

Evaluation of Child Guarantee, Preparatory Stage, Phase III Terms of Reference

BASIC INFORMATION

Title of the evaluation	Evaluating the Child Guarantee Preparatory Stage, Phase III
Office	ECARO, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Germany
Date	September 1, 2021

1. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

Fighting child poverty and investing in children’s well-being has featured on the agenda of the European Union (EU) for many years. In the last decade, an emphasis has been on the quality of education and care services and their impact on the society in the long run. This includes an equitable distribution of welfare, as well as a way to promote the social inclusion of children in need, particularly children from disadvantaged backgrounds¹.

In February 2013, the European Commission published the recommendation on Investing in children: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage, which was endorsed by the EU Council in July 2013. This recommendation has provided a clear and comprehensive policy framework for tackling child poverty and promoting child well-being. More recently, the adoption of a European Pillar of Social Rights (2017) and of the Action Plan for its implementation (2021), as well as of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2021) have reinforced the importance of promoting children’s rights. It is also important to note that all Member States have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which should thus guide EU- as well as national and (sub-) national policies and actions that have an impact on the rights of the child.

Despite this growing political commitment to promoting children’s rights and well-being as well as a stronger legal framework and a clearer policy guidance, progress has been slow and high levels of child poverty or social exclusion persist in many EU countries, for some groups of children.

Principle 11 of the European Pillar of Social Rights:

11. Children have the right to affordable early childhood education and care of good quality. Children have the right to protection from poverty. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds have the right to specific measures to enhance equal opportunities.

In 2019, in the Political Guidelines for the Next European Commission, President Ursula von der Leyen announced the creation of a European Child Guarantee with a view to ensuring that every child in Europe at risk of poverty or social exclusion has access to the most basic of rights like healthcare and education. The objective of the Council recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee, which was adopted in June 2021, is to prevent and combat social exclusion by guaranteeing the access of children in need to a set of key services.

¹ Eurofound (2019), Quality of health and care services in the EU, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg

The Council recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee addresses specific aspects of child poverty and social exclusion. It recommends to the Member States to provide for every child at risk of poverty or social exclusion free and effective access to:

- early childhood education and care;
- education and school-based activities;
- healthy meal every school day, and
- healthcare.

Effective access – meaning a situation in which services are readily available, affordable, accessible, of good quality, provided in a timely manner, and where the potential users are aware of their existence, as well as of entitlements to use them – to adequate housing and healthy nutrition is also to be guaranteed.

The European Child Guarantee recommendation foresees that within 9 months after its adoption (i.e. until 15 March 2022) Member States will develop action plans, which should cover the period until 2030 and:

- identify specific groups of children who should benefit from the guarantee;
- set targets to be achieved;
- outline corresponding measures;
- indicate the sources of necessary funding; and
- outline monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

While the Member States will report to the Commission every 2 years on the progress in the implementation of the national plans, the Commission will review the implementation of the Recommendation after 5 years and report to the Council.

2. THE OBJECT OF THE EVALUATION

The object of evaluation is the preparatory action for a Child Guarantee (Phase III), outlined in the Action Proposal in Annex 1: "[Testing the Child Guarantee with the Aim of Ending Child Poverty and Social Exclusion for all Children in Europe](#)". The intention of Phase III is to build a Child Guarantee Programme framework in support of the operationalisation of the Child Guarantee at all levels. This framework is being developed and verified in Phase III, under concrete and controlled circumstances.

Throughout the implementation of the early stage of this preparatory stage, Phase III, UNICEF refined the theory of change for its activities. Theory of Change of preparatory Stage, Phase III is summarized below.

Theory of Change Summary:

INPUTS	OUTPUTS	
Activities	Short-term outcomes	Long-term impact
<p>Pillar 1: EVIDENCE GENERATION AND ANALYSES</p> <p>Meta-Analysis in 27 EU countries Deep Dive analyses in 7 EU Countries Operational research on specific service models Human Interest Stories and other participatory tools</p>	<p>EU- and national level: Synthesis that generalises lessons for all EU countries including 4 -5 case studies (Evaluation)</p>	<p>European Child Guarantee adopted, resourced and used by Phase III participating countries and beyond</p>  <p>Child at risk of poverty and social exclusion in EU Member States have free and effective access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood education and care • Education and school -based activities • Healthy meal every school day • Healthcare • Healthy nutrition and adequate housing
<p>Pillar 2: POLICY ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country -specific communication and visibility plans; Evidence -based advocacy • Targeted technical assistance to governments in support of coordinated and participatory government -driven processes in 7 EU countries to develop Child Guarantee National Action Plans (NAPs) with monitoring and evaluation frameworks 	<p>National level: Finalized evidence -based and informed NAPs / improved strategies and plans</p> <p>National and subnational level: CG institutionalised in stakeholder coordination and participation systems in selected countries</p>	
<p>Pillar 3: IMPROVING SUPPLY, DEMAND AND SERVICE QUALITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated and participatory processes to design, implement and monitor selected service models driven by a coalition of implementing partners in selected implementation sites 	<p>Subnational level: ‘Conditions’ and investments required to operationalise the CG NAPs through selected models of services and interventions have been explored and defined</p>	

The preparatory action for a Child Guarantee originated from the European Parliament and has consisted of three phases. Phase I, conducted between mid-2018 and March 2020, was a study on the feasibility of a Child Guarantee for vulnerable children. The purpose of the Feasibility Study was to explore how exactly the Child Guarantee may contribute to fighting child poverty and social exclusion, in particular for children from disadvantaged backgrounds in the European Union and ensure the access for these children to the five areas already identified before. This was followed, in Phase II (autumn 2019 to February 2021), by a study on the economic implementing framework of a possible EU Child Guarantee scheme including its financial foundation.

