

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Individual Consulting Services Expert Consultant

CONTRACT MODALITY	Individual Consultancy
DUTY STATION	GSSC Finance section, Budapest, Hungary & office-based, with travel
DURATION OF CONTRACT	12 months

Purpose of Assignment

UNICEF's Global Shared Services Centre (GSSC) provides Individual Consultant Services (ICS) supporting the contracting and administration of individual consultants across UNICEF.

As part of the continued evolution of ICS, UNICEF is seeking to strengthen the way individual consultant talent is identified, accessed, managed and evaluated. Current opportunities include greater use of Long-Term Agreements (LTAs), stronger consultant talent data, simplified access to exceptional expertise, improved rate transparency and stronger guidance for both UNICEF users and consultants.

The consultancy will support the transition of ICS from primarily transactional consultant administration toward a more integrated consultant talent, sourcing, value for money and knowledge-management capability. The consultant will bring external consulting-industry expertise on **rates, market intelligence**, benchmarking and professional networks to help UNICEF establish sustainable consultant sourcing, talent management and value-for-money approaches aligned with leading international organizations and private-sector approaches. The consultant will work within ICS-GSSC team and partner with HQ Divisions, Regional Offices and Country Offices to design, implement and operationalize practical solutions across below priority workstreams.

Purpose of the Consultancy

The purpose of the consultancy is to establish and operationalize mechanisms that enable UNICEF to:

- Develop evidence-based **rate guidance and value-for-money benchmarks** for different categories of consultant engagement. Set-up mechanism for rate cards for quick hiring of consultants.
- Business Cases Developed and Presented to Relevant Stakeholders
- Access high-quality international and local consultants more quickly through Rosters, LTAs and structured talent pools;
- Maintain stronger information on consultant expertise and performance;
- **Developing Knowledge and Communication Products for ICS Users and Consultants**

The consultancy will be judged primarily by **operational outcomes achieved**, rather than by completion of analytical reports alone.

Scope of Work

1. Develop Consultant Rate Cards and Value-for-Money Benchmarks

The consultant will support development of a more systematic evidence base for assessing consultant rates and value-for-money.

The work will go beyond broad consultant categories by developing a more granular understanding of different types of individual consultant engagement.

The consultant will:

- Analyze historical UNICEF consultant rates and engagement data;
- Define a practical taxonomy of engagement types, technical areas and levels of expertise;
- Further disaggregate consultant engagements according to relevant variables such as seniority, complexity, scarcity of expertise, geographic market, duration, modality and nature of deliverables;
- Compare rates across comparable types of engagement;
- Identify meaningful internal benchmarks;
- Conduct external market benchmarking where appropriate consulting market trends, talent acquisition models, freelance platforms, expert networks, consulting ecosystems;
- Work with technical stakeholders to understand market conditions in specialist areas;
- Develop indicative rate cards, ranges or other decision-support tools for priority categories;
- Identify categories where standardized benchmarks are inappropriate because of scarce or exceptional expertise;
- Test rate guidance through live consultant engagements;
- Analyze differences between quoted, negotiated and contracted rates;
- Develop consultant-facing guidance on establishing appropriate rates and financial proposals; and
- Recommend mechanisms for routinely updating rate information.

Rate guidance should support informed professional judgment rather than function as rigid ceilings.

Deliverable 1 – Rate Cards and VfM Benchmarks Operational

A first set of rate cards or rate ranges is developed for agreed priority consultant categories, supported by more granular engagement classifications and value-for-money benchmarks. **Develop a model of rate cards, which can be then adopted systematically for future updates to rates.**

The rate guidance is tested through live engagements and accompanied by guidance for both UNICEF hiring managers and consultants.

Intended outcome: UNICEF can make more consistent and evidence-based decisions about consultant rates and value-for-money, while consultants have greater transparency about how to construct realistic financial proposals.

2. Support the Development of Business Cases for the Centralization of Expanded ICS Services (e.g., LTAs, Rosters, Low-Value Consultancies, and Other Related Services)

The consultant will work closely with the ICS team, technical stakeholders, and relevant process owners to develop business cases for the centralization of expanded services, including Long-Term Agreements (LTAs), Rosters, Low-Value Consultancies, and other related service lines. This initiative will support the continued enhancement of efficiency within the consultant hiring process while reducing the administrative burden on offices.

