play out at family or community level that may influence access to EIC services?

Gender equality, equity and human rights considerations must be used as a lens when responding to all questions and not be limited to the questions posed above. Reference and use of rights-based frameworks such as Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and/or other rights related benchmarks are expected in the design of the evaluation and analysis and presentation of findings.

The above questions are indicative and high-level. Through a consultative process, including development of a Theory of Change (TOC) for EICs, the evaluation team is expected to review the feasibility of answering the existing questions and propose changes if needed during the inception phase ensuring that all questions can be answered. The baseline assessment (initial process evaluation) should be designed in such a way that questions can be answered and indicators tracked at a later stage of implementation of the programme.

The selected institution for this assignment is expected to undertake the following activities:

- Review of background documents: review of relevant policies, procedures, budgets, frameworks, guidelines, directives and regulations related to early intervention centres in Sarawak, especially Akta 685 (Akta Orang Kurang Upaya 2008 / Disability Act), national development plan (12MP – Twelfth Malaysia Plan), the federal Madani framework, and the state PCDS.

² Possible results include: number of years remaining in formal school (vs. Dropout and go back to NGO, PDK, or specialized centre); attendance rate in school; number of children educated inclusively in mainstream government schools. To be further refined during TOC development (inception phase).

- Internal consultation within key relevant partners: The evaluation firm will engage in discussions and consultations with the key government and civil society partners. This internal consultation process aims to gather additional inputs, perspectives, and recommendations from these partners regarding the design and implementation of the longitudinal study and impact evaluation.
- Development of inception report which includes TOC development, study and evaluation design, questionnaire and analysis plan. The institution will review existing tools, then advise on the final questionnaire to be used for data collection. The institution will also advise on the sampling methodology, to ensure representation of appropriate target and control groups. The institution will also be responsible for obtaining ethical review at this stage, following guidelines to be provided by UNICEF considering planned data collection with children and vulnerable populations.
- Field data collection: The evaluation firm will coordinate enumerators' training (if any) and supervise the field data collection to ensure that high quality data will be collected.
- Analysis and reporting: The institution will analyse the data collected and develop a final report which should clearly explain the methodology used and findings by key indicators. Finding should be disaggregated by gender, geography, socio-economic status, race, among others, as applicable.
- Additional documentation: The evaluation firm will be tasked with preparing a separate report that details the experience with OSEICs, including history, achievements, challenges, and future plans. This "case study" will be informed by the first-year evaluation findings and recommendations.

Throughout the process, the selected institution is expected to work with the partners and stakeholders identified in this TOR, for inputs, coordination and feedback, under the direct supervision of UNICEF. The exercise is also intended to serve a capacity building function for relevant partners in Sarawak, who are keen on strengthening the impact evaluation of not only EICs, but also other social sector programmes in the state, especially from a disability-inclusive and gender-responsive perspective. To support this objective, the selected institution will need to ensure adequate participation of reference group members at each stage of the evaluation process.

The longitudinal study and impact evaluation is expected to take place over a three-year period, i.e. 2024-2026. In overview, the focus of these three years will be as follows:

- 2024, Year 1: focus on evaluability, process, implementation, early outcomes (baseline)
- 2025, Year 2: focus on short-term outcomes
- 2026, Year 3: focus on long-term outcomes

Further details on planned outputs and deliverables over the first year of this study are provided in the methodology section below.

These three years could be conceptualised as taking place over several phases, such as the following:

- *Phase I: Planning, design*
 - Scoping, advertisement, recruitment of the evaluation firm
 - Inception phase of the evaluation to develop methodology and implementation plan (Q2 2024)
- *Phase II: Data collection and analysis (Year 1)*
 - Field work, data collection (Q2-Q3 2024)
 - Data analysis, preparation of initial findings (Q3 2024)
- *Phase III: Report writing and dissemination (Year 1)*

- Report writing, validation with key stakeholders, dissemination (Q4 2024)

