

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES)

Republic of Marshall Islands
Early Childhood Development Project
Grant No.: IDA-V2100

Assignment Title: ECD PROGRAM OFFICER -INTERNATIONAL
Reference No.: MH-DIDA-77694-CS-INDV

The Government of Republic of the Marshall Islands has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of Early Childhood Development Project (ECD), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include the ECD Program Officer -International who will support the preparation and implementation of the Project. The assignment is expected to start in January 2019. The detailed scope of services is indicated in the attached TOR.

The Ministry of Finance through the Division of International Development Assistance (DIDA) now invites eligible individuals (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (to attach cover letter and curriculum vitae with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc.). The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

Mandatory: Academic Background, Relevant Experience and Specialized Competencies

- Minimum Education: Master’s level degree (with a major in a relevant discipline such as Finance, Business, Management, Law, Public Health, Education, Social Work) / or Bachelors level with significant experience (more than 10) in Project Management in a challenging and multi-stakeholder environment.
- Minimum Years of Relevant Experience: 10 years of progressively responsible professional work. Relevant experience includes project/program management and implementation of multi-discipline/sectoral projects in complex environments.
- Minimum 2 Years of relevant experience in project management including: development and monitoring of results frameworks, identification and resolution of implementation challenges; monitoring and evaluation of project performance.
- Strong oral and written communication skills in English and persuasiveness in presenting, discussing and resolving difficult issues.

Desired Competencies

- Technical knowledge and demonstrated experience in the development and implementation of programs in a thematic area relevant to early childhood development, such as maternal and child health, nutrition, early education, social work, child protection, or similar.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively manage a multidisciplinary team, including ability to empower others, manage performance, and support team members. Effective team leader, with an understanding of group dynamics, managerial techniques, and conflict resolution. Ability to work collaboratively to achieve goals.
- Ability to deal sensitively in multi-cultural environments and build effective working relationships with clients and colleagues.
- Knowledge of general principles of procurement, financial management, and safeguards requirements, policies and practices.

- Proficient in developing work plan, resource plan, budget, operation manual. Strong organizational and planning skills and ability to plan multiple activities simultaneously. Demonstrated ability to prioritize of tasks to meet deadlines, resource allocation to meet budget and quality expectations.
- Ability to identify complex issues and to respond and handle accordingly; does not add unnecessary complexity to tasks or projects.
- Ability to function effectively in multi-disciplinary teams within a matrix management environment.
- Previous experience in developing new processes and approaches and involvement in change management.
- Understanding of public sector dynamics and constraints and competing incentives.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016 ("the Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0900 to 1700 hours.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by e-mail) by 17 December 2018. The email subject line should state: "ECD Program Officer -International - full name of the candidate".

Procurement Adviser
Email: proc_advice_rmi@yahoo.com
Phone No. +6926255968

And cc the following:

Director of DIDA
mtarbwilin@gmail.com
Phone No. +6926255968

Republic of the Marshall Islands
Terms of Reference
Individual Consultant

Title:	ECD Program Officer-International
Location:	Office of the Chief Secretary, Majuro, RMI
Duration:	Full time for an initial period of 6 months, up to 36 months based on demonstrated satisfactory performance
Tentative State Date:	February 1, 2019

1. Background

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is one of the world's smallest, most isolated and vulnerable nations. The country consists of 29 atolls and 5 isolated islands (24 of which are inhabited) and has a total land mass of just 181 km² set in an area of over 1.9 million km² in the Pacific Ocean. The population of the RMI is estimated at 53,066¹, of which the two largest urban centers, Majuro (the nation's capital) and Ebeye, have populations of 28,000 and 9,614, respectively.

There is a growing recognition that the foundations of human capital formation in RMI are at risk despite improvements in national and household wealth. Poor early life health and nutrition, lack of early stimulation and learning, and exposure to poverty and severe stress threaten the ability of thousands of children to reach their full potential. These developmental deficits manifest in high rates of early childhood undernutrition and poor child development outcomes.

In RMI, children experience adversities across multiple domains, undermining children's opportunities to learn, earn, innovate, and compete. Barriers to optimal child development in RMI span across sectors, including: (i) limited availability, affordability, and consumption of nutritious diets, especially for women and children from vulnerable households; (ii) inadequate access to quality maternal and child health, nutrition, and immunization services; (iii) inadequate access to clean water and sanitation; (iv) insufficient opportunities for early stimulation and early learning; and (v) lack of support through formalized social assistance mechanisms. Cutting across all of this is a general low awareness of the importance of early child stimulation, health and nutrition.