The aim of Phase III is to test the Child Guarantee in Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece and Italy, as well as to analyse policy frameworks for combatting child poverty in mentioned countries, as well Germany, Lithuania and Spain. Detailed country plans have been developed and are being rolled out under the oversight of national steering committees led by the governments, facilitated by UNICEF and with the inputs from different government and non-governmental stakeholders working on child poverty, and social exclusion.

The ongoing work places UNICEF and its partners in a position to understand how the Child Guarantee can be made a reality in the Member States, what are the processes that should be activated for the Child Guarantee to be successful and what should be some of the key principles and core services that the Child Guarantee should enable for children in need in Europe, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds .

The contribution of UNICEF includes generation of quality evidence and technical assistance to inform decision making processes at the sub-national, national and EU levels, convening power of UNICEF to ensure participation of key stakeholders, including children; communication and visibility strategy to ensure transparency of the process to inform and obtain feedback on the implementation of the child guarantee.

3. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation purpose is to provide information to decision makers regarding the implementation of the Preparatory Stage of the Child Guarantee, as part of the agreement between UNICEF with the European Commission.

As the European Child Guarantee is in process of establishing mechanisms at different levels for planning, implementation and monitoring, the evaluation process intends to inform the ongoing specific political processes that can lead to decisions concerning actions to be taken, monitoring of progress and results, and implementation. It is therefore expected that the evaluation adopts a developmental character, allowing to feed into key decision-making moments.

In addition to UNICEF, primary audience and users of evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations include European Commission, national governments, civil society organizations, academics, and other practitioners and decision makers in the area of child poverty and social exclusion of children in the European Context, and other contexts dealing with similar child-related matters.

The evaluation will add transparency to the implementation of Phase III. It shall be managed by the independent Evaluation Section at UNICEF ECARO and conducted by an external institution to ensure that evaluation principles are safeguarded. An Evaluation Reference Group will be established to ensure technical soundness as well as guide the process in the integration of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations in the implementation of the preparatory stage of the Child Guarantee.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION

The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the progress of the preparatory stage, Phase III of the Child Guarantee in the evidence generation, institutional aspects, and operational aspects of implementing services on the ground.

Specifically, the evaluation team will examine the period between July 2020 – June 2022:

- a. The progress made by the Phase III of the preparatory stage, in terms of paving the pathway towards the implementation of the Child Guarantee in Europe; and
- b. Factors and/or group of factors facilitating or hindering the Child Guarantee preparation at the regional level and in countries participating in this Phase.

The evaluation will build on routine monitoring data collected throughout Phase III in all countries based on the agreed results framework and the findings of the Operational Research, which includes two rounds of data collection in the four implementation countries. The data and information gathered through routine monitoring and the operational research are answering questions pertaining to whether:

- all activities (e.g., systematic review and meta-analysis, deep dive analyses) have been implemented, as planned and the expected immediate outputs (e.g., synthesis of lessons learned) achieved (for more on activities and outputs, see the summary of the Theory of change for Phase III above),
- the selected services and intervention models meet specific criteria (e.g., innovation, evidence-based and -informed, sustainability, needs-based, gender-sensitive), and
- the results that are measurable in the given timeframe can be constructively used in national action planning.

Please see Annex 2 for further details.

Specifically, the evaluation should respond to the following questions and criteria:

Criterion	Description	Questions
Coherence	Through this criterion, the evaluation will analyse only external coherence of UNICEF’s intervention in terms of its consistency with the European Child Guarantee framework. This includes complementarity, harmonisation and co-ordination with other stakeholders, and the extent to which the intervention is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.	<p>Are the preparatory Stage Phase III outputs coherent with the Council recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee addressing specific aspects of child poverty and social exclusion?</p> <p>Are the Preparatory Stage Phase III outputs focused in particular on securing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective and free access to early childhood education and care • effective and free access to education and school-based activities • effective and free access to at least one healthy meal each school day • effective and free access to healthcare • effective access to healthy nutrition, and • effective access to adequate housing? <p><i>What conditions facilitated or hindered the coherence of these outputs?</i></p>

