

Terms of Reference

Assessment of alternative forms of care and family-support services for children with disabilities (Institutional contract)

I. BACKGROUND

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has a total **population** of 2.064 million¹ with almost one third of the population being children.

The **social protection sector** is led by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MoLSP) responsible for the establishment of the system of social protection. The Institute for Social Activity (ISA), under the MoLSP is responsible for monitoring social services, setting standards and providing training to professionals in the social protection sector. It has also the responsibility for collecting data and carrying out analysis of the social protection sector to advise the MoLSP on policy development and planning.

The 30 Centres for Social Work (CSW) are the core of the child protection system and have two key roles: 1) provision of social services and 2) administration of the social benefits. The CSWs have a key role in the identification of and support to children at risk of being abandoned, support families in meeting the responsibility toward the child, promoting parental care and family reintegration. They decide on the transfer of a child to alternative care, adoption and have a role as legal guardians.

The CSW are managing all forms of alternative care for children. The **institutional care** is exercised through seven institutions where children can be accommodated: 1) institution for accommodation of infants and toddlers without parents and parental care until three years of age; 2) Institution for children without parents and parental care over three years of age and youth; 3) institution for children and youth with educational and social problems; 4) institution for children and youth with behavioural problems; 5) institution for children and youth with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities; 6) institution for children and youth with physical disability; and 7) institution for accommodation of persons asylum seekers. The **non-institutional care** is exercised through 188 foster families, and 27 day care center for children with disabilities as family-support services. Kinships care is available however it is not regulated, therefore data is not collected.

In **child care**, the number of children living in institutions dropped from 398 in 2008 to 303 in 2013², proportion of under three making up to 21 per cent in 2008 and 18 per cent in 2013. Children with disabilities represent 14 per cent of the total. However, according to the Macedonian legislation, children with disabilities are considered as children until 26 years old. So, if we include the number of young persons with disabilities above 18 years old living in institutions, their percentage increases to 58. The number of children in foster families increased from 277 in 2008 to 341 in 2013, representing 53 per cent of all children living in formal care.

According to the child protection law, families with children with disabilities are entitled to special allowances. In 2014, a total of 6,684 families received special allowance for a child with disability. However, there is a lack of programs to support families in preventing child abandonment, ensuring well-being of children and appropriate monitoring of placements of children in alternative care.

¹ Data from 2002 Census. No census was conducted since then.

² All data in this paragraph is based on TransMonEE database, 2014

Stigma towards children with disabilities remains widespread. This response finds its logical basis in the way disability is recognised and described: a medical condition marking the person with a stigma that no medical treatment can erase. It translates in unchangeable disadvantage and results in a misfortunate state deserving pity, charity but calling also for differentiation and exclusion.

There are several NGOs and Disability Persons Organizations (DPOs) that are active in provision of support to children and persons with disabilities. Their work is focused on advocacy, capacity-building and direct service provision.

In the recent years, the MoLSP has increased its commitment to improve inclusion of children with disabilities. This commitment has been visible through increasing the number of day care centres for children with disabilities, changes in legislation to increase the amount for some benefits and introduce new benefits for persons with disabilities, ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, establishment of a National Coordination Body on for Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adoption of a National Strategy for Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2010-2018. In addition, the engagement of the Ministry is also reflected in an increased collaboration with NGOs to provide services to persons with disabilities, support to infrastructure project to increase the mobility and inclusion of persons with disability.

A major milestone was achieved with the introduction in 2014 of new model for assessment of children with disabilities based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health for Children and Youth (ICF-CY).

II. PURPOSE OF THE ASSIGNEMENT

In order to identify service provision and equity gaps, UNICEF is commissioning an assessment with the main purpose to map out all available forms of alternative care and family-support services provided to families and children with disabilities by the state and non-state actors in the social protection sector.

More specifically the assessment will look at:

- A. Geographical distribution and coverage of alternative care and family-support services,
- B. Number and type of beneficiaries of their services,
- C. Staff structure and availability of regular training of staff,
- D. Services provided by the staff,
- E. Funding (how budget is allocated and spent),
- F. Cooperation with other sectors, and
- G. The types and quality of programmes or services provided to children with disabilities by the state and non-state actors.

The methodology, analysis and recommendations produced by the assessment will be rights based, gender sensitive and take in consideration different ethnic background and place or residence of the families and children with disabilities.

