TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS

Title: Child-friendly Public Expenditure Assessment 2021-2025.	**Partnership:** Planning Office of Suriname and UNICEF.	**Type of engagement** ☒ Consultant ☐ Individual Contractor Part-Time ☐ Individual Contractor Full-Time	**Duty Station:** Paramaribo. Suriname

1. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

UNICEF's Social Protection Strategic Framework defines social protection as the set of public and private policies and programmes aimed at preventing, reducing and eliminating economic and social vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation. UNICEF's focus is on strengthening national social protection systems towards ensuring they are child sensitive and is built on policies that address structural causes of discrimination and exclusion, and which help remove inequalities in access to services or livelihoods/economic opportunities.

The Government of Suriname supported by its partners is focused on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including those focused on the rights of children and adolescents. Suriname has a small population based on the 2012 Housing and Population Censuses i.e., about 560,741 of which 35.2 per cent are children i.e., persons under the age of 18 years. Suriname is categorized as upper-middle-income country with a human development index of 99 out of 191.

However, according to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), more than 26% of Suriname's population was (monetarily) poor in 2017, based on the Suriname Living Conditions Survey, conducted in 2016 and 2017 (SSLC 2016/17). Nearly half (48%) of the people living in the rural interior of the country are estimated poor, revealing high discrepancies based on geographic location. Moreover, multidimensional poverty among children 0-17 years reaches 36.2%, with high variability across age groups and areas of residence. Children living in rural areas (39.8%), and especially in the rural interior (79.1%), face much higher multidimensional deprivation rates in comparison with children living in urban areas (26.6%). According to the preliminary results of the second wave of the SSLC, carried out in 2022, the multidimensional poverty is about 43%, with high deprivations on health-related indicators, overcrowding, school backwardness and housing.

Although Suriname is classified by the World Bank as an upper-middle-income country, the living conditions and income of about half of the population do not reflect this welfare level. The current estimated GDP per capita is USD 4,784.5 but there are huge disparities at the district level. Besides the inequality among households of different geographical areas, the deterioration of the economy affected households at the national level. Between 2015 and 2022 the purchasing power of all households has declined significantly. International commodity shocks, and the high fiscal and debt burden have weakened the financial-economic situation and social security system. The government has set out its policy strategy, based on its homegrown recovery plan, support from the IMF, and its medium-term policy framework aligning with the Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026.

These Terms of Reference are for an individual Consultant to conduct a Child-friendly Public Expenditure Assessment for the period 2021-2025 for Government sectors in Suriname. This Child-

friendly assessment provides evidence to advocate for the effective and efficient use of budgetary allocations for Children to achieve intended results, the Planning Office of Suriname, with support from UNICEF will undertake an assessment of how the public budgetary allocations to Government organisations (Social sector) were expended on children, for the period 2021-2025.

2. Objective and Scope

Overall objective

To conduct a **child-friendly public expenditure assessment** for the period 2021–2025 for government sectors in Suriname.

Scope

This child-friendly public expenditure assessment, in Suriname, is national in scope and will help to:

- determine whether the results achieved for children are reflective of the efficient and effective use of budgetary allocations to Government line Ministries, commissions and sub-accounting agencies.
- provide recommendations to the Director of Planning and Minister of Finance and other relevant Ministers to maintain or improve cost-effective and cost-efficient spending towards achieving intended results for children.

3. METHODOLOGY

Under the overall guidance of the Planning Office of Suriname and UNICEF, a consultant will be recruited to conduct this assessment. The pattern of budgetary requests and allocations to Government line Ministries, commissions and sub-accounting agencies; expenditure patterns; and results achieved for children will be examined. This assessment will also seek to examine, if any, gaps in the structure especially at the sub-national levels.

The process of conducting the child-friendly public expenditure assessment will make use of multiple methodologies and techniques and will identify and utilize existing information including, data from the Planning Office and the various Government sectors in Suriname. UNICEF will also provide whatever relevant data it has. This child-friendly public expenditure assessment, to the extent practicable, will follow the relevant guidance on evidence generation and will seek to recommend actions to take child-friendly budgeting, across sectors, to scale. This assignment will draw on good practices of similar child-friendly public expenditure assessment, and regional and global guidelines and guidance.

The child-friendly public expenditure assessment will progress through the following three phases:

Phase 1 Preparation and desk review

Approach and working method

The desk/data review makes maximum use of existing data and information, with strong emphasis on triangulating various sources and processes. The consultant will examine basic documentation (which would be shared via website links and PDFs) and will collect any additional documentation deemed necessary. Access to and use of documents is approved by the Planning Office of Suriname.

Together with the Planning Office and UNICEF, the consultant will select a representative set (sample) of (1) budget requests, (2) allocations, (3) expenditures, and (4) documentation of results for children. This sample will be examined across each relevant ministry and institution at both national and subnational levels.

Key questions for the desk review include the following:

- Are the results achieved for children reflective of the efficient and effective use of budgetary allocations?
- Are the budgets realistic and implemented in an intended manner and are checks and balances in place for effective stewardship?
- Is the budget as well as the fiscal risk oversight comprehensive, including for intergovernmental and sub-national transfers?
- Are adequate records and information produced, maintained on expenditures and are there timely comprehensive reporting at the national and subnational levels?
- The presence, use and effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation within the organization.

Deliverable 1: Desk/data review report and Gantt chart. The chart should be annexed by a list of categories of personnel to meet in country and a list of required information not yet collected/examined.

