

UNICEF Georgia Country Office

Terms of Reference

For a Local Organization For Piloting New Model of Foster Care

Start date: 01/11/2023

End date consultancy: 31/03/2024

1. RATIONALE

The Government of Georgia has been implementing a substantial childcare system reform since 2005. A key component of the reform was the end of institutional care for children. The deinstitutionalization process serves the best interest of a child and is a means for achieving a better quality of life for a child. First and foremost, UNICEF recognizes that the key aspects of successful deinstitutionalization entails strengthening family support programmes to prevent family separation, replacement of large-scale institutions with the family and community-based care (i.e., kinship care, foster care, independent care arrangements, etc.) and the development of the proper quality standards of UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children¹. Moreover, this requires a strong social work system at central and municipal levels.

Currently, around 1,500 children reside in foster care and 280 live in small group homes, managed by professional non-governmental organizations. However increasingly, the reports of the Public Defender's Office² and other studies indicate that quality of alternative care and residential services may be deteriorating; social work cannot perform gatekeeping functions properly³; and there are increased risks for children living outside their families, thus they need more support, better care, and supervision for their harmonious development.

The Code on the Rights of the Child mandates the Government to carry out all necessary legislative and administrative measures which involve the gradual replacement of residential care of children, including children with disabilities, by foster care and other family-based and community-based services (Article 32). UNICEF is committed to work with Government, specifically the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labour, Health, and Social Affairs (MoIDPOTLHSA) and State Care Agency (SCA) and its service

¹ The UN guideline on Alternative care defines the alternative care as a situation where "the child's own family is unable, even with appropriate support, to provide adequate care for the child, or abandons or relinquishes the child, the State is responsible for protecting the rights of the child and ensuring appropriate alternative care, with or through competent local authorities and duly authorized civil society organizations. It is the role of the State, through its competent authorities, to ensure the supervision of the safety, well-being and development of any child placed in alternative care and the regular review of the appropriateness of the care arrangement provided.

² Monitoring of Child Care System – Effectiveness of Alternative Care Special report; Public Defender's Office, 2019 (<http://www.ombudsman.ge/res/docs/2019051418581765162.pdf>)

³ RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF SSA SOCIAL WORK; Nelli Petrova-Dimitrova, report of the UNICEF Georgia consultant, December 2018.

providers to enhance the quality of foster care and address the issues identified by the Public Defender in their report from 2019⁴.

UNICEF's support to strengthen the foster care programme in Georgia started with a situational analysis of foster care in Georgia. The situational analysis reviewed the foster care process from provision of information to applicants, through training and assessment, matching, post-placement monitoring and support. One of the key findings of the situational analysis was the need for substantial change in the provision of the foster care.

Based on the situational analysis and its results, UNICEF is providing further technical assistance for strengthening the foster care programme and its components, including amending regulations and standards, development of outreach and recruitment strategies, and formulating unified training programmes (based on existing experience and identified needs), components which may be outsourced.

UNICEF has provided the technical support to MoIDPOTLHSA and SCA to conceptualize outsourcing of certain components of the foster care programme, such as development of manuals, guidelines, and training programmes and calculated relevant costs.

UNICEF is seeking to engage a local organization to pilot and test a new approach to administration of the foster care programme to improve recruitment of new foster families and provide professional support to existing foster careers.

2. OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The main objective of the assignment is to pilot a new approach to the administration of the foster care programme. The pilot programme aims to address the existing challenges and gaps in the current administration of the foster care programme.

The project will be implemented in close cooperation with MoIDPOTLHSA and SCA therefore the selected organization is required to work closely with UNICEF and key Government counterparts.

3. SCOPE AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The scope of piloting the foster care programme encompasses the design, implementation, and review of a new approach to the administration of the foster care programme within a specific geographic area (Tbilisi and Kutaisi, and at least in one Municipalities from the following list - Telavi, Rustavi and Batumi)⁵. The assignment involves testing the effectiveness and feasibility of outsourcing model, ensuring it meets the needs of children in foster care, foster parents and addresses some of the shortcomings of the existing system. The pilot program will involve collaboration among various stakeholders, including government

⁴ <http://www.ombudsman.ge/eng/spetsialuri-angarishebi/bavshvze-zrunvis-sistemis-monitoringi-alternatiuli-zrunvis-efektianoba-spetsialuri-angarishi>.

⁵ The neighboring municipalities may also be considered and agreed before the initiation of the process, the priority should be given to the organization that covers majority of the municipalities.

agencies, social service organizations, foster families, and community partners.

Specific Objectives of the Assignment:

Programme Design and Structure of Pilot - Develop a comprehensive framework for the pilot foster care programme based on the new outsourcing rule, guidelines, training modules and costing document (Annex 1). This framework should define the programme's key components, roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, and mechanisms for service delivery. Additionally, the organization will prepare and sign a memorandum of understanding with the State Care Agency, develop training materials for both regular and specialized foster care, and create working instruments for the professional support of foster families.

Selection and Recruitment of New Foster Families - Identify and recruit suitable foster families to participate in the pilot programme. This process involves ensuring that the selected families meet specific criteria and providing them with appropriate training and support. In Tbilisi, select 12 foster families (3 emergency foster caregivers, 3 specialized foster caregivers, and 6 regular foster caregivers). In Kutaisi, select 8 foster families (2 emergency foster caregivers, 2 specialized foster caregivers, and 4 regular foster caregivers) and 15 foster caregivers (Telavi, Rustavi, Batumi).

