



Detailed Terms of Reference: Strengthening of Formal Foster Care Systems in Namibia

1. Background

UNICEF partners with the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) in order to strengthen and expand their programmes aimed at children in need of care or protection. Foster care is central to the entire system of alternative care (which includes temporary places of safety, foster care and institutional care) and is in urgent need of overhaul.

In 2008 UNICEF supported the MGECW to undertake an alternative care assessment study to assess the volume and quality of alternative care provision and informal care, assess the capacity of the MGECW to manage alternative care systems for children, critically analyse policy, law, standards and practice in the provision of alternative care, and development recommendations.

In 2009 UNICEF supported the MGECW to undertake a follow up evaluation to assess the existing framework for foster care specifically, to compile information on foster care frameworks and guardianship legislation utilised in other countries, and to make recommendations for new approaches to foster care and foster care grants.

As a result of the study the MGECW is committed to strengthening informal kinship and formal foster care systems. Changes have already been incorporated into the final draft of the Child Care and Protection Bill

2. Justification

The consultancy aims to **take forward some of the critical recommendations from the 2009 foster care consultancy**, in particular to strengthen the formal foster care system.

In Namibia the foster care system is predominantly a kinship care system where care is provided to a child by the extended family, friends or within the community network. Formal foster care, defined as 'looking after children who are not related to the carers', is not the mainstream practice in Namibia culture but is an important safety net for children without appropriate kinship caregivers and children placed out of unsafe families because of abuse and neglect, children with disabilities and those that cannot be reintegrated into their families after placement in residential care. This group of children in need of foster care is growing and they cannot be met by the existing available foster parents. This is putting pressure towards inter-country adoptions, and approach which is not seen as culturally appropriate. Formal foster care is a critical component to provide a continuum of care within alternative care. The recruitment, assessment, approval and training of foster carers are required before children are matched and placed with them. This should be well organised, standardised and supported by specialised workers.

The activity proposed is part of the 2010 workplan between UNICEF and M/oGECW and the funding is available from PBA 2006/182 (DFID)

3. Purpose:

UNICEF Namibia with the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare plans to undertake a consultancy with the overall outcome of strengthening supported formal foster care systems.



Detailed tasks include the following:

- a) Develop foster care standards and guidelines
- b) Develop registration guidelines for foster care service providers
- c) Develop recruitment, assessment and training system for implementation of foster care guidelines, and registration processes

a) Develop foster care standards and guidelines

Based on focus group discussions and key informant interviews guidelines should be provided on the following areas:

- The definition of foster care and how it contributes towards providing a continuum of care for children cared for by a person who is not the birth parent of the child (i.e. alternative care).
- The minimum standards to qualify as a foster carer
- Circumstances required for a child to qualify to be placed in foster care
- Minimum standards and legislation requirements foster care service providers need to meet
- Minimum standards required for formal support to foster children and carers
- Minimum procedures for a child to be placed in foster care, and for a potential foster carer to be recruited, assessed, approved, trained, supported and monitored.

b) Develop registration guidelines for foster care service providers

- Identify procedures and processes to be followed for the registration and de-registration of service providers
- Design and pre-test tools/ forms to register as a foster care service provider in consultation with MGECW and foster care stakeholders

c) Develop recruitment, assessment and training system for implementation of foster care guidelines, and registration processes

- Development of a training manual and tools for the implementation of the minimum standards, guidelines and registration processes. The manual will provide information and exercises to equip social workers and/or civil society partners to train service providers on the recruitment, assessment and approval of foster cares. It will equip partners to train service providers to provide psychosocial support and counselling to foster carers.

4. Technical Working Group

The work of the consultant would be guided by a Technical Working Group. It will be chaired by the MGECW and will include representative from the RCCF network, PACT Namibia and UNICEF. The TWG will be involved in the identification and approval of a suitable candidate(s). UNICEF reserves the right to decline any candidate that does not meet the minimum standards and qualification required.

5. Scope and Methodology

The consultancy will use a 'social action methodology', based on consultation and cooperation with all stakeholders involved. This methodology enables the active involvement of all actors and beneficiaries related to foster care: children and young people (boys and girls), foster carers (men and women), social workers at national and regional level, other related staff members of the MGECW, Commissioners of Child Welfare and managers and staff of NGOs and FBOs in the regions. The selection of the region(s) will be done by the Technical Working Group. Consultative meetings and



focus group discussions will take place with key foster care stakeholders, with separate consultations taking place with foster children (15 – 17 years). The Regional consultation meetings will include:

- Foster parents
- Potential Foster Care service providers, including CBO and FBO partners
- Social workers

Key informant interviews will include social workers, Commissioners of Child Welfare, representatives of NGOs working with children, children’s homes and others as identified by the Technical Working Group. The consultant will carry out the interviews and facilitate the consultative discussions with the assistance of a translator as necessary.

