

Terms of Reference for Consultancy Services to Conduct Mid-Term Review of Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2021 - 2025 *for* ChildFund Japan-Nepal Office

1. Background and Rationale:

ChildFund Alliance is a global network of 11 child-focused development organizations helping nearly 23 million children and their families in 70 countries around the world. ChildFund Japan is a member of the ChildFund Alliance.

ChildFund Japan is committed to promote the rights of children through international development cooperation in the spirit of harmonious coexistence. The organization has been operating in Nepal since 1995 and ChildFund Japan Nepal Office (CFJ NO) was formally established in 2006. Its programs help deprived, excluded, and vulnerable children, families, and communities through meaningful and sustainable solutions. CFJ NO believes that each child inspires and drives us towards serving them by providing opportunities to develop their full potential and in making positive changes for their future.

CFJ NO continues to serve the disadvantaged children, families, and communities on areas of education, healthcare, nutrition, and income generation through sponsorship guided by its child sponsorship standards in maximizing child well-being from its program, special assistance and emergency relief and rehabilitation programs with support of various donors, sponsors, ChildFund Alliance members and the government fund of Japan. It works in partnership with local communities and civil society organizations for achieving effective outcomes. Safeguarding and children's participation are the key components integrated throughout the programs of the organization.

The focus of CFJ NO is primarily developing synergies on program development, its implementation and quality assurance, financial sustainability, and resource mobilization together with monitoring and evaluation, communication and program reporting as well as meeting the requirements and compliances of the Government of Nepal, of its own and of beneficiaries/stakeholders and the donor communities.

Its programs aim to improve the lives of children in Nepal and are guided by relevant national plans of action, policies and the UN Sustainable Development Goals among others. At the overall impact level and under its long-term goal, by 2025 ChildFund Japan Nepal Office aims to reach out in serving 25,000 children, adolescents and their families living under poverty, at-risk of abuse, exploitation, and unsafe migration, vulnerable to environmental disaster and various forms of violence and discrimination in Nepal. Thus, enabling them to live in safer communities and have improved their socio-economic conditions.

The Strategic Plan of CFJ NO (2021- 2025) aims at providing the children with equal opportunities of learning for utilization of their full potential. The strategic focuses are (1) Education, (2) Child Protection, and (3) Disaster Risk Reduction.

CFJ NO has identified intermediate outcomes and preconditions to achieve the major outcome of each of the strategic directions and is elaborated in its Country Strategic Plan (CSP). It promotes mainstreaming of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), environment and climate resilience, and conflict sensitivity in all its works. Currently, CFJ NO works in Sindupalchok, Dhading and Gorkha districts through three local partner organizations in close coordination and collaboration with local, provincial and federal level government structures.

This ToR has been developed to carry out Mid-Term Review of CSP 2021-25 to assess its effectiveness in the changed context after COVID-19, and developed political, economic and social situation. It is expected that this review will lead to a revision and refinement of the CFJ NO country strategic priorities.

2. Purpose of the assignment/consultancy services:

The overall purpose of the consultancy is to conduct a participatory review and reflection of the current CSP with an emphasis on CFJ NO's theories of change, to determine its relevance and effectiveness of strategic focuses and recommend CFJ NO for its future work.

The midterm review will explore strategies to build on and strengthen CFJ NO's development, humanitarian and influencing work; informing its long-term programmatic approaches, including advocacy, campaigns and influencing, to achieve impact at many levels. It will also inform our partnership and funding strategies to achieve our programmatic goals.

The review will consider the process of determining the effectiveness of the country planning in achieving the organizational objectives and taking corrective action wherever required. The review shall generate lessons learnt from CFJ NO's approach to the country planning and achievements thereof for the strengthening of future strategic directions and management of country plans. It is aimed at collating evidence to inform stakeholders of CFJ NO's approach to the country planning, its programmatic and financial implementation as well as overall achievements of its collaboration. It shall inform the design of future Country Strategic and Country Operational Plans as well.

