

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS

Title of Assignment	National Consultancy: To develop Nutrition Sensitive Social Protection training material, capacity building and document the adoption and roll out of nutrition sensitive social protection operational framework in 1 selected district	
Requesting Section	Social Policy	
Location	Place of assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This assignment will be based in Lilongwe with frequent visits to selected district. The consultancy is not office-based; however, it will be expected for the consultant to attend related and scheduled meetings and briefing sessions at UNICEF office and in selected district. 	
Contract Duration	13 months	
Estimated number of working days	91 days	
Planned Start and End Date	From: 15 May 2024	To: 15 April 2025

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Social protection can play a key role in tackling malnutrition by offering families additional income through cash transfers, which can be used to purchase more nutritious foods while increasing access to services. There is good evidence globally that, by increasing family incomes, social protection schemes can have positive impacts on malnutrition.¹ When recipients of social protection access additional nutrition-sensitive support – including both services and knowledge – to address the multiple underlying causes of malnutrition, the impacts of the transfers are likely to be enhanced. This can be in the form of providing additional services to the recipients of social protection programmes – often known as ‘cash-plus’ programming – or by enabling recipients to access existing nutrition services. Multiple evidence reviews have found that delivering transfers alongside additional interventions can lead to positive impacts on child nutrition.²

Building on the results of the Food Security and Nutrition – Inter-Agency Social Protection Assessment (FSN-ISPA) Country Report and the mid-term review of the MNSSP II, a Nutrition Sensitive Social Protection Operational Framework (NSSP-OF) was developed in 2023 under the overall supervision of Ministry of Finance Poverty Reduction and Social Protection (PRSP) Division and the Ministry of Health Department of Nutrition (DN). The Operational Framework sits in the nexus between the National Multi-Sector Nutrition Policy and the National Social Protection Policy and aims to operationalize nutrition-sensitive social protection strategies articulated in both the National Multi-Sector Nutrition Strategy and the Malawi National Social Support Programme II. There is, therefore, strong support from Government for nutrition-sensitive social protection as a component of a broader national strategy to tackle malnutrition and enhance the health of the nation. The definition of nutrition-sensitive social protection in Malawi, in the context of the Operational Framework, is:

A social protection system that reaches and provides adequate transfers to households with young children, adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating women; and, which ensures that recipients of social protection schemes are able to access other services that enhance nutrition within their households, either directly or indirectly.

¹ De Groot et al (2017); Manley et al (2012; 2020); and, Olney et al (2021).

² Manley et al (2022), Roelen et al (2018), FAO (2020), Olney et al (2021), Akhter (2019), Bliss et al (2018), Burchi et al (2018)

The aim of the NSSP-OF is to encourage access to nutrition services by recipients of social protection schemes which further enhance their nutritional well-being. The NSSP-OF has 4 objectives:

- Encourage nutrition-sensitive enhancements to social protection programmes;
- Ensure that all social protection beneficiaries access regular and high-quality nutrition-focused social and behavioural change (SBC) messages and direct nutrition services delivered through the health system during programme activities;
- Ensure that all social protection beneficiaries can access a range of nutrition-sensitive services through multiple platforms; and,
- Identify the risk of malnutrition among beneficiary households in a timely manner with those at risk referred to health services for treatment and support.

The platforms and initiatives that are the focus of the Operational Framework are those delivered by the Government, rather than additional services that may be delivered by development partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The NSSP-OF provides practical and standardized guidance for the integration of nutrition sensitive message and services to key social protection platforms: the Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) and the Climate Sensitive Enhanced Public Works Programme (CSE-PWP).

- The Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) aims to provide income transfers to households with limited labour capacity who are in the poorest 10 per cent of the population. The SCTP currently reaches 300,800 households, comprising over 1.3 million individuals, or around 6.5 per cent of the national population. On average, households receive MWK9,000 (US\$7.80) per month³ - and in selected districts additional top-ups are disbursed in the event of shocks (lean season, cyclone). Around 600,000 children live in the households of beneficiaries. According to the 2019 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), 6 per cent of children under-5 nationally live in households benefiting from the programme as are 8 per cent of adolescents aged 15-19 years. Overall, in 2019, 30 per cent of SCTP beneficiary households included a child under 5 years.⁴ Evidence shows that the SCTP has had positive impacts on its recipients. Due to investments in productive activities, on average households have benefited from an increase in consumption that is 69 per cent higher than the transfer received.⁵ The programme has made households more food secure, with a 14-percentage point increase in the proportion eating two or more meals per day. SCTP households are also significantly less likely to worry about having enough food.
- Climate Smart Public Works (CS-EPWP) provide participants with 72 days of paid work per year. In addition, participants are required to provide 30 days of unpaid community work per year to remain within the programme. Potential recipients are households with labour capacity who are living in extreme poverty. The current initiative targets 435,000 ultra-poor households across all districts in the country.⁶ In 2019, 45 per cent of households participating in public works included a child under 5 years of age, although, at the time, public works were not under the CS-EPWP programme.⁷

