United Nations Children's Fund

TERMES OF REFEREENCE

Title	Type of engagement	Duty Station
Programme Assistant (GS-4)	**Temporary Appointment - TA**	**Lahore, Pakistan**

UNICEF is a leading humanitarian and development agency working globally for children's rights. These rights begin with safe shelter, nutrition, and protection from disaster and conflict, spanning every stage of life. UNICEF strives to ensure that all children are born healthy, stay safe, and continue learning. UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places to reach the most disadvantaged children, saving lives, defending rights, and helping children fulfill their potential. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, every day, to build a better world for all.

And we never give up.

For more than 75 years, UNICEF has endeavored to improve the lives of children and their families. Working with and for children through adolescence and into adulthood requires a global presence dedicated to producing results and monitoring their impact. UNICEF also advocates and collaborates with leaders, thinkers, and policymakers to ensure all children, especially the most disadvantaged, can realize their rights.

UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce and encourages applications from all candidates, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, or ethnic background, including persons with disabilities. Our workplace policies promote flexible work arrangements, supporting staff in maintaining a healthy work-life balance both in and out of the office.

We are the first United Nations agency to be awarded the EDGE certification, the leading global standard for gender equality in the workplace.

UNICEF is proud of its multicultural and harmonious work environment, upheld by a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment (including sexual harassment), and discrimination. All selected candidates undergo rigorous reference and background checks.

Job Organizational Context

The UNICEF Lahore Field Office Nutrition Section manages a large and expanding portfolio of nutrition interventions across Punjab, requiring extensive financial, operational, supply and partnership-management support. The proposed Programme Assistant position is required to support timely implementation, strengthen financial oversight and documentation, facilitate supply and operational processes, and maintain compliance with UNICEF procedures. Based on the current programme pipeline, including BNP implementation, BISP-linked activities, partner management and anticipated funding commitments, the support function is expected to be required for 364 days, subject to programme scope, funding availability and operational requirements.

Purpose of the Job

Under the supervision and guidance of the Nutrition Specialist, Lahore, the Programme Assistant will provide integrated programme, financial, operational and supply support to the Nutrition Section. The position will maintain reliable tracking and documentation, facilitate timely payments, including approved Easypaisa transactions, support third-party financial management and oversight, and undertake field monitoring and spot checks when required. The incumbent will work closely with programme colleagues, Operations, Supply, Finance, implementing partners, government counterparts and contracted service providers.

Scope of Work

Summary of Key Functions and Accountabilities

1. Programme planning, implementation and coordination

- Support the preparation, updating and follow-up of annual and rolling workplans, implementation schedules and action trackers for the Nutrition Programme in Punjab.
- Compile routine programme data and partner updates, check submissions for completeness and consistency, and flag gaps or delays to the supervisor.
- Maintain trackers for programme activities, budgets, supplies, agreements, field visits, reporting deadlines and agreed actions.
- Provide inputs to programme reports, donor updates, briefing notes, presentations, dashboards and management reviews using verified information.
- Arrange and support field monitoring visits, including schedules, travel and logistical coordination, documentation and follow-up of agreed actions.

2. Programme transactions and financial follow-up

- Initiate and process assigned programme transactions in UNICEF corporate systems, including requests, commitments and payments, in line with delegated roles and procedures.
- Check supporting documents for completeness, correct coding and required clearances, and follow up pending actions with programme, Operations and Finance colleagues.
- Maintain up-to-date expenditure and commitment records and alert the supervisor to approaching deadlines, low utilization, funding expiry or documentation gaps.

3. Easypaisa and other approved digital payments

- Coordinate preparation and quality review of approved Easypaisa or other digital-payment batches, as applicable.
- Validate beneficiary or payee lists against approved activity records, check mandatory fields, identify duplicates or inconsistencies, and maintain controlled batch and exception logs.
- Coordinate payment initiation, status updates, failed or returned transactions, reconciliation and closure with authorized colleagues and service providers.
- Handle payment-related personal data on a need-to-know basis and use only authorized storage and sharing channels.

4. Third-party financial management and oversight

- Maintain contract, activity, invoice, advance, payment and deliverable trackers for third-party service providers supporting Nutrition activities.
- Conduct first-level review of financial reports and supporting documents against approved budgets, contractual provisions, activity evidence and certified deliverables; document exceptions for management review.
- Follow up unsupported, ineligible, duplicate, delayed or unliquidated costs and track corrective actions to closure.
- Support financial and operational review meetings and prepare concise exception summaries, status dashboards and records of agreed actions.