In details, the study will,

- I. look at CFJ NO' approach to programmatic and financial country planning, country plan management and implementation including its M&E frameworks.
- II. assess the country plan evaluation process and its follow-up to generate an understanding of how the evaluation process itself was able to contribute to a better understanding of the effectiveness of CFJ NO's country planning processes and to support necessary adjustments.
- III. draw lessons that can be useful for the country planning process in general and for the preparation and consideration of next phases of country plans and the development of new CSP beyond 2025.

Specifically, the purpose of the review is to appraise the CSP based on:

- I. the relevance of the strategy's theory of change aligning with NO's priorities, country context through social, economic and political realms.
- II. meaningful participation of concerned staff and relevant stakeholders throughout the review process.
- III. CFJ NO's experience with current partnership modalities and working approaches to generate data/evidence to inform relevant partnership modalities and working approaches and leverage resource mobilization including funding for upcoming periods.

This process will cover the assessment of the key activities implemented during the duration of the two and half years of CSP, i.e., in the timeframe between April 2021 to September 2023. It will also assess progress towards key performance indicators.

The CSP mid-term review and finalization will be guided by indicative questions which will be developed and generate corresponding findings and recommendations aimed at improving implementation and guiding strategic planning of the remaining years.

3. Scope of the work:

- 1) Review of documents (CFJ NO CSP 2021-25, annual progress and various project reports, evaluation documents etc.).
- 2) Review and analyze the government's priority and trend in the changed political context towards social and economic inclusion, civic space, environment and climate change, gender and conflict sensitivity.
- 3) Facilitate a participatory strategy review process (internally with/among staff and externally with partners and relevant stakeholders) using various facilitation tools to critically review our current CSP.
- 4) Produce a report evaluating the strategy and outlining specific recommendations as explained above.

The consultant will review key documents and use a range of tools (PESTLE and SWOT for example) to lead the country team and partners, and other stakeholders through the strategy review process, assessing the overall country context and identifying strategic focus areas, objectives, and means of implementation. Identify opportunities for climate crisis, gender-based violence (GBV), online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC) and other development and humanitarian programs suitable for CFJ NO working areas.

4. Process/Methodology:

Working closely with the CFJ NO team and particularly with the designated focal staff members, the consultant will provide technical and related services for the completion of the above assignment by fulfilling the following tasks:

- Hold an inception meeting with CFJ NO to present the summary of a proposal (technical and financial) and for further development/revision of the proposal, approval of the concepts, modalities/methodologies, planning and budget.
- As needed, organize additional preparatory meetings to discuss the objectives, scope and achievements of this assignment while finalizing the implementation plan.

The consultant will propose a mix of methods/appropriate methodologies they deem most suitable given the scope of the work. The review of the CSP must employ a participatory, collaborative methodology to achieve the desired purpose and scope of this assignment/consultancy services that will eventually be owned by CFJ NO team and its partners (partner NGOs).

Secondary research (peer-reviewed studies, grey literature, and internal reports) should be from a diverse range of reliable/reputable sources. Primary data collection must form the basis of the review. Data collection must be ethical, participatory and gender responsive aimed at the equal participation of the target population applying gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) lens.

The consultant will ensure that the principle of inclusion, transparency, participatory people-centered approach/process/methods are at the core of the review process and reporting.

Sample activities will include but not limited to:

- a) conducting participatory consultations with staff members of CFJ NO and as needed with its partners.
- b) carrying out an in-depth secondary review of available literature/documents of CFJ NO's work over the last 3 years, including reading reports, policy briefs and annual reports (includes desk study analysis and mapping of all materials and resources).
- c) consultation with local government stakeholders.
- d) carrying out contextual analysis for the purpose of guiding strategic priorities for CFJ NO.
- e) developing questionnaires and surveys addressed as appropriate to groups of stakeholders at various levels (e.g., service receivers/beneficiaries, community groups, movements, project implementation entities and other stakeholders and implementing partners, etc.).
- f) sampling and selection of respondents' data for interviews/FGDs following mixed methodologies: semi-structured interviews, key informative interviews, focus group discussions and meetings (in person, online and telephone) with staff members and relevant stakeholders.
- g) Field visits to offices of the PNGOs and project sites/locations for consultation with relevant stakeholders including program participants.
- h) participatory workshops to steer the evaluation and to discuss findings and recommendations.

