

Proposal Form

<Insert Consultancy Title Here>

Submission Date:

1. **Covering Letter**
2. **Basic Information (1 page)**

Name and full address of the firm/organization: (if applicable)	
Key consultant's name and full address:	
Key consultant's date of birth in dd/mm/yyyy:	
Landline No.:	
Mobile No:	
Email address:	
Post Box No:	
Fax No:	
TPN No:	

3. **List the relevant work experience in the past three years.**
4. **Express your understanding of the Terms of Reference for this consultancy.**
5. **Technical Proposal: Explain how you propose to undertake this assignment with clear methodology and timeline.**
6. **Financial Proposal: Provide a clear breakdown of your proposed consultancy fees in Bhutanese Ngultrums only. Include all administrative costs including travel costs. The proposed cost should be inclusive of taxes. (The financial proposal should be submitted in a separate sealed envelop clearly titled as "Financial Proposal for <add title of the consultancy assignment>".**
7. **Supporting documents mandatorily required:**
 - 7.1. Copy of Valid trade license for registered consultancy firms
 - 7.2. Latest tax paid certificates & TPN numbers
 - 7.3. ID copy of the proprietor for consultancy firms
 - 7.4. Bank Details of the Consultancy Firm & Individual Bank Account Number of Individual Consultants
 - 7.5. CV of the Lead Consultant
 - 7.6. Address and contact details

Terms of Reference for Child Care Access Assessment

**Exploring options to expand access to childcare in
Bhutan**

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1. PROJECT SUMMARY

Type of study	<input type="text"/>
Name of the project	<input type="text"/>
Project Start and End dates	<input type="text"/>
Project duration	<input type="text"/>
Project locations:	<input type="text"/>
Thematic areas	<input type="text"/>
Sub themes	<input type="text"/>
Donor	<input type="text"/>
Estimated beneficiaries	<input type="text"/>
Overall objective of the project	<input type="text"/>

2. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Terms of Reference (ToR) for conducting a childcare situation analysis on access to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programs for children aged 0-5 years in urban and rural areas, followed by a process evaluation of childcare pilot intervention. Based on the findings from the situation analysis, a small-scale pilot model will be designed to address the childcare needs of working parents. Six months after the pilot's implementation, the process evaluation will assess the fidelity of implementation, identify challenges and successes, and evaluate the pilot's effectiveness in improving access to childcare services for working parents. Save the Children in collaboration with The World Bank Group is seeking technical assistance of a consultancy firm to understand the childcare landscape, situational assessment and to undertake a process evaluation.

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Royal Government of Bhutan aims to ensure universal access to quality early childhood care and development (ECCD) services for 3–5-year-olds under the 13th Five-Year Plan (FYP). This includes center-based programs and mobile and home-based options for remote areas. Evidence indicates that limited childcare availability affects female labor force participation. The MoESD is now responsible for childcare for children under 3 years and is exploring ways to adapt current ECCD services or create new options, including workplace creches. Through the "Invest in Childcare" initiative the World Bank's Human Capital Recovery & Resilience Program-for-Results (HCRRP) is supporting the MoESD to strengthen and expand childcare services in Bhutan. Through this initiative it aims to understand the childcare landscape and identify opportunities to expand access to childcare services. The objectives of initiative are:

1. Conduct a childcare situation assessment for 0–5-year-old children,
2. Support for the design and pilot of childcare models (0–3-year-old), and
3. Conduct process evaluation of the pilot.

Objective 1 will mainly examine the supply and demand for childcare services for children aged 0-5 years in urban and rural areas. A landscape review will be conducted to understand plans and policies to expand childcare and early learning.

Informed by the situational assessment and stakeholder consultations, **Objective 2** will test a small-scale model to find out whether refinements to the current government ECCD models can better meet the childcare needs of women in employment and help women improve their employability by allowing them to engage in skills development training. The goal is to identify low-cost, easily implementable improvements to ECCD models.

The **Objective 3** will complete a process evaluation to investigate the fidelity and effectiveness of the pilot model and how well the pilot facilitates childcare access for working parents.

4. SCOPE OF STUDY

4.1 Purpose, Objectives and Scope

The purpose of the consultancy assignment will be to conduct childcare situation assessment for 0–5-year-old children.

The assessment will examine both demand and supply aspects of childcare services for children aged 0-5 in urban and rural areas. On the demand side, it will explore family needs, preferences, and economic activities, focusing on affordability, quality expectations, and gender and social norms affecting childcare and women’s workforce participation. It will also assess the potential economic and other benefits of improved childcare access. On the supply side, it will review existing childcare providers, their operational models, financial viability, service quality, and challenges like funding, workforce development, and regulations, including the feasibility of extending service hours and accommodating younger children. Additionally, the assessment will include a landscape review of policies and plans to expand childcare and early learning services for children aged 0-5, such as the 13th Five-Year Plan (FYP), existing structures for service delivery, quality assurance mechanisms, and training opportunities for private providers.

