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TERMS OF REFERENCE

MHPSS Sub-strategy for Children. Adolescents, and Caregivers Operational Plan and MEAL Framework Consultant

CONTRACT MODALITY	Individual Consultancy
DUTY STATION	Beirut, Lebanon & On-site
DURATION OF CONTRACT	8.5 months

Purpose of Assignment

Under the technical leadership of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), through the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP), support the refinement, revision, updating, validation and finalization of the Government of Lebanon's National MHPSS Sub-Strategy for Children, Adolescents and Caregivers, aligned with Lebanon's National Mental Health Strategy 2024–2030. This government-requested assignment will build on preparatory analysis and draft materials already developed and will be guided and validated through a government-led Steering Committee convened by NMHP. The Steering Committee will approve the workplan and structure, review deliverables at agreed milestones, consolidate feedback and validate the final package. UNICEF, as the contracting entity, will manage the contract, monitor delivery and process payments against deliverables validated through the agreed government-led governance mechanism.

The Sub-Strategy will define strategic priorities, roles and responsibilities, governance and coordination arrangements, referral linkages and an implementation roadmap across health, child protection, education and social sectors. It will include a life-course Theory of Change, Results Framework, a costed Operational Plan, and a results and MEAL Framework with SMART indicators.

The comprehensive costing of the Sub-Strategy will be undertaken by a separately engaged institution with specialized costing expertise, working in close coordination with the individual consultant throughout the assignment. The individual consultant will be responsible for ensuring that the strategic priorities, proposed interventions, implementation modalities, targets and resource requirements are sufficiently defined to inform the costing exercise, including compiling available unit costs and relevant financial information.

Scope of Work

Support the Government-Led Development of the National MHPSS Sub-Strategy for Children, Adolescents and Caregivers

Under the technical leadership of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), through the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP), support the refinement, revision, updating, validation and finalization of the Government of Lebanon's National MHPSS Sub-Strategy for Children, Adolescents and Caregivers, aligned with the National Mental Health Strategy 2024–2030. The assignment will not start from scratch: preparatory work, analysis and draft materials have already been developed and will provide part of the foundation for the process. The consultant will critically review and build on this work, refine and revise relevant content, update the evidence and strategic direction as needed, address identified gaps, and incorporate the additional agreed components required for a complete and implementable Sub-Strategy. The consultant will report technically to the government-led Steering Committee convened by NMHP, with representation from relevant ministries and public institutions, WHO, UNICEF and other designated national stakeholders. The government-led Steering Committee will approve the workplan and proposed structure, guide the process, review deliverables at agreed milestones, consolidate feedback and validate the final package. As the contracting entity, UNICEF will manage the

consultant's contract, monitor delivery against the agreed terms of reference and workplan, and process payments based on deliverables validated through the agreed government-led governance mechanism. The MHPSS Sub-Strategy will include an updated situation analysis, strategic priorities, a life-course Theory of Change, a results and MEAL framework aligned with existing SMART indicators, an operational plan, governance and coordination arrangements, referral linkages, roles and responsibilities, and an implementation roadmap across health, child protection, education and social sectors. NMHP and the government-led Steering Committee will determine which existing elements should be retained, refined, revised or replaced and validate all new and updated sections and will agree at the outset of the consultancy on the main outlines.

1. Desk Review update (October/November 2026)

Review and synthesize the available preparatory analysis and draft materials. The review will cover, at a minimum, Lebanon's National Mental Health Strategy 2024–2030; relevant MoPH/NMHP policies, plans, service delivery and referral frameworks; national policies, strategies and theories of change related to child protection, education, social protection, disability, and adolescents and youth; relevant national assessments and administrative data; and applicable WHO, UNICEF, IASC and other UN guidance on child and adolescent mental health and psychosocial support. In consultation with NMHP and the Steering Committee, confirm the final list of reference documents, identify evidence gaps, and synthesize key implications for risks, protective factors, service gaps, strategic priorities and systems strengthening across developmental stages.

• Using the Steering Committee-approved outline, update the situation analysis, life-course framework and Theory of Change. For this assignment, the life-course approach means examining children's and adolescents' changing needs, risks, protective factors and appropriate interventions from early childhood through adolescence, while accounting for the influence of caregivers, communities, services and systems.

• Update relevant sections of the document, including the situational analysis, Life Course Model and Theory of Change, to ensure they are consistent with and informed by the desk review findings and any additional evidence identified.

