

## **Terms of Reference for Consultancy Services**

### **Social Protection and Treatment - Access and Adherence**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

The Regional Inter Agency Task Team on Children & AIDS in Eastern and Southern Africa (RIATT-ESA) is a unique, multi-sectoral partnership of organizations focusing on the care and support for children affected by AIDS in eastern and southern Africa.<sup>1</sup> With child participation and human rights as one of its core strategic areas, RIATT-ESA advocates for policies and programmes that improve the well-being of children. Advocating for child sensitive social protection policies that foster the wellbeing of children especially in high burden HIV contexts is key strategic objective of RIATT-ESA.

In this regard, RIATT-ESA seeks the services of an experienced consultant to conduct a comprehensive appraisal of the literature (both academic and policy literature) in order to inform the strategic direction of its advocacy programme on the viability of child sensitive social protection mechanism in ESA. The outcomes of this systematic review will also be used to deepen RIATT-ESA's engagement with partner organizations, including key decision makers in the region (researchers, programme implementers and policy makers) on these issues, particularly in terms of its articulation with rights of children to health and dignity in different contexts.

It has been 25 years since the launch of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention has been a remarkable tool which recognizes children as having the same rights as adults and that these rights need to be equally respected. In this light, while there have been major developments in the field of children's rights, the call for children's right to be upheld in contexts of economic and health inequities and in developing nations, has not been met with brisk action. Most children, in these contexts continue to be disadvantaged. Thus to ensure children's rights are upheld, there have been calls for universal access to social protection. To this end, in 2009 UNAIDS identified social protection as one of its priority areas as a way of addressing structural vulnerabilities as a result of the rampant HIV epidemic.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.RIATT-ESA-esa.org/about-us>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\\_asset/jc1879\\_social\\_protection\\_business\\_case\\_en\\_0.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/jc1879_social_protection_business_case_en_0.pdf)

UNICEF defines social protection as “the set of public and private policies and programmes aimed at preventing, reducing and eliminating economic and social vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation”.<sup>3</sup> Social protection systems need to be sensitive to the multiple and compounding vulnerabilities faced by children and their families. In spite of being exposed to the common sources of vulnerability as families and the community at large, children face age-specific and developmental vulnerabilities that differ from those of adults or have more serious consequences, such as increased vulnerability to malnutrition, disease and abuse. Child-sensitive social protection has the potential to contribute to breaking intergenerational poverty through improvements in child development and education which will subsequently improve the working and family lives of later generation adults. Although social protection has helped drive remarkable progress for many children, far too many are still being left behind.

Children constitute a large share of the poor, and in many countries rates of poverty are higher among children than the collective population. According to the *2015 State of the World's Children report*, more than half of children in developing countries suffer from at least one form of severe deprivation.<sup>4</sup> Given these factors, it is crucial that social protection programmes are responsive to children's rights and needs. Child-sensitive social protection, therefore, considers different dimensions of children's well-being and addresses “the inherent social disadvantages, risks and vulnerabilities children may be born into, as well as those acquired later in childhood.”<sup>5</sup> The post 2015 agenda should continue to focus on ways to remove barriers that hinder the full realization of the rights of children. The *2015 State of the World's Children report*, calls for innovation – and for the best and brightest solutions coming from communities to be taken to scale to benefit every child.

More specifically, it has been shown that a significant proportion of adolescents on ART are struggling to manage this illness because of general lack of social support. Children affected by HIV need heightened, care and support in order to fulfill their ambitions of a long and productive life. Accordingly, there is a need for a systematic understanding of what is regarded as child effective sensitive protective systems and how this is or can be implemented in different contexts, including its potential effectiveness to improve the management of ART amongst infected children.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/UNICEF\\_Social\\_Protection\\_Framework\\_6\\_June\\_12.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/UNICEF_Social_Protection_Framework_6_June_12.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://sowc2015.unicef.org/>

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, *The State of the World's Children 2014 in numbers: Every child counts*, UNICEF, New York, 2014.

## 2. Scope of work

The Consultant will be required to conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature (published, programme documents and grey literature) on issues (psychological, social and economic) related to social protection in children. The Consultant will be further required to document the potential role of social protection with regard to access to HIV treatment and ART adherence in children, synthesizing key issues in the literature and also documenting existing knowledge gaps in the field.

Specific objectives of the consultant:

- 1) *Desk based review literature on social protection issues related to children, including linkages to ART adherence in children ESA (East and Southern Africa and internationally).*
- 3) *Review current interventions on child sensitive social protection in ESA focusing on ART adherence*
- 2) *Review policies on child sensitive social protection, including its implications for ART adherence in children in ESA*

## 3. Deliverables

The Consultant is required to present three sub reports, a policy brief and an annotated bibliography

- 1) *Analytical review outlining key issues related to social protection in children, including recent developments and significant challenges for social protection programmes promoting access and adherence to ART.*
- 2) *Based on the review, one should consider the type and form of available child sensitive social protection programmes interventions/initiatives, including implications for addressing ART access and adherence in children.*
- 3) *A review of current social protection policies that can be deemed 'child sensitive' and its implications for ART adherence in children.*
- 4) *A concise policy brief that advances key issues on social protection and ART adherence in children.*
- 5) *An annotated bibliography of key references*

#### **4. Project Management**

The Consultant, or team of consultants, is responsible for overall management of the project, including designing and conducting the research, drafting the report and debriefing the project team and key stakeholders. The Consultant(s) will liaise with RIATT-ESA throughout the process, providing regular updates on the design and implementation of the research, and seeking their input and advice where necessary.

#### **5. Indicative timelines**

The contract will be for the period (1 September - 4 December 2015).

#### **6. Consultant's qualifications, knowledge and experience**

- A Master's Degree (with at least 5 years experience) or a PhD in social sciences or public health with some general experience on issues related to the welfare of children (including issues related to HIV/AIDS, understanding psycho-social processes in child development, social support)
- The Consultant is expected to have a good understanding of poverty dynamics, social protection principles and their application to current economic and development issues in the region
- Links to networks on social protection issues and HIV work with children (researchers, programme implementers, policy makers)
- Capability to understand policy issues related to children in ESA region
- Established academic publication record
- Experience in conducting systematic literature reviews
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English

The proposal must not exceed 10 pages with proposed approach to research timeframe and budget.

Qualified candidates are requested to submit a research proposal with CV, cover letter, indicative budget and work plan to [proposals@repsi.org](mailto:proposals@repsi.org) by Monday 24 August 2015.