The assessment will include communities that do not have access to a publicly provided ECCD center (or mobile/home-based models) as well as communities with public and private ECCD models. Effort should be made to include the communities covered under the HCRRP implemented by the MoESD and the Accelerating Maternal and Child Health Outcomes Project (AMCHP) being implemented by the Ministry of Health. Furthermore, the survey will ensure representation of a variety of ECCD services available including informal childcare providers and non-state sector models serving 0–5-year-old children.

4.2 Primary Intended Audience and Use of the Study

The table summarizes the key stakeholders who will be consulted throughout the process and the study team (consultant) will ensure that the findings will be shared with the stakeholders to ensure accountability and learning and operationalization of key recommendations.

Stakeholder	Further information
Project donor	The World Bank Group
Primary implementing organisation	Save the Children Bhutan Office
Implementing partners	MoESD (ECCD & SEN Division)
Stakeholders	ECCD & SEN Division, UNICEF, TWG, The World Bank Group, Private ECCD operators, Parents, caregivers, education stakeholders and relevant CSOs.
Beneficiaries	Children 0-5 years of age and their parents/caregivers

5. STUDY METHODOLOGY

5.1 Study Design

For both the assessment and the process evaluation, a non-experimental design employing a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods will be employed. The consultant will propose a sound design and sampling methodology with guidance from the TWG and MoESD. The sampling approach should ensure adequate representation of respondents and study sites and centers.

5.1.1. Childcare Situation Assessment

The situation assessment should assess the supply and demand for childcare services for children aged 0 to 5 in selected urban and rural communities in Bhutan. There will be three components: (i) demand-side assessment; (ii) supply-side assessment and (iii) a landscape review.

(i) Demand-side assessment

Core themes should include:

- Current levels of economic activity (including labor force participation, hours, income, etc.)
- Current childcare arrangements
- Family needs and preferences including aspects related to convenience, affordability of childcare and willingness to pay and perceptions around quality
- Gender and social norms associated with childcare and women working
- Potential uplift in economic activity if families had access to better childcare arrangements

Initial considerations around sampling:

- The primary respondent for the household surveys should be the mothers/caregivers of children ages 0-5
- Information about childcare arrangements and preferences should be collected for all children ages 0-5 to allow disaggregation of results by age group (0-3 vs. 3-5)
- The sampling should include communities that do not have access to a publicly provided ECCD center (or mobile/home-based ECCD models) as well as communities where public ECCD models are available. The sampling should include communities being targeted by the HCRRP with jobs interventions (but may not have a public ECCD model) and the Accelerating Maternal and Child Health Outcomes Project (AMCHP) being implemented by the Ministry of Health.

(ii) Supply-side assessment: Core themes should include:

- Types of provision and core operating models available in the country
- Affordability and financial viability of the existing childcare arrangements
- Quality of childcare provision (at least a basic indication)
- Challenges and constraints in establishing and operating childcare services (e.g., access to financing, workforce development, meeting registration and quality standards, etc.)

- For services targeting children ages 3 to 5, perceptions on the need for, and feasibility of, (i) extending the hours of the day to better meet the needs of working parents; and (ii) extending the ages to include younger children.

Initial considerations around sampling:

- Surveys should be conducted with childcare providers including ECCD facilitators, ECCD center managers and focal monitors.
- The sampling should represent the variety of provision that is available in the country including formally registered and informal childcare providers and various public and nonstate sector models serving children ages 0-5.
- As not all provision will be registered, the survey design will need to outline strategies to identify providers.

(iii) **Landscape review:** Core themes should include:

- Policies and programs to expand childcare and early learning services for children ages 0-5 (including reference to the 13th Five Year Plan, expected to be available in Q3 2024).
- Institutional arrangements for childcare and early learning services
- Quality assurance systems and regulation
- Workforce requirements and opportunities to access training for private providers and CSOs.
- Perceptions on ways to improve childcare provision (including leveraging services targeting children ages 3 to 5 to extending the hours of the day to better meet the needs of working parents and extending the ages to include children under 3 years).

Initial considerations around sampling:

- This should be conducted through desk review and KIs initially, and then supplemented with findings from the demand- and supply-side assessments as well. Interviews should be conducted with government ministries / departments responsible for different aspects of the childcare and early learning system as well as a variety of organizations that working in the country on relevant topics (e.g., childcare, early childhood development, women's rights, etc.)