<p>Effectiveness</p>	<p>The evaluation will assess the extent to which the Phase III of the Preparatory Stage has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results.</p>	<p>Have the outputs of UNICEF and its implementing partners (methods, tools, plan and processes) been used in the formulation of the national action plans and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and in the implementation of the action plans in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?</p> <p>To what extent have the UNICEF and its partners at all facilitated the development of actionable, integrated, and effective policies to address child poverty and social exclusion at the national level? (to be assessed on the basis of the Action's contribution to the development of the national action plans for implementation of the European Child Guarantee recommendation)</p>
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>The evaluation team will analyse whether the net benefits of the Phase III of the preparatory action for a Child Guarantee continue, or are likely to continue. Includes an examination at the political, financial, operational /implementation, and technical aspect. It involves analyses of resilience, risks and potential trade-offs.</p>	<p>Can UNICEF's outputs (methods, tools, plans, and processes) be used and continue to be used in the formulation of the national action plans for implementation of the European Child Guarantee recommendation in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?</p> <p>What conditions may facilitate or hinder the sustained use of these methods, tools, and processes in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?</p>

Unit of Analysis Phase III inputs

EVIDENCE GENERATION AND ANALYSES

Meta-Analysis in 27 EU countries; Deep Dive analyses in selected Countries; Operational research in specific service models; Human Interest Stories and other participatory tools

POLICY ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

- Country-specific communication and visibility plans; Evidence-based advocacy
- Targeted technical assistance to governments in support of coordinated and participatory government-driven processes in 7 EU countries to develop Child Guarantee National Action Plans (NAPs) with monitoring and evaluation frameworks

IMPROVING SUPPLY, DEMAND AND SERVICE QUALITY

- Coordinated and participatory processes to design, implement and monitor selected service models driven by a coalition of implementing partners in selected implementation sites

Evaluation Criteria

Specific Evaluation Questions

Coherence

Are the preparatory Stage Phase III inputs coherent with the Council recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee addresses specific aspects of child poverty and social exclusion?

Are the Preparatory Stage Phase III inputs focused in particular on securing effective and free access to early childhood education and care; education and school-based activities; at least one healthy meal each school day; healthcare; health nutrition; and to adequate housing?

What conditions facilitated or hindered the coherence of these inputs?

Effectiveness

Have the inputs of UNICEF and its implementing partners (methods, tools, plans and processes) been used in the formulation of the national action plans and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and in the implementation of the action plans in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?

To what extent have UNICEF and its partners at all facilitated or hindered the development of actionable, integrated, and effective policies to address child poverty and social exclusion at the national level?

Sustainability

To what extent UNICEF's inputs (methods, tools, plans, and processes) can be used and can continue to be used in the formulation of the national action plans for implementation of the European Child Guarantee recommendation in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?

What conditions may facilitate or hinder the sustained use of these methods, tools, and processes in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?

5. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

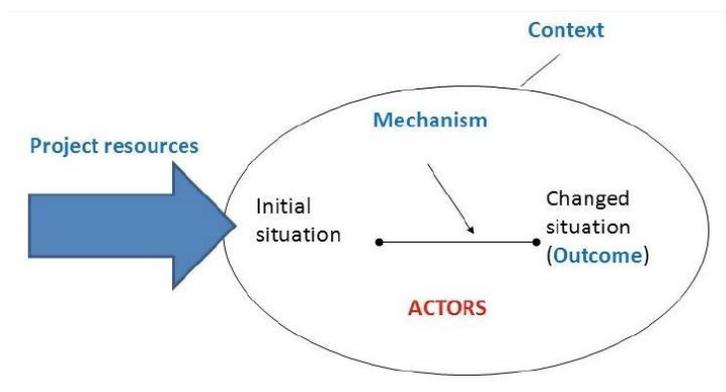
This evaluation will analyse pathways taken at the regional and country level leading towards progress in the results at the outcome level of the Child Guarantee. While projects/models of innovative approach, and implementation process will be assessed by the Operational Research, this evaluation will use this information to respond to the evaluation questions in terms of processes, methods, and approaches. The vast evidence generated by the operational research will be analysed as part of the operational conditions of the contract to set a mechanism in place of the Child Guarantee.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1. METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

The evaluation will use mixed methods and approaches, selected based on the evaluation questions, data availability and context. The evaluation will prioritize the use of a theory-based, contribution analysis approach and qualitative comparative analysis. It will also use a developmental approach focus to ensure that current contextual elements at the political, financial, implementation and technical levels are considered.

Although the evaluation is not meant to compare countries in order to rank their progress, a comparative analysis will be used to identify common outcome areas and characteristics, and consider specific contextual aspect in each country, compatible with a realist approach to the evaluation.



Source: Befani B., 1016

It is proposed that the evaluation team uses Qualitative Comparative Analysis for the analysis of cases in different countries, while using process tracing in each specific case study (expected 5 case studies) to analyze the contribution of Phase III of the preparatory action to the overall Child Guarantee preparation in that specific country.²

² Befani, B. (2016). Pathways to Change: Evaluating development interventions with Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) (p. 251). Stockholm: EBA.

Befani, B., Rees, C., Varga, L., & Hills, D. (2016). Testing Contribution Claims with Bayesian Updating. EPPN 2. CECAN. Retrieved from

Befani, B., & Stedman-Bryce, G. (2017). Process Tracing and Bayesian updating for impact evaluation. *Evaluation*, 23(1), 42-60.

