
Terms of Reference for Child Rights Strategic Landscape Analysis

1. Organisational context

ChildFund Australia is an independent international development organisation that works to reduce poverty for children in developing communities. We partner to create community and systems change which enables vulnerable children and young people, in all their diversity, to assert and realise their rights. Our vision is a world without poverty where all children and young people can say: “I am safe. I am educated. I contribute. I have a future.”

ChildFund Australia is a registered charity, a member of the Australian Council for International Development, and fully accredited by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which manages the Australian Government’s overseas aid program.

ChildFund Australia is a member of the ChildFund Alliance – a global network of 10 organisations which assists almost 36 million children and their families in 66 countries. ChildFund Australia directly manages and implements programs with a range of local partners in Cambodia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Vietnam, and other Pacific nations, and manages projects delivered by partner organisations throughout Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

2. Background

ChildFund Australia is developing its next organisational strategy and considering the strategic choices that will shape its role, impact and investments over the coming five years. This landscape analysis will produce a concise, strategy-oriented evidence-based analysis of the external environment shaping ChildFund Australia’s future. Drawing primarily on existing evidence, it will examine the state and changing lives of children in Asia and the Pacific, how international development practice is evolving, and how development actors and funders are responding, before drawing these perspectives together to identify the most significant implications for ChildFund Australia’s future strategy.

Across Asia and the Pacific, substantial progress in children’s rights and wellbeing coexists with persistent and emerging challenges. Progress remains uneven within and between countries, while forces including inequality, climate change, conflict and displacement, demographic and economic development and digitalisation are reshaping children’s lives. At the same time, the international development environment is changing, with shifting geopolitical and funding conditions, evolving donor priorities and increasing expectations regarding locally led development, evidence, partnerships, systems change and sustainable impact.

ChildFund Australia therefore proposes a Strategic Landscape Analysis to provide a contemporary, evidence-based assessment of the external environment shaping its future. The analysis will examine children’s rights and wellbeing across Asia and the Pacific; the major forces changing children’s lives; the evolution of international development practice; and how development actors and funders are responding.

The analysis will form a key part of the external evidence base for ChildFund Australia's next strategy. It is intended as a strategic research and synthesis product rather than a comprehensive regional or country-level Child Rights Situation Analysis. Its purpose is to identify the most significant patterns, changes, gaps, opportunities and tensions that should inform ChildFund Australia's subsequent strategic choices.

The primary output will be a 35–45 page Strategic Landscape Analysis, excluding annexes and country spotlights, designed to support executive and organisational strategy decision-making while providing sufficient depth to inform subsequent programming, advocacy and influencing priorities. The consultancy should therefore prioritise the most strategically significant findings, patterns and changes, rather than attempting to comprehensively document every child rights issue, country, development actor or funding opportunity.

3. Purpose

The purpose of the research is to establish a contemporary and forward-looking evidence base on the external environment shaping ChildFund Australia's future strategy and impact.

The Strategic Landscape Analysis will:

- **Assess the current state of children's rights and wellbeing** across Asia and the Pacific, with focused analysis of ChildFund Australia program countries. It will identify where children's needs and rights deprivations are greatest, and which children are being left behind and why.
- **Identify the major forces changing children's lives**, including drivers of increasing need and drivers of progress. It will outline how children's lives, needs and opportunities are changing; and identify which issues are likely to become increasingly important over the next five to ten years.
- **Examine how the international development environment and practice are evolving**, including changes in approaches to impact, funding and expectations of development organisations.
- **Analyse how major development actors and funders are responding**, including their thematic, geographic and strategic priorities and approaches to impact.
- **Identify significant gaps, emerging opportunities and areas of alignment** or tension across children's needs, development practice, actor responses and funding priorities.
- **Draw out strategic observations to inform ChildFund Australia's subsequent strategic discussions and decisions**, without prescribing organisational solutions.

The research will inform subsequent strategic discussions concerning ChildFund Australia's role and positioning, pathways to impact, intended outcomes, thematic and geographic priorities, advocacy and influencing, partnerships, and future program and investment priorities. The research will also provide a foundation for subsequent country-level analysis in select ChildFund Australia countries.

