

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Africa Strategy Coordination and Strategic Communications Consultant

CONTRACT MODALITY	Individual Consultancy
DUTY STATION	New York, USA (remote)
DURATION OF CONTRACT	8 months

Purpose of Assignment

Africa is central to progress for children globally. Demographic growth, rapid urbanization, climate pressures, economic transitions and technological change are reshaping the opportunities and risks facing children across the continent. At the same time, African institutions and Member States have set out ambitious continental commitments through Agenda 2063, its Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan 2024-2033, Africa's Agenda for Children 2040 and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

[UNICEF's Strategy for its Contribution to Africa's Development Agendas](#), adopted by the UNICEF Executive Board in September 2024, sets out how UNICEF will strengthen its contribution to these African-owned priorities. It calls for a whole-of-organization approach that connects action at country, regional and continental levels; strengthens partnership with the African Union, its institutions and other African partners; and uses UNICEF's technical capacity, partnerships, financing and influence to accelerate results for children at scale.

The Strategy is organized around three connected pillars: human capital development; resilience, humanitarian action and climate action; and child rights implementation. Its implementation is being advanced through a yearly workplan that brings together continental initiatives and cross-cutting actions involving headquarters divisions, regional and country offices, the UNICEF AU/UNECA Office and external partners.

Moving from strategy to implementation requires sustained coordination across this broad set of offices and workstreams. Governance and coordination forums need to be supported with timely information and clear follow-up; implementation progress needs to be consolidated across initiatives; emerging results and priorities need to be communicated consistently; and key milestones require disciplined project-management support. This is particularly important where delivery depends on inputs, decisions and collaboration across multiple organizational units and geographic locations.

The purpose of this consultancy is to provide dedicated coordination, strategic communications, research and analytical support, substantive drafting, progress reporting and project-management support for the implementation of UNICEF's Africa Strategy. Working closely with relevant Global Practices in Programmes, other divisions, regional and country offices, the UNICEF AU/UNECA Office and other offices engaged in implementation, the consultant will help connect workstreams, maintain visibility on progress, support timely follow-up and strengthen the coherence of UNICEF's organization-wide contribution to Africa's development agendas.

Scope of Work

Under the supervision of the Partnerships Manager, GPD, and the Senior Policy Advisor, Africa Strategy, GPD, and in close collaboration with relevant offices, the consultant will support the coordination and implementation of the Africa Strategy across four mutually reinforcing areas:

1. Coordination and stakeholder engagement: support regular coordination among the offices and workstreams contributing to the Africa Strategy, including preparation and follow-up for governance,

technical and working-level engagements.

2. Strategic communications, research and knowledge products: conduct targeted desk research, review and synthesize relevant strategic and technical documents, and support the drafting, review and finalization of briefing notes, background papers, talking points, presentations, strategic messages and other knowledge and communication products. Ensure materials are evidence-based, coherent and aligned with the Africa Strategy and UNICEF's broader organizational priorities. Support the communication of implementation progress and emerging results, including through SharePoint and other online platforms.
3. Progress tracking and reporting: consolidate and analyze implementation updates across continental initiatives and cross-cutting workstreams, track milestones, results and emerging challenges, and lead the preparation of an annual Africa Strategy progress report. This includes gathering and reviewing contributions from relevant offices, conducting supplementary research and analysis, synthesizing achievements and lessons learned, and drafting and finalizing narrative reports and management updates.
4. Project management and implementation support: support integrated planning and follow-up for priority milestones, coordinate inputs and review processes, identify bottlenecks and maintain organized project records.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
November 2026: Year-end coordination and partner engagement	• Inception note and delivery calendar, including governance milestones, communications priorities and approach to progress tracking. • Coordination and communications support for year-end priorities, including preparation for engagement with the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives, if scheduled during this period. • Desk review of relevant Africa Strategy documentation and update of the outline for a progress report.	30 November 2026 – 13 days
December 2026: Year-end implementation update and strategic communications	• Year-end coordination and implementation update consolidating progress, emerging results, risks and follow-up across continental initiatives and cross-cutting workstreams. • Monthly update or feature, refreshed SharePoint content, and messaging or briefing inputs for internal, external or partner engagement, including follow-up from Africa Group engagement where relevant. • Preparation of briefing notes, background research and substantive review of strategic documents, alongside the year-end implementation update.	31 December 2026 – 13 days
January 2027: Annual workplan and governance preparation	• Updated 2027 Africa Strategy workplan developed with relevant offices, including milestones, responsibilities, dependencies and a practical approach to tracking progress and contributions to results. • Monthly update or feature and preparation support for scheduled Technical Working Group or	31 January 2027 – 13 days