- *Phase IV: Data collection and analysis (Year 2)*
 - Preparation for next phase (Q1 2025)
 - Field work, data collection (Q2-Q3 2025)
 - Data analysis, preparation of initial findings (Q3 2025)
- *Phase V: Report writing and dissemination (Year 2)*
 - Report writing, validation with key stakeholders, dissemination (Q4 2025)
- *Phase VI: Data collection and analysis (Year 3)*
 - Preparation for next phase (Q1 2026)
 - Field work, data collection (Q2-Q3 2026)
 - Data analysis, preparation of initial findings (Q3 2026)
- *Phase VII: Report writing and dissemination (Year 3)*
 - Report writing, validation with key stakeholders, dissemination (Q4 2026)

Note that while this initial TOR and contract are focused on Phases I, II and III (2024 activities only), there is some description of potential activities to be covered in 2025-2026. Potential expansion of the TOR and contract for additional tasks in 2025-2026 will depend on satisfactory completion of deliverables in 2024, and continued availability of funding. While there is no guarantee of contract extension or subsequent work beyond the initial phases of this TOR (2024 only), UNICEF is requesting interested firms to include in their proposals the approach that would be taken for the entire three-year period.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

Methodology

Based on the objectives of the assignment, this section indicates a possible approach, methods, and processes for the longitudinal study and impact evaluation. Methodological rigor will be given significant consideration in the assessment of proposals. Hence consultants are invited to interrogate the approach and methodology proffered in the TOR and improve on it, or propose an approach they deem more appropriate, which should be guided by UNICEF's revised Evaluation Policy (2023), the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016), UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation (2014), UN SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator, UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (2020), UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards and Research, Evaluation and Data Collection and Analysis (2015) and UNICEF-Adapted UNEG Evaluation Report Standards (2017). Moreover, the assessment should consider issues of equity, gender equality and human rights throughout. In their proposal, consultants should clearly refer to triangulation, sampling plan, ethical considerations (including, ethical clearance) and methodological limitations and mitigation measures. They are encouraged to also demonstrate methodological expertise in evaluating similar initiatives.

It is expected that the evaluation will employ a quasi-experimental, mixed methods approach drawing on key project documents, the constructed Theory of Change and the Monitoring and Evaluation framework for guidance. Methods, options, limitations and suggestions for the best counterfactual (comparison group) should be included in the proposal from qualified firms. As a

longitudinal study, the evaluation is also expected to track a sampled cohort of families and their children over the three-year period of the exercise, and draw conclusions that demonstrate impact (or lack thereof) based on data collected. The proposed sample may include children currently in EICs, or those in mainstream schools who were previously in EICs but have graduated out.

At minimum, the evaluation will draw on the following methods:

- Desk review of project documents and other relevant data;
- Review and analysis of secondary quantitative data;
- Interviews with key informants;
- Focus group discussions with stakeholders;
- Primary quantitative data collection in the form of a survey among children and caregivers (with baseline to be collected during the first year);
- Site visits and observations at various EICs;
- Reconstruction of a Theory of Change (TOC) for EICs in Sarawak;
- Cost-benefit analysis, comparing costs and results achieved across the three EIC models;
- Cohort study of selected families and their children.

Some methodological considerations may include, among others:

- Identification of proposed target/intervention and counterfactual groups, and how these groups may change or evolve over the three-year period
- Considering both children in EICs, as well as those already in school (or who will later transition into school)
- Considering children officially registered as having a disability (Kad Orang Kurang Upaya, Kad OKU), and those that are not but still access EICs

Conventional ethical guidelines are to be followed during the evaluation. Specific reference is made to the revised UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System and UNEG Ethical Guidelines as well as to the UNICEF's revised Evaluation Policy, and the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation and Data Collection and Analysis and UNICEF's Evaluation Reporting Standards. In case children or vulnerable populations are expected to be included under the data collection, ethical review from an institutional review board (IRB), including Medical Research & Ethics Committee of the Ministry of Health Malaysia, will be required and will be the responsibility of the evaluation team upon approval of the inception report. Good practices not covered therein are also to be followed. Any sensitive issues or concerns should be raised with the evaluation management team as soon as they are identified.