Key activities will include:

1. Analyzing existing data and service delivery models for the identified services.
2. Coordinating with stakeholders to collect information, conduct surveys, and prepare reports to support decision-making.
3. Supporting the development of service design models for the proposed centralized services.
4. Preparing presentations, reports, and other documentation required for business case development.
5. Engagement with different offices for design input. Supporting the planning and facilitation of design workshops and the preparation of workshop materials.
6. Assessing and defining resource requirements, including staffing, systems, and other operational needs.
7. Developing business cases for presentation to relevant stakeholders.
8. Revising and refining business cases based on stakeholder feedback.

Deliverable 2: Business Cases Developed and Presented to Relevant Stakeholders

Comprehensive business cases for expanded services are developed, presented, and endorsed by key stakeholders.

Indicative Outcome:

- Approved business cases for expanded services, including resource requirement plans, are finalized and ready to support the implementation and rollout of the services.

3. Standardize High-Volume Consultant Requirements and Establish Roster and LTAs

The consultant will work with selected Country Offices, Regional Offices and technical stakeholders to identify high-volume categories of consultant engagement that lend themselves to greater standardization, and determine the model, piloting and documenting, while the ICS team is doing the roll-out for expanded services.

The consultant will:

- Analyze high-volume and recurring categories of consultant engagement; Review annual planning process by each office.
- Work with Country Offices to identify common requirements;
- Develop standardized or adaptable Terms of Reference for priority categories;
- Establish guidance on adapting standardized ToRs to local programme requirements;
- Identify categories suitable for Rosters/LTAs or other pre-qualified arrangements;
- Work with Country Offices and relevant process owners to establish Roster/LTA exercises;
- Facilitate sharing of successful models for continuity in future.
- Capture lessons to inform broader rollout.

Potential areas may include research, evaluation, facilitation, communications, translation, programme support, technical assistance or other high-volume consultant categories identified through analysis.

Deliverable 3 – Standardized ToRs, Model for Roster and LTAs Operational

An agreed initial set of standardized ToRs is developed and adopted for high-volume consultant categories, with selected Offices establishing consultant Rosters/LTAs using the standardized approach.

Intended outcome: Offices spend less time repeatedly developing similar ToRs and sourcing the same categories of consultant while improving consistency and quality.

4. Establish Individual Consultant Rosters Database and Platform

The consultant will support the development of the model for Roster data management and platform. With particular emphasis on easy search available to contract managers to find suitable candidates from the global roster database of consultants.

The consultant will work with process owners and technical teams to:

- Define a practical taxonomy for consultant expertise and types of engagement;
- Identify appropriate fields for recording consultant specialization, areas of work and relevant experience in database or roster platform;
- Support population of these fields for existing and newly engaged consultants;
- Establish practical procedures for maintaining the information;
- Develop a proportionate mechanism for recording substantiated consultant underperformance;
- Define appropriate criteria, evidence requirements, access controls and governance for performance-related records;
- Ensure that performance information can inform future sourcing decisions while respecting applicable due-process, privacy and records-management requirements;
- Explore mechanisms for capturing positive performance information and repeat-engagement history alongside underperformance; and
- Develop management reporting on consultant expertise and performance.

Deliverable 4 – Enhanced Consultant Talent Pool through global Rosters

Develop global roster for all offices which is available to contract managers across the organization for quick selection of candidates from Roster.

Intended outcome: UNICEF develops global roster easily accessible and usable by contract managers for all categories.

5. Establish an Exceptional Talent Engagement Pathway with DPC and GPD

The consultant will partner with GPD, DPC, ICS and other relevant offices and stakeholders to design and pilot a proportionate pathway for engaging **exceptionally qualified or eminent external experts**.

Potential profiles may include senior international-organization leaders, eminent academics, scientists, practitioners, internationally recognized thought leaders and individuals with rare specialist expertise.

The pathway will seek to remove unnecessary administrative barriers while maintaining all mandatory UNICEF safeguards.

The consultant will:

- Consult GPD, other divisions and programme stakeholders to identify requirements and potential candidates;
- Engage potential experts to understand barriers to working with UNICEF;
- Map existing consultant recruitment, contracting, training and onboarding requirements;
- Distinguish between mandatory controls and requirements that may legitimately be streamlined, recognized through equivalency or adapted;
- Develop objective eligibility and approval criteria;
- Develop streamlined onboarding and documentation arrangements;
- Explore recognition of equivalent prior experience, professional standing and relevant prior training;
- Develop tailored orientation and communication materials;
- Support actual pilot engagements through the pathway; and
- Document lessons and recommend arrangements for institutionalization.

