

Terms of Reference for a study of Childhoods work to strengthen protection for children identifying as LGBTQ.

1. Background and rationale

Child sexual abuse and exploitation is a global problem affecting the lives of millions of children. Even though no child is immune against potential child sexual abuse and violence, there are some groups of children that are at higher risk.

There is increasing awareness about the specific risks for abuse experienced by LGBTQ children and youth. LGBTQ youth are more exposed to harassment, violence, discrimination, sexual abuse, and exploitation, and more often suffer from mental health issues than adolescents in general. Research further indicates common breakdown of family relations in situations where the family is unable to accept the LGBTQ identity of the child or youth. This often results in the child or youth being kicked out from the home, or that the child decides or feels forced to leave.

In some countries, there are also clear legal gaps and widespread discrimination against people identifying as LGBTQ which limits access to education, employment and services. Cultural beliefs and lack of knowledge of diversity, gender and sexual orientation among family members, professionals, and people in general as well as inadequate national budget allocation for prevention and response services, contribute to this group disproportionately experiencing multiple forms of violations.

For several years, Childhood and Regnbågsfonden (the Rainbow Fund) have jointly initiated and funded initiatives to strengthen protection and reduce the risk of sexual abuse among LGBTQ youth, including boys. Our assessment is that the efforts we have made together in recent years are pioneering work that may be of interest for the wider field. The time is now ripe to analyze and document the challenges and lessons learned from these projects.

An overall strategy has been to get more LGBTQ organizations to integrate a protection and children's rights perspective in their activities, and to increase knowledge of the special needs and risks of the LGBTQ group among children's rights organizations and make them more inclusive. The projects have in various ways enabled the integration of child protection and LGBTQ perspectives and closer cooperation between LGBTQ organizations and child rights organizations and authorities.

The projects relevant for this study are implemented in the following countries: Ukraine, Moldova, Poland, Cambodia, and Sweden. See list of projects in appendix 1.

Even though the projects are implemented in different parts of the world where openness and knowledge of LGBTQ rights differ significantly, there seem to be similar challenges shared in all geographies.

For example, there is often an initial resistance from LGBTQ organizations to actively address an underage target group because it comes with other requirements, responsibilities, and risks. The experiences and lessons learned by project partners when they actively opened up to a younger target group can be of benefit to other LGBTQ organizations that see the needs of young people under 18 but have not yet taken the step to actively work with them.

There are also recurring examples of both disinterest and sometimes outright rejection from children's rights organizations and responsible authorities to participate in training on LGBTQ issues or actively work to include this group in their other activities that reach children. The strategies chosen by our project partners to overcome these obstacles are also relevant to document and disseminate further.

2. Specific Objectives of the Study and Questions

The study should focus on the following overarching research questions:

- Have the Childhood-funded projects increased protection for children who identify themselves as LGBTQ? If so, in what way?
- Are there lessons learned from collaborations between LGBTQ- sector and the child protection sector that other could benefit from? In what way?
- Have the projects contributed to potential learnings in terms of new insights and understanding of special vulnerabilities and protection needs to among children who identify as LGBTQ as well as opportunities and solutions to address them.
- Identify gaps and recommendations for improvement.

Other questions to be explored are the following.

- What changes for children have the projects resulted in?
- What are the experiences and feedback from the youth involved in the interventions? How is that feedback gathered in the projects?
- Have the collaborative projects led to changes within the organizations (e.g. new perspectives, knowledge, approaches, use of language about LGBTQ issues/or sexual abuse of children)
- To what extent have the projects openly addressed the risks of child sexual abuse?

- To what extent have the projects addressed the vulnerability of boys to sexual abuse?
- Has concrete preventive activities taken place? Which ones?
- Are there challenges encountered with addressing child sexual abuse within the group? (Challenges within the team, within the partnership, with external stakeholders such as government authorities, other civil society organizations, beneficiaries, parents?)
 - o If so, are there good examples of strategies on how to overcome those challenges?

The analysis should be presented in the context the different projects operate in and include relevant observations regarding how the external context acts as a barrier or enabler, and how the projects adapt or influence the external context.

The results from the study will be used to inform future grant-making and communication from World Childhood Foundation and Regnbågsfonden. We also aim to present the findings to other international foundations and partners with the purpose to increase the number of stakeholders integrating a child protection and LGBTQ-rights perspective in their work. The ambition is that the study will provide a valuable contribution to global learnings about how to strengthen the inclusion of the LGBTQ group in child protection systems and how to strengthen child protection perspectives within LGBTQ organizations.

3. Scope and methodology

The study should document and analyse experiences from projects mentioned in appendix 1.