Identify Existing Foster Families for Professional Support: Identify and engage with existing foster families in Tbilisi (20 families), Kutaisi (10 families) and other Municipalities (10 Families -Telavi, Rustavi, Batumi)⁶ to provide them with the necessary professional support. Criteria for identifying these families will be agreed upon with UNICEF and the State Care Agency.

Community Engagement and Awareness: Engage with the community to create awareness and support for the foster care programme. This involves forming partnerships with local organizations, community and businesses to establish a nurturing environment for both foster children and families.

Evolution of Piloting Programme and Recommendations: As the piloting programme progresses, review its evolution and outcomes. Based on the findings, prepare recommendations for the adoption of a state programme on foster care. These recommendations should draw from the lessons learned during the pilot phase and the insights gained from its implementation.

4. DELIVARABLES

Deliverables	Timeline	deliverables
Comprehensive Framework Document (Develop a detailed framework document for the pilot foster care outsourcing model. This document should encompass the	15 November	1 Milestone 15 November

⁶ In total, covering approximately 100 children residing in foster care

new concept, guidelines, training modules, and costing details (as outlined in Annex 1). The framework should clearly outline the pilot structure, objectives, strategies, and key components.)		
Training materials for specialized and regular foster careers	15 November	1 Milestone - 15 November
Reports on foster families who received professional support	15 December 15 March	2 Milestone - 15 December 3 Milestone - 15 March
Report on selection and recruitment of new foster families	15 March	3 Milestone - 15 March
Assessment Report: Prepare a detailed report that assesses the progress, outcomes, and challenges of the pilot. The report should provide insights into the effectiveness and feasibility of the program's implementation.	15 March	3 Milestone - 15 March
Recommendations Document: Based on the assessment findings, develop a recommendations document outlining the steps and strategies for adopting a state program on foster care. These recommendations should be informed by the lessons learned during the pilot phase and should address areas of improvement and expansion.	31 March	4 Milestone – 31 March
Final Report	31 March	4 Milestone - 31 March

5. PAYMENT MODALITY

Payments to the contracted organization will be made in accordance with a pre-determined schedule developed before signing the contract in proportion to the work to be performed. Each payment will be based on a submission of a deliverable for the work already completed.

6. QUALIFICATIONS

- At least 10 years of experience in the field of provision of social services for children (small group home, foster care),
- At least 5 years of experience with a development of social programmes, guidelines,

training materials and capacities of the workforce.

- Proven knowledge of child protection and child welfare system in Georgia
- Familiarity with the regulatory framework and international standards pertaining the decentralization, family support programmes, social work, or/and municipal social work in Georgia
- Experience in developing comprehensive policy and analytical documents and communicating with relevant stakeholders
- Previous work experience with the UN will be considered an asset.

7. SUPERVISION

The organization will work under the direct supervision of the Social Services Officer. Overall supervision will be provided by the Child Protection Specialist.

8. CONTRACT ARRANGEMENTS

- UNICEF will support the contractor in establishing contact with necessary stakeholders and arrange meetings with all relevant parties.
- No sub-contracting is allowed or inclusion of overhead (HQ) costs.

9. TIMEFRAME

The assignment is expected to be carried out from 1 November 2023 to 31 March 2024.

10. SELECTION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Evaluation Criteria: The Evaluation ratio between the technical and financial proposal is 70:30. First, the Technical Proposals will be evaluated. The Technical Proposal was allocated a total possible score of 70 points using following criteria. Technical Proposals receiving 70% of obtainable points (49 pt.) or higher, will be considered technically responsive and the Price Proposal will be opened. Proposals which are considered not technically compliant and non-responsive, will not be given further consideration.

Technical Proposal: 70

- Overall correspondence between ToR requirements and proposal (specific tasks, deliverables) – 20
- Experience of the entity in similar assignments (Experience in the field of provision of social services for children (small group home, foster care), experience with a development of social programs, guidelines, training materials and capacities of the workforce) – 30
- Qualifications and expertise of proposed experts – 20 points.

Only proposals which receive a minimum of 70% (49 points) will be considered further.

FINANCIAL EVALUATION (30 points)

Only those financial proposals for bidders which have been technically accepted according to the above criteria will be opened. The Financial proposal will be weighted based on the clarity and appropriateness.

The price proposals in GEL should be broken down for each component of the proposed work. The total amount of points allocated for the price component is 30. The maximum number of points will be allotted to the lowest price proposal that is opened and compared among those invited bidders which obtain 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.:

$$\text{Score for price proposal X} = \frac{\text{Max. Score for price proposal (30)} * \text{Price of lowest priced proposal}}{\text{Price of proposal X}}$$

The Contract shall be awarded to a bidder obtaining the highest combined technical and financial scores. Proposals not complying with the terms and conditions contained in this ToR, including the provision of all required information, may result in the Proposal being deemed non-responsive and therefore not considered further.

Prepared by:

George Kakachia, Social Services Officer

Submitted by:

Teona Kuchava, Child Protection Specialist

Endorsed by:

Vakhtang Akhaladze, Operations Manager

Endorsed by:

Amy Clancy, Deputy Representative

Approved by:

Jesper Moller, Representative