

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Senior Public Finance and Refugee Inclusion Costing Consultant

CONTRACT MODALITY:	Individual Consultancy (National/International)
DUTY STATION:	Social Policy Section, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
DURATION OF CONTRACT:	7.5 months (remote + travels)

Purpose of Assignment

The purpose of the consultancy is to generate rigorous and practical evidence on the financial requirements, investment gaps, and financing options needed to achieve sustainable refugee inclusion into essential services and local systems in Ethiopia, and to use this evidence to develop a Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS)-owned investment case for refugee inclusion. The study will support Ethiopia's government-led transition from predominantly humanitarian assistance toward a more sustainable, development-oriented approach to refugee inclusion, guided by the Makatete Roadmap and aligned with the objectives and principles of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), building on the experience and principles of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). Effective implementation of these commitments requires practical evidence on the financial implications of integrating refugees into national systems, including health, nutrition, education, WASH, child protection, social protection, livelihoods, shelter and basic services. The transition from a predominantly humanitarian response model toward sustainable inclusion of refugees within national systems requires robust evidence, credible financial planning, strengthened government institutional capacity, and realistic sequencing of investments. UNICEF Ethiopia seeks an experienced consultant to undertake a costing study and investment case for refugee inclusion in selected refugee-hosting areas such as Asayita (Afar Region), Kebribeyah (Somali Region), and/or a Refugee Hosting Area under the RRS Melkadida Branch Office (Somali Region), and locations will be confirmed in the inception phase. The assignment will generate evidence on current service delivery costs, financing sources, unit costs, incremental costs of refugee inclusion, financing gaps, and feasible investment options that can support implementation of the Makatet Roadmap and broader refugee inclusion objectives.

Scope of Work

The consultant will undertake a comprehensive costing and financing analysis examining the financial requirements, financing arrangements, investment gaps and sustainability considerations associated with refugee inclusion in Ethiopia. The study will assess existing service delivery costs across relevant sectors; current sources and structure of financing from government, humanitarian and development partners; unit costs of essential services per beneficiary, facility or service-delivery modality; additional incremental costs required to extend inclusion to refugee populations; and financing gaps and requirements for long-term sustainability.

The study will serve as the analytical foundation for an RRS-owned investment case for refugee inclusion. The investment case will be developed in a pragmatic and data-sensitive manner, recognizing that data availability may vary across sectors, locations and service-delivery systems. Throughout the assignment, the consultant will provide embedded capacity strengthening support to designated RRS technical staff. This will include joint development of costing assumptions, joint determination of minimum standards/packages, delivery of practical workshop sessions on costing exercises and use of costing models, and preparation of reusable costing tools and guidance materials. The consultant shall prepare a short capacity strengthening plan at inception and a capacity-building completion note at the end of the assignment documenting competencies transferred, tools handed over, and recommendations for institutionalizing future costing exercises within RRS..

1. Costing and Financing Analysis

The consultant will:

- assess existing service delivery systems and service gaps in the study locations;
- map current financing sources, expenditure patterns and financing flows across relevant sectors;
- estimate unit costs of essential services where data availability permits, and identify and utilize benchmark costs as needed;
- determine the incremental costs required to advance refugee inclusion in national systems;
- identify and quantify financing gaps, distinguishing between immediate service-delivery requirements, medium-term systems-strengthening investments, and longer-term sustainability needs.

The consultant is not expected to serve as the technical specialist for all sectors under the study. Sector-specific service-delivery assumptions, norms, and technical parameters will be validated through consultations with government ministries, UNICEF sector teams, implementing partners, and relevant technical experts. The consultant will be responsible for developing and applying the overall costing methodology, economic analysis, financing assessment, and investment case. The selection of priority areas for costing across sectors (including health, food and nutrition, education, WASH, child protection, social protection, refugee inclusion in national protection, livelihoods, shelter and settlement, and basic services, etc.) will be decided at the inception phase in consultation and agreement with RRS, UNICEF and other required stakeholders. The following provides an overview but is not limited to the areas for short- and medium-term costing and action plans (that consider high-level infrastructure typologies as well as include implementation, capacity building, financing, social behaviour change communication (SBCC)):

WASH: Conducting a WASH system and infrastructure gap analysis and defining service standards or target service levels; identifying investment requirements; developing indicative technical solutions/options; estimating capital and recurrent costs; estimating operations and maintenance (O&M) requirements; proposing service delivery models (government, utility-led, public private partnership (PPP), fecal sludge management (FSM) arrangements, etc.); calculating financing gaps and investment scenarios.

Child protection: Costing of refugee inclusion into national child protection systems including civil registration and vital statistics (birth registration) by identifying inclusion gaps and translating the inclusion gaps into a resource requirement, activity, or investment for costing. Consultations will be required to decide what is an acceptable minimum package/standard. A minimum package defines the lowest acceptable standard for inclusion and includes human resources, training, supplies, infrastructure and facilities, ICT, operations, and system processes (Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and protocols). The minimum standard needs to be defined and agreed in a participatory process with government stakeholders including RRS, line ministries and sub-national sector bureaus that provide child protection services. The domains of the child protection system that need to be considered during costing include but are not limited to: the legal and policy framework; governance and coordination; service delivery (child protection services for prevention and response, documentation services, social welfare services, social service workforce, case management, justice services, birth registration services); minimum standards and oversight; human, financial and infrastructure and facility resources; participation and community engagement; as well as data collection and monitoring (including case management systems and data governance). Refugee inclusion benchmarking data can be used where available to understand the inclusion gap and priority areas of investment (high impact interventions) to achieve inclusion.

Education: Pre-primary education; primary education; transition from primary to secondary; adolescents' education; secondary education; Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET); skills for learning to earning; job readiness; entrepreneurship; and tertiary education.

Social protection: Safety-net/cash transfer support for refugees and host communities; Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) – health insurance inclusion for refugees; school feeding (school meals for refugee and host community children); and livelihood grant/support (training, grants, productive assets, finance and market opportunities).

Health: Cost of including refugees in national health services, including primary health care, referral services,

medicines, health infrastructure, human resources and equipment.

Food and Nutrition: Cost of meeting essential food and nutrition needs, including nutrition services, prevention and treatment of malnutrition, food assistance where required, and transition/integration into sustainable national systems.

Shelter and Settlement: Cost of adequate and sustainable shelter, settlement infrastructure, site services and basic facilities, including rehabilitation/upgrading where appropriate.

Protection: Cost of including refugees in national protection, legal, registration, documentation, safety and justice systems.

2. Cost of Inaction Analysis

The consultant will assess the cost of delayed or incomplete inclusion, including operational, fiscal and service delivery implications. Particular attention should be given to understanding the consequences of maintaining fragmented or parallel systems, continued financing gaps, and delays in implementation of refugee inclusion commitments.

3. Targeted Cost-Effectiveness Analysis

Where sufficient data exists, the consultant will undertake targeted cost-effectiveness comparisons for selected investment options. This may include comparison of alternative service delivery or inclusion approaches using practical indicators such as cost per beneficiary reached, cost per additional service user, cost per service outcome, or cost per system-strengthening output.

4. Investment Case Development

The consultant will develop a practical, RRS-owned investment case that translates costing evidence into prioritized, sequenced and fiscally realistic options for refugee inclusion. The investment case should synthesize findings from the costing work, financing-gap analysis, cost-of-inaction assessment and targeted cost-effectiveness analysis into a coherent package that can support government planning, budgeting, advocacy and resource mobilization.

The study will explicitly recognize that data availability is likely to vary substantially by sector, geography, institution and service-delivery modality. The consultant should avoid over-reliance on aggregate modelling where data are insufficient. All assumptions must be documented transparently. Where quantitative data is incomplete, the consultant may use triangulation, proxy indicators, scenario ranges and qualitative validation, but should clearly distinguish between observed data, estimated values and analytical assumptions.

The assignment offers a unique opportunity to support one of Ethiopia's flagship refugee-inclusion initiatives and contribute to the implementation of the Makatet Roadmap through the development of government-owned evidence and investment products that can inform policy, planning and resource mobilization at national level.

The study should not be designed as a classical macro-level cost-benefit analysis. Selected cost-benefit or return-on-investment perspectives may be included only where data are strong enough to support credible interpretation. The consultant is expected to exercise independent technical judgement in determining the most appropriate analytical approaches within the parameters established by these Terms of Reference.

The consultancy will require a combination of field-based and Addis Ababa-based engagement to ensure robust evidence generation, stakeholder ownership, and validation of findings. The consultant will be expected to undertake two or three field missions to the two or three primary study locations: Asayita Refugee Hosting Area (Afar Region) plus Kebribeyah Refugee Hosting Area (Somali Region) and/or a Refugee Hosting Area under the RRS Melkadida Branch Office (Somali Region). These missions will support facility-based costing, service-delivery assessments, key informant interviews, focus group discussions where appropriate, and engagement with local authorities, service providers, refugee representatives, host communities, and implementing partners.

In addition, the consultant will be expected to undertake a minimum of one week of stakeholder consultations in Addis Ababa to conduct key informant interviews with the Refugees and Returnees Service (RRS), relevant line ministries, UNICEF, UNHCR, development partners, and other national stakeholders involved in refugee inclusion, planning, budgeting, and service delivery. These consultations will support the setting of minimum standards/packages, costing assumptions, financing analysis, investment-case development, and validation of emerging findings.

A further one-week mission in Addis Ababa is envisaged during the course of the assignment to deliver a practical workshop and jointly conduct with stakeholders the refinement of costing assumptions and undertake costing exercises. Another one-week mission in Addis Ababa is expected at the final phase of the assignment to support validation and finalization of outputs. During this period, the consultant will work closely with RRS and UNICEF to facilitate validation workshops, refine recommendations based on stakeholder feedback, finalize the investment case and policy recommendations, and contribute to the preparation of associated visibility and dissemination materials, including policy briefs, presentations, and other communication products intended to support implementation of the Makatet Roadmap and broader refugee inclusion objectives.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable	Estimated input days
Deliverable 1. Inception Report and Data Collection Tools	Refined methodology; Sector and data availability assessment; Stakeholder mapping; Workplan; Interview guides; Facility costing templates; Consultation tools; Data-request templates.	15.11.2026	20 days
Deliverable 2. Draft Costing Study	Three weeks (or 4 weeks depending on the number of refugee hosting areas to be selected for the study during the inception phase) of field research completed to assess the situation and multi-sector social service delivery gaps plus available data collection; Service delivery (plus management) and financing mapping; Unit costs; Incremental costs; Financing gaps; Delivery of practical workshops for jointly defining minimum standards/packages, costing assumptions, costing exercises and use of costing models (travel to Ethiopia required); Preliminary findings.	31.01.2027	40 days
Deliverable 3. Revised Costing Study and Analytical Note	Revised costing analysis; Cost-of-inaction analysis; Targeted cost-effectiveness analysis; one week visit in Addis to conduct validation workshop and agree with RRS on policy recommendation and framing of policy brief.	31.04.2027	30 days
Deliverable 4. Final Investment Case Package	Refugee inclusion investment case; Policy brief; PowerPoint slides, Validation workshop report; Replicable costing framework (reusable costing tools and guidance materials) and capacity-building completion note.	30.06.2027	30 days

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.

Important Notes

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that the health insurance (and visa if applicable) required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.
- UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES (CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

Education:

- Advanced university degree in economics, public finance, development economics, health economics or a related field, with demonstrated experience leading or substantially contributing to multi-sector social service delivery costing, social sector financing and investment case development.

Work Experience:

- Minimum 10 years of progressively responsible experience in public finance, public service delivery, complex multi-sector social service delivery costing studies covering two or more social sectors at national or sub-national levels, investment case development, social sector financing, development economics, public policy, refugee inclusion, social protection, or related fields.
- Demonstrated experience leading or substantially contributing to multi-sector social service delivery gap assessments and costing studies, financing-gap analyses, public expenditure reviews, financing strategies and investment cases, fiscal analysis or comparable economic and public finance assignments.

- Demonstrated ability to work with sector specialists and government counterparts to develop sector-specific assumptions, costing assumptions, and investment scenarios.
- Proven track record in situation assessments and multi-sector service delivery gap assessments; identifying minimum service standards; technical options for closing identified gaps; concept-level infrastructure packages and indicative bills of quantities (BoQs); capacity estimates; lifecycle cost estimates; operations and maintenance (O&M) plus institutional arrangements; financing and implementation scenarios; as well as all the required inputs to the overall investment case; with familiarity of international and national standards (e.g. WHO, Sphere, environmental and public health guidelines).
- Experience in similar humanitarian-development, geographic, refugee, displacement or low-resource and underserved-area contexts is an added advantage.
- Experience working with government institutions, development partners, international organizations or research institutions, and proven experience in similar assignments and contexts.
- Previous experience in Ethiopia, refugee inclusion, social protection, education, health, nutrition, WASH, child protection, livelihoods or related public systems in similar geographic or low-resource contexts is highly desirable. in the design, implementation, monitoring and technical support of cash-plus interventions, child-sensitive social protection programmes, Case Management, or integrated social services.

Language requirements

- Fluency in spoken and written English is required.

Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:

- Public finance, multi-sector social service delivery costing or social sector financing expertise.
- Experience with government planning, budgeting, multi-sector service delivery costing, public expenditure and financing gap analysis or investment case development.
- Demonstrated capacity to deliver situation assessments and multi-sector service delivery gap assessments; identifying minimum service standards; technical options for closing identified gaps; concept-level infrastructure packages and indicative bills of quantities (BoQs); capacity estimates; lifecycle cost estimates; operations and maintenance (O&M) plus institutional arrangements; financing and implementation scenarios; as well as all the required inputs to the overall investment case; with familiarity of international and national standards (e.g. WHO, Sphere, environmental and public health guidelines).
- Experience working with administrative and sector data. Ability to work with incomplete datasets and document assumptions transparently.
- Ability to convert sector norms and standards and service delivery models into cost models/credible cost estimates.
- Strong facilitation skills for consultations with multiple government, partners and technical stakeholders.
- Knowledge of Ethiopia public systems, refugee inclusion, WASH, child protection, social protection, education, health, nutrition or livelihoods programming.
- Excellent analysis and writing skills.