

Requesting Section: Education/ECD, UNICEF TCO

Situation analysis on Early Childhood Development in Thailand (RFPS)

1. Background

UNICEF Thailand is supporting the Office of Education Council (OEC), serving as the secretariat for the National Early Childhood Development Policy Committee, in enhancing national and sub-national governance, coordination, and implementation monitoring to advance Early Childhood Development (ECD). Effective allocation of effort and investment in ECD requires policy-makers to be aware of gaps and challenges at both national and regional levels and to target their measures accordingly. A comprehensive ECD situation analysis will aid the government in making informed policy decisions, directing investments for maximum impact, and ensuring no child is left behind. Therefore, Thailand plans to conduct a comprehensive ECD situation analysis in 2025, with the expectation to be updated every 2-3 years as appropriate.

The Situation Analysis aims to contribute to the national implementation and monitoring of ECD services, enrich policy dialogues, and guide future policy, programming, and investments in early childhood development. The findings will be used to advocate for more effective and sustainable investments in ECD, ensuring that every child in Thailand can develop to their full potential, regardless of socioeconomic background, geographic location, or other barriers. The analysis will assess the current state of ECD in Thailand, identifying and examining key indicators and processes related to early childhood education, nutrition, healthcare, child protection, and responsive care and parenting. It will provide essential recommendations to inform policies, strategies, and coordination aimed at improving early childhood outcomes and addressing existing disparities.

In light of the above, UNICEF Thailand and the OEC are seeking a national institution to develop a Situation Analysis of Early Childhood Development in Thailand. This analysis will provide valuable insights to guide Thailand's efforts in promoting an inclusive, equitable, and high-quality ECD system for all children. The selected institution will work closely with UNICEF Thailand, the Office of Education Council, and other key ministries involved in early childhood development.

2. Objectives, Purpose & Expected results

The overall objective of this assignment is to:

- Assess the current status of ECD policies, services, and coordination mechanisms.
- Identify key gaps, challenges, and opportunities in the provision and coordination of ECD services.
- Propose a comprehensive inter-sectoral ECD monitoring framework.
- Provide actionable recommendations for policy and service improvement.

The comprehensive ECD situation analysis in Thailand will improve the understanding of decision-makers, ECD service providers, and stakeholders regarding the current status of early childhood development in Thailand and the causes of gaps and inequities, contribute to national planning and monitoring process, and inform evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation for ECD in Thailand. Additionally, a monitoring framework containing key ECD indicators should be presented to allow the National ECD Policy Committee to monitor progress annually.

3. Description of the assignment

The comprehensive situation analysis is expected to be a mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative) study. The study must be conducted through a strong gender and equity lens and ensure families and children from disadvantaged contexts and marginalized communities (such as poor households, underserved provinces, migrant families, and children with disabilities) are represented in the study. The study should present evidence on ECD service delivery, challenges, and opportunities to support the development of a comprehensive and coordinated strategy and enabling environment for the equitable expansion of quality ECD services in Thailand. It should also examine access, coverage, quality, and equity of ECD services across sectors and national and sub-national coordination mechanisms, focusing on the whole child's development according to the Nurturing Care Framework.

The contractor will work under direct supervision of UNICEF ECD Specialist, and in close cooperation with the Bureau of ECD, OEC. Regular meeting with UNICEF and OEC should be planned. In addition, as national ownership is necessary to build consensus on the analytical results, involvement of the government ministries, civil society and other national stakeholders throughout the SitAn process is essential. Stakeholder involvement should be strategically planned and managed throughout the process.

The development of the Situation Analysis (SitAn) shall follow a basic sequence of steps:

1. Inception phase:

- Kick-off meeting
- Initial desk review to assess availability of data/information.
- Development of the inception report, including conceptual framework for the SitAn, research plan, data collection tools, and report structure.
- Presentation of the conceptual framework, research plan, tools, and report structure to UNICEF, OEC and key stakeholders.