Suitable approach and methodology are to be proposed as part of the presented tender. We anticipate a combination of desk-research (project proposals, reports and other documentation related to the projects) complemented by information gathered in surveys, interviews, and case studies.

The mission can be carried out remotely. Interviews and case studies may be carried out by local teams. We do not anticipate international travel as part of the budget.

4. Required Expertise and Qualifications

Desired profile of the study team or individual

- a relevant academic degree and/or practical experience that includes qualitative interviews and quantitative analysis
- experience of, and understanding for, working in a development context

- a good understanding of global child protection and child safeguarding in general, and understanding the global LGBTQIA+ context
- a good ability to express yourself in writing to clearly and structurally document the results of the assignment.

5. Expected Deliverables and Duration of the Work

The final report should be submitted not later than May 15, 2025

The report should be written in English,

An inception report with a detailed methodology and implementation plan should be submitted within two weeks after the agreement is signed.

The final report should not exceed 30 pages, including an executive summary

The report should include an overarching analysis of the findings in relation to the research questions, illustrated by quotations and case studies from the project partners. It should also include a brief context of how working with LGBTQ rights differs in the various countries and how that affects the possibility to work with the protection of children who identify as LGBTQ. The report should include a list of recommendations and lessons learned.

6. Budget

The budget should cover costs for team member salaries, expenses and per diem as well as travel expenses, costs for translators as well as data processing. The budget does not include costs for printing or dissemination of the final report.

The bids should be submitted in USD or SEK.

Payment can be made in 2-3 tranches with the final tranche being submitted after the full report is delivered.

7. Exclusivity and rights

World Childhood Foundation shall retain ownership of the report and related material and shall be free to determine how the material is presented and communicated after completion of the assignment. Any changes to the design of the assignment or report must be approved by Childhood. During the course of the assignment, any findings and conclusions shall not be shared with stakeholders outside of Childhood.

8. The proposal should include the following:

The study will be made in close collaboration with Childhood with clear milestones for reporting, feedback and final approval- to be developed in partnership with the consultant.

Tenders must be received no later than 15 November 2024. Tenders will be considered on a rolling basis.

The application must contain:

- A brief description of the applicant and why you are interested in this project.
- Overall approach and project plan for the assignment including
 - Proposed methodology and analytical approach for the assignment.
 - Estimated total time for the mission, with key phases and milestones
 - Cost proposal with specified fee and possible expenses for the assignment, excluding VAT.
- 2 work samples of similar assignments carried out with the associated description of the assignment.
- 2 references with contact information

Applications and questions about the assignment can be sent by e-mail to:
AK Fagerlund ak.fagerlund@childhood.org World Childhood Foundation

I. Additional References or Resources

More information about philanthropic investments in LGBTQ rights can be found here: <https://globalphilanthropyproject.org/>

APPENDIX 1

Childhood-funded projects enhancing protection for children identifying as LGBTQ:

- Safer environment for children and youth in Moldova Y3 with GENDERDOC-M and Terre des Hommes, Moldova
 - o Grant period: 3 years (ongoing)
 - o Childhood investment: 160 454 USD
 - o Project Objective: To address the intersectionality of LGBT+ rights and children's rights. In year one GDM and Terre Des Homme trained each other in their respective expertise and the first ever interview study with LGBT+ youth in Moldova was carried out to identify areas for improvement within the support system. The findings from the study guides the project going forward.

- Inclusive Child Protection with First Step Cambodia and Beautiful Life Organisation, Cambodia
 - o Grant period: 2 years (ongoing)
 - o Childhood investment: 205 000 USD
 - o Project objective: To ensure that social services and child protection services become inclusive towards children and youth who identifies as LGBTIQ+.

- First steps for LGBTI Adolescents with LGBT Association LIGA in Ukraine
 - o Grant period: 5 years (ongoing)
 - o Childhood investment: 264 004 USD
 - o Project objective: increased protection and wellbeing of adolescents identifying as LGBTQ.
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- Safer Safeguarding sexually exploited LGBTQ youth with RFSL Youth, Sweden
 - o Grant period: 3 years (concluded)
 - o Childhood investment: 445 000 USD
 - o Project objective: To minimize the exposure that LGBTQ youth have to sexual abuse, domestic violence and grooming, as well as ensuring that exposed youth have access to relevant support.

- Pilot grant LGBT+me with Empowering Children Foundation, Poland

- Grant period: one year (concluded)
- Childhood investment: 20 000 USD
- Project objective: To provide professionals, parents, children and youth – both heteronormative and LGBT+ – with knowledge about the situation of LGBT+ children and young people in Poland and the necessary measures to combat homophobic and transphobic violence.