• Present the desk review findings, proposed Sub-Strategy structure and key decisions to NMHP and the Steering Committee for guidance and validation before substantive drafting proceeds.

2. Develop the Theory of Change and results framework incorporating key MHPSS design principles (November 2026)

• Develop the Theory of Change, results framework with SMART indicators, and initial operational framework as interconnected components from the outset, drawing on the validated evidence base and the Steering Committee-approved Sub-Strategy outline. Ensure that the operational framework identifies the proposed interventions, implementation modalities, targets and indicative resource requirements to inform the subsequent costing exercise, in close coordination with the institution responsible for costing, once engaged. Apply the life-course, social-ecological, continuum-of-care and multisectoral approaches consistently, explicitly incorporating positive adolescent development, agency, participation, social connectedness, and supportive peer and family relationships as protective factors.

• Ensure that the ToC adequately reflects the different stages of child and adolescent development, associated risks and protective factors, and the influence of families, communities, services and systems across the life course, with clear pathways of change and linkages across promotion, prevention, early intervention and response.

• Ensure alignment with national priorities, existing systems and service delivery realities in the Lebanese context, including the Lebanon National Mental Health Strategy 2024–2030, relevant MoPH/NMHP policies and service delivery frameworks, existing child protection and education policies and referral mechanisms (Child Protection Policy in school settings), key national assessments and evidence on child and adolescent mental health, and relevant global frameworks such as the UNICEF Global Multisectoral Operational Framework for MHPSS of Children, Adolescents and Caregivers,

3. Technical Consultation on the Theory of Change and results framework (November December 2026)

• Provide technical and facilitation support to prepare and facilitate an NMHP-led technical consultation workshop with the Steering Committee, relevant MoPH entities, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Social Affairs, WHO, UNICEF, civil society, professional bodies, and other designated national stakeholders and partners to review and strengthen the proposed Theory of Change and results framework including SMART indicators.

• Facilitate technical discussion and consensus around the key risks and protective factors, levels of social ecology, continuum of care, pathways of change, intended outcomes and roles of different sectors and systems.

• Compile and synthesize technical feedback from government counterparts, relevant partners and UNICEF.

• Integrate agreed technical feedback into the ToC, ensuring continued coherence with the desk review, situational analysis and relevant national and global frameworks.

4. Rights-Holder Consultation and Validation of Strategic Directions and Preliminary Framework (December-January 2027)

• Under NMHP leadership and Steering Committee oversight, provide technical design and coordination support for participatory consultation with children, adolescents, caregivers and frontline actors to inform and validate the proposed strategic priorities, key elements of the Theory of Change, results framework including intended outcomes and preliminary operational directions of the Sub-Strategy, prior to the development of the first complete draft.

• Develop age-appropriate, accessible and participatory consultation protocols for engaging children, adolescents and youth, aligned with UNICEF global guidance on participation and mental health, including simplified and translated consultation materials as needed to facilitate safe and meaningful participation and ensure that their perspectives inform the development of the Sub-Strategy.1

• Conduct participatory workshops and/or focus group discussions with children, adolescents, caregivers and frontline workers, ensuring diverse and meaningful adolescent engagement at key stages of strategy development and validation. Use existing adolescent and youth participation mechanisms and platforms wherever feasible, with the specific mechanism to be confirmed with NMHP and UNICEF, and establish clear feedback loops demonstrating how adolescent views were considered and incorporated.

• Explore participants' perspectives on priority risks and protective factors, needs and sources of support, barriers to accessing multisectoral services, and the relevance of the proposed pathways and outcomes at different stages of the life course and across the continuum of care.

• Synthesize consultation findings and incorporate relevant feedback into the proposed strategic priorities, Theory of Change, preliminary results framework with SMART indicators and operational directions. Identify implications for the subsequent development of the detailed Operational Plan and MEAL Framework, including mechanisms for continued adolescent participation, feedback and accountability.

• Submit the consultation findings, revised Theory of Change, proposed strategic priorities, preliminary results framework with SMART indicators and operational directions to NMHP and the Steering Committee for technical review and endorsement as the basis for developing the first complete draft of the Sub-Strategy.