6. Schedule of Tasks

Under the overall supervision of the Technical Working Group headed by MGECW with support from UNICEF the consultant will perform the following key tasks to meet the purpose of the assignment:

Process Description	# days required
<p>STEP 1: Desk review and planning finalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with TWG to review TOR, agree on expected outputs, and finalise questions for interviews • Develop detailed plan for FGDs and key informant interviews • Review necessary documents, reports and legislation on foster care in Namibia • Meet with MGECW and finalise logframe and work schedule for assessment • Present final logframe and work schedule to Technical Working Group • Finalise selection of region(s) in consultation with TWG • Conduct a desk study of relevant international models of standards and guidelines which could be drawn on as options for Namibia 	5
<p>STEP 2: Finalise and make logistical arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workout travel schedule, accommodation and travel requirements, and identify dedicated staff including MGECW and translators. • Make field arrangements in region(s) to include focus group discussions with groups consisting of 10-15 people in each region, and 6-8 key informant interviews. Identify organisations to help the MGECW recruit members of focus groups and identify best key informants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Foster parents (one FGD) ○ Separate girl and boys (15-17 years) (2 FGD) who are in foster care (one FGD). <p>The key informant interviews should include social workers (at least 2 per selected region), Commissioners of Child Welfare (at</p>	3



Process Description	# days required
<p>least 1 per selected region), representatives of NGOs working with children, children's homes and others as identified by the Technical Working Group.</p>	
<p>STEP 3: Develop and approve field tools for consultations and interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop focus group discussion guides; • Develop list of questions for key informant interviews with social workers, Commissioners of Child Welfare (at least 1 per selected region), representatives of NGOs working with children and other identified informants. • Develop format for reporting process, content of discussions and outcome of interviews. 	3
<p>STEP 4: Complete and summarise field work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Focus Group Discussions (two half-day FGDs), key informant interviews (2 days per region), with one day for logistical arrangements and two extra days for additional key informant interviews in Windhoek with MGECW personnel and national NGOs. Number of days allocated for travel to be confirmed when the regions are decided. • Write up record of process and outcome during course of field work, and share with TWG 	14
<p>STEP 5: Analyse field work and compile information on relevant international models standards and guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of desk study, the consultant will conceptualise the field findings with international practices into standards and guidelines. • Present draft standards and guidelines to Technical Working Group for discussion • Test standards and guidelines with social workers and other key stakeholders before finalisation of tools • Incorporate changes into standards and guidelines 	14
<p>STEP 6: Development of registration guidelines for foster care service providers, and training system for implementation of the foster care guidelines, and registration process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk work where consultant develops the registration guidelines in line with developed standards and guidelines, as well as a training systems for implementation of the foster care guidelines 	15
<p>STEP 7: Presentation and Pretesting of training system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration guidelines and training manual is shared with TWG 	



Process Description	# days required
for comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training manual is pre-tested on social workers and other key stakeholders, and changes are incorporated back into the manual. • Draft manual is finalised for approval 	5
STEP 8: Final submission to the MGECW for approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit amended deliverables to MGECW for approval, including field trip report, standards and guidelines document, and training manual • Contract closed upon UNICEF satisfaction all deliverables have been met, with final approval/feedback from MGECW to follow afterwards 	5
TOTAL	64

(The above proposed process description is a recommendation, but is not fixed. Submissions may adjust the process as per functional requirements and it is recommended an additional 5 days is submitted for to provide room for flexibility).

7. Required skills and qualifications

- International consultants and/or institutions may be required to work with a local (Namibian consulting firm or individuals).
- The consultant must have at least 5- 10 years experience in the field of foster care and should have a Master's degree in social sciences, education, sociology, public health or related field. He/she will need to be the equivalent of an L3 or L4 level.
- The consultant should have prior knowledge of foster care systems in one or more countries, and preferably in a developing country.

8. Indicative Deliverables

1. Approved Logframe and Schedule for consultancy;
2. Notes from Focus Group Discussions, and Key Information interviews
3. Finalised standards and guidelines document
4. Training Manual to strengthen formal foster care systems. To include, amongst others, guidelines for registration of service providers; and recruitment, assessment and approval process as foster carers.
5. Process consultancy report describing consultancy process, methodology, and key results

9. Payment Schedule

- Payment after completion of step 1, 2 & 3 for 20% of total budget
- Payment after completion of step 4 & 5 for 20% of total budget
- Payment after completion of step 6 for 30% of total budget
- Payment after completion of step 7& 8 for 30% of total budget



Prepared by:
Matthew Dalling,
OVC Specialist

Date:

Through:

Monalisa Zatjirua
OIC SPVC Chief

Reviewed by:

Rushnan Murtaza
OIC Deputy Representative

Approved by:

Ian MacLeod
Representative