This is a strategic synthesis, not original research. The analysis should prioritise identifying the implications of existing evidence for ChildFund Australia's strategic choices, rather than undertaking comprehensive literature reviews or exhaustive mapping exercises.

4. Scope of work

1. *The state of children's rights and wellbeing*

The analysis will provide a high-level assessment of the current situation of children across Asia and the Pacific. It will identify the most significant areas of ongoing need, inequality and stalled or reversing progress, alongside areas in which substantial gains have been achieved.

The analysis will take a holistic child rights and wellbeing perspective and consider, at minimum:

- Child poverty;
- Child protection, violence, exploitation and harmful practices;
- Education, learning and skills;
- Physical health, nutrition and survival;
- Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing;
- Climate change, environmental risks and disaster impacts;
- Humanitarian need, conflict, fragility and displacement;
- Gender equality, disability and social inclusion;
- Children's participation, agency and civic space;
- Digital lives, online risks and opportunities; and
- Livelihoods, transitions to adulthood and future opportunities for adolescents and young people.

The analysis will primarily consider children aged 0–17, consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Where strategically relevant, the analysis may extend to young people transitioning into adulthood, particularly in relation to education, skills, employment, civic participation and reproductive health. Particular attention will be given to inequalities and intersecting forms of disadvantage. The analysis should identify not only where need is greatest, but which children are being left behind, where progress is uneven, and which rights and outcomes appear most resistant to change.

2. How children's lives are changing

The analysis will examine the major forces shaping children's lives, rights and wellbeing and consider how these may influence children's needs over the next five to ten years.

This will include **drivers increasing or compounding need**, such as:

- conflict, fragility and displacement;
- climate change and environmental degradation;
- poverty, inequality and cost-of-living pressures;
- demographic change and urbanisation;
- Gender, disability, social and economic inequalities
- shrinking civic space and political instability;
- digital harms and changing patterns of technology use; and
- other significant or emerging forces identified through the research.

It will also examine **drivers and enablers of progress**, such as economic development, technological change and artificial intelligence, improvements in health and education, youth agency, stronger civil society, domestic institutions and systems, and increasing domestic capacity and investment.

The analysis should identify both established trends and emerging issues that may become increasingly significant for children. It should remain open to issues that do not fit neatly within

traditional development sectors, particularly emerging issues and intersections between multiple dimensions of children's lives.

Particular attention will be given to how these forces may affect different groups of children differently and whether patterns of inequality, exclusion and vulnerability are themselves changing.

3. How international development practice is evolving

The analysis will examine how the international development environment and approaches to achieving impact are changing, and what these changes mean for development organisations.

It will examine **forces increasing the complexity of the operating environment**, including:

- geopolitical instability and changing international relations;
- declining or constrained official development assistance;
- changing aid architecture and donor priorities;
- increasing humanitarian demand;
- competition for funding and pressure to diversify revenue;
- increasing expectations regarding locally led development and local ownership;
- changing expectations regarding evidence, accountability and demonstrable impact; and
- the growing role of non-traditional development actors.

The analysis will also synthesise the **approaches and capabilities increasingly associated with achieving greater, more sustainable and scalable impact**, including:

- locally led development and local ownership;
- systems approaches and systems strengthening;
- advocacy, influencing and policy change;
- evidence, learning and adaptive programming;
- innovation and pathways to scale;
- innovative and blended finance;
- partnerships, coalitions and collective action;
- convening and knowledge brokering; and
- other emerging approaches identified through the research.

In doing so, this section should also identify significant child rights issues for which progress depends substantially on changes beyond direct program delivery—for example, changes in public policy, legislation, government systems, public financing, social norms, institutional practice or accountability.

4. How development actors are responding

The analysis will examine how major development actors and funders are responding to changing needs and the evolving development environment.

A strategic landscape and gap analysis will consider relevant actors, including:

- UN agencies and international financial institutions;
- bilateral and multilateral donors, including China's role in re-shaping the Pacific aid landscape;
- International Non-Government Organisations;
- ChildFund Alliance;
- national and subnational governments;

- local and national civil society organisations, networks and coalitions;
- academia and research institutions;
- foundations and philanthropy;
- the private sector;
- individual givers (in Australia) and other emerging actors.