Deliverable 5 – Exceptional Talent Pathway Piloted

An agreed exceptional-talent pathway is developed jointly with GPD and DPC and piloted through actual expert engagements.

Intended outcome: UNICEF demonstrates a practical and compliant route for engaging exceptionally qualified external talent without imposing unnecessary administrative barriers.

6. Develop Knowledge and Communication Products for ICS Users and Consultants

The consultant will develop an integrated suite of practical knowledge and communication products supporting both UNICEF users of ICS and external consultants.

Products may include:

For UNICEF users

- Guidance on consultant rate assessment and value-for-money;
- Develop business case and presentations to be sent for approvals.
- Guidance on when and how to use consultant rosters, LTAs;
- Standardized ToR templates and examples;
- Knowledge materials for new expanded processes.
- FAQs, process maps and quick-reference guides, defining content structure, with proposed best practices, and reviewing materials;
- Materials explaining the exceptional-talent pathway;
- Webinars, presentations and briefing materials; and
- Case studies and lessons from implementation.

For consultants

- **Working as a Consultant with UNICEF** guidance;
- **How to Set Your Consultant Rate** guidance;
- Guidance on daily, monthly and deliverable-based pricing;
- Guidance on preparing financial proposals;
- Develop knowledge materials/FAQs to navigate through the system process for application and invoice submission.
- Explanations of reimbursable and non-reimbursable costs;
- Information on rosters/LTAs and how consultants can compete for them;
- Guidance for professionals moving into consultancy from government, academia, international organizations or the private sector; and
- Tailored onboarding material for highly experienced and eminent experts.

The consultant will test materials with users and consultants and refine them based on feedback.

Deliverable 6 – ICS Knowledge and Communication Package Launched

A coherent package of user-facing and consultant-facing knowledge products is published and actively used to support implementation of the new ICS arrangements.

Intended outcome: UNICEF users and consultants understand the service, available sourcing mechanisms, expected processes and rate considerations, reducing avoidable delays, misunderstandings and transactional support requirements.

Work Assignment Overview	Deliverables/ Outputs (SMART)*	Delivery deadline, days to deliver
1. Develop Consultant Rate Cards and Value-for-Money Benchmarks: The consultant will analyze UNICEF's historical consultant rates and engagement data to establish a practical taxonomy and benchmark comparable engagements by expertise, seniority, complexity, scarcity, geography, duration, modality, and deliverables. Consultant will complement internal analysis with relevant external market benchmarking and stakeholder input, develop and test indicative rate guidance and decision-support tools, identify areas where standard benchmarks are unsuitable, assess quoted, negotiated, and contracted rate differences, and provide consultant guidance and recommendations for routinely updating rate information.	Deliverable 1 – Rate Cards and VfM Benchmarks Operationalized (a) Rate Cards and Classification Framework completed. (b) Value-for-Money (VfM) Benchmarks completed. (c) Reusable Rate-Setting Model. (d) Pilot Testing and Validation done. (e) Implementation and practical guidance for hiring managers finalized.	31 st March 2027 45 days
2. Support the Development of Business Cases for the Centralization of Expanded ICS Services (e.g., LTAs, Rosters, Low-Value Consultancies, and Other Related Services) The work will focus on analyzing existing data and service delivery models, engaging offices and stakeholders to gather inputs and inform service design and supporting design workshops for proposed centralized services. It will also define resource and operational requirements, prepare decision-making materials and develop, refine, and present robust business cases incorporating stakeholder feedback.	Deliverable 2: Business Cases Developed and Presented to Relevant Stakeholders Approved business cases for expanded services, including resource requirement plans finalized and ready to support the implementation and rollout of the services.	31 st January 2027 35 days
3. Standardize High-Volume Consultant Requirements and Establish Roster and LTAs: The consultant will work with Country and Regional Offices and technical stakeholders to identify high-volume, recurring consultant engagements suitable for greater standardization. This will include reviewing planning and engagement requirements, developing adaptable Terms of Reference and guidance, identifying opportunities for rosters, LTAs, or other pre-qualified arrangements, and supporting the design and piloting of these models. Lessons and successful approaches will be documented	Deliverable 3 – Standardized ToRs, Model for Roster and LTAs Operational An agreed initial set of standardized ToRs developed and adopted for high-volume consultant categories, with selected Offices establishing consultant Rosters/LTAs using the standardized approach.	30 th June 2027