Note: The above-mentioned tasks to be performed are intended as a guide and should not be viewed as an inflexible specification as it may be modified following discussions between CFJ NO and the selected consultant.

Interested consultants/firms are expected to propose detailed methodologies and tools for this assignment which can be mutually agreed by both the consultant/consulting firm and CFJ NO based on open discussions.

The report must include full citations for all the sources used. The selected consultant will have to share a sample guide for references and formats. Primary sources must be used wherever possible over secondary sources. For example, the researcher should refer a statistic to its original report, not where it is cited second-hand by a report or even newspaper or website.

While interviewing respondents during the assignment (except for staff members of CFJ NO and PNGOs), the consent forms and interview notes should be submitted, signed and dated.

If quantitative analysis has been done as part of the study/research, the raw data should be provided and all steps of calculations shown, in relevant software.

Applications will only be considered if they include all the following documents and information listed below:

- Letter of motivation
- Technical and Financial proposal
- Updated CV and credentials/academic certificates of the consultant
- Ethical and safeguarding/child protection statements
- Two work samples demonstrating the most relevant report/study
- Copies of PAN/VAT registration certificate
- Copy of firm/organization registration certificate and VAT registration (mandatory)
- Copy of tax clearance certificate for latest Fiscal Year for firms/organizations

- Recent Financial Audit Report certified by a reputable audit organization (for firms/organizations)

Note: EoI received without above documents will be considered as disqualified. Furthermore, applications from non-VAT registered individuals or tax exempted organizations will not be entertained for the process.

5. Professional Skills and Qualifications of the Consultant:

This consultancy service will be carried out by an experienced and qualified consultant. The consultant will be selected through a competitive and transparent process. Required expertise, experiences, academic qualifications and competencies include:

- Advanced degree (minimum Master's degree) in social sciences or humanities (development studies, political science, sociology or other acceptable discipline).
- Good understanding of development and humanitarian programs.
- Significant experience in strategy development and review/evaluation (preferably for rights-based international development and humanitarian organizations).
- Significant experience in conducting qualitative research, including reviews and evaluations, with the team leader having strong leadership skills and the ability to work as part of a team, constructively with other experts.
- Excellent command of written and spoken English, with his/her demonstrated competency.
- Excellent analytical and writing as well as presentation skills both in English and Nepali required with hands-on experiences of producing well-written documents, in clear, concise and correct language; prior experience of facilitating multi-stakeholders' workshops and meetings is essential.
- Excellent analytical skills and experience in gender analysis, context analysis, political economy and power analysis.
- Ability to deliver a high-quality product to deadline.
- Ability to work efficiently and effectively with project members in various locations and from multiple organizations.
- Ability to integrate different experiences, methodologies, and approaches from a diverse range of stakeholders, organizations, and technical experts from multiple sectors through adapting facilitation techniques.
- Flexibility to adapt to any subsequent changes in the terms of reference.
- Ability to organize independently, proactively seek out information and manage feedback and inputs primarily through online methods.
- Ability to translate findings into practical guidance and present it in an appropriate format.
- Willingness and ability to travel to the field to conduct the review and gather primary data.

In addition, the consultant should have:

- knowledge and skills on gender sensitivity and environment and climate change perspective.
- knowledge about current political, economic, social sectors, impact of COVID-19, and government's policies and priority towards these sectors.

Applicants are required to clearly familiarize themselves with this call for EoI and have increased understanding of their roles and responsibilities for this assignment.

6. Commitment to Quality Work:

The consultant/firm shall use an evidence-based approach and ensure the highest standards of work and timely deliverables at every stage of the assignments. The consultant/firm shall ensure clarity of

objectives and process during the consultations, counter check all facts and figures cited, ensure that the contents and formats of the assignment that meet the high standard for such documents and ensure proper editing and clarity.