To address the above constraints, the GoRMI is developing a comprehensive, integrated, and long-term early childhood development (ECD) program. The program will focus on investing in the early years—targeting the period from conception up to age five—and engage the Ministries of Health and Human Services; Education; and Culture and Internal Affairs directly as implementing agencies, as well as other government/non-government partners. The program will aim to ensure that women and children are healthy and well-nourished (particularly in the first 1,000 days from conception through a child's second birthday), that young children receive early stimulation and learning opportunities from birth onwards, and that children are nurtured and protected from stress.

The GoRMI has established a high-level ECD steering committee to provide ongoing leadership and stewardship for the ECD agenda. The Office of the Chief Secretary (OCS) will serve as the secretariat for this program. World Bank IDA financing and technical assistance has been committed for a period of ten years to support the government in defining and institutionalizing this programmatic response, and mainstream it into new and existing systems of service delivery for early childhood development. Additional support for ECD is planned/expected from other development partners.

The GoRMI is seeking to engage a full-time ECD Program Officer to provide day-to-day management and coordination of the ECD Program implementation. The position will be based in Majuro, RMI and will support the CSO to coordinate the delivery of ECD activities across sectors, including the World Bank IDA-financed investment.

¹ 2011 RMI Census

2. Objectives of the assignment

The ECD Program Officer will support the high level ECD steering committee and the Chief Secretary in the day-to-day management, coordination, and monitoring of the ECD Program implementation, including management of the World Bank IDA-financed investment in the ECD Program.

3. Scope of Services

The ECD Program Officer will report to the Chief Secretary and provide management support and assistance to the development, coordination and implementation of a government-led multisectoral ECD program. The Program Officer will also have responsibilities for overseeing and managing implementation of the World Bank IDA investment which will provide technical and financial support to the government for the ECD program. Specific duties and responsibilities are as below:

I. Support to GoRMI Multisectoral ECD Program

- **Technical and Secretariat Support to the ECD High Level Steering Committee:** Provide day-to-day coordination, management, administration, and communications support to the ECD high level committee, including but not limited to: (i) draft the Committee terms of reference (TOR); (ii) provide sufficient and timely information to the Committee to make informed decisions; (iii) facilitate meetings; (iv) prepare and circulate meeting minutes; and track follow-up actions in accordance with the Committee's TOR. The Program Officer will also work with the CSO to support the Steering Committee in the ECD policy development process, including tasks such as: (v) manage the policy development process and establish the timeline and resource requirements; (vi) mobilize appropriate technical assistance, including preparation of TORs and management of the selection processes; (vii) coordinate inputs from various stakeholders involved in this process; and (viii) support the CSO and Steering Committee in the review and deliberation process.
- **Secretariat Support to the ECD Technical Working Group (TWG):** Provide secretariat support and guidance for the TWG, including: (i) draft the TWG TOR; (ii) ensure regular meetings/sub-meetings; (iii) facilitate ongoing, effective communication between the various stakeholders; and (iv) report and communicate relevant information beyond the TWG to the Steering Committee, government agencies, development partners, NGOs, and civil society, as appropriate.
- **Coordinate Government Agencies involved in the ECD Program:** In collaboration with the CSO, government staff, the IDA-financed team (see below) facilitate effective coordination of ECD Program activities across implementing agencies. The key implementing agencies involved in the ECD program include the Ministries of Health and Human Services, Education and Culture and Internal Affairs. Local governments, particularly MALGOV and KALGOV, and Outer Islands mayors will also play a pivotal role. The Program Officer will: (i) ensure the communication channels between the different entities is strong; (ii) support the coordination of planning and monitoring across financing sources in order to maximize effectiveness and efficiency of ECD resources; (iii) convene regular coordination meetings; and (iv) provide routine and ad hoc updates through appropriate channels.
- **Coordinate Technical Assistance for the ECD Program:** The ECD Program Officer will support the CSO in coordinating the development partner technical assistance for ECD (including, but not limited to the domains of maternal and child health and nutrition; early learning and stimulation; and child/social protection) including: (i) ensure strategic alignment and harmonization of technical assistance across partners and line ministries; (ii) coordinate mission travel in Marshall Islands in collaboration with DIDA and line ministries, as necessary; (iii) ensure technical review of all TORs; (iv) coordinate the review of inputs/outputs and dissemination of all information generated through technical assistance; and (v) ensure relevant government agencies and stakeholders are consulted and informed of all deliverables.

- Communications, Advocacy, and Change Management for the ECD Program: Working closely with the Social and Behavior Change Communication Coordinator, the Program Officer will: (i) ensure that resources for communication and advocacy are adequate and coordinated across the ECD program and implementing entities; (ii) review strategy, materials, and plans for delivery of ECD advocacy/awareness campaigns as well as social and behavior change communication campaigns; (iii) oversee the implementation of ECD communications activities in alignment with government strategies; (iv) ensure harmonization of advocacy/communication activities across line ministries and development partners and facilitate inter-agency collaboration, as required; (v) support organizational changes as required within government agencies and stakeholders to facilitate multi-sectoral cooperation, coaching implementing staff and providing clear communication to enable the process; and (vi) manage the development and dissemination of advocacy materials to government decision-makers, implementing agencies, civil society, and other relevant parties.
- Capacity building: Working closely with the Project Officers in each of the three agencies, the ECD Program Coordinator will play a key role in building capacity to implement the ECD program in RMI government.