The analysis should examine the landscape through complementary lenses:

- **By thematic priority:** for example, child protection, education and learning, health and nutrition, livelihoods, humanitarian action, climate, GEDSI and other significant areas identified through the research.
- **By approach to impact:** including program delivery, advocacy and influencing, systems strengthening, research and evidence, financing, convening, partnership and coalition-building, and innovation.
- **By geography:** including regional and sub-regional disaggregation as appropriate.
- **By funding and investment priority:** identifying where significant institutional and philanthropic resources and individual giving attention are concentrated or emerging. This should include analysis of any changes to the ways in which donors are giving, for example increased funds to local organisations; blended finance; unrestricted versus restricted etc.

The analysis should be proportionate and strategic rather than attempting to comprehensively map every actor. The purpose is not to undertake a detailed business development analysis or funding pipeline. Rather, it is to understand where development resources and institutional attention are moving, as an important dimension of the external environment. It should focus on patterns relevant to ChildFund Australia's future choices.

Where feasible, matrix-style gap analysis analysis should identify:

- areas that are relatively crowded;
- areas that appear underserved;
- emerging areas of activity or investment;
- approaches increasingly being adopted by leading development actors;
- significant advocacy and influencing agendas;
- areas attracting or losing donor attention; and
- opportunities or gaps at the intersection of thematic issues and approaches to impact.

5. Strategic observations and implications for ChildFund Australia's strategy

The analysis will draw together the evidence from the preceding analysis into a concise set of strategic observations about the external environment shaping ChildFund Australia's future. Rather than summarising each section, the synthesis should interpret the evidence across the analysis and identify the most significant issues that ChildFund Australia will need to consider in determining its future strategic direction.

The synthesis should consider **where impact is most needed; how children's needs and opportunities are likely to change; how impact is increasingly being achieved; where there may be gaps or space to contribute; and where influence, attention and resources are moving.**

The synthesis should identify:

- **The most significant current and emerging challenges and opportunities for children** — including persistent unmet needs, issues that are worsening or likely to become increasingly important, groups of children being left behind, and areas where progress is possible or accelerating. This should help inform decisions about intended impact, outcomes and priorities.
- **Important differences across geographies and contexts** — including issues that are widespread across Asia and the Pacific, particularly significant in ChildFund Australia countries, or concentrated among particular countries, contexts or groups of children. This should help inform geographic and program priorities.
- **Gaps and opportunities within the development landscape** — including issues, populations or intersections that are underserved; areas where existing responses are fragmented or insufficient; and emerging areas where relatively few actors are responding. This should help inform consideration of ChildFund Australia's future role and positioning.
- **How the pathways to impact are changing** — including where direct program delivery remains important and where greater impact may increasingly depend on locally led action, systems strengthening, advocacy and influencing, research and evidence, partnerships, convening, innovation, financing or combinations of these approaches. This should help inform decisions about ChildFund Australia's future role and pathways to impact.
- **Where advocacy and influencing may be particularly important** — including issues where progress depends on changes in policy, legislation, public financing, government or institutional systems, social norms or accountability, and where there may be opportunities to influence governments, donors or the broader development agenda. This should help inform future advocacy and influencing priorities.
- **How the funding and development landscape is shifting** — including changes in the priorities of governments, institutional donors such as DFAT, philanthropy and other funders; areas attracting increasing or declining attention and investment; and changes in preferred approaches, partnerships and funding models. This should help inform decisions about partnerships, growth, investment and funding priorities.
- **Where needs, opportunities and resources converge or diverge, and potential areas of focus** — identifying, for example, opportunities where current or emerging need is high, donor interest is strong and few development actors are responding. Conversely, the analysis should identify where these factors do not align—for example, where need is high but the space is already crowded, or where high or emerging needs receive limited attention or funding. This should help identify the opportunities and trade-offs that should inform ChildFund Australia's future strategic priorities, including programming, advocacy and funding priorities.

The consultancy will not propose strategic solutions or make recommendations. Its purpose is to establish the external evidence base and highlight the issues that should inform ChildFund Australia's strategic choices.

The consultancy will not recommend what ChildFund Australia should do or pre-empt decisions about its comparative advantage, positioning or priorities. Rather, the strategic observations should

clearly identify the external opportunities, challenges and trade-offs that need to be considered in making these decisions through the subsequent strategy process.