The consultant shall, at the onset of the planning process, identify all stakeholders having a direct and indirect interest in the specified assignment, listing people, groups and institutions that influence the work of CFJ NO and its PNGOs.

7. Consultancy Service Timeframe and Deliverables:

The schedule of the consultancy service should be based on the work plan. A detailed action plan for the consultancy service will be designed after the selection of the consultant.

Expected timeframe: August through November 2023

The estimated maximum working days would be 30 days within the consultancy's duration. Any extension as mutually agreeable will be shared and communicated as needed. The consultant/firm must follow the timeline and any change can be made only after prior approval from CFJ NO.

Typical assignments milestones /outputs for all deliverables

Assignments/Activities	Deadline
Tender and Selection	August
Detailed orientation to the selected consultant/consultancy firm at CFJ NO	Week of 4 th September
Presentation of the Inception Report (including design of the Mid-Term Review and tools/methodologies, budget, detailed implementation plan etc.)	Week of 4 th September
Contract signing with the consultant/consultancy firm	Week of 4 th September
Review of the documents, literature and desk research etc. – context analysis.	11 – 15 September
Submission of revised and final Inception Report incorporating feedback from CFJ NO	Week of 11 th September
Mid-Term Review (this plan needs breakdown including schedule at CFJ NO, with other stakeholders, visits to PNGOs and field locations/project sites)	Week of 18 th September onwards
Data disaggregation, analysis, tabulation and compilation	Week of 1 st October
Present the preliminary findings and organize validation workshop	Week of 8 th October
Submission of first draft of the report	Week of 15 th October
Revise draft report based on comments and inputs received	Week of 22 nd October*
Submission of the final draft report	Week of 29 th October
Final Report approved and payment after all deliverables	Week of 5 th November

*To consider Dashain Holidays

This timetable is indicative and can be subject to change.

8. Expectations for Deliverables:

The consultant will ensure the study objective and the following deliverables are met as per the set timeline:

- The report will be an informative, well-written 15-20-page document that can be easily comprehended and applied. It will be presented in a professional (clear and concise) and attractive structure/manner, following CFJ NO's branding guidelines.

- The report emerges from broader consultations and learning from the experience of the existing CSP and utilizes the findings to shape the CSP review findings.
- The report responds to the country context/needs, as it is based on a collaborative, gender and conflict-sensitive analysis of root causes of inequality and social discrimination/injustice in Nepal.
- Is based on CFJ NO's focus on programming and influencing, and challenges traditional gender and social norms and power struggles.
- Focuses on choices that, when implemented, will allow CFJ NO to maximize its impact on a scale.
- Presents appropriate resources (financial and human) needed to deliver the CSP.
- Positions the country in the context of the CFJ global work and is clearly linked to the CFJ HO Global Strategy.
- Adheres to existing development and humanitarian agreements, climate crisis (CC) agreements/negotiation including government priorities for Nepal's standards, norms, policy, and guidelines for Education, Child Protection and DRR.
- Submits a consolidated review report with findings covering material review and assessment stage.
- Submits data sourcing report, of conducted interviews/focus groups and /or 1:1 meeting with staff members and other stakeholders/beneficiaries.

9. Ethical and Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy:

The selected consultant/firm must declare any Conflict of Interest with CFJ NO, employees or other stakeholders, as part of their bid. Child protection is a term used to describe the responsibilities and activities undertaken to prevent or to stop children being abused or ill-treated. It is CFJ NO's duty and responsibility to reduce the risks of abuse to the children who we have contact with and keep them safe from harm. CFJ HO/NO has an overarching framework to protect children who come into contact with its employees, volunteers, partner organizations and individuals, including consultants, who are working on behalf of CFJ NO.

The consultant should include statements in the proposal on how he or she will ensure ethics and child protection during the commencement of the assignment and during the field work. The consultant should also specify other ethical protocols to be followed during the due course of the review processes. The consultant is expected to get consent of the respondents and/or children's guardian before taking information and ask if their information could be used in the report and for public dissemination. Such consent must be documented in writing and submitted to CFJ NO along with the final report.