5. First Complete Draft of the National MHPSS Sub-Strategy for Children, Adolescents and Caregivers (February 2027)

• Develop the first complete draft of the Government of Lebanon's National MHPSS Sub-Strategy for Children, Adolescents and Caregivers, building on the endorsed strategic directions, consultation findings and preliminary frameworks developed under Deliverable 4

• Assess previous draft materials critically and retain only elements validated by NMHP and the Steering Committee. The draft will integrate the situation analysis, strategic priorities, life-course Theory of Change, results framework with SMART indicators, governance and coordination arrangements, referral linkages, roles and

responsibilities, and proposed implementation priorities and roadmap. It will also include the proposed structure and key components of the Operational Plan and MEAL Framework, which will be further developed and detailed under Deliverable 6.

• Work in regular consultation with the Steering Committee to ensure government ownership, strategic coherence, alignment with relevant national policies and systems, and consistency with applicable WHO, UNICEF, IASC and other agreed global frameworks.

• Facilitate technical inputs and discussions at agreed key stages of the Sub-Strategy development process, as required to clarify strategic priorities, outcomes and key directions of the revised Sub-Strategy, within the scope of the agreed workplan and consultation/validation process.

• Submit the first complete strategic draft to NMHP and the Steering Committee for technical review and consolidated feedback, with particular attention to strategic coherence, feasibility, institutional responsibilities and the proposed implementation arrangements. The feedback will inform the subsequent detailed development of the Operational Plan and MEAL Framework and refinement of the integrated Sub-Strategy package.

6. Development of the Operational Plan and MEAL Framework (February – March 2027)

• Develop the detailed Operational Plan to translate the agreed strategic priorities, outcomes and Theory of Change into actionable interventions, roles and responsibilities, timelines and implementation arrangements, building on the strategic directions established under Deliverable 5 and incorporating feedback from NMHP and the Steering Committee. The Operational Plan should specify implementation phases, responsible institutions, indicative targets, resource requirements and coordination arrangements. Where feasible, compile and validate available unit costs and other relevant costing inputs to lay the groundwork for the subsequent development of a costed Operational Plan by a separately engaged institution with specialized costing expertise. Coordinate with the institutional costing partner, once engaged, to ensure that the Operational Plan provides the necessary technical and programmatic inputs for costing.

• Develop the detailed Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Framework, building on the agreed Theory of Change and results framework, including SMART indicators, baselines and targets where available, means of verification, data sources, institutional responsibilities, reporting arrangements, accountability and learning arrangements to support monitoring of implementation, results and progress. Ensure that the framework incorporates mechanisms for meaningful adolescent participation and feedback, including monitoring how feedback is considered and acted upon.

• Ensure coherence and clear linkages between the Sub-Strategy, Operational Plan and MEAL Framework, and submit the integrated package to NMHP and the government-led Steering Committee for technical review and validation of the strategic, programmatic and operational components, with any outstanding costing elements clearly identified for completion through the separate institutional costing exercise. UNICEF will monitor delivery through the consultancy contract.

7. First Round of Review and Revision (March 2027)

• Support NMHP and the Steering Committee to conduct the first technical review of the full draft package, consolidate comments and identify issues requiring government guidance or decision.

• Compile and synthesize inputs from NMHP, the government-led Steering Committee and other relevant technical stakeholders, and provide the consolidated response to UNICEF for contractual monitoring of the deliverable.

• Revise the Sub-Strategy based on agreed feedback and document key issues requiring further discussion or decision.

8. Second Round of Review and Revision (April-May 2027)

• Support a second Steering Committee-led review of the Sub-Strategy, Operational Plan and MEAL Framework as an integrated package, addressing strategic priorities, implementation arrangements, roles, responsibilities, results and indicators.

• Compile and analyze feedback from relevant stakeholders and support consensus-building around strategic priorities, implementation arrangements, roles and responsibilities, and the proposed results and monitoring framework.

• Revise the three documents based on consolidated and validated feedback.

9. Multi-Stakeholder Consultation and Finalization (May 2027)

• Provide technical and facilitation support to an NMHP-hosted multi-stakeholder workshop, convened under Steering Committee oversight, to review the integrated Sub-Strategy, Operational Plan and MEAL Framework with SMART indicators.

• Facilitate discussion and consensus-building on outstanding issues and proposed revisions.

• Consolidate workshop feedback and incorporate agreed changes into the final versions of the three documents.

• Coordinate with NMHP and the government-led Steering Committee to ensure technical quality, government ownership and validation of the final package, while keeping UNICEF informed for contractual monitoring and acceptance of the deliverable.

