

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

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|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Title:</b>             | Early Childhood Education Consultant to develop an ECE Toolkit for Commonwealth member countries |
| <b>Location:</b>          | Home based   |
| <b>Maximum fee of:</b>    | £17,500 (all-inclusive)  |
| <b>Contract duration:</b> | 40 person days   |
| <b>Closing date:</b>      | 20 March 2019  |

### Background

The foundations of brain architecture and functioning, and subsequent lifelong developmental potential, are laid down in the early years in a process that is exquisitely sensitive to external influence<sup>1</sup>. Ministers at the 20<sup>th</sup> Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (20CCEM) held in Nadi, Fiji, noted the importance of providing all children with access to quality early childhood education and the need for a multi-sectoral approach to support and promote early learning and development of all young children.

The Commonwealth recognises that, for many of its member countries, achieving SDG **target 4.2 ‘by 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education’** will remain a challenge if early intervention strategies are not deployed to address this issue. A Report titled the ‘Status of SDG4 in the Commonwealth’ which was commissioned by the Secretariat notes that while many small states (for which data was available) were reporting participation rates<sup>2</sup> over 90%, this was not necessarily the case for small states in the Pacific region where Nauru was highest ranked among them with a rate of 71.6%. Also concerning was that many Commonwealth member countries in the African region with the exception of Ghana, Mauritius and Seychelles recorded levels below 50%. The Report advances that there is a clear and demonstrable need for continued coordinated efforts in the area of early childhood education and international monitoring.

The Commonwealth Secretariat ('the Secretariat' hereinafter) will work in collaboration with other international organisations, civil society and ECE experts to develop an ECE Toolkit that will serve as a guide and a reference point for Education Ministers and senior policy officials in the strengthening early childhood education capacity amongst member states. The Toolkit proposes that the education sector, specifically the Ministry of Education, should be the driver or host of a multi-sector ECE programme, particularly for the age group 3+. There are two stages of International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 0. The first is focussed on childhood educational development in the age range of 0 to 2, while second, which will be the focus of this Toolkit is designed for children from age 3 years to the start of primary education -

<sup>1</sup> Yoshikawa, H. and Kabay, S., 2014. The Evidence Base on Early Childhood Care and Education in Global Context

<sup>2</sup> Participation in organised learning one year before official primary entry age

classified as pre-primary education age group.

The development of this Toolkit feeds into the Secretariat's programme of work on education which is embedded in the Secretariat's 2017/18 - 20/21 Strategic Plan, specifically Strategic Outcome 3<sup>3</sup>. The initial pilot and subsequent roll out of the Toolkit to member countries will facilitate greater awareness among Ministries of Education that will enable them to recognise the need to invest in early learning and that early childhood education lays the foundation for lifelong learning, and wider social and economic outcomes.

The Commonwealth is comprised of 53 countries from five regions: Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe and Pacific. It is expected that the Toolkit will be multi-regional in nature that will be adaptable to the Commonwealth regional context.

### Aims and Objectives of the Toolkit

The primary aim of this Toolkit is to provide a resource to Ministries of Education in Commonwealth member countries interested in understanding how best to enable/support a multi-sectoral approach for increasing access to quality early learning and development.

#### *Objectives of the Toolkit:*

- to outline the role of the Ministry of Education in 'driving' a multi-sectoral approach to ECE particularly for the age group 3+;
- to provide guidance on how best to implement a coordinated approach to early childhood education;
  - governance of national ECE programme at all levels (national, sub-national and community level as appropriate)
  - Monitoring, continuous learning and evaluation of ECE programmes
  - Strengthening partnerships across key stakeholders
- to acknowledge the interdependencies between ECE and other priorities outlined in the global goals such as poverty (SDG1), hunger (SDG2), health (SDG3) and gender equality (SDG5) and provide suitable guidance for a multi-sectoral approach;
- to highlight evidence-based case-studies of Commonwealth good practices in ECE;
- to assist ministers of education, national policy makers, non-sector experts and other relevant stakeholders to establish ECE policies (policy development and national systems building) and interventions that will support the improvement in early childhood outcomes;
- to provide guidance on developing a cadre of ECE experts (researchers/managers/teachers) to advise Commonwealth member countries in ECE policy and practice; and
- provide a mechanism for ministers of education to advocate for increased allocations to early childhood education.

### Job Summary

Under the supervision of the UK-based Education Adviser, the consultant will be responsible for developing an Early Childhood Education Toolkit for use by Commonwealth member countries. The Toolkit will be developed in collaboration with colleagues at the Secretariat, the Commonwealth Accelerated Development Mechanism for Education (CADME) Technical Working Group and other

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<sup>3</sup>Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan 2017/18 - 2021/21. Retrieved from:  
[http://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/CommonwealthSecretariatStrategic\\_Plan\\_17\\_21.pdf](http://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/CommonwealthSecretariatStrategic_Plan_17_21.pdf)

partners to be identified at a later stage.

The Secretariat has developed a concept note which contains a high level outline of what key elements should be addressed by the ECE Toolkit. The consultant will play a key role in helping the Secretariat adapt this outline to ensure that the Toolkit is relevant and can be customised to meet the diverse needs of Commonwealth member countries.