Disability-inclusive data collection approaches are to be designed and adopted for this project. This may include, among others, the need for integration of sign language and braille. Surveys will need to be accessible to screen reader users and also have the option to be completed with support in case of respondents with intellectual disabilities, or other reasonable accommodation needs.

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Activity	Deliverable	Time estimate
Inception meeting (online)	Meeting minutes	01 April 2024
Inception phase: All relevant documents are reviewed, explanatory discussions held, and inception report submitted compliant with UNICEF requirements	Inception report (English)	30 April 2024
Second and final draft of the inception report presented to UNICEF team and key stakeholders	Revised inception report PowerPoint presentation for reference group Comments matrix with response to comments	31 May 2024
Conduct enumerators' training based on the methodology described in the Inception Report and supervise field data collection		30 June 2024
Relevant methods applied to analyse primary and secondary data and prepare preliminary findings report and presentation. During this time, the draft final report will begin to be drafted as analysis takes place	Preliminary findings report (including desk review and literature search), PowerPoint presentation, meeting minutes	31 July 2024
Prepare and submit first draft of evaluation report	Draft report	15 August 2024
Revise the first draft and submit second draft final evaluation report to Evaluation Management team, Reference group and other stakeholders in a multi-stakeholder workshop and prepare presentation and other materials	Second draft report and executive summary	31 August 2024
Present findings, conclusions and draft recommendations at a multi-stakeholder validation workshop	PowerPoint presentation	30 September 2024
Final report, executive summary, infographic and other materials finalized.	Final report, executive summary, evaluation brief	30 November 2024
Supplementary case study documentation on OSEICs	Draft and final reports	31 December 2024

Note that the timeline for Years 2 and 3 of the project is expected to be similar, to allow for data collection during the same season or time of the year.

Key stakeholders for this exercise will include the Sarawak Ministry of Women, Early Childhood and Community Wellbeing Development (KPWK, which oversees policy, regulation and implementation of EICs), the Agape Centre (which consist of four non-governmental organisations delivering early

intervention programs and services for children with disabilities, and a government-based child development clinic), the National Early Childhood Intervention Council (NECIC, a coalition of early intervention CSO and other early childhood disability inclusive approaches), the Economic Planning Unit Sarawak (EPU Sarawak), the federal Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWK), and UNICEF Malaysia (which supports the government in realizing the rights of children with disabilities across the country). The external evaluation firm will operate under the guidance of a **reference group** consisting of representatives from the above key stakeholders and possibly other external experts. The Sarawak Ministry of Women, Early Childhood and Community Wellbeing Development (KPWK) will chair the reference group. The study and evaluation contract will be directly managed by UNICEF Malaysia, which will provide the funding for this exercise.

4. DELIVERABLES

Item	Description	Timeframe
1	An inception report	31 May 2024
2	A report of the initial findings	31 August 2024
3	A final baseline report	30 November 2024
4	A PowerPoint presentation of the final report	30 November 2024
5	A four-page brief	30 November 2024
6	Documentation of OSEICs as a case study	31 December 2024

Evaluation products expected for this exercise are as follows (all to be delivered in English):

- An inception report, in an agreed format, in preparation for data collection, and a PowerPoint presentation of the inception report to present to key stakeholders;
- A report of the initial findings from primary data collection, including a desk review analysis and a PowerPoint presentation of the initial findings to facilitate a stakeholder consultation exercise;
- A draft report and final report that will be written in accordance to the UNICEF guidelines and revised until approved (incl. a complete first draft to be reviewed by UNICEF; a second draft to be reviewed by key stakeholders, and a final draft);
- A PowerPoint presentation of the final report to be used to share findings with key stakeholders and for use in subsequent dissemination events;
- A four-page evaluation brief that is distinct from the executive summary in the evaluation report and is intended for a broader, non-technical and non-UNICEF audience.