5.2 Data Sources and Data Collection Methods / Tools

Instruments for the assessments

The World Bank's "Invest in Childcare" situation assessment instruments for childcare should be as a solid starting point for this work. This package of instruments covers the core themes indicated in this note (apart from the supply-side assessment questions specifically related to the potential to leverage existing ECCD models serving children ages 3-5).

For the process evaluation, tool(s) that is aimed to collect data to assess implementation fidelity, challenges and successes of the interventions should be developed. Both tools should be reviewed by the TWG.

All primary data collected during the study must facilitate disaggregation by gender, age, disability, location, or remoteness wherever possible. It will be a requirement of the study team to source additional external data sources to add value to the study, such as government

administrative data, secondary literature that closely aligns to the project. The approach should also detail how data collected through different sources will be triangulated.

A range of project documentation will be made available to the study team that provides information about the design, implementation, and operation of the project. The study team is required to adhere to the [Save the Children Child Safeguarding; Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; Anti-Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying](#); and Data Protection and Privacy policies throughout the evaluation process.

The consultant or the consultant firm will also be required to lead and coordinate the data collection including recruitment of enumerators, training, ensuring the field data collection, monitoring and compiling of data. For this the financial proposal also include budget needed to complete all these tasks related to the completion of data collection for both the situation assessment and the process evaluation.

5.3 Ethical Considerations

It is expected that this study will be:

- **Child participatory.** Where **appropriate** and **safe**, children should be supported to participate in the evaluation process beyond simply being respondents. Opportunities for collaborative participation could include involving children in determining success criteria against which the project could be evaluated, supporting children to collect some of the data required for the evaluation themselves, or involving children in the validation of findings. Any child participation, whether consultative, collaborative or child-led, must abide by the [9 Basic Requirements for meaningful and ethical child participation](#).
- **Inclusive.** Ensure that children from different backgrounds have the chance to participate, as well as children with disabilities.
- **Ethical:** The study must be guided by the following ethical considerations:
 - Safeguarding – demonstrating the highest standards of behavior towards children and adults.
 - Sensitive – to child rights, gender, inclusion, and cultural contexts.
 - Openness - of information given, to the highest possible degree to all involved parties.
 - Confidentiality and data protection - measures will be put in place to protect the identity of all participants and any other information that may put them or others at risk.¹
 - Public access - to the results when there are not special considerations against this
 - Broad participation - the relevant parties should be involved where possible.
 - Reliability and independence - the study should be conducted so that findings and conclusions are correct and trustworthy.

It is expected that:

- Data collection methods will be age and gender appropriate.

¹ If any Consultancy Service Provider, Freelancer or Contingent worker will have direct contact with children and/or vulnerable adults and/or beneficiaries and/or have access to any sensitive data on safeguarding and/or children and/or beneficiaries, it is the responsibility of the person receiving the consulting service to contact the local HR team and child safeguarding focal point to ensure vetting checks and on-boarding are conducted in line with statutory requirements, local policies and best practices guidance.

- Study activities will provide a safe, creative space where children feel that their thoughts and ideas are important.
- A risk assessment will be conducted that includes any risks related to children, young people's, or adult's participation.
- A referral mechanism will be in place in case any child safeguarding, or protection issues arise.
- Informed consent will be used where possible.

6. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The consultancy assignment is expected to be executed between **December 2024 to April 2025**. The study deliverables and tentative timeline (subject to the commencement date of the study) are outlined below. The consultant, and SC study Project Manager will agree on final milestones and deadlines at the inception phase.

Deliverables and Tentative Timeline

Deliverable / Milestones	Timeline
<p>A. Child Care Situation Assessment (First Assignment)</p>	
<p>The consultant will submit and present an inception report* for the first assignment in line with the provided template, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study objectives, scope and key study questions ▪ Description of the methodology, including study design, data collection methods, sampling strategy, data sources, and final study matrix against the key study questions ▪ Final draft data collection instruments (<i>The World Bank's situation assessment instruments for childcare that include the core themes to be assessed under the present assessment which will be reviewed and adapted as needed to suit the assessment objectives and country context</i>) ▪ Data collection mechanism (finalization of tools, training of enumerators, data collection, supervision) ▪ Data analysis and reporting plan ▪ Caveats and limitations of study ▪ Risks and mitigation plan ▪ Ethical considerations including details on consent key deliverables, responsibilities, and timelines 	27 th December 2024
Submission of final study design/protocol and data collection tools	31 st December, 2024
<p>Data collection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enumerators recruitment and training (piloting and finalization of tools) ▪ Field data collection and supervision 	<p>W2 & W3 January 2025</p> <p>W4 January – W1 February 2025</p>

<p>Data analysis and reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Including all encrypted raw data, databases, and analysis outputs and report writing ▪ Presentation of draft study report (tentatively proposed for 27th March) - SCI template available 	<p>W4 February 2025</p> <p>W3 March 2025 (27th March)</p>
<p>Final Childcare Assessment Study Report* incorporating feedback from consultation on the Draft Study Report (11th April)</p> <p>Knowledge translation materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PowerPoint presentation of Study findings ▪ Evidence to Study Brief**SCI template available 	<p>W2 April 2025 (11th April)</p>

*All reports are to use the Save the Children format including font, and other branding requirements.

