Terms of Reference for Individual Consultant

TERMS OF REFERENCE (to be completed by the Hiring Office)	
Hiring Office:	UNFPA China Office
Purpose of consultancy:	UNFPA - the United Nations Population Fund - is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency. Our mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA aims to achieve three zeros by 2030 – zero unmet need for contraception, zero preventable maternal deaths, and zero violence or harmful practices against women and girls. UNFPA is now implementing the ninth country programme (CP9, 2021-2025) in China which complements the Chinese government's development vision set out in China's 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and is consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for China for the same period. The UNFPA CP9 is supporting policy reforms and development at the national and subnational levels, through research, capacity building, advocacy and pilot projects and interventions in four thematic areas – sexual and reproductive health, adolescents and youth, gender equality and women's empowerment and population dynamics. Under the gender component of the UNFPA/China CP9, UNFPA works together with national partners (e.g. National Health Commission (NHC), China Population and Development Research Center (CPDRC), etc.) to address son preference and gender-biased sex selection (GBSS). As an expression of a harmful practice, GBSS in favor of boys is a symptom of pervasive social, cultural, political and economic injustices against girls and women. GBSS leads to distorted levels of sex ration at birth (SRB). China has witnessed the most prolonged and significantly skewed SRB among the countries facing a similar challenge. An imbalance SRB first occurred as a problem in China in the early 1980s. It exceeded 110 in the 1990s and reached a peak of 121.18 in 2004. As China has strengthened comprehensive governance response to address skewed SRB since 2006, the SRB in China has consistently dropped during the past decade – from 119.45 in 2009 to 110.3 in 2020. Although the ratio has fallen, it is still higher than a normal ratio of 103-107. China aims to reduce the SRB back to a normal ratio by 2030 according to the National Population and Development Plan (2016 to 2030) issued by the State Council in 2016. A study on gender preference for children and SRB in China supported by UNFPA in 2021 shows that most provinces in China have shifted their son preference to "no preference" or "girl preference", but there are still some provinces with strong son preference (e.g. Hainan, Anhui, Jiangxi, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hunan and Hubei) and the SRB remains relatively high, slowing down the time for the national SRB to return to normal. Considering there is limited research on son preference and GBSS in these areas in recent years, the study recommends strengthening the research on gender preference

	at the attitude and behavior levels and the types and intensities of such preferences, in-depth analysis of the causes underlying the shift in gender preference, and dig into the impact of socio-economic development and cultural transition on the shift in gender preference in those provinces with strong son preference and high SRB. In line with the 2022 Annual Workplan of gender output, UNFPA will support a study of son preference and GBSS in selected provinces with high SRB in China to generate evidence on main drivers of GBSS (son preference and gender inequality that underlines it) for advocacy and policy dialogues with key stakeholder at national and subnational levels.
Scope of work: *(Description of services, activities, or outputs)*	Two national consultants (one senior consultant and one junior consultant) will be recruited, as a team, to conduct the study on son preference and GBSS in selected provinces with high SRB in China to: ● Understand current status of son preference – people's perceptions, attitudes and behaviors towards son preference; ● Analyze the cultural, economic and social reasons for strong son preference within the national context of rapid social and economic development, relaxed fertility policy, low fertility and population ageing; ● Provide recommendations to address son preference and GBSS with focus on positive social norm change of gender preference in provinces with strong son preference and high SRB. The consultancy is expected to use both qualitative and quantitative methods for information/data collection including, but not limited to, literature review, individual interviews and focus group discussions. The quantitative data analysis will be conducted among 21 provinces with SRB above the normal level (SRB > 107) according to the data of the 7th Census in 2020. The qualitative data analysis will be conducted in 2 selected provinces with high SRB. In addition to the 2nd hand data from the national surveys (e.g. National Fertility Survey, 2020 Census data, the 4th National Survey on Women's Social Status, etc.), the national consultant will conduct field visits to 2 provinces with strong son preference and high SRB to collect the first-hand data including interviews with the couples of reproductive age and other family members. The expected outputs/deliverables of this consultancy include: ● A design report outlining the overall design of the study including objectives and scope of the study, methodology and approach with a detailed description of the data collection plan and tools; ● A draft study report with key findings, conclusions and recommendations; ● A final study report to incorporate comments/feedback from NHC, UNFPA and other peer reviewers. The consultants are also expected to: ● Organize the consultation meetings with the key stakeholders for the study design and the study report review and finalization.

	● Coordinate with NHC and local authorities for field visits and data collection in the selected provinces.
Duration and working schedule:	35 working days for a senior national consultant and 25 working days for a junior consultant within a period from August 29 to December 9, 2022. The expected working schedule is as follows: ● August 29 to September 12, 2022 – Draft and submit the design report of the study ● September 13 to September 25, 2022 – Revise and finalize the design of the study ● September 25 to November 13, 2022 - Conduct the data collection and analysis and draft the study report ● November 13 – December 9 , 2022 – Revise and finalize the study report to incorporate the comments/feedback from NHC, UNFPA and other peer reviewers (national consultants)
Place where services are to be delivered:	Beijing
Delivery dates and how work will be delivered (*e.g.* electronic, hard copy etc.):	**Expected deliverables and delivery dates**: ● The design of the study by September 12, 2022 ● The draft study report by November 13, 2022 ● The final study report by December 9, 2022 All deliverables will be in both English and Chinese in electronic forms.
Monitoring and progress control, including reporting requirements, periodicity format and deadline:	● Develop a work plan with time schedule agreed by UNFPA China CO at the start of the assignment; ● Report progress and findings to UNFPA China CO periodically; ● Produce and submit the deliverables of the assignment as per agreed schedule.
Supervisory arrangements:	Ms. Ren Yanan, Programme Analyst (Gender/GBV), UNFPA China Office will supervise the consultancy during the contract period.
Expected travel:	None
Required expertise, qualifications and competencies, including language requirements:	**Senior national consultant:** ● Advanced university degree in demography, gender, social science, or other related discipline required. ● At least 8 years of demonstrated extensive experience with research and development in the areas of gender, population & development, particularly related to gender-biased sex selection (GBSS) and sex ratio at birth (SRB); ● Proven records of publications on GBSS and SRB, fertility policy, gender equality and women's development; ● Experience in/knowledge of China GBSS related policies and programmes and familiarity with China's development and governance context; ● Strong network with government authorities on GBSS;

	● Ability to access to GBSS related national survey data; ● Excellent leadership, analytical and communication skills; ● Proved capacity to process and analyze big data sets; ● Knowledge of UNFPA mandate and GBSS programme. ● Excellent command of both written and spoken Chinese and English. **<u>Junior national consultant:</u>** ● Advanced university degree in demography, gender, social science, or other related discipline required. ● At least 2 years of demonstrated extensive experience with research and development in the areas of gender, population & development, particularly related to gender-biased sex selection (GBSS) and sex ratio at birth (SRB); ● Experience in/knowledge of China' GBSS related policies and programmes and familiarity with China's development and governance context; ● Excellent analytical and communication skills; ● Proved capacity to process and analyze big data sets; ● Ability to work in a team with good communication; ● Excellent command of both written and spoken Chinese and English.
Inputs / services to be provided by UNFPA or implementing partner (e.g support services, office space, equipment), if applicable:	● Ensure the quality assurance of deliverables of the assignment (e.g. the design report, the draft and the final report of the study); ● Ensure the dissemination of the study report with key stakeholders and utilization of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations.
Other relevant information or special conditions, if any:	None