The NSSP-OF focuses on three priority categories of the population: Pregnant and lactating women (PLW); Children under 5 years of age; and, Adolescent girls. It prioritizes three sets of activities:

- Integrating the beneficiaries of social protection programmes within key nutrition platforms providing nutrition services (both direct and indirect). The priority platforms for the Operational Framework are:
 - Community Care Groups;
 - Community-Based Childcare Centres (CBCCs);
 - Primary Health Care services;

³ Households with school going children receive an education bonus: \$1 for primary school and \$2 for secondary.

⁴ Analysis of the HIES 2019.

⁵ Innocenti (2018).

⁶ Mhone (2022).

⁷ Analysis of the HIES (2019).

- Schools; and,
- Village Savings and Loans Associations (VLSAs) and Savings and Loans Groups (SLGs)
- Providing SBC and nutrition services to recipients of social protection programmes during their participation in programme activities, such as during manual payments or case management meetings of the SCTP or during unpaid workdays on the CS-EPWP programme; and,
- Regularly engaging with social protection beneficiaries during their participation in the programme and linking them with key nutrition platforms as well as identifying those at risk of malnutrition and referring them to the appropriate primary health care service for treatment and support.

Since the Operational Framework focuses on the social protection schemes and is, therefore, part of the broader social protection sector, overall responsibility for the effective delivery of the Operational Framework lies with the Poverty Reduction and Social Protection (PRSP) department within the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs. However, the direct responsibility for the delivery of the Operational Framework – since it is nutrition-focused – is with the Department for Nutrition (DN), which sits within the Ministry of Health. The DN reports to the PRSP on the Operational Framework through the National Social Support Steering Committee (NSSSC) and the National Social Support Technical Committee (NSSTC). Due to the decentralisation of government, the overall responsibility for the delivery of the Operational Framework is with the District Commissioner. However, the direct responsibility for the planning and delivery of the Operational Framework is delegated to the Principal Nutrition, HIV and Aids Officer (PNHAO).

The NSSP-OF was validated on 16 November 2023. The next step is to develop the training materials required and support the government to roll out the operational framework in a selected district. This initial roll out is intended to begin the process of operationalizing the framework. By setting the work in the starter district, this process will provide lessons on the feasibility of the governance structure described in the NSSP-OF, the capacity of human resources at different levels in the district, and costs associated with the roll out, and confirm the governance of and Upon completion of the rollout. Lessons will be documented to determine the extent to which the NSSP-OF was rolled out as planned, identify bottlenecks and areas that require revision, and update the NSSP-OF based on lessons learned.

PURPOSE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The consultant will lead the process of developing the training materials for central and district level government officials with the guidance from the Department of Nutrition, introduce the NSSP-OF in the selected district, roll out the training in consultation with PRSP, DN, SCTP and PWP (2 months), provide supportive supervision to district officials during its rollout with SCTP and CS-EPWP (9 months) and provide input to the development of NSSP module in the SCTP management information system (MIS). At the conclusion of the rollout, the consultant is expected to document the lessons learnt – successes and bottlenecks in implementation - as part of an operational capacity assessment of the NSSP-OF.

SCOPE OF WORK/OBJECTIVES

The consultant is expected to:

- a. Develop the training programme and materials for central and district level government officials in collaboration with SCTP, CS-EPWP and DN, based on the NSSP-OF. This will include off-line data collection tools⁸ and reporting templates in Excel.

⁸ While offline data collection tools are to be developed, the long-term goal is for an NSSP module to be developed and integrated into the respective management information systems of SCTP and CS-EPWP.

- b. Support the identification of the district for the rollout and prepare the budget (based on the costed rollout plan in the Final Report)
- c. Introduce the NSSP-OF at district level & conduct a practical training in the selected district (to include central level staff from SCTP, CS-EPWP and DN).
- d. Provide supportive supervision, and mentor the PNHAO in the planning and implementation of the NSSP-OF, during the rollout. The supportive supervision will focus on the integration of the NSSP-OF within SCTP and CS-EPWP operations.
- e. Carry out an operational review, assessing the feasibility of the long-term systemic roll out of the NSSP-OF, whether the human resources at district level are sufficient, including the health, school and community platforms that are meant to provide nutrition services to SCTP beneficiaries, any changes required within SCTP and CS-PWP operational guidelines, required budget and lessons learnt. This review should include a consultative workshop. The report will highlight recommendations for the refinement of the NSSP-OF.
- f. Provide inputs to the IT consultants tasked with the development of the NSSP module into the SCTP MIS (the deliverable of the module will be part of the ToRs of an ICT consultancy firm).
- g. Updated NSSP-OF document, that is approved by PRSP and DN.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

To whom will the consultant report (supervisory and any other reporting/communication lines):

- The consultant will report to the Social Policy Specialist with frequent coordination with the Nutrition and Gender Specialists at UNICEF, who will provide inputs to reports and materials developed as part of the consultancy.
- The consultant will furthermore consult and interact with PRSP and DN. A Task Force will be used to monitor progress of the work, made up of PRSP, DN, UNICEF, SCTP and PWP.

What type of reporting will be expected from the consultant and in what format/style will the submissions of reports/outputs be done:

- Monthly monitoring reports on progress of the work.
- Regular discussions will be held face-to-face and virtually, and the consultant is expected to stay in touch via telephone, emails, and other online platforms.

How will consultant consult and deliver work and when will reporting be done:

- The consultant will be home-based with regular presence in the UNICEF Malawi office for required technical and briefing meetings.
- The consultant will visit the selected district at least once a month to check on progress.
- The consultant will provide monthly deliverables based on an agreed work plan and delivery schedule.
- In the first week of the month, the consultant will produce a work plan outlining the key deliverables in consultation with the contract supervisor. Where amendments arise during the month, a formal email will be shared and attached to the monthly report.
- The consultant will present the draft documents and the final report to UNICEF as agreed during the time of engagement and as per the work plan.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

In alignment with the scope of work described above, the consultant will be expected to perform the following activities and deliverables per the schedule and estimated dates below as well as any other activities as deemed necessary and related to the successful delivery of the assignment.

Table 1: Expected Deliverables against Task and Milestones`

Task/Milestone	Deliverable/Outcome (e.g. Inception, progress, final reports, training material, workshop, etc.)	Estimated # of days	Planned Completion date	Estimated cost payable
Inception period	Approved inception report	10 days	25 May 2024	20%
Develop the training programme and materials for central and district level government officials in collaboration with SCTP, based on the NSSP-OF. This will include off-line data collection tools ⁹ and reporting templates in Excel.	Final Training materials	20 days	25 June 2024	
Support the identification of 1 district for the rollout and prepare the budget (based on the costed rollout plan in the Final Report). Introduce the NSSP-OF at district level & conduct a practical training (to include central level staff from SCTP, PWP and DN).	Training report	5 days	15 July 2024	20%
Provide supportive supervision, and mentor the PNHAO in the planning and implementation of the NSSP-OF, during the rollout. The supportive supervision will focus on the integration of the NSSP-OF within SCTP operations.	Monthly progress at the end of each month during the implementation period Documentation of the roll out	36 days (4 days per month for 9 months)	15 February 2025	20% monthly progress report 3 20% Final documentation of the rollout
Carry out an operational review, assessing the feasibility of the long-term systemic roll out of the NSSP-OF, whether the human resources at district level are sufficient including the health, school and community platforms that are meant to provide nutrition services to SCTP beneficiaries, required budget and lessons learnt. This review should include a consultative workshop. The report will highlight	Operational Review workshop & report	20 days	15 March 2025	20% upon completion of deliverables

⁹ While offline data collection tools are to be developed, the long-term goal is for an NSSP module to be developed and integrated into the respective management information systems of SCTP and CS-EPWP.

recommendations for the refinement of the NSSP-OF.				
Document the process undertaken and provide inputs to the IT consultants tasked with the development of the NSSP module into the SCTP MIS.	Final Report			
Update NSSP-OF document, that is approved by PRSP and DN.	Updated NSSP-OF			

However, as the actual starting date may impact the dates estimated in the TOR, a detailed workplan with exact timeframes and actual delivery dates will be jointly agreed upon between the consultant and the supervisor upon contract signature and which will be updated on a regular basis as needed.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION OF RESULTS

The performance of work will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

- Completion of tasks specified in TOR
- Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables
- Quality of work
- Demonstrating high standards in cooperation and communication with UNICEF and counterparts
- Adherence to UNICEF's child safeguarding policy

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

All payments, without exception, will be made upon certification from the supervisor of the contract of the satisfactory and quality completion and submission of deliverables and upon receipt of the respective and approved invoice. 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.

