

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultant to Strengthen UNICEF Food Environment Policy Advocacy, Governance and Conflict-of-Interest Resources

CONTRACT MODALITY Individual Consultancy

DUTY STATION Home-based/Remote

DURATION OF CONTRACT 11 Months

Purpose of Assignment:

UNICEF is seeking an individual consultant to provide specialist, time-bound support to strengthen its global, regional and country-level work on preventing overweight and obesity among children and adolescents. Globally, one in five children and adolescents aged 5–19 years—391 million—are living with overweight, including 188 million living with obesity. While undernutrition remains a significant concern in most low- and middle-income countries, the prevalence of overweight and obesity is increasing among school-age children and adolescents.

Since initiating its work on food environments in 2020, UNICEF has made substantial progress in developing evidence-based tools and resources to support Country Offices. Demand for support is increasing, notably through REACH, as more offices seek to translate these resources into national action. During this Strategic Plan period, UNICEF aims to scale up technical assistance to help Country Offices apply available tools and advance the introduction, implementation and monitoring of national food-environment policies, contributing to UNICEF's Strategic Plan commitment to reduce malnutrition in children and adolescents.

The assignment will strengthen and update UNICEF's overweight programming guidance, technical resources and strategic positioning. This includes developing an evidence-informed position on the clinical management of obesity in children and adolescents, clarifying its relevance to UNICEF's mandate and prevention-focused programming, and integrating the implications into updated guidance. The consultant will support selected Country Offices to apply UNICEF advocacy, technical, and conflict-of-interest resources to priority food-environment policy processes; provide responsive technical assistance to country and regional teams; and synthesize implementation lessons for wider learning. The assignment will strengthen the quality, consistency and practical application of UNICEF's support for overweight and obesity prevention and help identify priority evidence, implementation and guidance gaps.

Scope of Work:

The consultant will provide specialist technical support to strengthen UNICEF's strategic positioning, programming guidance, practical tools and country support for overweight and obesity prevention, with a focus on food-environment policy action and emerging issues including obesity management and pharmaceutical engagement. The scope of work includes evidence synthesis and policy positioning on emerging issues; development of strategic guidance for UNICEF Country Offices; consolidation and refinement of practical advocacy, governance and conflict-of-interest resources; and support to country learning on the application, adaptation and review of UNICEF food-environment policy resources in national policy processes. The consultant will synthesize evidence, country experience and implementation lessons to inform future guidance, technical assistance, evidence generation and resource-development priorities.