** The Evidence to Action Brief is a 2-4 pages summary of the full report and will be created using the Save the Children Management Response template.

All documents are to be produced in MS Word format and provided electronically by email to the SC focal person. Copies of all PowerPoint presentations used to facilitate briefings for the project should also be provided to Save the Children in editable digital format.

7. REPORTING AND GOVERNANCE

SC Bhutan will form a technical group with representatives from SC and MoESD and to provide technical support and to facilitate the process. The consultant will report to technical working group jointly led by the SC and MoESD. The working group will be responsible for approving all the deliverables. The technical working group will meet at least once face to face and will provide feedback remotely as and when required.

The consultant is to provide reporting against the project plan. The following regular reporting and quality review processes will also be used:

A written progress update by email to the technical working group every fortnight, documenting progress, any emerging issues to be resolved and planned activities for the next month.

The consultant will also attend regular technical working group meetings. The technical working group will meet at least three times before discussions/ presentations of important milestones and deliverables such as inception meeting, interim report presentation, and final report presentation.

8. STUDY MANAGEMENT

The expected consultancy period is for **Study** Tentative Timeline, with key deliverables in bold. The final timeline and deliverables will be agreed upon in the inception phase.

What	Who is responsible
Call for quotations	HR manager/ IT and Logistics Coordinator
Study tender submissions due	HR manager/ IT and Logistics Coordinator

Tender review and selection of study team	SC
Documentation review, desk research	Consultant
Consultation	Consultant
Inception report	Consultant
SCI and Administrative clearance	SC and MoESD
Ethical clearance	SC (SCI clearance) and Consultant (National Ethical Clearance)
Review of inception report including data collection tools	SC and TWG
Logistical arrangements	MoESD focal person and SC focal person
Field Data collection	Consultant
Data management and analysis (coding, transcriptions, data cleaning and analysis)	Consultant
Presentation to TWG and review of first draft of the study report	Consultant
Submission of final study report, datasets and Knowledge products (ppt and study brief).	Consultant

9. STUDY TEAM AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Interested consultants will be required to submit an Expression of Interest in line with the provided template, which should demonstrate adherence to the following requirements.

Understanding of Requirements and Experience

To be considered, the consultant must have demonstrated skills, expertise and experience in:

- Designing and conducting situational assessment, needs assessment in ECCD
- Conducting studies in the field of Education particularly in relation to ECCD
- Leading socio-economic research, evaluations or consultancy work in Bhutanese context that is sensitive to the local context and culture.
- Conducting ethical and inclusive studies involving children and child participatory techniques
- Experience in using statistical packages such as STATA and qualitative data analysis
- Conducting ethical and inclusive studies involving marginalised, deprived and/or vulnerable groups in culturally appropriate and sensitive ways
- Managing and coordinating a range of government, non-government, community groups and academic stakeholders
- Sound and proven experience in conducting evaluations based on OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, particularly utilisation and learning focused evaluations
- Extensive experience of theories of change and how they can be used to carry out evaluations

- Strong written and verbal skills in communicating technical and/ or complex findings to non-specialist audiences (especially report writing and presentation skills)
- A track record of open, collaborative working with clients

There is a high expectation that:

- Members (or a proportion) of the study team have a track record of previously working together.
- The team has the ability to commit to the terms of the project and have adequate and available skilled resources to dedicate to this study over the period.
- A team leader will be appointed who has the seniority and experience in leading complex study projects, and who has the ability and standing to lead a team toward a common goal.
- The team leader will lead the team in EWG meetings and in the presentation of the study findings to stakeholders.

Financial Proposal

Save the Children seeks value for money in its work. This does not necessarily mean "lowest cost", but quality of the service and reasonableness of the proposed costs. Proposals shall include personnel allocation (role / number of days / daily rates / taxes), as well as any other applicable costs.

10. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT

The following payments will be made to the consultant using and agreed mode of payment

- Upon approval of inception report and tools: [20%]
- Upon submission of First Draft study Report: [30%]
- Upon approval of final study report: [50%]

11. HOW TO APPLY

If interested in applying for this study, please refer to the [Consultant EOI Form](#). Contact person for this study is

12. ANNEXES

Annex 2: SCI Report Template

ToR prepared by:	
ToR approved by:	

Date of sign off: