TERMS OF REFERENCE

National consultant for the development and implementation of a child expenditure tagging methodology

CONTRACT MODALITY: Individual Consultancy

DURATION OF CONTRACT: 1 year and 3 months

Purpose of Assignment

Child-sensitive social protection is one of the main routes through which the Government reaches children and families, encompassing child and family benefits, social assistance, social insurance, social services and care services. These instruments largely determine how public resources support children's well-being and protect them from risks. Yet the spending channelled through them cannot currently be identified systematically: it is dispersed across multiple programmes, institutions and levels of the budget and remains indistinguishable within the existing budget classification. This limited visibility constrains the Government's ability to gauge the scale and composition of its investment in children through social protection, and how equitably that investment is distributed across different groups of children.

Order No. 104-r of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic, dated 24 February 2025, approved the Action Plan for the implementation of the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child for 2025–2028. The Plan includes measures to track and analyse expenditure aimed at supporting children, including children in difficult life situations, and to introduce child expenditure tagging in the automated information system (AIS) "Kazna.Budget".

At present, many expenditures directly targeting children cannot be identified on the basis of the existing budget classification. Detailed information on the purpose of such expenditures and on the groups of children and families they reach is held by the respective line ministries and agencies. At the same time, a significant share of expenditure that contributes to the realisation of children's rights is cross-cutting in nature and may be distributed across different government bodies, expenditure areas and levels of the budget. This includes, in particular, expenditure on protecting children from violence and on supporting children in difficult life situations, children affected by migration, children with disabilities and other children in vulnerable situations. The current system lacks a unified methodological approach that would allow such expenditure to be systematically identified, classified, tagged and tracked. As a result, it is difficult to establish how much is invested in children and how this investment is distributed across sectors and groups of children.

It is therefore necessary to analyse possible options for applying tagging within the current system of budget planning, execution and reporting, and to identify the most appropriate mechanism, taking into account data availability, sustainability of the approach, potential for automation and the need to minimise the additional burden on government bodies. Systematic introduction of tagging requires methodological and analytical work: developing possible tagging options, testing the methodology on actual data, refining it based on the results of piloting, preparing a draft legal or departmental act of the Ministry of Finance, and formulating requirements for subsequent automation. UNICEF therefore seeks expert support for this work.

In line with UNICEF's mandate to support the realisation of the rights of every child, child expenditure tagging is envisaged as a tool within a coherent logic of use: systematic identification and recording of child expenditure → generation of analytical reporting → determination of the volume and structure of expenditure on children → informing decision-makers on budget planning, prioritisation and mobilisation

of resources for children as well as advocacy for children. This logic of use should determine the content, breakdowns and structure of the analytical reporting generated on the basis of tagging and, subsequently, the requirements for its automation.

Scope of Work

Objectives:

The objective of the assignment is to develop, test and prepare for implementation a unified child expenditure tagging methodology based on an agreed categories of expenditure on children, enabling the systematic identification, recording, analysis and subsequent automated tracking of expenditure targeting children.

Main tasks:

- analyse the current system of budget planning, execution and reporting in terms of its capacity to identify expenditure on children;
- review international experience in tagging and analysing public expenditure on children, including the experience of the Republic of Armenia as a potentially relevant regional example, as well as that of other countries, highlighting approaches of practical interest to the Kyrgyz Republic;
- develop a classification (categories) of expenditure on children as the substantive basis for tagging;
- develop methodological approaches to determining direct, indirect and cross-cutting expenditure, including household-level benefits that reach children;
- analyse possible options for integrating tagging into the existing budget data system;
- develop a draft tagging methodology;
- prepare a draft regulatory or departmental document approving the methodology. The type of act will be determined based on the results of the legal and institutional analysis, in agreement with the Ministry of Finance. At the first stage, the methodology should cover republican budget expenditure. The inclusion of expenditure of the Social Fund (particularly relevant for social protection), the Mandatory Health Insurance Fund (MHIF), local budgets, public investment and external financing will be analysed separately and reflected in recommendations on the phased expansion of coverage;
- test the methodology on actual data;
- refine the methodology based on the results of testing;
- prepare functional (business) requirements for the automation of child expenditure tagging.