2. Data collection and analysis:

- Interviews and/or focus groups with key informants.
- Secondary analysis of available data/information. In-depth desk-review of existing evidence regarding the situation of young children. This will include data/information on most disadvantaged and deprived groups of children.
- Data analysis
- Development of draft report (maximum 80 pages) including the monitoring framework to be reviewed by UNICEF, OEC, and other key partners

3. Finalization:

- Validation of the draft SitAn report.
- Development of final comprehensive report including the monitoring framework for public dissemination, and other deliverables (including summary report, PowerPoint Presentation and policy brief on key ECD challenges and recommendations.

Remark: The SitAN report should cover, but not limited to, the following structure/topics. The final report structure must be agreed upon by UNICEF and OEC.

Chapter 1 – ECD in Thailand

- 1.1 Background and context
- 1.2 Thailand within regional and global framework
 - Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - SDGs
- 1.3 Laws, policies, plans
 - Multisectoral

- Sectoral
- Enabling
- 1.4 Budget and investment
- 1.5 Governance and mechanism
 - 6 Ministries MOU
 - National ECD Policy Committee
- 1.6 Stakeholders/ Networks
 - Ministries
 - NGOs/ INGOs
 - Community
 - Local authorities

Chapter 2 – ECD situation analysis

- 2.1 Health and Nutrition
 - Antenatal and postnatal care
 - Immunization
 - Child health promotion
 - Access to healthcare
 - Growth monitoring and malnutrition
 - Breastfeeding
 - Complementary feeding
- 2.2 Responsive Caregiving and support for parents
 - Parental leave
 - Parental skill
 - Living arrangements
 - Parent-Child Relationship
 - Parental Wellbeing
- 2.3 Safety and Security
 - child protection
 - child injury
 - social protection
 - Clean and child-friendly environment
- 2.4 Opportunities for Early Learning
 - Learning at home
 - Childcare services for 0-2 years old (Access and quality)
 - Early childhood education 3-6 years old (Access and quality, including learning activities, media and resources, environment, staffing, National ECD Standards)
 - Child development - DSPM, ECDI 2030
- 2.5 Children in vulnerable situations (e.g. children with disabilities, poor children, migrant children)
 - Access to rights, services

Chapter 3 – Overall analysis and policy recommendation

- 3.1 Overall analysis of Thailand's ECD implementation
- 3.2 Policy recommendation

Chapter 4 – Deep dive into the emerging issues

- 4.1 An emerging issue to be identified

Annexes - ECD monitoring Framework

4. Deliverables and Timeline

The activities and deliverables for this assignment are as follow:

Activities	Deliverables	Estimated timeline
Inception phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project kick off meeting Initial desk review to assess availability of data/information. Development of the inception report, including conceptual framework for the SitAn, research plan, data collection tools, and report structure Presentation of the conceptual framework, research plan, tools, and report structure to UNICEF, OEC and key stakeholders. 	Deliverable 1 - Inception report in Thai and English, including conceptual framework for the SitAn, specific tools for data collection, and report outline.	End of May 2025
Data collection and analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews and/or focus groups with key informants. Secondary analysis of available data/information. In-depth desk-review of existing evidence regarding the situation of young children. This will include data/information on most disadvantaged and deprived groups of children. Data analysis Development of draft report (maximum 80 pages) to be reviewed by UNICEF, OEC, and other key partners 	Deliverable 2 - Draft SitAN report in Thai	End of September 2025
Finalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validation of the draft SitAn through workshop and report review Development of final comprehensive report for public dissemination and other deliverables 	Deliverable 3 - Presentation of Summary of comments and response from the validation process Deliverable 4 - Final report in Thai and English Deliverable 5 - Summary report in Thai and English Deliverable 6 - PowerPoint Presentation in Thai and English. Deliverable 7 – Policy brief on key ECD challenges and recommendations in Thai and English	Mid-October 2025 (Deliverable 3) End of November 2025 (Deliverable 4-7)

5. Reporting requirements

- Inception report in Thai and English, including conceptual framework for the SitAn, specific tools for data collection, and report outline.
- Draft situation analysis report in Thai

- Final situation analysis report in Thai and English
- Summary report in Thai and English
- PowerPoint Presentation in Thai and English.
- Policy brief on key ECD challenges and recommendations in Thai and English

Note: All reports as part of the deliverables (such as inception report, draft report and final report) must meet the quality standards of UNICEF.