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) is a comparative method for systematic cross-case analysis. It addresses questions related to the set of factors, within and outside an intervention, that are associated (as a package) to an outcome. It also allows for questions such as what difference the intervention made, for whom and under what circumstances. It does so by asking whether the causal package (e.g. the intervention and other factors), satisfy notions of necessity and sufficiency for a claim of causality (Befani, 2016). In QCA, every case is conceived as a package, or a combination of conditions and one particular outcome. QCA, at its core, uses set theory logics (i.e. conjunction, disjunction, and negation) for unpacking the necessary and sufficient conditions for an outcome to occur. It is ideally suited for capturing causal asymmetry: causal factors that are either necessary but not sufficient (i.e. political will and commitment is an important element of an intervention's success, but in itself cannot achieve change) or sufficient but not necessary (the construction of a bigger school is sufficient for increasing school capacity, but there are other strategies that could increase school capacity). Additionally, QCA's distinguishing feature is that it is based on Boolean algebra (for every presence, there is an absence) and operates by identifying superset/subset relationships that fit the available empirical data.

Process Tracing (PT) has gained ground in the last decade as a method. It is a theory-based qualitative method for investigating causal inference by assessing within case congruence to an expected theory of change (Collier, 2011; Beach & Pedersen, 2013). Beach and Pedersen propose this method as a qualitative approach through ex-post design where there is no control group available. It requires outcomes to be known and questions why and how change happens by tracking evidence of each link in the causal chain. Process tracing is distinguishable from other more commonly used approaches of evaluation because it focuses on increasing our level of confidence in a causal story rather than trying to measure impact and attribute it to a particular event (Befani and Mayne, 2014). It is also distinguishable from case-study analyses because it proposes a Bayesian logic assigning probabilities to assess the strength of within-case observations and evidence of how and why an effect occurred.

Participatory approach for this evaluation is encouraged, especially those including child participation.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation questions are formulated as per OECD-DAC evaluation criteria with some adjustment to UNICEF's change strategies and will explore value-added through coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability. Additional cross-cutting issues such as relevant human rights, including child rights, equity and gender equality are also examined as part of any UNICEF evaluation.

Specific Evaluation Questions	Data/Evidence/Tools	Proposed Methods
<p>Are the preparatory Stage Phase III inputs coherent with the Council recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee addressing specific aspects of child poverty and social exclusion?</p> <p>Are the Preparatory Stage Phase III inputs focused in particular on securing effective and free access to early childhood education and care; education and school-based activities; at least one healthy meal each school day; healthcare; healthy nutrition; and to adequate housing?</p>	<p>Desk Review of inputs KII at the regional and country level Statistics, Admin data Media data Natural language processing</p>	<p>Realist evaluation Contribution analysis</p>
<p>What conditions facilitated or hindered the coherence of these inputs?</p>	<p>KII at regional level KII at country level, participating countries Desk Review ; ToC</p>	<p>Realist Evaluation</p>
<p>Have the inputs of UNICEF and its implementing partners (methods, tools, plan and processes) been used in the formulation of the national action plans and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and in the implementation of the action plans in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?</p> <p>To what extent have the UNICEF and its partners at all facilitated or hindered the development of actionable, integrated, and effective policies to address child poverty and social exclusion at the national level?</p>	<p>Desk review KII at country level, participating countries Media data Natural language processing ToC</p>	<p>Outcome mapping Process tracing Contribution analysis Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)</p>
<p>To what extent UNICEF's inputs (methods, tools, plans, and processes) can be used and can continue to be used in the formulation of the national action plans for implementation of the European Child Guarantee recommendation in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?</p>	<p>KII at the regional level; KII at country level (participating and not participating countries) Desk review; Media data; Natural language processing ToC</p>	<p>Realist evaluation; Contribution analysis; Process tracing; Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)</p>
<p>What conditions may facilitate or hinder the sustained used of these methods, tools, and processes in the Member States concerned? And in other Member States?</p>	<p>KII at the regional level KII at country level (participating and not participating countries) Desk review</p>	<p>Realist evaluation Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)</p>

Limitations

The evaluation will be conducted remotely. To mitigate any problems on data collection and also to facilitate the contextual analysis at the country level, it is expected that at least one member of the evaluation team is based in each of participating countries.

Language considerations will need to be addressed by the evaluation team, and it is expected that evaluation team covers for any translation or simultaneous translation required for this exercise.

6.2. EVALUATION NORMS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation must be in line with the United Nations evaluation norms and standards³. The evaluation must be external and independent and will be carried out in an objective, impartial, open and participatory manner, based on empirically verified evidence that is valid and reliable.

The ethical principles that will guide the evaluation are independence, impartiality, credibility, responsibility, honesty and integrity⁴. Similarly, it is essential for the evaluation team to maintain respect for the dignity and diversity of the individuals interviewed, and to take into consideration respect for human rights, gender equity and equality⁵ throughout the evaluation process. The team

³ UNEG Norms and Standards (2016): Available from www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914

⁴ The evaluation team must comply with the UNEG/UNICEF standards and guidelines:.

