

Terms of Reference

on

THE IMPACT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND CSOS' PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN HOLDING REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES (RECS) AND GOVERNMENTS TO ACCOUNT.

1. Background

Save the Children is an independent child rights advocacy international NGO operating in 120 countries across the globe. Its mandate is based on saving the lives of children through advocating for their rights and assisting them to fulfil their potential through public policy advocacy and child-led interventions that promote their sustainable development in areas including health, nutrition, education and broad-based social protection.

Civil society, including the organizations of children and young people, can play a pivotal role in influencing national and regional governance processes. Although the space these actors have varies from the lower to the higher tiers (for example from national governance to regional and Pan African levels), they have the right to engage with structures at all levels to advance their specific priorities and to hold them to account.

There are a wide range of instruments that can be used by CSOs and children to monitor the realization of governments commitments to children and citizens at large. These include among others, the UNCRC, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), NEPAD, REC level policies, national Constitutions, etc. These instruments are more potent in advancing the rights of children in countries with democratic experience because CSOs can use mainstream governance arenas such as parliamentary processes, legal measures, and the media. Even more, in some countries in the ESA region, some CSOs and government service providers have introduced innovative accountability mechanisms such as child-centered social accountability.

Against this background and with funding from DANIDA, The Save the Children Regional Programming Unit (SCI RPU) has been supporting the engagement of civil society organizations including those led by children and young people to engage in holding national governments and RECS to account on the rights and general welfare of children through its DANIDA LOT CIV project 2022-2023. Notables of these include, among others, capacity development to CSOs to use treaty body instruments in child rights monitoring and reporting; supporting the ACERWC to engage with Civil society actors, including those established by children and youth; working with the RECs and the ACERWC to develop guidelines on child

participation. In addition, the RPU provided technical and financial support to coalitions of civil society organizations to develop the Concluding Observation Tracking Matrix (COTT Matrix).

So far, the targets of child rights monitoring and reporting have been national and sub-national governments. On the other hand, there is no practice of reporting on the progress made by regional and Pan African entities in the implementation of child and youth rights partly because these entities are not parties to any of the treaties and their role is more on meta policies than on implementation. In this regard, SCI RPU through its Child Rights Governance pillar is seeking to recruit a consultant to conduct a study on the impact of Children, Youth and CSOs engagement and participation in holding Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and governments to account.

2. Objective of this research.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of children, youth and civil society engagement and participation in holding governments and regional economic communities to account using treaty body instruments namely the UNCRC, ACRWC, UPR and the Voluntary National Reviews of implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development including achieving its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the pledge to leave no one behind. Specifically, the study will;

- 1) Identify and analyze the approaches and strategies used by both children and youth as well as civil society organizations in holding governments and RECs accountable.
- 2) Identify measurable results and/or positive changes with evidence in the governance of countries in East and Horn of Africa because of Children and Youth and CSOs engagements.
- 3) Assess the impacts of children, youth, and civil society organizations' participation and engagement in governments and regional economic communities' decision-making and policy processes.
- 4) Identify challenges and barriers to meaningful participation and engagement of children, youth, and CSOs in holding duty bearers to account and;
- 5) Generate recommendations to strengthen civic engagement in holding States to account using the instruments mentioned above (UNCRC, ACRWC, UPR reporting and VNR of SDGs

To deliver against this objective, the following questions will need to be answered

- 1) To what extent are child and youth-responsive policies guaranteeing the participation of children and young people in the democratic governance of East and Horn of Africa countries?
- 2) What are the barriers and challenges hindering and/or inhibiting children, youth, and CSO's meaningful contribution to open and democratic governance in East and Horn of countries and RECs.
- 3) What Structures and platforms are open to children and other non-state actors in holding governments and RECs to account?

- 4) Do regional policies and procedures recognize international instruments and have relevant and effective national policies and instruments to support children's open and democratic governance?
- 5) How can governments better engage children, youth, and civil society organizations in their decision-making processes to improve accountability and transparency in governance.