10. Translation and Design (June 2027)

• Coordinate and provide technical support for the translation of the finalized National MHPSS Sub-Strategy for Children, Adolescents and Caregivers into Arabic. The translation will be undertaken by a separately engaged professional translator, with the consultant responsible for facilitating coordination, providing technical clarifications and ensuring consistency in the use of agreed MHPSS terminology.

• Review the translated documents in coordination with NMHP and the government-led Steering Committee to ensure accuracy, consistency and alignment with the approved English versions. Facilitate the collection, consolidation and resolution of feedback from relevant members, including any necessary revisions by the translator, to ensure that the final Arabic versions are technically accurate, appropriately contextualized and acceptable to NMHP and the Steering Committee. Submit the cleared versions to UNICEF for contractual acceptance.

• Review design and layout iterations, prepared by a separately engaged design service provider, ensuring that substantive revisions are accurately reflected across languages and designed versions, including consistency of terminology, tables, figures, indicators and other technical content. Coordinate any necessary corrections with the service provider.

• Support NMHP and the government-led Steering Committee to review and validate the final English and Arabic versions in preparation for publication and dissemination, facilitating the consolidation and incorporation of final comments and confirmation of technical clearance by NMHP and the Steering Committee. UNICEF will confirm contractual acceptance of the completed deliverable.

11. Launch and Dissemination (June 2027)

• Support NMHP, under the oversight of the government-led Steering Committee, and in coordination with UNICEF and relevant partners, in preparing for the official launch of the Sub-Strategy, Operational Plan and MEAL Framework including SMART indicators.

• Support the development of key content and materials required for dissemination and communication of the finalized strategic package.

• Support coordination with relevant stakeholders to promote awareness, ownership and uptake of the Sub-Strategy and its accompanying implementation and MEAL frameworks through the agreed stakeholder

engagement and dissemination activities undertaken during the consultancy period. Completion of this task will be based on the consultant's delivery of the agreed coordination and engagement activities, rather than on subsequent stakeholder uptake or implementation of the Sub-Strategy.

Work Assignments Overview	**Deliverables/Outputs**	**Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable**
Updated desk review and situational analysis	Review and update the existing desk review and relevant sections of the document based on national, regional and global evidence; identify key evidence gaps and implications for the Life Course Model, Theory of Change and situational analysis.	30 December 2026
Life Course Model & Theory of Change	Revised Life Course Model and Theory of Change integrating key design principles and theoretical frameworks, including the life course approach, social ecological model and continuum of care, and reflecting risks, protective factors and pathways of change across developmental stages.	30 December 2026
Technical Consultation on the Life Course Model & Theory of Change	Under NMHP technical leadership, prepare and facilitate a technical consultation workshop with the government-led Steering Committee and other relevant stakeholders; compile technical feedback, secure Steering Committee validation of agreed revisions, and submit the completed deliverable to UNICEF for contractual monitoring and acceptance.	31 December 2026
Rights-Holder and Frontline Worker	Develop age-appropriate consultation tools and facilitate participatory	31 January 2027

Consultation & Validation	consultations/workshops and/or FGDs with children, adolescents, caregivers and frontline workers; synthesize findings and integrate relevant feedback into the Life Course Model, ToC, proposed strategic priorities, preliminary results framework and operational directions, to inform the development of the first complete draft of the Sub-Strategy.	
First Draft of the Revised MHPSS Sub-Strategy	First complete strategic draft of the revised MHPSS Sub-Strategy, informed by the finalized Life Course Model and Theory of Change, desk review, situational analysis, technical consultation and rights-holder consultations and endorsed strategic directions; including the proposed strategic priorities, results framework with SMART indicators, governance and coordination arrangements, implementation roadmap, and preliminary structure and key components of the Operational Plan and MEAL Framework; developed under NMHP technical leadership; and submitted to the government-led Steering Committee for technical review and consolidated feedback and to UNICEF for contractual monitoring and acceptance.	28 February 2027
Development of the Operational Plan & MEAL Framework	First detailed draft of the Operational Plan translating strategic priorities into actionable interventions, roles,	31 March 2027

	responsibilities, timelines and implementation arrangements, including indicative targets, resource requirements and implementation phases, and a compilation of available and relevant sector unit costs to inform subsequent costing by a separately engaged institution with specialized costing expertise; and first detailed draft of the corresponding MEAL Framework, including key results, SMART indicators, means of verification, data sources, accountability and learning arrangements; submitted to NMHP and the government-led Steering Committee for technical review and consolidated feedback and to UNICEF for contractual monitoring and acceptance.	
First Round of Review & Revision	Support NMHP and the government-led Steering Committee to conduct and consolidate the first round of technical review, primarily focused on the MHPSS Sub-Strategy, including its strategic priorities, Theory of Change, results framework and alignment with the emerging Operational Plan and MEAL Framework; revise the Sub-Strategy based on validated feedback; document issues requiring government decision; and submit the revised deliverable to UNICEF for contractual monitoring and acceptance.	31 March 2027

