

TERMS OF REFERENCE

TITLE – Social and Environmental Safeguarding (SES) Consultant

CONTRACT MODALITY Individual Consultancy

DUTY STATION Bangkok, Thailand (Remotely)

DURATION OF CONTRACT 13 Months

Purpose of Assignment

UNICEF Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) has prioritized the rollout of Social and Environmental Safeguarding (SES), a recent addition to UNICEF's regulatory framework.

The SES Framework is organized around four pillars:

1. Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) in Programming and Safeguarding
2. Complaints and Feedback Management
3. Programme Implementation Risk Management/HACT
4. Data Protection

The SES Framework complements and strengthens Country Offices' enterprise risk management by improving coordination across risk areas and embedding risk considerations into programmatic, operational and strategic planning.

Following the issuance of key regulatory documents—the Policy and Procedure on ESS in Programming (June 2025), the revised Policy on Safeguarding (June 2025), and the Procedure on Complaints and Feedback Management (May 2026)—APRO has begun rolling out the SES Framework across the region's 22 Country Offices, as part of global efforts led by the Office of Strategy and Oversight (OSE).

The consultancy will support APRO's Operations team in rolling out SES across the region's 22 offices while helping Country Offices meet institutional donor requirements—particularly those of IFIs, KfW and GCF—related to SES.

The consultant will be supervised by the Regional Operations team, in close coordination with APRO Country Offices and the OSE team at headquarters.

Scope of Work

1. Support the SES rollout:

- Contribute to the development and enhancement of regional SES-related rollout and implementation materials, ensuring that donor perspectives and Country Office typological needs are not only adequately reflected, but also that the process promotes sustainability and simplification. This should cover, among other areas:
 - SES training modules are updated based on feedback collected;
 - The Environmental and Social Safeguarding Risk Management Plan (ESRMP), including proposed mitigation measures;
 - The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP);
 - Monitoring tools, including benchmark / tracking tool on steps to take on SES to support offices in tracking progress (integration within existing tools as feasible);
 - Other SES related checklists, templates, plans, guidance, etc.
- Support capacity building of UNICEF staff, partners, vendors on SES implementation
- Provide recommendations to better integrate SES with other risk areas, including Programme Implementation,

Data Protection, Supply and Operations. Also, provide recommendations on CFM related issues, in particular:

- The extent of Government involvement in CFM processes and the use of Government feedback channels, including implications for data protection, independence, and oversight;
- The use of inter-agency feedback channels and whether interoperability among systems is sufficient.

2. Support in reviewing and addressing SES-related donor requirements:

- Engage with Regional and Country Offices contacts to assess the compliance of submitted documents with Environmental and Social Commitment Plans (ESCPs) and other documents developed by local governments as well as with relevant donors' Environmental and Social Frameworks (ESFs), identify gaps and provide recommendations to address those gaps.
- Identify and propose opportunities to streamline compliance with donor requirements.
- Provide technical assistance to Country Offices in designing SES risks management and related checklists, plans and documents.
- Prepare summary reports on the quality and trends of ESS/Safeguarding submissions to donors and other stakeholders, including Complaints and Feedback Mechanism (CFM) inputs, highlighting common gaps and best practices.

Work Assignment Overview	Deliverables/ Outputs (SMART)*	Delivery deadline
Support SES rollout and mainstreaming in APRO	• Provide an updated, enhanced and adapted set of SES training materials localised and tailored to specific office contexts under support in the region • Report on SES training led including consultations and review engagements (remote) for select offices in the region. (Monthly Progress Update)	31 Jan 2028
Integration recommendations and guidance	• Summary report on ESRMP screening and mapping of mitigation measures into select offices CPD/workplanning cycles • Report on support to Country Offices with recommendations for better integration of SES with other risk areas (e.g., Programme Implementation, Data Protection, Supply and Operations) and on UNICEF CFM viz Government • Concise summary guidance for APRO to support Country Offices in ensuring quality assurance of SES risk management based on COs typologies. (Monthly Progress Update)	31 Jan 2028
Donor compliance	• Summary note to offices on:	31 Jan 2028

	- review and assessment of submitted documents for compliance with donor frameworks (e.g., ESCPs, ESMFs, LMPs, SEA/SH Plans, Waste Management Plans); - Identification of gaps and provision of technical assistance to Country Offices; - Recommendations for streamlining donor requirements. (12 reviews)	
Reporting	• Production of two analytical summary reports (every six months) on ESS/Safeguarding submissions, including CFM data in the region. Reports will provide a trend analysis; a quantitative assessment of common gaps; a synthesis of good practices; recommendations for programme and system strengthening.	31 Jan 2028

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:

Advanced degree in environmental science, social sciences, environmental law, law, public administration, human rights, or a related field, is required.

Work Experience

- At least 10 years of experience in environmental and social risk assessment.
- Sound knowledge of Safeguarding frameworks, inclusive but not limited to Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Language requirement

- Fluency in written and spoken English

Knowledge/Expertise/Skills

- Strong knowledge of Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) from IFIs and relevant IFIs/UN safeguard policies (including PSEA).
- Experience in reviewing ESCPs, ESMF, ESMPs, LMPs, and other safeguard instruments.
- Sound knowledge of complaint and feedback/grievance redressal and mechanisms.
- Excellent analytical and report-writing skills.
- Strong communication and stakeholder engagement abilities.
- Ability to work both collaboratively and independently and to meet tight deadlines
- Experience of working with UN agencies and knowledge of UNICEF mission and mandate is an asset

Desirable

Working experience in Asia-Pacific region