Tasks and responsibilities:

Under the overall guidance and direct supervision of the Social Policy Specialist, in coordination with other sections of the UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Country Office and the UNICEF Global Centre of Excellence, and in cooperation with the established inter-agency working group, the Consultant shall perform the following tasks:

1. Situation analysis and development of the conceptual approach

- conduct inception consultations with the Ministry of Finance and relevant government bodies;
- review the legal and regulatory acts and methodological documents governing budget planning, execution and reporting;
- analyse the structure of the available budget data and the existing mechanisms for generating financial and non-financial information;
- analyse the information generated by line government bodies on service recipients and measures targeting children;
- identify existing opportunities and constraints for identifying expenditure on children;

- review international practice in tagging and measuring expenditure on children (C-PEM), including the experience of the Republic of Armenia as a potentially relevant regional example, as well as that of other countries and applicable UNICEF approaches, highlighting elements of practical interest to the Kyrgyz Republic;
- examine approaches to accounting for direct, indirect and cross-cutting expenditure, including household-level benefits that reach children (such as family and social assistance benefits), as well as expenditure targeting both children and adults;
- to ensure an evidence-based choice of methodological approach, compare at least three models, including: 1) a permanent classification attribute in the budget system; 2) an additional analytical tag at programme or activity level; 3) an external analytical mapping table with estimated coefficients;
- analyse the advantages and limitations of each option;
- propose a classification (categories) of expenditure on children, to be agreed with the Ministry of Finance as the basis for the subsequent development of the methodology;
- prepare recommendations on the approach to be used for the development and subsequent testing of the methodology, including agreement on the categories.

2. Development of the draft methodology and initial identification of expenditure

The Consultant shall develop a draft methodology providing for:

- the definition and scope of expenditure on children, including age boundaries, and consideration of the possibility of including prenatal expenditure directly related to the health and development of the unborn child, taking into account whether it can be reliably isolated on the basis of the available budget data;
- a classification of expenditure on children: categories and sub-categories of child expenditure, sectors and functions covered;
- the core principles of tagging;
- criteria for determining expenditure targeting children;
- an approach to identifying direct expenditure;
- an approach to identifying indirect and cross-cutting expenditure, including household-level benefits that reach children;
- a procedure for determining the share of expenditure attributable to children where direct isolation of expenditure is not possible, including for household-level benefits received by households with children;
- rules for preventing double counting;
- a procedure for assigning, verifying and changing tags;
- the division of responsibilities between the Ministry of Finance and line government bodies;
- a procedure for applying tagging at the stages of budget planning, revision, execution and reporting;
- an approach to analytical reporting, including: frequency, analytical breakdowns, indicators of the volume and share of child expenditure in total budget expenditure, and comparison of planned and actual expenditure.

The Consultant shall also prepare a draft legal or departmental act approving the methodology, together with supporting documentation. The type of act will be determined in agreement with the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic.

3. Testing and refinement of the methodology

As part of piloting and testing the methodology, the Consultant, jointly with line ministries, will tag child expenditure in the budgets of at least 3 sectors, to be agreed with the Ministry of Finance and to include

social protection, applying different approaches to direct and cross-cutting expenditure, based on one completed budget year (approved plan, revised plan, actual). Within this work, the Consultant shall:

- apply the developed criteria to actual expenditure;
- verify the feasibility of identifying direct expenditure;
- test the approach to identifying and accounting for indirect and cross-cutting expenditure, including household-level benefits that reach children;
- test the approaches to determining the share of expenditure on children;
- test whether the tagged data can be disaggregated by age group, geography and groups of children in vulnerable situations, including children with disabilities and children living in poor households;
- test at least two methods for allocating mixed expenditure;
- verify the feasibility of using existing financial and non-financial data at an aggregated level;
- assess the risks of double counting;
- assess the comparability of information across government bodies;
- determine the amount of additional information that may be required from line government bodies;
- assess the possibility of minimising manual data collection and additional reporting;
- hold consultations with the Ministry of Finance and relevant government bodies on the results of piloting.

Based on the results of testing, the Consultant shall:

- prepare a report on the results of piloting;
- identify the problems and limitations encountered;
- refine the methodology;
- prepare practical examples of applying tagging;
- based on the piloting data, prepare a pilot analytical child budget brief — a substantive analytical product for internal use that demonstrates the practical application of the methodology and serves as a basis for subsequent analytical reporting and advocacy;
- hold a discussion of the revised draft methodology with relevant government bodies.