6. Strategic Evidence Matrix (Supplementary Excel Workbook)

To support subsequent strategy development, the consultancy will prepare a Strategic Evidence Matrix in Microsoft Excel that consolidates the principal findings of the analysis into a practical decision-support tool.

The matrix should synthesise evidence across the major thematic areas and enable comparison between:

- the scale and trajectory of children's needs;
- the drivers shaping future change;
- the current development actor response;
- donor and funding attention;
- the extent to which the issue is currently well-served or underserved; and
- the key strategic considerations emerging from the evidence.

The matrix should allow ChildFund Australia to identify where:

- needs are greatest;
- needs are increasing or emerging;
- progress is being achieved and why;
- development responses appear crowded or fragmented;
- significant gaps or underserved issues remain;
- donor and funder attention is increasing or declining;
- different pathways to impact (for example, direct programming, systems strengthening, advocacy, partnerships or innovation) appear most relevant; and
- opportunities and trade-offs exist that warrant consideration during strategy development.

The matrix should be designed as a practical working tool rather than a comprehensive database. Consultants are expected to exercise judgement in identifying the issues of greatest strategic significance rather than attempting to catalogue every issue, actor or funding opportunity.

The matrix should include the following columns: Theme / Issue | Scale of Need | Future Trajectory | Priority Populations | Geographic Relevance | Current Development Actor Response | Donor / Funding Attention | Primary Pathways to Impact | Key Strategic Opportunities or Gaps | Evidence Strength / Confidence.

Where appropriate, consultants may use qualitative ratings (for example High/Medium/Low or Increasing/Stable/Declining) supported by concise explanatory notes rather than quantitative scoring.

Geographic scope

The primary geographic scope of the research will be Asia and the Pacific, reflecting the centre of gravity of ChildFund Australia's directly managed programming and strategic interests. ChildFund Australia directly manages and implements programs with a range of local partners in Cambodia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. It also supports projects

delivered by partner organisations in Indonesia, Laos and the Philippines, as well as countries in Africa, and the Americas.

The regional analysis will identify broad Asia-Pacific patterns while distinguishing between subregions and country contexts where aggregation risks masking important differences. Analysis may differentiate, where relevant, between:

- Asia and the Pacific;
- subregions within Asia;
- small island developing states;
- fragile and conflict-affected contexts;
- lower- and middle-income countries; and
- other groupings that emerge as analytically significant.

The research will include **eight focused country spotlights for pre-agreed ChildFund Australia program countries**. These will connect regional trends with the specific contexts in which ChildFund Australia operates and provide a concise synthesis of the most strategically relevant evidence concerning children's rights and wellbeing, inequalities, changing needs and emerging trends. The country spotlights are not intended to constitute comprehensive national Child Rights Situation Analyses.

While the analysis will be grounded in the Asia-Pacific context, relevant global trends in children's rights, international development practice, advocacy and influencing, and development financing will also be considered where they shape the environment in which ChildFund Australia operates.

5. Methodology

Desk review and evidence synthesis

The research will primarily comprise structured secondary research, evidence synthesis and strategic landscape analysis designed to inform organisational strategy and program prioritisation.

It is not intended to be a formal systematic review. The consultancy should prioritise the synthesis and strategic interpretation of credible existing evidence, using a transparent and proportionate approach to identifying, selecting and assessing sources.

Sources may include:

- reports and datasets from UN and multilateral organisations;
- government and official statistical sources;
- reports and evidence produced by international, national and local civil society organisations;
- institutional donor strategies, policies and investment priorities;
- academic and peer-reviewed research;
- systematic and evidence reviews;
- regional and national Child Rights Situation Analyses;
- development, futures and foresight studies;
- ChildFund Alliance and ChildFund Australia research and program evidence; and
- other relevant grey literature.

Evidence synthesis may be limited to English-language sources. The consultancy is expected to apply judgement in prioritising evidence of greatest strategic significance. The assignment is not intended to provide exhaustive coverage of every thematic issue, country, development actor or funding opportunity. Rather, consultants should identify the most important patterns, trends, opportunities, tensions and implications that will assist ChildFund Australia to make strategic decisions. All sources must be appropriately referenced.