3. Geographical scope

This study will cover the East and Horn of Africa region with a specific country focus on **Somalia, South Sudan**.

4. Research Methodology/approach.

Methodology is largely qualitative employing document analysis and interviews. but an innovative use of the mixed methods approach is encouraged.

1. The document analysis will involve a systematic review of laws, policies and frameworks at a regional level and in Somalia, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda. Where necessary, Save the Children country offices will help identify key documents.
2. Interviews will be conducted with representatives from governments, regional economic communities such as the Intergovernmental Authority and Development (IGAD), East African Community (EAC), Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) etc., Civil society organizations, and youth-led organizations. Support will be provided by Save the Children to identify relevant key informants and where necessary, facilitate communication and setting up of interviews.
3. Responses from children and youth on their engagement and should form part of the core mode of inquiry for this study.

5. Deliverables

A final report entailing:

- a) Overview of the current status: existing policies and institutional framework at regional level
- b) Key gaps in ensuring efficient implementation - policy and institutional level.

- c) International trends and proven practices.
- d) Recommendations and concrete proposed steps to inform RPU's regional-level advocacy strategy for children and youth open and democratic governance
- e) PowerPoint summary of the entire report and an Executive Summary
- f) Knowledge products include: country specific factsheets, 5 country specific press summaries and a regional press release

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The Consultant:

1. Professional and independent delivery of all above listed outputs in line with specifications given within the Terms of Reference within agreed upon timeframe.
2. Quality written outputs that are of publishable quality.
3. Regular and transparent reporting on progress to Save the Children, including any delays or challenges as they develop.
4. Commitment to presenting results in a professional and accessible manner.
5. Commitment to Save the Children's Child Safeguarding Policy

Save the Children:

The accountability for this study rests with the Regional CRG Manager who will oversee the following

1. Supporting the Consultant in accessing programme related documents and research;
2. Support with logistics for field work, including access to participants;
3. Actively engaging the Consultant throughout the research and review process;
4. Being available for feedback and review of drafts.

8. Competencies

This consultancy is open to both individuals and consultancy firms who meet the following criteria:

1. Advanced university degree in relevant area such as law, political science, social and economic development, and international relations.
2. A minimum of eight years of relevant work experience focused on developing countries, in areas related to development cooperation in human rights, development cooperation, policy and socio-economic development.
3. Policy aptitude and experience on mechanisms for financing for development, child and human rights-based access to social services;

4. Prior experience of researching child and youth open governance in the EHoA regional context, ideally specific experience in Somalia, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Rwanda.
5. Familiarity with child rights programming;
6. Demonstrate experience working with INGOs;
7. Demonstrate analytical and conceptual ability, good communication and facilitation skills;
8. Demonstrate strong report writing skills, a track record of delivering high-quality written outputs, and be able to share examples of previous work;
9. Demonstrate the ability to work independently and deliver on time.
10. Training and knowledge on child safeguarding are an asset/ experience working with children.

11. Timeline

This assignment is scheduled to begin on 1st August 2023. The successful bidder must commit to accomplishing and delivering the consultancy services and deliverables before or on 30 November 2023.

12. Ethics, Safeguarding and Code of Conduct

As per Save the Children policy:

- the consultant will be required to sign and adhere to the Child Safeguarding Policy and ethical guidelines.
- background checks will be undertaken on all applicants.
- the title rights, copyrights and all other rights of whatever nature in any materials used or generated under the provisions of these services will exclusively be vested with Save the Children International East and Southern Africa Regional Office.

13. How to apply

Interested Applications should consist of:

1. Filled Expression of Interest form
2. Cover letter
- 3.. Examples of similar work already conducted

Applications must be sent electronically to esaro.procurement@savethechildren.org on or before 11th July 2023 no later than 1700hrs EAT.