The findings of the assessment will be used by the MoLSP to improve or expand the existing services and create new services if needed for children with disabilities in line with ICF-CY approach.

III. SELECTION OF THE TEAM

UNICEF is seeking to offer an institutional contrat to international consultant/s who will work with a national consultant.

The national consultant should be identified and contracted by the applicant. CV and P11 for the national consultant should be included in the proposal. Below is a list of potential institutions or persons that you may consider:

- NGO Open the Windows at contact@openthewindows.org or Vladimir Lazovski, vladimir.lazovski@openthewindows.org;
- NGO Resource Centre for Parents of Children with Disabilities at resursen.centar@yahoo.com or Jasna Mandik at jasnaer@yahoo.com;
- NGO Polio Plus - Movement against Disability at polioplus@polioplus.org.mk or elena@polioplus.org.mk;
- NGO Center for Down Syndrome at downsyndrome.mk@gmail.com, and
- Ms. Elizabeta Kunovska at EKunovska@mtsp.gov.mk

IV. ACTIVITIES AND TIMEFRAME

The consultants will undertake the following activities:

Activities and time frame for the international consultant (IC) and the national consultant (NC)			
Activity		Responsible person	2015 Time-frame
Inception phase	a. Develop the methodology in close collaboration with the NC. Provide UNICEF with an inception report to be discussed with and approved by the country office	IC	mid-September
	b. Provide feedback on the methodology and inception report before being shared with UNICEF	NC	
Desk review phase	a. Conduct a desk review and prepare a desk review summary report	NC	end-September
	b. Review and provide feedback on the desk review summary before being shared with UNICEF	IC	
Data collection phase	a. Organize and conduct field visits and meetings for data collection	NC	October
	b. Organize meetings and field visits for the in-country mission of the IC	NC	
	c. Conduct an in-country mission for data collection	IC	
Report writing phase	a. Draft assessment report submitted to UNICEF incorporating the feedback from the NC	IC	November
	b. Organize meetings with counterparts to review draft report and collect feedback	NC	
	c. Finalize assessment report	IC	

V. DELIVERABLES

The consultant/s are expected to provide UNICEF with the following deliverables:

- An inception report by mid- September;
- Desk review summary report by end- September;
- Draft assessment report by end-November; and
- Final assessment report by early December.

VI. CONTRACT SUPERVISOR AND FREQUENCY OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW

UNICEF Deputy Representative in close coordination with the Child Protection Officer will provide supervision and performance review, also considering feedback on quality performance from involved

national partners. The consultant is also expected to timely report on any constraints and progress in conducting the assessment.

VII. LOCATION AND DURATION

The starting date for the assignment is August 17, 2015 and end date is December 15, 2015. The timeframe for the individual activities is described in point 4 and 5. The consultant/s are expected to visit several service providers within and outside of the capital.

VIII. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

For the international consultant

- Advanced degree in social studies, legal studies, human rights;
- At least five (5) years of professional experience in the social protection sector including conducting assessments or studies relevant to this consultancy;
- Experience in working within UNICEF or other international organizations is considered an asset;
- Language proficiency in both written and oral English.

For the national consultant

- University degree or equivalent in social studies, legal studies, human rights;
- At least three (3) years of professional experience in the social protection sector including conducting assessments or studies relevant to this consultancy;
- Experience in working with Macedonian state institutions is considered an asset;
- Experience in working within UNICEF or other international organizations is considered an asset;
- Language proficiency in both written and oral English and Macedonian.

IX. EVALUATION PROCESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

The consultant/s need to provide the following:

- A CV;
- Brief technical proposal (methodology and approach) on how the assignment will be carried included timetable of the proposed activities; and
- An all-inclusive financial offer with detailed breakdown of costs. Please make sure to factor in all cost implications for the required service.

All proposals will be assessed first on their **technical merit** and subsequently on **financial proposal**. The proposal with the best overall value, composed of technical merit and financial proposal, will be recommended for approval. Only proposals which receive a minimum of 40 points for the quality of the technical proposal will be considered further for the financial proposal

Evaluation Criteria:	Quality of technical proposal	65 points
	Financial offer	35 points
	Maximum points	100

The UNICEF CO will provide interpreters during the in-county visits. The consultant/s will be provided with office space, vehicles for site visits and official meetings, if necessary logistical support for meeting and visa procedures. Laptops or computers will not be provided.