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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Evaluation Consultant – Oky Evaluation Scoping and Participatory Design

CONTRACT MODALITY	Individual Consultancy
DUTY STATION	**Evaluation Office - Italy, Rome, remote with travel**
DURATION OF CONTRACT	3,5 months

Purpose of Activity/Assignment:

Oky is a girl-centred digital platform designed by UNICEF to improve adolescent girls' access to evidence-based information on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and related aspects of health, safety and wellbeing. By providing accessible, age-appropriate and locally relevant content, Oky seeks to reduce stigma, stress and shame, and to strengthen girls' knowledge, particularly about menstruation and reproductive health, as well as their confidence and agency.

The initiative combines digital innovation, localization processes, and institutional partnerships to strengthen adolescent girls' agency, knowledge, and access to supportive environments. It primarily targets adolescent girls aged 10–19 years, particularly marginalized and underserved groups including children with disabilities, while also engaging caregivers, educators, service providers, community leaders, and government institutions.

Oky is implemented through a collaborative network focused on local ownership. Key partners include the Digital Impact Division, Digital Centre of Excellence, Global Programme Division and Centres of Excellence at global level; regional offices; and UNICEF country offices and national franchise partners at country level.

Since its inception in 2017, Oky has evolved into a multi-country initiative currently operational in fourteen countries, with an overall portfolio of approximately EUR 8.5 million between 2019 and 2027. The current implementation phase in Madagascar, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia is supported by an Austrian Development Agency-funded programme running from September 2025 to July 2028. Oky is also aligned with the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2026–2029, which identifies adolescent girls, community and front-line systems, and innovation and digital transformation as accelerators for results at scale.

The Institutional Effectiveness Portfolio in the UNICEF Evaluation Office is planning an evaluation of the Oky programme in collaboration with the UNICEF Oky team. The broad intended purpose of the evaluation is to generate independent, credible, and actionable evidence on Oky's relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, and scalability, and on its contribution to strengthening adolescent girls' agency, safety, and wellbeing, and supportive environments.

The evaluation will be preceded by a scoping and design exercise to refine its purpose, objectives, scope, priority questions and methodological approach, taking into account the available evidence, implementation contexts and budget. The exercise will identify a credible and proportionate approach to assessing Oky's effectiveness, including its contribution to observed outcomes and potential higher-level changes, while considering alternative explanations and the limitations of available evidence.

The scoping and design exercise will also ensure the meaningful, safe and ethical participation of adolescent girls in shaping the evaluation's priorities, outcomes of interest and methodological approach. This consultancy will lead the integrated scoping and design process and develop the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the subsequent independent evaluation.

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Scope of Work:
The consultant will lead a scoping and design exercise for the Oky evaluation, combining documentary and data review, targeted stakeholder consultations, meaningful adolescent participation and methodological assessment. The exercise is expected to develop a coherent evaluation design that responds to priority questions and evidence needs while remaining realistic within the available resources.

The assignment will include the following activities:

- **Evidence review and preparation:** Review relevant programme documentation, the theory of change, monitoring and evaluation framework, existing studies and available data. Identify evidence gaps, potential outcome pathways and initial methodological options, and prepare a brief inception note and consultation plan.
- **Stakeholder consultations and adolescent participation:** Undertake targeted consultations with programme stakeholders and adolescent girls, using safe, ethical and age-appropriate approaches. In collaboration with relevant UNICEF teams and partners, ensure that girls' perspectives inform the identification and prioritization of evaluation questions, outcomes of interest and relevant contextual considerations.
- **Evaluation design and methodological assessment:** Develop a proportionate evaluation approach for assessing Oky's relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and scalability, including its contribution to observed outcomes and potential higher-level changes. Consider appropriate theory-based and mixed-methods approaches, the availability and quality of evidence, plausible alternative explanations, country and stakeholder coverage, ethical requirements, and what the evaluation could credibly conclude about Oky’s contribution to observed changes.
- **Drafting and finalization:** Prepare and finalize the evaluation design and Terms of Reference, including priority evaluation questions, proposed methodology, an evaluation matrix, data sources, sampling and country coverage, ethical and safeguarding arrangements, governance, timeline, and an indicative budget. Revise the design in response to feedback from the Evaluation Office and relevant stakeholders.

Under the overall guidance of the Evaluation Manager and the supervision of the contract manager in the UNICEF Evaluation Office, the consultant will lead the technical work for the Oky evaluation scoping and design exercise, including developing the evaluation Terms of Reference.

The consultant will adhere to applicable UN and UNICEF norms and standards in evaluation and ethical guidelines for evidence generation, and is expected to identify and promptly flag any potential ethical issues or violations that may arise during the consultancy.

The assignment is expected to take place over four months, from January to April 2027. It will be primarily home-based and include one short field mission to Madagascar, South Africa, Tanzania or Zambia, depending on programmatic priorities, consultation opportunities and logistical feasibility. The mission will focus on participatory consultations with adolescent girls and selected stakeholders, with engagement of other groups, including adolescent boys, considered where relevant to the evaluation's emerging priorities.

UNICEF reserves the right to terminate this contract without notice due to unsatisfactory performance or to misconduct by the consultant, as UNICEF may determine in its absolute discretion. Payment will also cease on the day of termination.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
Evidence review and preparation: Review key programme documentation, theory of change, and available evidence, identify initial methodological options and prepare consultations.	Brief inception note, initial methodological considerations and consultation plan.	31 January 2027 3 days
Stakeholder consultations and adolescent participation: Conduct targeted consultations with adolescent girls and selected stakeholders, including a facilitated participatory session in one country.	Concise consultation synthesis, including implications for evaluation priorities, outcomes of interest and methodological approach.	28 February 2027 5 days One trip to either Madagascar, South Africa, Tanzania or Zambia, and back from consultant's place of residence
Evaluation design and methodological assessment: Develop a proportionate evaluation design, taking into account available evidence, causal analysis options, ethical considerations and available evaluation budget.	Draft evaluation ToR including evaluation matrix, methodology, proposed country coverage, timeline and indicative budget.	31 March 2027 5 days
Finalization: Incorporate feedback on the evaluation ToR from the Evaluation Office and relevant stakeholders.	Final evaluation ToR.	30 April 2027 3 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.
- 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.

Minimum requirements:

- **Education:** Master's degree in social sciences, evaluation, public health, gender studies, international development, or a related field.
- **Work Experience:**
    - At least 8 years of professional experience in evaluation, research or related evidence-generation work, including substantial experience in designing evaluations or research studies in international development contexts.
    - Demonstrated experience in designing theory-based and mixed-methods evaluations, including approaches to assessing intervention contributions to outcomes and examining alternative causal explanations.
    - Demonstrated experience in meaningfully involving adolescents or other young people in evaluation or research design and implementation.
    - Proven experience in ethical evidence generation, including research involving children or vulnerable groups and the application of appropriate safeguarding measures.

- **Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:**
  - Strong understanding of evaluation methodologies and the development of evaluation questions, evaluation matrices and data collection strategies.
  - Strong skills in participatory evaluation design, including facilitating consultations and workshops with adolescents.
  - Ability to translate evaluation questions and available evidence into feasible, proportionate methodological approaches and realistic evaluation budgets.
  - Excellent analytical, synthesis and report-writing skills.

- **Language Requirements:** English – both written and verbal. Level III (i.e., advanced proficiency) is required.
- **Desirables:**
  - Experience evaluating adolescent health, menstrual health, sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality or related programmes.
  - Experience evaluating digital interventions, including digital health applications.
  - Familiarity with UNICEF's programmatic mandate.
  - Experience working in East and Southern Africa.
  - Considering the sensitivity of the topics and the direct engagement with adolescent girls, a female candidate will be preferred.