Consultants must apply a rights-based approach and the Do-No-Harm framework and must sign the Non-Staff Code of Conduct along with the consultancy contract.

10. Intellectual property/Confidentiality:

All the documents, reports, information, provided and produced during the assignment will be treated as absolute property of CFJ NO and will remain strictly confidential. The above-mentioned outputs or any part of it cannot be sold, used and distributed or reproduced in any way by the assigned consultant/firm or individual without permission from CFJ NO.

Except for the purpose of this assignment, the information will not be disclosed to the public nor used in whatever form without written permission from CFJ NO.

11. Application and evaluation process:

The selection committee will review all Expressions of Interest-based on the following:

a) Technical Experiences to deliver b) Timeframe and Methodology c) Financial proposal

Please note that financial proposals will be evaluated against the total funds available for the activity and CFJ will enter into negotiations with the merit evaluated consultant.

Cumulative Analysis will be used to evaluate and award the proposal. The evaluation criteria associated with this TOR is split between technical and financial as follows:

- 70 % Technical (understanding of the requirements/ objectives)
- 30 % Financial (reasonable and realistic budget, with appropriate cost breakdowns)

100 % Total

Technical proposals should be concise and articulate the methodology and description of services that will be provided under this assignment.

The selection team will also evaluate the quality and relevance of writing samples and references submitted.

12. Institutional arrangements:

In the case of the consultancy firm/organization selected for this assignment, it is expected to identify a Project Manager for communication and reporting purposes. At the Inception meeting, the Project Manager will be expected to submit a full contact list of all those involved in the study.

The senior management team (SMT) of CFJ NO will provide oversight and coordinate technical inputs and support, as well as monitor the CSP Mid-Term Review process, methodology and validation of the deliverables. The Program Director of CFJ NO will provide all necessary background documents and will support the consultant/firm in organizing the review.

The consultant/firm will be expected to report to CFJ NO and attend all meetings as agreed with the Program Director of CFJ NO. The Consultant/firm will be required to submit to the Program Director weekly progress reports by email during the assignments period summarizing activities /tasks completed to date (per cent achieved), time spent etc.

13. Budget and Terms of Payment:

CFJ NO will provide a budget on an installment basis. 25% percent of the contract amount will be paid after the signing of the agreement and upon submission of final inception reports. The remaining 75% amount will be paid after submission of the final report and upon validation of the SMT.

The budget for the assignment will be finalized after selection of firm/consultant.

CFJ NO will make payment of the contract agreed amount in cheque to the consultant/firm within 14 days after submission of payment request letter, email, invoice etc. The applicable taxes will be deducted at source according to tax policy of government of Nepal. The consultant can receive the tax deposit slip from CFJ NO.

14. Submission of Proposal/Application Procedures:

Interested and qualified consultant/firm or consulting organizations, who meet the above requirements, should apply by submitting their Expression of Interest (Eoi) in two forms, Technical and Financial Proposals with a subject line “Call for Eoi- FY2023 CFJNO SAP/GF-04 to the following address:

ChildFund Japan Nepal Office

Sanepa, Lalitpur

Nepal

Email: info@childfund.org.np

In the cover letter of the proposal, the consultant/firm should mention “Mid-Term Review of CFN NO CSP 2021-2025”.

The proposals must be received by CFJ NO at the address given above no later than 5 pm (CoB) on 15th August 2023.

The application/proposal must be written in English language. The proposal received after the deadline will not be considered for evaluation. Any proposal that does not meet the requirements will be rejected. A proposal that meets the requirements and offers the best value for money will be selected.

ChildFund Japan is a child rights focused organization and the selected consultant will be subjected to background check.

Only competitive and successful applicants will be contacted.

All rights are reserved with CFJ NO either to approve or disapprove any proposal without giving any reasons whatsoever. If needed, the consultant will be asked for modifications and presentations of the application/proposal before approval.

All applications will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

// The End//