Other interim products are:

- Minutes of key meetings with the UNICEF team and key stakeholders; and
- Presentation materials for the meetings with the UNICEF team and key stakeholders. These may include PowerPoint summaries of work progress and conclusions to that point.

Outlines and descriptions of each evaluation product are meant to be indicative, and include:

- Inception report: The inception report (of maximum 20 pages, excluding annexes) will be key in confirming a common understanding of what is to be assessed, including additional insights into executing the evaluation. At this stage the evaluation team will support partners to refine and confirm questions, confirm the scope of the evaluation, further improve on the methodology proposed in the TOR and their own proposal to improve its rigor, as well as develop and validate instruments. The report will include, among other elements:

- i) evaluation purpose and scope, confirmation of objectives and the main themes of the assessment;
 - ii) reconstructed Theory of Change (TOC) for EICs in Sarawak, which will provide a framework for expected outputs and outcomes in a variety of settings;
 - iii) evaluation criteria and questions, final set of evaluation questions, and evaluation criteria for assessing performance;
 - iv) evaluation methodology (i.e., sampling criteria), a description of data collection methods and data sources (incl. a rationale for their selection), draft data collection instruments, for example questionnaires, with a data collection toolkit as an annex, a data analysis plan, a discussion on how to enhance the reliability and validity of conclusions, the field visit approach, a description of the quality review process and a discussion on the limitations of the methodology;
 - v) proposed structure of the final report;
 - vi) work plan and timeline, including a revised work and travel plan;
 - vii) resource requirements (i.e., detailed budget allocations, human resource commitments, tied to evaluation activities, work plan, deliverables);
 - viii) annexes (i.e., organizing matrix for evaluation questions, data collection toolkit, data analysis framework); and vi) format of an evaluation briefing note for external communication purposes. The inception report will be presented at a meeting with UNICEF and key stakeholders.
- Initial findings: This report will present the initial findings from primary data collection, comprising the desk-based document review and analysis of the programme. The report developed prior to the first drafts of the final report should be 10 pages, or about 6,000 words in length (excluding annexes, if any), and should be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation that can be used for validation with key stakeholders.
 - Final evaluation report: The report will not exceed 50 pages, excluding the executive summary and annexes. The evaluation report will follow the format outlined in UNICEF's evaluation report standards, including the identification of recommendations that are co-created and validated with partners.
 - PowerPoint presentation: Initially prepared and used by the assessment team in their presentation to key stakeholders, a standalone PowerPoint will be submitted to the UNICEF team as part of the deliverables.
 - A brief of four pages (distinct from the executive summary) for external users will be submitted to the UNICEF team as part of the evaluation.
 - Case study documentation: In no more than 10 pages, this document should present in a visually attractive and storytelling format an overview of the history, achievements, challenges and way forward for EICs, drawing on key findings and recommendations from the first year of the evaluation.

Reports will be prepared according to the UNICEF Style Guide and UNICEF Brand Toolkit (to be shared with the winning bidder) and UNICEF standards for evaluation reports as per Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS) guidelines³. Furthermore, all final deliverables (reports) should be produced in accessible formats, as per UNICEF's procedure on disability inclusive communication and advocacy.

Quality assurance of evaluation key reports: The first draft of the final report will be received by the evaluation management team and UNICEF who will revert with comments within 5 working days,

³ <https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/global-evaluation-reports-oversight-system-geros>

and work with the team leader on necessary revisions. The second draft will be sent to the reference group. The evaluation management team will consolidate all comments on a response matrix and request the evaluation team to indicate actions taken against each comment in the production of the final draft. The evaluation team needs to revert with revised reports within one week of receipt of comments.

5. DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE, OR EXPERIENCE

The evaluation will be conducted by engaging a qualified institution. The exact composition of the team to meet the requirements and timelines should be specified in the technical proposal. At a minimum, the team should consist of the following two profiles:

The Team Leader should bring with them the following competencies:

- Having extensive evaluation/research experience (at least 10 years) with an excellent understanding of impact evaluation principles and methodologies, including capacity in an array of qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Holding an advanced university degree (Masters or higher) in public policy, economics, statistics or similar, including sound knowledge of policy and systemic aspects; familiarity with programmes for children with disabilities is a requirement.
- Having in-depth knowledge of the UN's human rights, gender equality and equity agendas.
- Having a strong team leadership and management track record, as well as excellent interpersonal and communication skills to help ensure that the evaluation is understood and used.
- Experience in undertaking impact evaluations of programmes for children with disabilities is desirable (if not, the team leader should ensure appropriate expertise is brought onto the team)
- Previous experience of working in a Southeast Asian context is desirable, together with understanding of the Malaysian context and cultural dynamics.
- The Team Leader must be committed and willing to work independently, with limited regular supervision; s/he must demonstrate adaptability and flexibility, client orientation, proven ethical practice, initiative, concern for accuracy and quality.
- S/he must have the ability to concisely and clearly express ideas and concepts in written and oral form as well as the ability to communicate with various stakeholders in English.

Team Member/Technical Expert:

- Holding advanced university degrees (Masters-level) in public policy, economics, statistics or similar.
- Having evaluation/research experience (at least 5 years) with an excellent understanding of longitudinal study and impact evaluation principles and methodologies, including capacity in an array of qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Familiarity with national programmes for children with disabilities in Malaysia
- Excellent interpersonal, facilitation and communication skills
- Fluency in English and Malay, and some field members who will be in contact with families and children shall be fluent in Chinese or local Sarawak languages, especially Iban.
- Experience in conducting impact evaluations in the Malaysian context is desirable.

6. DURATION OF CONTRACT

The contract duration is 10 months, starting from April 2024 to January 2025.

7. TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

If based outside of Sarawak, the contractor shall plan for at least three missions to Sarawak as part of this assignment, generally coinciding with the inception, data collection, and reporting/validation phases. For planning and costing purposes, the missions should be planned to Kuching, although travel and flights to Sibiu and other locations in Sarawak may also be required. The contractor should make provision for traveling by car where necessary (to-from the airport and field locations). If members of the contractor's team are based in other parts of Malaysia, they should also plan to travel to Sarawak to support this assignment.

All travel arrangements, including insurance and visas, are to be managed and paid by the contractor. Travel cost shall be calculated based on economy class travel, regardless of the length of travel and costs for accommodation, meals and incidentals shall not exceed applicable daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates, as promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC at <http://icsc.un.org>).

8. GUIDELINES ON PROPOSALS SUBMISSION

TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

The technical proposal should be prepared according to the following specifications. The following items should be included, based on which the first technical assessment will be conducted (indicative length of each section is provided in brackets):

- 1) Profile and experience with similar projects and clients, including links to 2 sample reports (up to 2 pages)
- 2) Understanding of the TOR and overall approach to the evaluation (up to 2 pages)
- 3) Methodology to conduct the evaluation (up to 3 pages)
- 4) Proposed workplan for the evaluation (up to 2 pages)
- 5) Quality assurance and risk mitigation mechanisms to guarantee the best results for the project (1 page)
- 6) Contractor's profile, including summary of qualifications and number of working days allocated to the project (up to 2 pages)
- 7) Reference contacts from other clients (1 page)
- 8) Annexes: full curriculum vitae of professional(s) conducting the evaluation

If needed, UNICEF may request bidders to conduct a presentation of their proposals and clarify details before making a final decision on contract award.

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The Technical Proposal shall also include a clear breakdown detailing the types of resources/ roles proposed and the number of days required based upon the requirements and work methodology proposed.