	Steering Committee engagement, including agenda, inputs and briefing materials as required. • Drafting and review of strategic briefs, analytical notes and leadership materials for priority engagements. Planned trip to New York	
February 2027: Governance follow-up, implementation tracking and strategic communications	• Monthly coordination and implementation update, with the consolidated tracker refreshed and governance decisions and actions followed up with responsible offices. • Monthly update or feature, SharePoint maintenance, and inputs to leadership or partner messaging and engagement materials. • Drafting and review of strategic briefs, analytical notes and leadership materials for priority engagements. Planned trip to Addis Ababa	28 February 2027 – 13 days
March 2027: Implementation review and strategic communications	• Mid-term review of progress against the workplan, including the contribution of continental initiatives to planned results, key risks, dependencies and recommended management follow-up. • Monthly update or feature and coordination support for relevant technical, governance or partner engagements.	31 March 2027 – 13 days
April 2027: Engagement support and strategic communications	• Preparation for internal engagements such as RMTs, and others as identified, including coordination of inputs, agenda proposals, progress synthesis, presentations or briefing materials, and action-tracking arrangements. • Monthly update or feature, refreshed SharePoint content, and ongoing implementation tracking and follow-up. • Review, revision and substantive editing of the annual progress report, incorporating feedback from relevant offices. Planned trip to Nairobi	30 April 2027 – 13 days
May 2027: Engagement and progress reporting	• Coordination and project-management support for internal and external engagements, including final materials, meeting support, documentation of decisions and follow-up actions. • Monthly update or feature and progress report consolidating implementation status, continental initiative contributions, risks and priorities for the remainder of 2027.	31 May 2027 – 13 days

	• Finalization of the annual Africa Strategy progress report, including results, achievements, challenges, lessons learned and forward-looking priorities.	
June 2027: Governance, final reporting and handover	• Preparation and follow-up support for the biannual Steering Committee and/or relevant Technical Working Group engagement, including progress materials, decisions and action tracking, as scheduled. • Final monthly update or feature, updated SharePoint and implementation tracker, final report, organized repository, handover package and forward workplan. • Final analytical and briefing products, implementation handover and documentation of outstanding follow-up priorities.	30 June 2027 – 13 days

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

Minimum requirements:

- Education:

- Advanced university degree in international development, public policy, international relations, communications, social sciences, business administration, project management or a related field.
- A first university degree combined with additional relevant experience (10 years) maybe be accepted in lieu of an advanced degree.
- Work Experience:
 - At least 10 years of relevant professional experience in programme or project coordination, strategic communications, partnerships, planning or related areas.
 - Demonstrated experience managing complex, multi-stakeholder workplans across organizational units or geographic locations.
 - Experience coordinating senior-level meetings, consultations or governance processes and translating decisions into clear follow-up actions
 - Demonstrated experience conducting policy and programme-related research, synthesizing complex information and producing high-quality analytical reports, briefing notes, strategic documents and knowledge products for senior management and external audiences.
- Language requirement:
 - Excellent English writing, editing and synthesis skills, with experience preparing leadership briefs, presentations, talking points and stakeholder communications.
- Skills:
 - Strong interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to work effectively with diverse internal and external stakeholders.
 - Strong project-management skills, including milestone tracking, risk and dependency management, action follow-up and preparation of concise management reporting.

Desirables:

- Familiarity with UNICEF, the UN system, African Union development frameworks or Africa-focused partnerships is an asset.
- Proficiency in Microsoft 365 tools, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Teams and SharePoint.