Consultants may use artificial intelligence (AI) and other digital research tools to improve the efficiency of evidence identification, synthesis and drafting. However, all findings, interpretations, analyses and citations must be independently verified by the consultancy team. The consultancy remains fully responsible for the accuracy, quality, integrity and transparency of all outputs.

Again, the country spotlights are not intended to constitute comprehensive national Child Rights Situation Analyses. Each selected CFA country spotlight could be a maximum of 3 pages, using a standard template. They would be informed by the above resources, rather than requiring analysis and synthesis of country-specific resources. They will provide key differences from or similarities to the regional picture and major gaps in development actor response and relevant donor attention. These should be designed primarily to support Child Fund Australia's overarching organisational strategy and program priorities, rather than country-specific strategy and priorities.

Quantitative analysis

Where required, analysis of existing published datasets will be used to assess the scale, distribution and trajectory of key child rights and wellbeing issues.

Where possible and relevant, data will be disaggregated by geography, gender, age, disability, socioeconomic status and other dimensions of inequality. The analysis should explicitly identify significant data limitations and areas where the absence of evidence may conceal particular groups or issues.

Strategic landscape and comparative analysis

The consultancy will synthesise evidence across thematic areas, approaches to impact, actors and funders to identify broader patterns within the development landscape.

Comparative and matrix-based analysis should be used where it adds value to identify:

- common and differentiated needs across countries and contexts;
- areas of actor concentration and relative gaps;
- emerging approaches to achieving impact;
- significant advocacy and influencing agendas;
- donor and funder priorities; and
- areas of convergence or divergence between evidence of need, sector activity and funding attention.

The methodology should remain proportionate to the purpose of the research. The objective is not to create a comprehensive database of development actors or funding opportunities, but to generate a sufficiently robust external evidence base to inform strategic decision-making.

6. Deliverables and Indicative Timetable

Time is a critical consideration for this assignment. ChildFund Australia intends to use the findings to inform an active organisational strategy development process. Consultants are therefore encouraged to propose efficient approaches, including the use of appropriately resourced teams working concurrently where appropriate. Proposals demonstrating the ability to deliver high-quality outputs in a shorter timeframe will be viewed favourably.

The timetable is indicative and may be refined in consultation with the successful team as part of the inception and work planning process. Activity streams may overlap and deliverables will be developed iteratively. ChildFund Australia anticipates that the assignment will require approximately 60 consultant days across a multidisciplinary consultancy team. Consultant teams may propose an alternative level of effort and team composition based on their proposed methodology.

Payments will be made upon satisfactory completion and approval of the relevant deliverables by ChildFund Australia.

Activity stream	Deliverables & Payment triggers	Indicative timing	Due date & Payment schedule
Contract awarded			
1. Inception and analytical framework	Inception report with agreed methodology, report outline, analytical framework, list of priority evidence sources, and agreed country spotlight template.	Week 1	Friday 14 August
2. Concurrent evidence synthesis	Draft analytical papers covering the four core analysis sections (1. State of children's rights and wellbeing; 2. Drivers of change; 3. Evolving development practice; 4. Development actors and funders).	Weeks 1–4	Friday 11 September
3. Country spotlights	Draft country spotlights for eight agreed ChildFund Australia countries using standard template.	Weeks 2–4	Friday 11 September
4. Strategic synthesis and integration	Draft analytical paper for section 5. Strategic observations and implications for ChildFund Australia's strategy; and draft Supplementary Excel Workbook for section 6. Strategic Evidence Matrix. Draft Executive PowerPoint slide deck.	Weeks 5–6	Friday 25 September
5. ChildFund review and Final Strategic Landscape Analysis (incorporating feedback)	Final report, final Strategic Evidence Matrix, Executive PowerPoint slide deck, and all editable files.	Week 7–8	Friday 16 October

7. Management and Reporting Arrangement

The consultancy team lead will report to the **Director, Strategy, International Programs and Impact**, who will provide overall oversight and strategic direction for the assignment. The consultancy team

lead will work closely with relevant ChildFund Australia staff, including the Executive Team and International Programs Team.

Regular progress meetings will be held throughout the assignment to review progress, discuss emerging findings and provide direction and feedback on draft deliverables.