Second Round of Review & Revision	Support a second government-led Steering Committee review of the MHPSS Sub-Strategy, Operational Plan and MEAL Framework as an integrated package; incorporate feedback validated by NMHP and the Steering Committee across the three documents, ensuring coherence between strategic priorities, implementation arrangements, resource requirements and monitoring and accountability mechanisms; and submit the revised package to UNICEF for contractual monitoring and acceptance.	31 May 2027
Multi-Stakeholder Consultation & Finalization	Under NMHP technical leadership and government-led Steering Committee oversight, prepare and facilitate a multi-stakeholder workshop to review the MHPSS Sub-Strategy, Operational Plan and MEAL Framework as an integrated package; consolidate feedback, support consensus-building and finalize the three documents for Steering Committee validation, ensuring that the Operational Plan is sufficiently detailed to inform the separate institutional costing exercise and that any outstanding costing elements are clearly identified; and submit the final technical and operational package to UNICEF for contractual monitoring and acceptance.	31 May2027
Translation & Design	Coordinate and provide technical support for the Arabic translation of the finalized MHPSS Sub-Strategy, Operational Plan and MEAL Framework, to be undertaken by a separately engaged professional translator; support NMHP and the government-led Steering Committee to review and	30 June 2027

	consolidate feedback, ensure technical accuracy, consistency of terminology and alignment with the approved English versions, and coordinate necessary revisions with the translator and design service provider; support validation of the final English and Arabic designed versions; and submit the completed package to UNICEF for contractual monitoring and acceptance.	
Launch & Dissemination	Support NMHP, under the oversight of the government-led Steering Committee and in coordination with UNICEF and relevant partners, to prepare and coordinate the official launch of the MHPSS Sub-Strategy, Operational Plan and MEAL Framework and develop key dissemination, communication and stakeholder-engagement content. Submit evidence of completed activities to UNICEF for contractual monitoring and acceptance.	30 July 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.
- Contracts are conditional upon the selected candidate's willingness to comply with any current or future vaccination requirements that may be established by UNICEF, where applicable. Failure to comply with applicable vaccination requirements, where required and without an approved medical exemption by UNICEF, may result in the withdrawal of the consultancy offer or termination of the contract in accordance with the General Terms and Conditions of Contract.
- 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 or equivalent advanced university degree in psychology, psychiatry, public mental health, public health with a mental health focus, social work, or another relevant mental health/MHPSS-related discipline.
- **Work Experience:**
    - Minimum of 7 years of progressively responsible experience in child and adolescent mental health and psychosocial support, including demonstrated experience developing or leading government mental health/MHPSS policies or strategies, Theory of Change and results frameworks, operational plans and implementation arrangements.
- **Language Requirements:**
    - Strong writing and communication skills in English; proficiency in Arabic and/or French is an asset.
- **Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:**
    - Proven experience in government-led strategy development, situation analysis, Theory of Change, and results/MEAL frameworks with SMART indicators, and participatory

stakeholder consultation, including engagement with senior government officials and technical staff across relevant ministries and public institutions.

- Ability to work independently and collaboratively with diverse stakeholders.

- **Desirables:**
  - Familiarity with WHO, UNICEF, IASC and other relevant standards and technical approaches for child and adolescent mental health and psychosocial support; prior experience working with government-led multisectoral processes in Lebanon or a comparable context is an asset.
  - Familiarity with costing methodologies and processes, including the identification of resource requirements, compilation of unit costs and provision of technical inputs to inform the costing of multisectoral strategies and operational plans, is an asset.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit the following documents via the online recruitment portal, TMS (Talent Management System):

- An up-to-date TMS profile and curriculum vitae (CV)
- Cover letter
- A separate financial proposal
- **A detailed technical proposal: Applicants should submit a proposed methodology and workplan, a CV demonstrating relevant qualifications and experience, and examples of comparable assignments or relevant written work.**