



Terms of Reference (ToR) Call for a National Researcher- Romania

REGIONAL RESEARCH ON SUPERVISION of social workers and other care workers working in integrated and multi-disciplinary teams setting in child protection

- Project Title: Child Protection Hub (ChildHub)
- Position: Consultancy (only legal persons)
- Location: Romania- contract with Terre des hommes Foundation Romania
- Period: January - March 2022
- Duration: approx. 15 working days
- Deadline:13th January 2022

I. Introduction

About Terre des hommes

Terre des hommes (Tdh) is the leading Swiss organization for children's aid. In 2019, our health, child protection and emergency programmes have supported over four million children and members of their communities around the world through innovative and sustainable solutions.

In Europe, Tdh helps children who are affected by migration, who come in contact with the law as a victim, witness or offender, and who need general protection including from the risk of abuse, trafficking or exploitation. In 2020, more than 39,600 children and 6,570 parents benefitted from Tdh's support and over 20,700 child protection professionals were trained in Europe. Our key activities include, among many others:

1. supporting countries in developing and strengthening comprehensive and well-coordinated child protection systems;
2. building the capacities of professionals working for children;
3. mobilising communities and educating families to create safe and nurturing environments for children and youth
4. empowering and increasing the resilience of children through mental health and psycho-social support and self-led art initiatives.

Introduction to the Child Protection Hub

The Child Protection Hub (in short ChildHub) is an interactive and innovative network of child protection professionals in Central, East and Southeast Europe. ChildHub promotes the sharing of knowledge and good practices, offers specific professional trainings and skills development opportunities and informs and advocates with policy-makers to influence policies and practices



related to child protection. ChildHub ensures a space for constant learning and communication with the opportunity for professionals to become part of a strong regional community of practice. The online platform of ChildHub is available in nine languages and is open to a range of professionals from social and healthcare workers through justice and law enforcement professionals to policy-makers.

ChildHub conducts activities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary (only project coordination work), Kosovo, Moldova, Romania and Serbia. The project is coordinated by Terre des hommes` Regional Support Hub Budapest (located in Hungary), with dedicated local project associates/coordinators in Terre des hommes country offices in Albania, Kosovo, Moldova and Romania, and in the external partner organizations of Brave Phone in Croatia, the Center for Youth Integration in Serbia, the Know-How Centre for the Alternative Care of Children of the New Bulgaria University, and Save the Children North-West Balkans in Bosnia and Herzegovina. ChildHub`s overall objective (as a long-term vision) is to contribute to the realization of children`s fundamental rights across the region, in particular the right to be protected from abuse and violence. ChildHub`s mid- term objective is to contribute, together with child protection actors, to a functional child protection system and exert influence on the development of policies, structures, and accountability mechanisms for child protection.

II. Background and context of the research on supervision

Issues of child protection are very complex, difficult and often overwhelming to deal with for front line professionals in every context. Learning from supervised practice is an essential component of the education and training of frontline workers (members of multidisciplinary teams) in direct work with children and families in risk. Supervision is the “cornerstone” of a good practice for these professionals and is geared toward efficiency, accountability, professional standards and high performance of workers. Professional supervision is key as it enables both supervisor and supervisee to reflect on, scrutinize and evaluate the work carried out, assessing the strengths and challenges of the practitioner by providing coaching and mentoring.

Research has demonstrated that provision of supervision is associated with job satisfaction, commitment to the organization and overall wellbeing. Also, research shows that in an inter-professional context, workers relate job satisfaction and professional development to their supervisor`s expert knowledge, regardless whether they share the same professional background (Carpenter et al,2012). The emotionally charged nature of work can place particular demands on school psychologists, school social workers, child protection workers, health workers, police officers and it is important to provide opportunities for reflective supervision oriented to case management, problem solving, emotional support and quality of their work in addressing issues of child abuse, neglect etc. Professional supervision is an important source of advice and expertise and may be required to endorse judgments at certain key points in time for professionals dealing directly with cases on their day to day practice, and identify the factors who promote or hinder the multidisciplinary team work . Through this process, supervisors should also record key decisions within the child`s case records.

Practice and research show that in the field of social work and education there is a need of different types of supervision: organizational, team support, clinical support for better understanding of the children/family behavior patterns, emotional support for the practitioners working directly with children and families etc. Supervision is both educative and supportive and facilitates the supervisee to explore their feelings about the work and the family. Effective



supervision related to issues of child protection needs to be regular and provide continuity, so that the relationship between supervisor and supervisee develops.

In Romania, supervision in social work is very well regulated, being mentioned as one of the minimum quality standards in case management (quality standard no. 12, order 288/2006), with clear indicators and work procedures. Every social welfare institution establishes internally if supervision for case managers and social workers is provided by an external body or internally. Nonetheless, no assessment reports were found on the functioning, quality and current structure of supervision in public institutions in Romania. In one best practice booklet on this topic¹, it is mentioned that in many social welfare institutions, supervision is seen only as an administrative task to control and monitor the work of the social workers, and less on offering support, reducing stress, professional and personal development.

Since 2011 the methodological framework² on prevention and intervention of multidisciplinary team in situations of violence against children and domestic violence, clearly states the roles and responsibilities of all involved parties. The purpose and objectives of supervision are described, as well the role of a supervisor but there is no mentioning of those in charge of taking on this role within the multidisciplinary team. The case manager is the one forming and leading the multidisciplinary team, most likely he/she benefits from supervision as regulated within his/her institution.

The evaluation report³ carried out by Tdh in 2015 to assess the status of continuous training of social workers, showed that less than 8,5% of the respondents (227 online surveys filled in) benefitted from supervision, 54,9% of respondents indicated that support is received mostly from their colleagues, but would want to receive supervision from an external body or internal specialized staff.