Ethical Guidelines for UN Evaluations (2008): Available from www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102 and **Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system** (2008): Available from www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100

⁵ **Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – 2011 Towards UNEG Guidance,**

www.uneval.org/document/detail/980

will take the appropriate measures to preserve the confidentiality of information and data of the individuals involved, while respecting the right to provide information in confidence. It is essential that informed consent be obtained when the information is collected.

When interviewing minors, it is essential that the evaluation team refer to the UNICEF guidelines, Ethical Research Involving Children.⁶ It is also necessary to minimize the risks associated with any possible negative consequences and maximize the benefits for the main stakeholders by foreseeing unnecessary harm or injury that may arise from the findings of a negative or critical evaluation, without compromising its integrity.

The evaluation must also comply with UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis,⁷ the Ethical Considerations When Using Social Media for Evidence Generation⁸, and according to the methodology selected and the subject evaluated, it must be reviewed by an external ethical review committee (UNICEF has a global contract for external ethical reviews). The evaluation will not be able to proceed with the data collection before being approved by the ethical review committee. If the institution has its own ethical review mechanisms, they could substitute for the external committee, provided that these mechanisms comply with the minimum quality standards established in UNICEF's policy. In its methodological proposal, the evaluation team should clearly indicate any possible ethical issues and specify the supervision and the ethical review mechanisms of that are applicable to the evaluation process.

In addition, members of the evaluation team are required to disclose in writing any past experience, of themselves or their immediate family, which may give rise to a potential conflict of interest, and to deal honestly in resolving any conflict of interest which may arise during the evaluation.

6.3. DISSEMINATION

The evaluation will be disseminated widely throughout the countries and at the regional levels. It will include an evaluation report with a stand-alone executive summary. Findings of the evaluation throughout the evaluation process will be disseminated and validated through workshops, and on-line meetings, a video may be produced by the evaluation team.

As the evaluation is implemented, the evaluation team, can propose to set up a webpage to inform the Evaluation Reference Group and evaluation team members and share all materials produced by the evaluation, with milestones, a shared platform for comments and discussions.

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF DELIVERABLES

A **technical reference group** will be created to support and follow up on the evaluation process and comment on the consultancy deliverables. This group will be composed of staff from UNICEF, EC, as well as from the government and other key stakeholders that can provide technical advice on the object of evaluation. Terms of Reference for the group will be disseminated among team members.

⁶ Ethical Research Involving Children (2013). Available from <http://childethics.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ERIC-compendium-approved-digital-web.pdf>

⁷ UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis, 2015: www.unicef.org/supply/files/ATTACHMENT_IV-UNICEF_Procedure_for_Ethical_Standards.PDF

⁸ Ethical Considerations When Using Social Media for Evidence Generation: [Ethical Considerations When Using Social Media for Evidence Generation \(unicef-irc.org\)](http://www.unicef-irc.org/ethical-considerations-when-using-social-media-for-evidence-generation)

With regard to **deliverables**, the evaluation team will produce at the regional level an inception report, an interim report and a final report. At least four evaluation workshops will be held online: Kick off meeting, presentation of inception report, a presentation of preliminary findings, a presentation of preliminary findings for the final report. A fifth virtual meeting can take place with the presentation of a video and opening of initial discussion for an evaluation management response.

In addition, cases studies in five countries participating in the Phase III of the preparatory action for a child guarantee will be implemented. It is expected to have 4 self-standing case study evaluation reports.

For each report, a template will be provided to the evaluators; however, the evaluation team should consult and follow the quality standards of the UNICEF evaluation reports, available at:

Inception report :

www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/UNICEF_UNEG_TOR_Checklist_updated_June_2017.pdf ;

Final report/ Case study country reports

www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/UNICEF_adapted_reporting_standards_updated_June_2017_FINAL.pdf

Each report delivered will be reviewed by UNICEF and the counterparts (reference group), as well as by a **quality assurance** system by the **Regional Office** (five working days). In addition, the evaluation team should integrate and respond to comments received and submit a revised version of each report.

8. PAYMENT:

The payment of each deliverable will only be made when the revised version of the report is received and approved, incorporating the received comments.

Deliverables and timeline:

		Deliverable	Tentative Dates
<i>Initial phase</i>	Meeting	Kick off meeting materials	October 2021
<i>Inception phase</i>	Document	Inception report Draft	November 2021
	Document	Inception report draft	December 2021
	Document	Revised Inception report, including data collection tools and methodological note	
	Meeting	Presentation of Inception Report materials	January 2022
<i>Report Finalization</i>	Document	Short interim report with preliminary findings, including case studies	March 2022
	Meeting	Workshop preliminary findings and recommendations co-creation materials	March 2022
	Document	Final Evaluation report Draft, including case studies	April 2022
	Document	Final Evaluation Report, including case studies	June 2022
	<i>Other materials produced</i>	Video* Evaluation Policy brief*	Early July 2022
		Meeting	Presentation final report and other materials produced

() Optional (Will be considered as a bonus when presenting a proposal)*

9. PROFILE OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The Evaluation team will be composed by one senior team leader, one evaluator, a research assistant, focal point researcher for each of the case countries (at least 4), designer producer (optional) and editor.