Phase 2: Data/information collection, analysis and draft report

In the second phase the consultant will be required to come to Suriname for approximately three weeks, to do the following:

Activities:

- Conduct Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with key personnel in the Ministry of Finance and other Government Ministries and commissions.
- Examine the integrated financial management and accounting system as well as internal accounting systems of line ministries to determine functionality and accountability gaps.
- Meet with key Government officials including directors and technical heads and record initial findings, which will be presented to key stakeholders at the end of the mission.
- Report periodically to the Planning Office of Suriname. This provides the opportunity to discuss challenges as they arise in performing the necessary functions.
- Conduct a mid-mission meeting to report on the work's progress and possible difficulties faced.
- Conduct an end-of-mission meeting to present the progress of the mission and the main findings.
- within 3 weeks of the end of the mission in-country, share the draft final report for review and comments.

Data Management

To ensure the absolute safety of all data, No data collected and or reviewed for this Child-friendly Assessment for Suriname or data to which the consultant is privileged during the time of the Assessment, as a direct or indirect result of being the consultant, can be shared and or used by the consultant, neither can s/he approve the use of the whole or any part of it, for personal or professional purposes, without approval, in writing, from the Planning Office of Suriname and UNICEF, jointly.

Deliverable 2: Draft report and a PowerPoint presentation on the key findings and recommendations and district profiles on key districts.

Phase 3: Finalization of the reports

The consultant will:

- within 2 weeks of receiving the comments, revise, if deemed necessary, the report considering all comments received.
- prepare all documents in English and Dutch and submit in electronic version.

Deliverable 3: Final report, PowerPoint presentation on the key findings and recommendations and district profiles on key districts.

Deliverables, Duration and Percentage of Payment

Deliverable	Main components	Duration	% of Fee
Inception report	• Prepare Inception Report which should include the following: 1) Work plan including timelines for each phase. 2) An analytical framework for the assignment 3) Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus group discussion guides 4) Comprehensive desk/data review report 5) Outline of final report	10 days	30
Draft Report	• Preparation and presentation of draft report based on all data collected. • Deliver an Oral presentation of key findings to all stakeholders (findings and provisional recommendations should be presented using a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings and recommendations and district profiles).	30 days	50
Final Report	• Integrate comments and prepare final report including the Executive Summary (with final PowerPoint presentation and District profiles) - The final report should be in English and Dutch.	10 days	20

Ethical Consideration

To ensure that the key ethical principles for the conduct of assessment involving human subjects are followed, especially in phase 2 of this assessment, each potential respondent will be given full information about the assessment including the purpose and potential benefits of the assessment, their rights, and how the information collected will be used. They will also be informed that all data will be kept confidential being only accessible by members of the assessment team. Verbal consent will be collected from all those who agree to participate. All participants will be informed of their right to discontinue their participation at any point. Approaches for ensuring confidentiality will be described to all potential participants.

Accountabilities:

The Planning Office of Suriname and UNICEF will:

- Form a steering committee.
- Meet initially with the Consultant.
- Review and approve all deliverables, including the Child-friendly Public Expenditure Assessment and provide feedback for adjustments.
- Review and approve the final Child-friendly Public Expenditure Assessment.

The Consultant will:

- Meet initially with the Planning Office of Suriname and UNICEF to discuss in detail the consultancy and timelines.
- Review all necessary documentation and prepare the outline for the final report.
- Conduct data collection exercises and draft the final report.
- Present findings to stakeholders
- Incorporate feedback from the consultations into all deliverables.
- Prepare and submit the final report, PPT and District profiles in Dutch and English
- Ensure all substantive deliverables meet UNICEF and SPS quality standards.
- The consultant shall act in a manner within the laws of the country of Suriname and the core values (CRITAS) of UNICEF.

NB: UNICEF shall assume no liability for the health and safety of the consultant; nor will assume responsibility for the loss or damage of equipment or transport vehicles or any injury done to a third party used in conjunction with this work.

4. PROFILE OF THE CONSULTANT

These terms of reference are for an individual consultant with at least 8 years of experience in conducting mixed method data generation exercises especially in public expenditure analysis and assessments related to children. The following characteristics are required and desirable.

Required:

This consultancy is for a person who must possess the following competencies:

- Advanced university degree in social or public policy, economics, econometrics, development studies, statistics, with specialization in social budgeting or public finance management or related fields relevant to this assignment.
- At least 6 years of proven experience in social research and policy development.
- Demonstrable proficiency in conducting public expenditure analyses, quantitative and qualitative data analysis.
- Excellent facilitation, and coordination skills.
- Excellent Knowledge of and demonstrated competency in Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP) and Results-based Management (RBM)
- Sound understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the relevant Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).
- Excellent analytical, writing and presentation skills in English and Dutch.

- Strong computer skills, especially in Microsoft office package, quantitative and qualitative data analysis capacity; excellent interpersonal skills.

Desirable:

- Previous work experience with the United Nations System.
- Familiarity with local, political, economic and cultural environments of Suriname would be an asset.

5. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Interested persons are invited to submit their application by email. Please ensure the application is completed thoroughly and the following is shared with the expression of interest. Successful candidates will be notified by the Human Resources officer of the Planning Office of Suriname once the recruitment and selection process is completed.

A technical proposal, for the assignment, should be submitted. The *technical proposal* should include a detailed methodological proposal, a CV, **examples of similar work led by the consultant** and other relevant information to ensure the quality of the presented proposal and minimise disqualifications.