

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy for Development of the National Strategic Plan on Child Health (2026–2032), Incorporating Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)

CONTRACT MODALITY Individual Consultancy

DUTY STATION Colombo, Sri Lanka

DURATION OF CONTRACT 2.5 months

Purpose of Assignment

To provide time-bound technical and facilitation support to the Family Health Bureau to develop a comprehensive, evidence-informed and nationally owned NSPCH 2026–2032, incorporating IYCF, based on the findings of the preceding end-term review and structured multisectoral stakeholder engagement.

Scope of Work

Review and operationalize Phase I findings

- Review the final Phase I end-term review report and supporting evidence on NSPCH 2018–2025 and IYCF Strategy 2015–2020, including implementation gaps, situational analysis and strategic recommendations.
- Prepare a concise evidence-to-action matrix linking each major finding to proposed strategic responses, responsible thematic groups and questions for consultation.
- Undertake only targeted supplementary evidence checks where essential to address material gaps identified during drafting, rather than repeating the original desk review.

Stakeholder mapping, engagement and consultations

- In consultation with FHB, prepare a stakeholder engagement plan, consultation schedule and standardized discussion guides, including a mechanism for collecting written submissions.
- Facilitate meetings of the steering committee, technical working groups and relevant national/provincial stakeholders.
- Include Ministry of Health technical programmes, preventive and curative services, provincial and district authorities, professional colleges, academic institutions, nutrition/IYCF experts, education and child protection sectors, development partners, civil society, caregivers and appropriate child/adolescent perspectives.
- Use stakeholder workshops, key informant interviews or focused group discussions where necessary to address identified evidence gaps, feasibility and equity concerns.
- Document participation, major recommendations, consensus decisions, differing views and action points in consultation reports and meeting records.

Synthesis, prioritization and strategic framework

- Compile inputs from all consultations into a consolidated issues-and-recommendations matrix, triangulated against Phase I findings.
- Facilitate agreement on the plan's age coverage, thematic structure, vision, guiding principles, goals, strategic objectives and priority outcomes.
- Prioritize interventions using agreed criteria such as burden and severity, equity, evidence of effectiveness, feasibility, cost/resource implications and implementation capacity.

- Ensure that IYCF is explicitly addressed through appropriate objectives, interventions and indicators, including breastfeeding, complementary feeding, responsive feeding, counselling, service quality and multisectoral coordination, as agreed by stakeholders.
- Address cross-cutting considerations such as equity, disability inclusion, child safeguarding, quality of care, health systems strengthening, climate and environmental risks, digital well-being and multisectoral collaboration where supported by the evidence and consultation process.

Draft the strategic plan and implementation framework

- Prepare the complete first draft of the NSPCH 2026–2032, including context and rationale; vision and goals; strategic objectives; thematic strategies and interventions; governance; coordination; and implementation mechanisms.
- Develop an accompanying action/implementation matrix specifying strategic objective, strategy, activity, baseline, target, timeframe and responsibility, with indicative resource or financing considerations where agreed by FHB.
- Specify the respective roles of national, provincial, district and institutional actors, coordination mechanisms and arrangements for annual operational planning.
- Ensure coherence with relevant Sri Lankan policies and global commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals and applicable child nutrition/IYCF guidance.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

- Develop a results framework with impact, outcome and output indicators for child health and IYCF.
- For each proposed indicator, define the indicator, baseline (or data gap), target, data source, frequency, disaggregation and responsible institution, subject to data availability and stakeholder agreement.
- Propose routine performance review, feedback, mid-term assessment and end-term evaluation arrangements, including practical data-quality and accountability measures.

Validation, revision and finalization

- Present successive drafts to the technical working groups, steering committee and wider stakeholders for structured feedback.
- Maintain a comment-resolution matrix recording comments received, decisions taken and revisions made.
- Facilitate a final national validation meeting and incorporate agreed recommendations.
- Submit the final edited strategy, implementation matrix, monitoring framework, executive summary and presentation in editable formats; support FHB in presenting the document for required institutional endorsement. Final approval remains the responsibility of the relevant authorities.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
Methodology, stakeholder map, consultation tools, thematic workstreams, milestones and coordination arrangements with the support of FHB.	Deliverable 1 – inception report and work plan	10/11/2026
Evidence-to-action matrix, consultation agenda/tools and consolidated priority issues. Develop with the support of FHB	Deliverable 2 – Stakeholder consultation report	30/11/2026

as a base for consultative meetings to get the proposed activities. Need provision to add priority issues in that phase also		
Complete strategic plan incorporating IYCF, initial implementation matrix and draft results/M&E framework with the support of FHB	Deliverable 3 – First draft NSPCH 2026–2032	15/12/2026
Revised plan, consultation feedback matrix, validation presentation and meeting report	Deliverable 4 – Revised draft and validation package	31/12/2026
Final NSPCH, action matrix, indicator reference framework, executive summary, slide deck and editable source files.	Deliverable 5 – Final strategy package	12/01/2027

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.

Important Notes

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that the health insurance (and visa if applicable) required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.
- UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

**QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES
(CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT**

- **Education:** PhD in Community Medicine, Public Health, Child Health, Nutrition, Health Policy or related discipline.
 - **Work Experience:** At least 10 years
 - **Language Requirements:** English
 - **Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:**
 - Experience in health policy, strategic planning, programme management, monitoring and evaluation or comparable assignments.
 - Demonstrated experience developing national strategies or action plans, preferably in child health, early child care development, children with special needs, maternal and child nutrition or IYCF.
 - Proven ability to facilitate multisectoral consultations, synthesize complex evidence and produce high-quality strategic planning and policy documents.
 - **Desirables:**
 - Experience working with Sri Lankan government health systems, professional institutions and development partners is desirable.
 - Strong written English, presentation, coordination and analytical skills; capacity to work with Sinhala/Tamil consultation inputs through appropriate arrangements is desirable
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