The consultancy cost will be based on an all-inclusive fee basis which will include all cost related to this assignment including, professional fee, travel and living cost, transportation cost (fuel, car hire, etc), stationary, communications etc. No other costs are payable under this consultancy.

DESIRED COMPETENCIES, TECHNICAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

Academic qualification:

- Advanced university degree in social protection, nutrition, social sciences, or related field.

Work experience:

- A minimum of 10 years' experience with either the UN and/or NGO, progressively responsible experience in coordination, assessments, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of nutrition and/or social protection programmes.

- Experience required of working in the nutrition sector in Malawi, particularly with the Department of Nutrition at district level.
- Experience of providing direct technical assistance to government counterparts on district-level nutrition services is desired.

Technical skills, knowledge and strength areas:

- Knowledge of Malawi's nutrition governance structure required.
- Technical expertise in community based nutrition services; experience of social protection desirable.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, and proven success in facilitating interagency processes to achieve a common goal is key.
- Ability to build trust, develop, and maintain effective working relationships with respect for diversity
- Commitment to the UNICEF's values and guiding principles.
- Communicates effectively including: tailoring languages, tone, style, and format to match audiences; actively listens to perspectives of stakeholders and team members; interpreting messages and respond appropriately; speaking and writing clearly and efficient; and makes presentations in public with confidence.
- Conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines, and achieving results
- Excellent oral and written communications skills, as well as analytical skills, with an exemplary ability to identify problems and propose solutions.
- Strong interpersonal, team work, and self-management skills, as well as mature judgment.
- Ability to perform under pressure..

Languages:

- Excellent command of English, both verbal and written skills are required.
- Fluent Chichewa is essential.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

UNICEF will regularly communicate with the consultant and provide feedback and guidance and necessary support so to achieve objectives of the work, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to the performance and quality of work.

As per policy on consultants, the individual will be expected to complete a list of mandatory training, including policies on Prohibiting and Combatting Fraud and Corruption, Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority and other relevant policies for their information and acknowledgement upon acceptance of the offer.

Before the issuance of the official contract, the individual consultant is requested to:

- complete the applicable mandatory trainings.
- ensure that the health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. The consultant is solely responsible for their own health insurance.
- the selected consultant is 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. The vaccine mandate, 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 candidates to disclose their disability during their application in case they need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in their assignment.

Consultants must have their own equipment, tools and materials needed to perform their services. They will use their own laptops/computers, any application or system needed to complete the assignment.

The access to UNICEF email and system is restricted to UNICEF staff therefore consultants should not be granted access unless it is imperative to complete assignment. The need for email access will be determined in consultation with the contract supervisor and will require approval from management.

Work is to be conducted remotely, and thereafter in the field (for delivery of training and/or supportive supervision).

The consultant is expected to use their own office resources. UNICEF will support the costs associated with training (venue). Funds for the central and district level training and roll out will be provided to the relevant government partner.

CONDITIONS

- The consultancy will be for a period of 13 months.
- The candidate selected will be governed by and subject to UNICEF's General Terms and Conditions for individual contracts.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant.
- The consultant will be based in Lilongwe and with frequent travels to the selected district.
- The consultant will be paid an all-inclusive fee (including stationary, communication, travel and other miscellaneous expenses) as per the stipulated deliverable and payment schedule.
- The consultant is not entitled to payment for overtime, weekends or public holidays.
- No travel should take place without an email travel authorization from section prior to the commencement of the journey from the duty station.
- Standard UNICEF procedures will apply for invoicing and all other financial management requirements set out in the contract.
- Standard penalty clauses will also apply for late and poor-quality deliverables. The supervisor of the contract will provide the consultant with the criteria for the evaluation of the quality of each deliverable.
- Additional details of UNICEF rules, regulations and conditions will be attached to the contract.
- The consultant will not have supervisory responsibilities or authority on UNICEF budget.
- Individuals engaged under a consultancy 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.
- Consultants 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.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested consultants should provide the following:

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. Brief technical proposal (no longer than five pages) demonstrating the consultant's understanding of the assignment and approach/methodology to the assignment.
3. Financial proposal including a breakdown of their all-inclusive fees (including professional fees, travel, living cost, visa and other costs). Complete the attached form.



Financial
Proposal.xlsx

4. References details from at least 3 supervisors, including the current supervisor.