Required team leader and one other evaluator:

- . Expert(s) in the social sciences, economics, international development or evaluation, or other relevant disciplines with at least a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent (preferably, with a graduate degree in evaluation, M&E, and/or policy analysis);
- . Proven experience at least 12 years in conducting evaluations and research, specially on the system level;
- . Proven experience in the design and application of the proposed methods of qualitative and quantitative evaluation and research (contribution analysis, QCA, process tracing, etc);
- . Proven experience in facilitating and collecting information with vulnerable groups;
- . Knowledge of child poverty in Europe, early childhood development approaches, children with disabilities, children in institutions policies and programmes;
- . Knowledge of the equity and gender approaches and their application;
- . Fluency in spoken and written English;
- . Prove of good ability to write reports clearly and concisely.

Desirable:

- Previous work experience with EU Evaluations and United Nations;
- Knowledge of UNEG evaluation standards;

The focal point in each country will have a solid knowledge of the social policies on children in that respective country, be familiar with data collection tools on sensitive issues, and master qualitative and quantitative analytical skills. Fluency in the local language is a must.

10. WORK PLAN

The workplan will be defined together with the evaluation team, and indicative timeframe is presented below. It is important to take into account that the **time needed to provide comments** on each deliverable will be of 10 working days, and that once comments are received the team will have at most 5 working days to incorporate them. Note that more iterations of feedback and revisions will alter the total time of the project. One round of comments is expected for each deliverable (including inception report, draft reports phase 1 and phase 2, and case studies).

EVALUATION TIMELINE

Child Guarantee - Phase III

	2021						2022						
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
I. Getting started													
ToRs finalized	■												
RFP submitted	■	■											
Contract signed		■											
Kick-off Meeting			■										
II. Inception Phase													
Desk and Literature Review			■										
First round of Interviews with COs and RO				■									
Refining of the methodological approach				■	■								
Delivery of detailed Methodological Note					■	■							
Deliver of the Draft Inception Report (IR)						■	■						
Technical reference group Feedback							■	■					
Ethical Review								■	■				
Integration of feedback and Final Inception Report									■	■			
III. Data Collection and Analysis													
Key informants Interviews							■	■					
Gathering of Operational Research Data								■	■				
Gathering of existing data and evidence						■	■	■					
Analysis of data and evidence, triangulation							■	■	■				
Delivery of short interim report with preliminary findings									■	■			
Workshop to present preliminary findings										■	■		
Additional evidence collection											■	■	
IV. Report Finalization													
Delivery of the Draft Evaluation Report											■	■	
Revision & comments from Evaluation Reference Group												■	■
Integration of feedback and Final Evaluation Report													■
Workshop / Dissemination													■
Preparation of the Management Response													■

11. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Award criteria: Cumulative Analysis.

The evaluation and award criteria that will be used for this RFP is Cumulative Analysis evaluation (point system with weight attribution). The weighting ratio between the technical and financial proposals will be 70:30. The respective importance between technical and financial scores will be weighted as 70% and 30%.

An offer is considered technically acceptable (and therefore eligible for opening of financial offers) when it obtains 49 points out of 70 during the course of the technical evaluation. The final selection of the contractor will be based on a combination of the technical and financial proposals with a weighting of 70% for the technical proposal and 30% for the financial proposal. In the case of cumulative analysis, the proposals scoring below 70% of the available technical points will be considered non-compliant and will be rejected and not further considered (e.g. in the case of 70:30, the passing score is 49 points out of 70).

- Weightage for Technical Proposal = 70%
- Weightage for Financial Proposal = 30%
- Total Score = 100%

Proposer(s) must submit a technical and a price proposal (in separate documents) that will be split between technical and commercial (price proposal) scores (a 70/30 split).

The **technical proposal** (70 points) should include the following information:

- A brief methodological proposal (max 3 pages)
- Presentation of the firm/research institution/consulting group
- A business licence
- Team composition (incl. identification of team leader), with complete CVs
- Matching the team skills with the required skills
- Sample(s) or link(s) of previous Evaluation(s) by the team members
- Other relevant information in order to ensure the quality of the presented proposal and minimize the disqualifications.

Separately, a **financial proposal** should be as detailed as possible, and it is recommended that the proposal be broken down by the number of days worked by each team member and the daily rate of each member, travel costs, per diem, insurance, and administrative and operational costs, etc. A Template will be provided.

Financial Proposal should include:

1. Detailed budget as per the Financial Proposal template
2. Explanation of budget assumptions with regard to planning, team composition, field work, etc.