5. Supply, inventory and logistics support

- Coordinate section inputs to supply plans, requisitions, distribution plans and delivery schedules with Supply and programme colleagues.
- Track Nutrition supplies and equipment from request through delivery, handover and reported utilization, including waybills, receipts and distribution records.
- Follow up delayed deliveries, stock risks, damaged or short-delivered items and required corrective action.
- Support reconciliation of dispatch, receipt, distribution and stock records and flag variances for review.
- Organize workshops, training, consultations, conferences and field activities, including venues, participant communication, travel, supplies, attendance records and payment documentation.

6. Records, controls and compliance

- Maintain complete, orderly and retrievable electronic and hard-copy files for financial, operational, supply and monitoring transactions.
- Apply segregation of duties, confidentiality, conflict-of-interest, anti-fraud, safeguarding and data-protection requirements.
- Escalate suspected irregularities, fraud risks, safeguarding concerns, data breaches or material control weaknesses through established reporting lines without conducting an unauthorized investigation.
- Contribute to process improvements, standardized tools and practical guidance that strengthen efficiency, transparency and audit readiness.

7. Partner coordination and team support

- Maintain updated contact lists for relevant government counterparts, implementing partners, UN agencies, development partners, consultants and service providers.
- Coordinate routine correspondence, meeting schedules and follow-up with partners using respectful and clear communication.
- Support partner meetings, technical working groups and programme reviews through agendas, background packs, attendance tracking, concise notes and action follow-up.
- Monitor timely submission of partner plans, reports, liquidation documents and other required deliverables and flag overdue items.
- Provide accelerated administrative, logistical and information- management support during emergencies and periods of increased workload.
- Reprioritize assigned tasks with the supervisor, provide back-up support for business continuity, and perform other programme-support duties within the scope of the post.

Impact of Results

Accurate, timely and well-organized support from the Programme Assistant will enable the Nutrition team to implement activities efficiently, maintain reliable programme and financial records, meet reporting and operational deadlines, and follow up commitments with partners. The post will contribute to stronger coordination and smoother delivery of nutrition interventions in Punjab, helping the programme reach children, adolescents and women with quality services and support.

Qualifications and Competencies

1. Education

Completion of secondary education is required, preferably supplemented by technical or university courses in business administration, finance, accounting, economics, supply chain management, public administration, development studies or others, related to the field of work.

2. Work Experience

At least four years of relevant experience in programme support, financial management, operations, payments, supply/logistics, contract administration or field monitoring. Experience with UNICEF, another UN entity, an international organization, government or a development/humanitarian programme is desirable. Experience supporting nutrition or health programmes is an asset.

3. Technical and Digital Skills

Demonstrated ability in budget and funds tracking, financial reconciliation, document review, payment-processing support, records management and preparation of management trackers or dashboards. Strong proficiency in Microsoft Excel and other Microsoft 365 applications is required. Experience with ERP-based workflows, digital-payment platforms, SharePoint or comparable document-management systems is desirable.

4. Language Proficiency

Fluency in English and Urdu is required. Knowledge of Punjabi is an asset.

5. UNICEF Values and Core Competencies

Core Values: Care, Respect, Integrity, Trust, Accountability and Sustainability. Core Competencies at Level 1: Demonstrates Self-Awareness and Ethical Awareness; Works Collaboratively with Others; Builds and Maintains Partnerships; Innovates and Embraces Change; Thinks and Acts Strategically; Drives to Achieve Impactful Results; and Manages Ambiguity and Complexity.

6. Capabilities Required

a. Project Management (2)

- Use project management tools to organize and track tasks within a project
- Schedule and prioritize tasks to meet deadlines
- Provide project updates and report issues

b. Collaboration (2)

- Use tact and discretion in sensitive situations
- Communicate thoughtfully and diplomatically considering how words may be perceived by others
- Write clearly and concisely in emails and reports, outlining brief summaries and suggested actions
- Communicate key points and recommendations verbally in a clear and direct manner
- Organize, visualize and present data, tailoring visuals to highlight key insights

c. Problem Solving (2)

- Compare different sets of information to identify correlations and differences
- Analyze information to identify the root cause of problems and possible risks
- Identify key data and patterns in reports and summaries
- Organize, visualize and present conclusions in a structured and logical way
- Consider and suggest possible solutions to resolve problems independently
- Consider available information when making decisions

d. Digital Dexterity (2)

- Use AI tools and digital platforms to collect information
- Assess AI generated tasks for accuracy and effectiveness
- Use key organizational business systems and digital platforms
- Manage and organize digital documents and files in alignment with digital workforce policies and culture
- Safeguard documents ensuring confidentiality and manage data risks