Work Assignment Overview	Deliverables/ Outputs	Delivery deadline		Planned Travel
		Exact date to complete the deliverable	Input days	
Deliverable 1. Strategic guidance, positioning and evidence synthesis for UNICEF's overweight and obesity agenda	<p>Deliverable description: Review and update selected UNICEF overweight and obesity prevention guidance and strategic resources and develop UNICEF's positioning on emerging issues, including obesity management and engagement with pharmaceutical companies. Review point: Draft strategic recommendations and positioning materials reviewed by the OWO prevention team and relevant technical colleagues.</p> <p>Final outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 evidence synthesis on priority issues related to overweight, obesity management and prevention. • 1 UNICEF discussion paper/positioning paper on obesity management and pharmaceutical engagement. • 1 policy brief on obesity classification and UNICEF's comparative advantage in overweight and obesity prevention, clarifying how disease-based framing relates to UNICEF's child rights, nutrition, prevention and food-environment mandate. (Intended audience: UNICEF senior leadership, Nutrition & Health teams, country offices). • 1 policy brief on UNICEF's role and boundaries in obesity management for children and adolescents, including implications for Health and Nutrition programming, clinical management, pharmaceutical engagement and UNICEF's prevention-focused mandate. (Intended audience: UNICEF Nutrition and Health teams, country offices, partners). 	30 June 2027	<p>20</p> <p>10</p> <p>5</p> <p>5</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 policy brief on the role of nutrition in NCD prevention and care, clarifying UNICEF's contribution, opportunities and boundaries across Health and Nutrition programming. (Intended audience: UNICEF Nutrition and Health teams, country offices, partners) • 1 strategic overweight & obesity prevention guideline identifying priority evidence, implementation and guidance areas and gaps for UNICEF (Intended audience: Country offices). 		5	
			10	
Deliverable 2. Development of a UNICEF Food Policy Advocacy and Conflict-of-Interest Toolkit	<p>Deliverable description: Review, assess and consolidate UNICEF resources and selected external tools, frameworks and guidance relevant to food-environment policy processes, advocacy, governance and conflict-of-interest management. Develop a practical toolkit that supports country offices to prioritize policies, assess policy readiness, identify stakeholders, undertake stakeholder, power and political economy analysis, manage conflict of interest and plan advocacy action. Develop a Food Environment Policy Journey Framework and accompanying Navigation Flowchart that help country offices identify their stage in the policy process and determine appropriate next actions, tools and resources.</p> <p>Review point: Draft resource mapping, toolkit architecture, policy journey framework, navigation flowchart, decision trees, templates and guidance modules reviewed by UNICEF technical teams and selected end users.</p> <p>Final outputs:</p>	15 December 2027		2 trips of 4 days each to the Philippines and Colombia
			20	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 resource mapping and gap analysis of UNICEF and selected external food-policy advocacy and conflict-of-interest resources. • 1 UNICEF Food Policy Advocacy and Conflict-of-Interest Toolkit, including practical tools templates and guidance resources drawn from existing UNICEF and selected external materials, with adaptations and new resources developed only where critical gaps are identified. • 1 Food Environment Policy Journey Framework mapping recommended sequencing of tools and resources across the policy cycle. • 1 visual Food Environment Policy Navigation Flowchart enabling country offices to identify their current position in the policy process and determine recommended next actions. • 1 user guide for adaptation and application by UNICEF country offices. • Toolkit reviewed and refined based on feedback from at least three UNICEF country offices that have reviewed or applied selected components of the toolkit. • 1 recommendations brief identifying priorities for future tool and resource development, including 		<p>12</p> <p>5</p> <p>5</p> <p>5</p> <p>15</p> <p>3</p>	
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	<p>recommendations on how this toolkit should be integrated with UNICEF's the food marketing law toolkit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a presentation pack, including talking points, for the launch webinar of the toolkit for country offices. 		2	
Deliverable 3. Knowledge exchange, country application and implementation learning	<p>Deliverable description: Support selected country offices to apply, adapt and review UNICEF food-environment policy resources, tools and guidance in priority policy processes. This may include resources related to evidence generation, policy prioritization, stakeholder and political economy analysis, advocacy, governance, conflict-of-interest management, policy development, implementation and monitoring. Synthesize country experience, emerging evidence and lessons learned to strengthen organizational learning and inform future guidance, tools, evidence generation and technical support priorities.</p> <p>Review point: Summary of country applications, feedback on UNICEF food-environment policy resources, implementation observations and emerging lessons reviewed with the overweight and obesity prevention team and relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Final outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 scoping framework outlining the approach, priority questions, document review plan, country 	30 January 2028	5	3 trips of 4 days each to Brazil, India, Kenya

	<p>consultation approach and proposed structure for Deliverable 3 learning products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 8 concise country learning snapshots illustrating country experiences with applying UNICEF food-environment policy resources, including policy context, resource use, adaptations, challenges and lessons learned. • Four brief learning updates documenting emerging lessons, implementation barriers, enabling factors and support needs during the assignment period. • Four knowledge-sharing sessions, such as webinars, workshops, learning clinics or community-of-practice sessions, including presentation materials and brief summary notes. • 1 final synthesis and recommendations report summarizing implementation experiences, recurring barriers, support needs, evidence gaps and priorities for future guidance, evidence generation, country support and resource development. 		<p>20</p> <p>5</p> <p>10</p> <p>10</p>	

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: Master’s degree in Human Nutrition, Public Health Nutrition.

Work Experience:

- At least 10 years of progressively responsible professional experience in food systems, food environment policy, nutrition policy, public health policy, governance, advocacy, or related fields.
- Demonstrated experience supporting the development, implementation or evaluation of food-environment policies, including areas such as food marketing restrictions, healthy school food environments, healthy retail, fiscal measures, food labelling, public procurement or related policy interventions.
- Demonstrated experience developing policy toolkits, guidance documents, frameworks, implementation resources, decision-support tools or advocacy resources for governments, UN agencies, development partners or civil society organizations.
- Experience conducting stakeholder analysis, political economy analysis, governance assessments and/or conflict-of-interest assessments related to public policy processes.
- Experience synthesizing evidence and translating technical information into practical guidance, policy recommendations and advocacy products.
- Experience working with UN agencies, international organizations, governments or development partners.

Language Requirements:

Fluency in written and spoken English is required.

Knowledge of another UN language is desirable.

Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:

- Strong understanding of food-environment policies and overweight and obesity prevention.
- Strong analytical, research and writing skills.
- Demonstrated ability to develop practical tools, frameworks and guidance resources for non-technical users.
- Excellent facilitation, consultation and stakeholder-engagement skills.
- Ability to synthesize complex information into user-friendly products and recommendations.
- Strong project management and organizational skills.

Desirables:

- Experience working on food policy advocacy, governance and conflict-of-interest management.
- Familiarity with UNICEF, WHO or other UN system policy and programme environments.
- Experience working across multiple countries and regions.
- Experience supporting policy change processes in low- and middle-income countries.