II. **Oversee and Manage the IDA-Financed Investment into the GoRMI ECD Program**

- Manage the IDA-Financed ECD Project Implementation: In close coordination with implementing agency staff, the Program Officer will: (i) coordinate and ensure the development/update of project plans, the Project Operation Manual, and other administrative/technical manuals as required for the project and aligned to the project appraisal document (PAD); (ii) ensure the timely implementation of the Bank-financed ECD project in accordance with the Operations Manual moving toward achievement of the project's development objectives within the expected timeframe; (iii) mobilize human resources, goods, services, trainings, and other activities, as required, to ensure continued project implementation; (iv) identify key implementation challenges and bottlenecks as they arise and work with implementing agencies to deploy solutions; (v) adhere to agreed governance and implementation arrangements, including convening project counterparts for joint implementation reviews, documenting review outcomes, and monitoring progress on follow-up actions, as per the Operations Manual; (vi) establish, maintain, and facilitate strategic dialogue across project staff, implementing agencies and government officials at national and sub-national level, development partners, NGOs, and civil society, as required for project effectiveness; and (vii) perform other duties as necessary and reasonable to ensure efficient functioning of project.
- Manage IDA-Financed Technical Assistance: The Program Officer will be responsible for managing all firm and individual technical assistance procured with IDA funds. This includes a team of long-term, IDA-financed consultants supporting the delivery of the ECD Program, including but not limited to: three (3) ECD Coordinators (each supporting an implementing agency); one (1) ECD Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator; and one (1) ECD Social and Behavior Change Communication and Advocacy Coordinator, as well as any analytical, diagnostic, or advisory technical assistance commissioned with IDA financing. Responsibilities include: (i) oversee contract management and monitor deliverables for individual consultants and technical assistance firms to ensure full adherence to contract conditions and TORs; (ii) review outputs for timeliness and quality; (iii) for long-term individual technical assistance, establish performance objectives, undertake performance evaluations (in coordination with the government agencies, as appropriate), and provide support to ensure optimum performance of the IDA-financed team; and (iv) draft TORs for additional human resource support that may be required to achieve project objectives, oversee recruitment process in adherence to procurement guidelines; and (v) ensure that the IDA-financed team is systematically building capacity of the implementing agencies through the delivery of high quality training, coaching, mentorship, knowledge sharing and learning fora, etc. Given logistical arrangements and multisectoral nature of the project, management of the IDA-financed technical team will be coordinated with

the line ministries, implementing agencies, and/or DIDA depending where the team members are 'housed'. Effective team management will require maintaining strong communication and coordination across individuals and across agencies.

- **Oversee Reporting for the IDA-Financed ECD Project:** The Program Officer will be responsible for monitoring and reporting of the IDA-financed Early Childhood Development Project. Working closely with the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist and the Central Support Unit (CSU) in DIDA, the Program Officer will: (i) plan for and participate in World Bank team missions; (ii) ensure the accurate and timely preparation of the semiannual implementation status report, budget(s) and procurement plan(s) according to World Bank procedures (including the use of the Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement); (iii) lead and manage all procurement activities with support from the CSU; (iv) provide fiduciary oversight and reporting with support from the CSU; (v) monitor program implementation in accordance with the Operations Manuals, including monitoring and management of project risks; (vi) provide periodic updates to the Ministry of Finance and CSO on project performance and related issues; (vii) prepare of ad hoc thematic and substantive reports as requested by the ECD Steering Committee, CSO, TWG, World Bank, and/or other relevant stakeholders; (viii) track overall disbursements and undertake disbursement projections; and (ix) ensure the project is in compliance with the legal and financial agreements.

4. *Outputs*

The Program Officer is responsible for ensuring the timely completion of key outputs including: annual procurement plan, budget, semi-annual report, performance reviews, regular meetings of the TWG.

5. *Institutional and Organization Arrangements*

The Program Officer will report to the Chief Secretary and receive fiduciary and procurement support from the CSU in the Ministry of Finance. Physical location of the ECD Program office is still to be determined. The Program Officer is required to follow the GoRMI's working hours, but depending on the business needs, may be requested to work extended hours. Some travel internally with the Marshall Islands will be required. Limited international travel is anticipated.

6. *Selection Criteria*

Mandatory: Academic Background, Relevant Experience and Specialized Competencies

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