to support continuity and inform the ICS team's broader rollout of expanded services across priority consultant categories		
4. Establish Individual Consultant Rosters Database and Platform. Support the development of a robust global consultant roster data-management model and platform, with an emphasis on enabling contract managers to easily identify suitable candidates. Working with process owners and technical teams, the consultant will define a practical taxonomy and data fields for expertise and experience, establish procedures for maintaining roster information, and develop appropriate governance for recording both positive performance and substantiated underperformance. The model will support informed future sourcing decisions while meeting due-process, privacy, and records-management requirements, and will include management reporting on consultant expertise, performance, and engagement history	Deliverable 4 – Enhanced Consultant Talent Pool through global Rosters. Global roster for all offices developed and made available to contract managers across the organization for quick selection of candidates from Roster.	30 th June 2027 40 days
5. Establish an Exceptional Talent Engagement Pathway with DPC and GPD Work with GPD, DPC, ICS and relevant stakeholders to design and pilot a streamlined pathway for engaging exceptionally qualified or eminent external experts. The approach will reduce unnecessary administrative barriers while preserving mandatory UNICEF safeguards by defining clear eligibility and approval criteria, simplifying onboarding and documentation, recognizing appropriate equivalent experience and training, and providing tailored orientation. Pilot engagements will be used to test the model, capture lessons, and recommend arrangements for broader institutionalization.	Deliverable 5 – Exceptional Talent Pathway Piloted A documented exceptional-talent pathway, jointly developed and agreed with GPD and DPC, defining eligibility criteria, selection and approval procedures, and engagement arrangements for exceptional experts. The pathway is to be validated through pilot engagements with selected experts, with lessons learned and recommendations incorporated into the final approach.	30 th September 2027 25 days
6. Develop Knowledge and Communication Products for ICS Users and Consultants Knowledge and communication materials developed and tested for UNICEF users of ICS and external consultants. Resources to cover consultant rates and value-for-money, business cases and approvals, rosters/LTAs, standardized ToRs, expanded processes, the	Deliverable 6 – ICS Knowledge and Communication Package Launched: A coherent package of user-facing and consultant-facing knowledge products is published and actively used to support implementation of the new ICS arrangements.	30 th November 2027 20 days

exceptional-talent pathway, financial proposals and pricing, system navigation, reimbursable costs, onboarding, and relevant guidance for professionals transitioning into consultancy. Materials will include practical tools such as FAQs, process maps, quick-reference guides, webinars, presentations and case studies, and will be refined based on feedback from UNICEF users and consultants		
Possibility of Travel within the assignment period to Target Country Offices		

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: An advance university degree in one of the following or a closely related field:

- Finance or Procurement Management;
- Human Resource Management

- Business administration;
- Project management;
- Organizational development; or
- Another field relevant to the consultancy.

A first university degree combined with substantial additional relevant professional experience may be accepted in lieu of an advanced university degree.

Work Experience: A minimum of 7 years of progressively responsible professional experience involving human resource management, procurement management, coordination or delivery of consultancy, professional services, international development projects or similar assignments.

Skills: Demonstrated experience in recruitment of human resources or procurement management.

- Demonstrated experience in leading process improvement and process design in a complex set-up.
- Demonstrated experience managing complex projects involving multiple organizations, countries or stakeholder groups.
- Demonstrated experience working with senior stakeholders and independently coordinating relationships across organizational boundaries.
- Demonstrated experience producing high-quality written products, including reports, guidance, proposals, presentations or other professional communication materials.
- Demonstrate ability to design and deliver workshops/trainings to large groups.
- Demonstrated ability to analyze information, identify patterns and translate findings into practical recommendations or operational improvements.

The successful consultant should demonstrate:

- Strong project and relationship management skills;
- Ability to work effectively across organizational boundaries;
- Ability to engage confidently with senior stakeholders and highly experienced external experts;
- Strong analytical and problem-solving ability;
- Commercial awareness and understanding of professional-services environments;
- Ability to operate independently while collaborating effectively with technical and operational colleagues;
- Ability to manage ambiguity and develop practical solutions; and
- Strong orientation toward implementation and measurable results.

Language Requirements: English fluency is required. Knowledge of another United Nations language is an asset.

Desirables: The following experience will be considered a strong advantage:

- Experience establishing rate cards, researching or managing consultant rosters, expert pools or talent networks;
- Experience with any UN agencies on similar assignments;
- Experience combining private-sector or commercial experience with international-development experience;