The total amount of points allocated for the price component is **30**. The maximum number of points will be allotted to the lowest price proposal that is opened and compared among those invited firms/institutions which obtain the threshold points in the evaluation of the technical component. All other price proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price; e.g.:

Score for price proposal X = (Max. score for price proposal (30 Points) * Price of lowest priced proposal) / Price of proposal X

Total obtainable Technical and Price score: **100**



The Proposer(s) achieving the highest combined technical and price score will (subject to any negotiations and the various other rights of UNICEF detailed in this LRPS) be awarded the contract(s).

All interested institutions are requested to include in their submission detailed costs including:

- a) Daily rate including hours per day
- b) Expenses associate with remote evaluation etc.
- c) Please include all relevant costs that are required for this exercise) to be agreed prior to commencing the project
- d) Any additional requirements needed to complete the project (evaluation) or that might have an impact on cost or delivery of products
- e) The consultants would be required to use their own computers, printers, photocopier etc.

The proposals will be evaluated according to the requirements criteria and the quality of the methodological note applicable to this specific work, the score for each element of the application, and the total weight given to the technical and the financial proposal, and the time and mode of notification of the selection process' results.

12. Responsibilities

UNICEF's responsibilities include timely provision of all required information, guidance and feedback on all deliverables. The contractor is expected to produce products as per defined tasks and deliverables and revise them based on feedback to be provided by UNICEF.



Annex 1: Consolidated Proposal Preparatory Stage, Phase III, Child Guarantee

Attached

Annex 2: Routine monitoring and Operational research

The core indicators for which data are collected through routine monitoring from the four implementation countries:

Child Guarantee PHASE III	PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
<p>RESULTS FRAMEWORK</p> <p>Child Guarantee PHASE III REPORTING DASHBOARD</p>	<p><i>OUTPUT 1.1</i></p> <p>INDICATOR 1 Existence of data and evidence on how countries are responding to child poverty and social exclusion of children, and what is required to close implementation gaps identified for children in need</p> <p>KEY DELIVERABLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Meta-analysis, 7 Deep Dive reports • Operational research: 4 country reports, 1 final research report • 1 Synthesis report • 4-5 Case studies (Evaluation) 	<p><i>OUTPUTS 2.1-2.3</i></p> <p>INDICATOR 2 Number of countries with evidence-based and -informed national action plans and monitoring and evaluation frameworks</p> <p>KEY DELIVERABLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National action plans informed by deliverables of Pillar 1 and 3 • Institutionalised mechanisms: stakeholder coordination, child/youth participation • Agreed communication and visibility events and products 	<p><i>OUTPUT 3.1</i></p> <p>INDICATOR 3 Evidence-based and -informed models of services and interventions in key CG policy areas for selected CG target groups tested and integrated / mainstreamed into existing systems and responses at all levels</p> <p>INDICATOR 4 Number of professionals working in key CG services capacitated and equipped to plan, provide, and monitor in a participatory manner quality services and interventions for the CG target groups</p> <p>INDICATOR 5 Number of decision- and policymakers at (sub-)national level capacitated and equipped to plan, manage, integrate, mainstream, and scale up quality programmes, services and interventions for the CG target groups</p> <p>INDICATOR 6 Number of children/adult caregivers from the CG target groups reached with evidence-based and -informed models of services and interventions to reduce child poverty and social exclusion of children</p> <p>INDICATOR 7 Number of children/adult caregivers from the CG target groups reached with evidence-based and -informed models of services and interventions reporting changes in service satisfaction, needs (un)met, literacy (rights, services), confidence and agency (access, use, feedback, complain, report violence)</p> <p>INDICATOR 8 Number of service providers who test evidence-based and -informed models of services and interventions for the CG target groups reporting changes in the satisfaction with the services and interventions provided</p> <p>KEY DELIVERABLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tested and integrated / mainstreamed models in key CG services for the CG target groups incl. specific outputs for children/caregivers and service providers (see indicators above) • Capacitated and equipped professionals and decision- and policy-makers • Tool for taking models to scale
<p><i>← Organisational Learning & Phase III Evaluation →</i></p>			

Metadata for Output Indicator 3 that monitors progress made in the four countries in planning and implementing the selected models of services and interventions in key Child Guarantee policy areas for selected groups of children in need:

Pillar – Output – Indicator	Definition	Targets Yr. 1 - CG Phase III	Targets Yr. 2 - CG Phase III	Data Source – Means of Verification – CG Phase III
<p>PILLAR 3: IMPROVING SUPPLY, DEMAND AND SERVICE QUALITY</p> <p>OUTPUT 3.1</p> <p>INDICATOR 3 Evidence-based and -informed models of services and interventions in key CG policy areas for selected CG target groups tested and integrated / mainstreamed into existing systems and responses at all levels</p>	<p>Description: This indicator captures the process of testing, integrating, and later mainstreaming the selected models of services and interventions in key CG policy areas for selected CG target groups into existing systems and responses at all levels. Models tested should fulfil the following criteria (as appropriate) – they should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aligned with relevant national and subnational policies, plans, and programmes; • based on a theory of change and a sound results framework; • evidence-based and informed, gender-sensitive/-responsive, innovative, and quality-assured; • building on existing systems, structures, and services (where applicable); • prioritizing the most significant access barriers for the children in need who are targeted by the services and interventions; • agreed with the national and subnational bodies overseeing the implementation of the CG (coordinating mechanisms); • have clearly identified funding sources and know their costs; • assessed/adapted to fit the available spaces for replication/scale-up; • accompanied by actions, as needed, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – capacitate and equip professionals to plan, provide, and monitor in a participatory manner quality services and interventions in key CG policy areas for children in need; – capacitate and equip decision- and policymakers to plan, manage, integrate, mainstream, and replicate/scale up quality programmes, services and interventions in key policy areas for children in need; – mobilize/empower and engage the local communities (incl. the media) to address, e.g., stigma and discrimination; – strengthen data systems to produce quality data for agreed indicators; – assess spaces available for developing/strengthening safe and child-friendly feedback and complaints systems, and channels for reporting violence, abuse, and exploitation, as part of child safeguarding policies. <p>Disaggregation: n/a</p>	<p>All models are agreed and approved by the relevant authorities.</p> <p>A coalition of implementing partners (governmental and/or non-governmental) are overseeing a coordinated and participatory process to design, test, integrate and mainstream the selected models supported by the Country Office, which are in line with the criteria set out in the “Description” of this Indicator.</p> <p>At least 2 models of services and interventions in selected key CG policy areas for at least 2 selected groups of children in need in selected implementation sites have been designed; barriers to the implementation of the models have been eliminated and enabling conditions created by the competent authorities (as needed); and the models are being implemented and monitored in line with the country-specific theory of change and results framework, as well as the model-specific theories of change; and accompanying actions to strengthen capacity and systems are underway (as needed).</p>	<p>Testing of all models in all implementation sites completed including the Operational Research (see Pillar 1), and the models integrated / mainstreamed, as planned.</p> <p>The learning from the planning and programming has been used to generate generalizable evidence on the practicalities of implementing effective and efficient services and interventions in key CG policy areas for the selected groups of children in need. The results have further informed the definition of the conditions and investments required to operationalize the countries national action plans (see Pillar 2) at subnational level and to replicate/scale-up models along with other priority services and interventions in key CG priority areas for those groups of children in need who are prioritized by the country.</p>	<p>Data sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country-specific theory of change and results framework for Phase III • Model-specific theories of change • Routine monitoring data • Operational research data and reports <p>Means of verification: Document review and process / performance monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of programming documents and of data from operational research • Agendas, list of participants, protocols, reports and presentations from stakeholder meetings / consultations, etc. • Relevant subnational policy documents, protocols, etc. (local authorities, service providers) • Quarterly updates on each model (based on standardized Regional Office reporting format)

Operational research goals and objectives:

Operational research

Initial Mapping Reports
Jun-Aug 2021

4 Interim Country
Research Reports (R1)
Nov-Dec 2021

1 Synthesis Report (R1 and R2)
4 Final Country Research Reports
May-Jul 2022

Main aims

1. **To provide timely feedback to the implementing teams** in each country and to other relevant national stakeholders.
2. **To learn from the planning and programming experience** in the four implementation areas of CGP3, **to generate generalizable evidence** on the practicalities of implementing effective and efficient services and interventions for children in need from disadvantaged backgrounds in Europe.

Core elements

1. **Developing and understanding of the programmes**
 - Mapping of implementation plans and context
2. **Qualitative research with professionals (R1 and 2) and beneficiaries (R2)**
 - Around 3 months after start of implementation
 - 9 to 12 months later
3. **Survey of professionals and beneficiaries at intermediate points**
 - Can include some quantitative measures – e.g, satisfaction with services received, confidence and agency of service recipients

Core operational research themes

A set of general research questions is guiding the entire operational research and frames the research protocols prepared for each country context, with specific questions and tools for each country under development

- 1. PLANNING:** i) What are the factors that favoured or hindered the planning phase? ii) What should be improved to realize better planning for the future?
- 2. MANAGEMENT:** i) What are the challenges encountered in managing the model and how have they been overcome? ii) How UNICEF, implementing partners and institutional partners interact and work with one another? (i.e. M&E mechanisms, reporting, steering committees)
- 3. INTEGRATION:** i) What are the enabling factors to building effective integrated services for the target population? ii) What are the barriers and challenges to develop integrated of services (at partner level, political context, regional, local level)?
- 4. SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICABILITY:** i) What are the enabling factors that can support the sustainability of the services implemented? ii) What are the challenges to reach sustainable services? iii) What are the necessary conditions to replicate and expand the intervention within the country or elsewhere?
- 5. SERVICE DELIVERY:** i) What are the factors (contexts and mechanisms) that can favour or hinder the implementation? ii) What is the added value of the intervention in each context?
- 6. INCLUSION:** i) Do the services include the most disadvantaged children and families? ii) What are the barriers in accessing the services and the solutions to overcome these barriers?
- 7. PARTICIPATION:** i) Did the professionals of services involved beneficiaries in redesigning the project activities and services? ii) Where the beneficiaries asked their opinion on the quality of the services and in giving feedbacks to improve the service itself?