- Methodological rigor will be given significant consideration in the assessment of the quality of deliverables. In the domain of ethical compliance, the research should be guided by **UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis** and when relevant the approval of an ethical review board will be a prerequisite for the research. (<https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/documents/unicef-procedure-ethical-standards-research-evaluation-data-collection-and-analysis>)
- Reports as part of the deliverables (including both Inception Report and Final Report) must meet the quality standards of UNICEF in line with **UNICEF Standard Operating Procedures for Research Studies and Evaluations**. The Final Report will need to be rated as satisfactory or above by UNICEF's quality assurance review facility. (<https://www.unicef-irc.org/files/upload/documents/UNICEF-%20Quality-Assurance-Research.pdf>)

6. Location and Duration

- The assignment is expected to be completed with 8 months after the signing of the contract. (tentatively from April to November 2025). A detailed workplan will be agreed with the awarded contractor during the inception phase.
- The contractor will work primarily in Thailand and in close collaboration with UNICEF and other government entities which are based in Bangkok, Thailand. Regular virtual or in-person meetings are expected. The contractor will be responsible for acquiring resources and facilities required for its completion, including any travel arrangements.

7. Mandatory and Desirable Qualification Requirements

This contract will be awarded to an institution. If a consortium of two or more institutions submits a joint bid, a lead institution must be named. The lead institution will serve as the sole point of contact with UNICEF for contract management purposes. Bidders shall assign personnel (s) who meet the below qualification to provide the services required under this TOR.

Qualification for institutional contractor

- The contractor must be legally permitted to operate in Thailand and have office representation registered in Thailand.
- Demonstrated strong expertise in global and Thailand's situation on early childhood development, with at least 10 years of institutional experience in carrying out a similar research or experience in ECD in Thailand.
- Must have familiarity with Thai government system, ECD governance, and the public provision of ECD services in Thailand.
- Experience of research team in conducting reviews of data, research, policy analysis; knowledge and experience working on issue related to early childhood development is required.
- Demonstration of a quality assurance mechanism to ensure that products are of high quality.
- Must have the capacity to travel and work in Thailand to engage with relevant stakeholders.
- Demonstration of the ability to conduct the research in Thai, and the ability to submit a concise and well-developed report both in English and Thai.

- Ability to be flexible and deliver results under tight deadlines.
- Must understand and follow UNICEF Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis and be able to conduct an ethical review according to UNICEF's requirement.
- Experience of working with UNICEF, UN agencies, private sector and/or governments on research initiatives is desirable.
- Expertise in children development and family strengthening, gender equality promotion is desirable.

Qualification for Project lead

- Advanced degree in early childhood education, social policy, education, social science, public health, or another relevant technical field.
- A minimum of 8 years of professional/ academic experience in policy analysis, planning, research, monitoring and evaluation, or other relevant area.
- Familiarity with early childhood development, ECD governance, and the public provision of ECD services in Thailand.
- Excellent knowledge of qualitative and/or quantitative research methods, including experience in literature and desk review
- Must be excellent in communication in English and Thai communication skill, including ability to present in a formal setting in both languages.
- Experience in drafting or development of situation analysis reports for children and adolescents, and/or analytical reports and policy documents related to children is an added advantage.