Following agreement on the revised methodology, the Consultant shall prepare:

- the final draft child expenditure tagging methodology;
- a draft legal or departmental act of the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic providing for the approval of the revised methodology, together with supporting documentation.

4. Preparation for the automation of tagging

Based on the tested and refined methodology, the Consultant shall develop a model of the future tagging process and the requirements for its automation. At this stage, the Consultant shall:

- describe the business processes related to generating the information required for child expenditure tagging;
- define the roles and actions of process participants, including the information system owner, the reference directory administrator (who enters the required data), quality control, periodic data review, logging of user actions, etc.;
- identify the points at which data are generated, entered, verified, corrected and used;
- define the required information flows;
- define the reference directories, field attributes and other data required for automation;
- define the requirements for storing and retaining tags at the various stages of the budget process;
- define the requirements for report generation;
- define the requirements for user access rights management;

- define the necessary linkages with existing budget data and, where necessary, other information sources;
- formulate requirements for the automated generation of information on expenditure on children.

Based on the developed model, the Consultant shall prepare functional (business) requirements for the automation of child expenditure tagging — a document describing, from the perspective of the budget and financial process, what the information system should provide and how. This document serves as the substantive basis for the subsequent preparation of detailed technical specifications for the developers/vendor of the information system. Such technical specifications constitute a separate technical document and are prepared with the involvement of IT specialists.

Work Assignments Overview

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to com the deliverable
Stage 1. Diagnostics and conceptual approach	**Deliverable 1** Inception report and detailed work plan; analysis of the current budget data system and processes; review of international experience (including Armenia); analysis of possible tagging approaches; proposed classification (categories) of child expenditure; recommended conceptual approach.	15 February 2027
Stage 2. Draft methodology and initial identification of expenditure	**Deliverable 2** Draft tagging methodology; classification (categories) and age scope; criteria for direct and cross-cutting expenditure; approaches to mixed expenditure and to the child share; double-counting rules; approach to analytical reporting; piloting plan.	15 June 2027
Stage 3. Piloting and final refinement of the methodology	**Deliverable 3** Conduct of piloting; piloting report; refined methodology; practical examples; first child budget brief for internal use; draft legal or departmental act of the Ministry of Finance approving the methodology and accompanying documents.	15 October 2027
Stage 4. Package of documents for preparation for automation	**Deliverable 4** Description of roles, business processes and information flows; functional (substantive) requirements for automation; requirements for data and reporting; final report and presentation of results.	15 March 2028

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.
- Contracts are conditional upon the selected candidate's willingness to comply with any current or future vaccination requirements that may be established by UNICEF, where applicable. Failure to comply with applicable vaccination requirements, where required and without an approved medical exemption by UNICEF, may result in the withdrawal of the consultancy offer or termination of the contract in accordance with the General Terms and Conditions of Contract.
- 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

Minimum requirements:

Bachelor’s in economics, finance, public administration, public policy or another relevant field.

Years of Experience/ Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required*:

Work Experience:

At least 10 years of professional experience in public financial management, budget planning, public expenditure analysis or related areas; proven experience in analytical studies and in developing methodological or regulatory documents in public finance; experience working with financial and non-financial budget data; experience engaging with government bodies, conducting consultations and presenting results. Specific experience: at least one successfully completed assignment related to expenditure tagging, budget classification, budget tracking systems, public expenditure reviews or similar public financial management tools; proven experience in preparing functional requirements and/or technical specifications for the automation of budget, financial or other government processes.

Language Requirements:

Fluency in Russian, and good working knowledge of English. Knowledge of Kyrgyz is an asset.

Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:

Strong analytical and writing skills; ability to work with large volumes of budget data; skills in developing methodologies, recommendations and automation requirements; ability to conduct inter-agency consultations and present complex methodological issues clearly; proficient use of Microsoft Excel, Word and PowerPoint.

Desirables:

Master's degree or equivalent qualification; experience on technical assistance projects in public financial management; knowledge of social protection and social sector financing; familiarity with child-focused budget analysis.