Note: No financial information should be included in the technical proposal

FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

Financial proposal should be prepared according to the followings:

1. The currency of the Proposal shall be in USD (United States Dollars). UNICEF will reject any proposals submitted in another currency
2. Based on requirements in the Terms of Reference, proposer(s) are expected to submit the financial proposal based on the derivation of resources type and person-days effort as recommended in the Technical Proposal. The pricing tabulation shall be clearly itemized and inclusive of all fees incurred (e.g. service tax, if applicable) as per the following:

For Service Requisition:

Name	Resource Type	Rate per Hour/ Day (USD)	Hours/ Days Required	Total (USD)
	Team Leader			
	Technical Expert			
	(others, if any...)			
SST (6%) – if applicable				
Total (Inclusive of tax)				

This proposal shall also include payment schedule linked to clearly defined milestones, as recommended in the Technical Proposal.

9. PROPOSED PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- *(By milestones/ deliverables): Payment upon completion & acceptance of specific milestones/ deliverables*

The days [and deadlines] indicated above are indicative only and are used for estimation purposes. Fees shall be calculated based on the days offered to complete the assignment and shall be considered the maximum compensation as part of a lump sum contract. No additional fees shall be paid to complete the assignment. Payment will be made upon submission and approval of deliverables and full and satisfactory completion of the assignment.

Unless the proposers propose an alternative payment schedule, payments will be as follows:

- Approved inception report: 20% of the contractual amount;
- Approved initial findings report: 25%;
- Approved final evaluation report, final presentation and final brief: 35%.
- Approved documentation of OSEICs as a case study: 20%

10. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

In making the final decision, UNICEF considers both technical and financial aspects. The internal evaluation team first reviews the technical aspect (including by reference to its legal requirements (i.e General Terms and Conditions and other relevant provisional terms) of the offer followed by the review of the financial offer of the technically compliant proposer(s).

A maximum of 70 points will be awarded according to the quality of the technical proposal while a maximum of 30 points will be awarded for the price component.

UNICEF will award the contract to the proposer(s) that provides the most responsive proposal – highest combined Technical and Financial Scoring.

TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

The technical proposal should address all aspects and criteria outlined in this Terms of Reference. The proposals will be evaluated against the following:

Criteria for Selection	Points Allocated
Evidence of the firm’s experience in projects of similar complexity, scale and level (impact evaluations and longitudinal studies); 2 sample reports required	10
Overall understanding of the ToR and of the needs and requirements for the evaluation	5
Proposed methodology to conduct the evaluation	15
Workplan for the evaluation	5
Quality assurance and risk mitigation mechanisms	5
Use of innovative methods to address the purpose, objectives and key	5

questions	
Academic and technical background of contractor’s team	5
Experience of key personnel in leading evaluations and/or reviews, institutional capacity assessments, of similar scale and level	10
Experience with quantitative and qualitative research and approaches	10
Total	70

Only proposers that score at least 70% of the maximum Technical Evaluation points (i.e. 49 or more) shall proceed to the Financial Evaluation stage. Financial proposals from proposer(s) that do not meet this minimum technical threshold will not be opened.

FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

The financial proposals will be evaluated against the following:

The maximum number of points will be allotted to the lowest price proposal that is opened and compared amongst the proposers that obtained the threshold points in the evaluation of the technical component. All other price proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price; e.g.:

$$\text{Score for price proposal X} = \frac{\text{Max. score for price proposal X} * \text{price of lowest priced proposal}}{\text{Price of proposal X}}$$

11. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

This contract will be supervised and managed by the UNICEF Multi-Country Evaluation Specialist. Other UNICEF staff will work closely with the supervisor on the assignment, including Social Policy Specialist(s), the Gender and Disability Specialist, among others. Together with relevant government partners, and the UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), key stakeholders and UNICEF will formulate a reference group for this assignment that will support the supervisor and advise on sign-off of all deliverables.

12. CONDITIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- a. The contractor shall utilize his own resources, materials and facilities, including but not limited to its own computer(s) in the execution of work. The contractor’s fee shall therefore be inclusive of all office administrative costs
- b. The contractor’s focal point appointed to manage the work required shall be reachable during office hours
- c. All persons engaged under UNICEF institutional contract shall be subject to the UN Supplier Code of Conduct: <https://www.ungm.org/Public/CodeOfConduct>