All deliverables must be written in English and provided in editable electronic formats, primarily Microsoft Word, Excel and/or PowerPoint, as appropriate.

8. Confidentiality

All discussions and documents relating to this ToR will be treated as confidential by the parties.

9. Child Safeguarding

The consultancy team will undertake the Services to a high standard; use its best endeavors to promote the best interests of ChildFund; protect the reputation of ChildFund and work in a manner consistent with the mission, vision and policies of ChildFund (see Child Safeguarding Policy/Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct PSEAH policy and Employee Code of Conduct). ChildFund Australia has a zero-tolerance policy to abuse, exploitation and harassment in all its forms.

10. Counter-Terrorism and Anti-Money Laundering

ChildFund Australia acknowledges its obligation under the Australian laws relating to counter-terrorism and anti-money laundering. In order to meet its obligation, the consultant is obligated to provide information required for ChildFund to undertake counter terrorism screening before engagement. The Consultants' names, dates & places of birth and ID numbers will be checked against Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) consolidated list, National Security Australia list, World Banks listing and the Asian Development bank listing to ensure not engage with entities or individuals appearing on the lists.

11. Conflict of Interest

The Consultants must declare any financial, personal, family (or close intimate relationship) interest in matters of official business which may impact on the work of ChildFund

12. Fraud and Corruption prevention and awareness

ChildFund Australia has a zero approach to fraud and corruption act. The successful consultant will be required to comply with ChildFund Australia's fraud and corruption prevention and awareness Policy and act against any form of fraud or corruption and not offer, promise, give or accept any bribes.

13. Insurance

The successful applicant will be required to have in place insurance arrangements appropriate to provision of the requirement in this TOR including (without limitation) travel insurance.

14. Acknowledgment and Disclaimer

ChildFund, its Board and staff make no express or implied representation or warranty as to the currency, reliability or completeness of the information contained in this ToR. Nothing in this ToR should be construed to give rise to any contractual obligations or rights, expressed or implied, by the issue of this ToR or the submission of Expression of Interest in response to it. No contract would be created until a formal written contract is executed between ChildFund and a selected consultant.

15. Selection Criteria for Consultancy Team

ChildFund Australia is seeking an experienced multidisciplinary team with complementary expertise in children's rights, international development, strategic foresight, evidence synthesis and development landscape analysis. The successful team should demonstrate:

- Proven experience undertaking strategic research, evidence synthesis and landscape analyses for strategy, policy or investment decision-making.
- Demonstrated ability to synthesise complex evidence into concise, executive-level reports and presentations.
- Strong expertise in children's rights, international development and the Asia-Pacific region.
- Understanding of the international development landscape, including donors, INGOs, local civil society, philanthropy and emerging approaches to impact.
- Experience analysing the international development landscape, including donor priorities, funding trends, development actors and emerging strategic opportunities.
- Demonstrated capability in strategic foresight, horizon scanning and identifying emerging trends, risks and opportunities relevant to organisational strategy.
- An experienced Team Lead with a demonstrated track record in leading multidisciplinary consultancy teams and translating complex evidence into clear, strategic insights for executive decision-making.
- A multidisciplinary team with complementary expertise relevant to the assignment and the capacity to undertake multiple workstreams concurrently while maintaining a consistent analytical framework and report quality.
- Strong project management, quality assurance and timely delivery of high-quality outputs.
- Competitive pricing and value for money.
- Availability to undertake the assignment within the indicative timeframe.

For a consultancy team, ChildFund Australia will assess the collective expertise of the proposed team. Proposals should clearly identify the role, level of effort and relevant expertise of each team member.

Please submit your expression of interest (EOI), in **English, by Tuesday 4 August 2026**. The proposal should include technical and financial proposal based on the TOR, the team leads CV and team members biographies. The technical proposal should include the approaches/methodologies, report outline with country spotlight proposal, list of priority evidence sources, timeline with number of days based, and relevant examples of experience.

The financial proposal should specify a total lump sum amount and a breakdown of a daily professional fee and other costs. Applications without a financial proposal will be regarded as incomplete and will not be considered for further assessment. Referees and confirmed availability for the duration of the assignment must be provided.

Questions can be directed to Melissa Burgess mburgess@childfund.org.au.