III. Objectives of the research

In spite of all practice established so far, there is a need to further develop and deepen knowledge, skills and practice in the field of supervision. There is a need to explore the different understandings, needs, standards, challenges of supervision faced by social workers and other social care workers involved in the multidisciplinary case management work. Furthermore, it will be for a great benefit to compare these needs, standards and understandings existing in the South-Eastern countries by fostering the mutual exchange and learning in order to provided research based evidence for the ones being in the process of establishing a child- and family-oriented social care system.

Also, there is a need to establish professional supervision as a prerequisite to quality services within the practice of child protection, for multidisciplinary team members. Such need has come naturally in a from the field where such practice is almost inexistent and when there is an increased focus on child protection issues.

¹ <https://www.protectiacopilului6.ro/Files/proiecte/management-de-caz/ghid-de-bune-practici.pdf>

² <https://lege5.ro/gratuit/ge2daobyge/metodologia-cadru-privind-prevenirea-si-interventia-in-echipa-multidisciplinara-si-in-retea-in-situatiile-de-violenta-asupra-copilului-si-de-violenta-in-familie-din-19012011>
<https://lege5.ro/gratuit/ha3timrv/managerul-de-caz-si-responsabilul-de-caz-ordin-288-2006?dp=gqzdamjxgi2tm>

³ https://childhub.org/sites/default/files/library/attachments/romanian_in_eng_0.pdf



In this context, the Child Protection Hub seeks to conduct a qualitative research across the region to explore the different understandings, needs and standards, factors hindering or promoting supervision mostly involved in the multidisciplinary case management work. Such research will target members of multidisciplinary teams and other responsible structures for offering and ensuring close professional supervision for child protection workers, school psychologists/social workers and other multidisciplinary teams' members.

The research aims to answer primary research questions to achieve the following objectives:

- To provide a snapshot of supervision for social workers and other social care workers in the multidisciplinary team (MDT) setting in child protection in Romania (Areas: multidisciplinary work: social assistance, education, health, police)
- To explore the attitudes, behaviors and perceptions of social workers and other workers working in an MDT context regarding supervision
- To identify key factors that hinder and promote supervision practices in the multidisciplinary teams' contexts
- To identify good practices in supervision
- To provide recommendations for strengthening supervision in Romania.

In order to conduct the national research, ChildHub is looking for a highly professional researcher, to become a part of the team of researchers working in 8 countries of South East Europe (Albania, Bosnia- Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia), under the coordination of the Lead Researcher, who is going to develop the research methodology, research tools and deliver final Regional research report based on all 8 national reports.

IV. Scope of Service:

The national researcher will be responsible to:

1. Attend introductory workshop (3 hours) and weekly meetings with lead researcher
2. Work Package 1:
 - Locate and obtain relevant policy documents in relation to supervision for their own country.
 - Analyse these documents by identifying key aims, intended outcomes and practice guidelines for supervisors.
 - Recruit a minimum of five key informants (from Centers of social work, law enforcement, prosecution, education, health, NGOs) to be interviewed, and to undertake and audio-record these interviews.
3. Work Package 2:
 - Access academic literature on supervision and use this, alongside the document analysis and key informant interviews, to help generate statements for the Q-study.
 - Recruit a minimum of 15 participants (ideally from 3 locations and from different types of institutions) to complete an online survey and the Q-study.
 - Recruit a minimum of three key informants to be interviewed about the results of the Q-study, to ensure validity of the conclusions.



4. Other

- Management and handling of all research data collected – and secure transfer to Cardiff University
- Review draft sections of final report
- Draft and finalise national report – in consultation with the ChildHub national associate and national organisation.

Timeline

January 2022

- Kickoff meeting with lead researcher and all local researchers 24 or 25 January 2022
- Development of the Q-method study and design and testing of the survey.

February 2022

- Work package one – desktop review and qualitative interviews with key stakeholders.
- Work package two – online survey and Q-method study.
- Results from the survey and Q-study to be analysed as the data become available

March 2022

- Submission of inputs to lead researcher
- Draft national report to be submitted to ChildHub (by 17th March) in English
- Final regional and national reports to be submitted to the funder (by 31st March)
- Presentation of country findings at a ChildHub regional online conference (late March)

The Lead researcher will be at hand to oversee the process and to write an overall synthesis report out of the 8 national reports.

Conditions

- The position is partially remote, as field work might be necessary. The consultant will be expected to work from its current location for most activities and attend virtual meetings in support of research activities. Field work is expected to be carried out in Bucharest and other locations where Tdh has offices (Dolj and Bacau counties). The possibility to carry out face to face interviews/ focus groups might be depending on the pandemic context and other constraints.
- The consultant will be expected to work approx. 15 days until March 2022.



Profile

- Demonstrated knowledge, experience, expertise in child protection/ child rights, supervision, and development of the welfare system for children in Romania;
- Substantial research experience, and publications in the field of child protection, child welfare
- Sound knowledge of research methodologies
- Proficiency in English both in writing and orally
- Ability to work with an international team of researchers
- Very good writing skills
- Ability to work with tight deadlines
- Have strong interpersonal skills
- Availability.

V. To Apply

Please submit the following information in English to Terre des hommes Romania at Raluca.condrut@tdh.ch by January 13th, 2022:

- The CV of the Researcher appointed to work on this;
- List of relevant publications of the appointed Researcher (as author or co-author) / References to previous, similar work done;
- An initial/ short plan of work in which the researcher suggest angles to focus on;
- Price Offer: the daily fee, indicating costs in EUR. VAT should also be indicated if applicable, separately.

Please note that only the selected candidates will be contacted. Any application received after the deadline will not be considered.

For any additional questions, please contact Raluca Condruț, Programs and Migration Manager at Raluca.condrut@tdh.ch.