Qualification for Research team member

- A degree in early childhood education, social policy, education, social science, public health, or another relevant technical field
- At least 5 years of experience in early childhood development
- Experience in conducting workshops, focused group discussion, and interviews.
- Must be good in communication in English and Thai communication.

8. Evaluation process for this solicitation / tender

The evaluation panel will first review each response for compliance with the mandatory requirements of this RFPS. Failure to comply with any of the terms and conditions contained in this RFPS, including provision of all required information, may result in a response or proposal being disqualified from further consideration. Kindly also refer to the detailed instructions in the main LRPS document.

Each valid proposal will be assessed by an evaluation panel first on its technical merits and subsequently on its price. For this RFPS, the weight allocated to the technical proposal is 70 % (i.e. 70 out of 100 points). To be further considered for the financial evaluation a minimum score of 49 points is required. Only proposals with a score of 49 or more points in the technical evaluation will be financially evaluated (i.e. the financial proposal will be opened). For further details and the distribution of points kindly refer to **table 1** below.

The weight allocated to the financial proposal is 30% as per the following: the maximum number of 30 points will be allotted to the lowest priced, technically compliant proposal. All other price proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price. Financial proposals should be submitted on an all-inclusive basis for providing the contracted deliverables as described in the TOR.

The proposal(s) obtaining the overall highest score after adding the scores for the technical and financial proposals is the proposal that offers best value for money and will be recommended for award of the contract.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria and distribution of points

CATEGORY	Max. Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OVERALL RESPONSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of, and responsiveness to the requirements (5) Understanding of scope, objectives and completeness of response (5) 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> METHODOLOGY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of the proposed approach and methodology (15) Quality of proposed implementation plan, i.e. how the bidder will undertake each task to deliver the results under tight deadlines, and time-schedules (10) Risk assessment - recognition of the peripheral problems and quality assurance mechanism/ methods to prevent and manage peripheral problems (5) 	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PROPOSED TEAM and ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team members - relevant experience, skills & competencies (15) Professional expertise, knowledge and experience with similar projects, contracts, clients and consulting assignments. (15) 	30
TOTAL POINTS FOR TECHNICAL PROPOSAL (min. passing score = 49 points)	70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINANCIAL PROPOSAL Full marks are allocated to the lowest priced proposal. The financial scores of the other proposals will be in inverse proportion to the lowest price. 	30
TOTAL POINTS	100

9. Administrative issues and Proposal to be submitted

- Bidders are requested to provide a detailed technical proposal in **Annex C** – Technical response form. The technical proposal must include all information needed to fully evaluate the proposal against the requirements and evaluation criteria outlined in section 7 and 8 of this TOR.
- Bidders must ensure not to include any financial information in the technical proposal.
- Bidders are requested to provide the detailed cost proposal in **Annex D** – Financial response form. All cost implications for the required service/assignment as per this TOR must be included. No costs can be added later.
- If the bidder wishes to include additional or optional elements outside the defined deliverables as per this TOR, these should be clearly marked as such in both, the technical and financial proposal.
- Should circumstance arise, where there are two or more competitive proposals, an online interview with the team leader and key members may be requested, to determine suitability.
- It is anticipated that the work required will be carried out in the facilities of the successful institution and in the fields. UNICEF is unable to provide office space.
- The financial proposal should be all-inclusive, including any anticipated travel costs.

10. Payment Schedule

No.	Payment	Tentative schedule	Upon successful completion of ...
1.	40%	June 2025	Deliverable 1
2.	40%	September 2025	Deliverable 2
4.	20%	December 2025	Deliverable 3-7

- The payment schedule must be based on completed deliverables.
- If the bidder wishes to propose an alternative payment schedule, it must be included in the financial proposal. The final payment schedule is to be reviewed and agreed with UNICEF.
- Payment terms 30 days net upon receipt of approved invoice.

11. Any other Information

UNICEF and OEC will be supporting the organization and coordination of the meetings and workshop with key stakeholders as needed.