The consultant will also have overall responsibility for conducting country assessments/case studies and review of existing materials developed by regional organisations such African Union, CARICOM and Pacific Community as well as international organisations such as the World Bank and others that will inform the Toolkit development. The consultant is expected to provide guidance on early interventions that complement the sustainable development agenda and highlight evidence of good practice from Commonwealth member countries. The Secretariat shall have the ownership of the intellectual property rights to any outputs commissioned and produced during this consultancy.

### Expected tangible and measurable outputs

| Deliverable  | Due Date       |
|--|----------------|
| Inception Report and draft outline of Toolkit  | 15 April 2019  |
| Review of the existing landscape and at least three country assessments/case studies (selection must reflect the diversity of Commonwealth member countries) | 30 April 2019  |
| First draft of Toolkit   | 22 May 2019    |
| Second draft of Toolkit taking into account feedback provided by the Commonwealth Secretariat  | 21 June 2019   |
| Final version of Toolkit taking into account feedback provided by the Commonwealth Secretariat   | 30 August 2019 |

### Indicators to evaluate the consultant's performance:

All outputs shall be assessed in accordance with the following indicators. This serves as a guide and should not be considered as exhaustive.

| Deliverable   | Indicators  |
|---|---|
| Inception Report and draft outline of Toolkit   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlights a multi-sectoral and coordinated approach to ECE that is responsive to varied regional needs (acknowledging the multi-regional context)</li> <li>• Demonstrates strong connection to Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG4 as well as the Commonwealth Charter</li> <li>• Clear, logical and easily understandable by diverse audiences</li> </ul> |
| At least three country assessments/case studies (selection must reflect the diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of existing landscape and work of other regional/international</li> </ul>   |

| Deliverable                       | Indicators   |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| of Commonwealth member countries) | <p>organisations to inform the design and development of the Toolkit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with the Secretariat on the selection of countries</li> <li>• Engagement with the relevant stakeholders in identified countries</li> <li>• Accurate identification of challenges and good practice</li> <li>• Analysis of the ECE policies in place in the identified countries, within the context of the SDGs</li> <li>• Analysis and determination of whether a multi-sectoral and coordinated approach to ECE is being practiced</li> <li>• Evidence of country strategies to improve access to ECE for vulnerable and marginalised groups</li> </ul>   |
| Draft Toolkit                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical precision and user friendly Toolkit that advances a multi-sectoral and coordinated approach to ECE</li> <li>• Policies and practical approaches to early interventions which can be easily customised to individual Commonwealth member countries in any given or multiple regions</li> <li>• Clear and policy-relevant analysis and approaches that complements the sustainable development agenda</li> <li>• Clear implementation strategy and methodology to support the piloting of the Toolkit is outlined</li> <li>• Identified strategies for reaching vulnerable and marginalised groups</li> <li>• Engagement with colleagues of the Secretariat's youth, gender and health teams and other identified stakeholders</li> <li>• Framework for multi-sectoral and coordinated approach to ECE is developed</li> <li>• Good practice identified</li> <li>• Guidelines for its usage by Education Ministers and senior policy officials</li> </ul> |
| Final Toolkit                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All comments from the Secretariat and members of the CADME</li> </ul>   |

| Deliverable | Indicators  |
|-------------|---|
|             | <p>Technical Working Group and/or ECE Working Group are adequately taken into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent plain English drafting style and suitability for audience of national level government officials, policy makers, health care officials and non-sector experts</li> <li>• Technical excellence</li> <li>• A Toolkit that is easily adaptable and relevant to Commonwealth member countries</li> </ul> |

## Person Specification:

### Education:

An advanced university degree in one of the following fields is required: education, international development, public health, economics, nutrition, child development, sociology, psychology, human development or another relevant technical field.

### Required Experience:

- Minimum 8-years professional work experience at the national and international levels in the social development field, with an emphasis on early learning and early childhood development
- Experience in and knowledge of early childhood development systems in Commonwealth member countries
- Full familiarity and engagement with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Familiarity with issues and challenges faced by Commonwealth member countries
- Excellent analytical, communication and writing skills in the English language
- Proven ability to work under pressure and meet strict deadlines

### Desirable:

- Relevant experience in a UN system agency or another international organisation
- Experience in and knowledge of UNICEF's activities supporting early childhood education

### Budget

The consultant will be paid as follows for the development of the ECE Toolkit, calculated on the basis of £400 per day:

Phase 1:      £16,000 for 40 days work (consultants all-inclusive fee)  
                   £1,500 for economy class travel and subsistence (country assessment/s or travel to London to attend consultation meetings)

Phase 1:      April 2019 to August 2019 - Maximum fee of £17,500 i.e. £16,000 all-inclusive consultants' fee and up to £1,500 reserved for travel and subsistence cost.

- 10% payment to be paid at the beginning of the consultancy
- 10% payment to be paid at the submission of Inception Report and Toolkit outline

- 15% to be paid upon submission of country assessments/case studies
- 40% payment to be paid on receipt of first draft of the Toolkit
- 25% payment after receipt and acceptance of final Toolkit at a standard deemed satisfactory to the Secretariat

The Commonwealth will bear any approved economy class travel and subsistence allowance expenses related to the consultant's travel to consultation meeting/s in London or to undertake country assessment/s up to a maximum fee of £1500 as identified earlier. All travel costs will be guided by the Secretariat's Travel and Expenses Policy.