**UNICEF China**

**Terms of Reference**

**For LVC Consultant Recruitment**

**Job Title of Consultancy:**Consultant for the Equity Assessment of the Public Financial Management (PFM) Systems in China

**Requesting Section:** Social Policy

**Name of Supervisor and Job Title:** Daixin Li, Economic Analysis Specialist

**Background of Consultancy Request:**

The UNICEF China Country Office (hereinafter “CCO”) is undergoing a process of realignment for the new five-year cycle (2021-2025) to be able to better respond to China’s rapid development and increasing domestic and foreign policy aspirations in line with its imminent transition into being the world’s largest economy and an upper income country. A key part of this realignment is a strategic shift from an approach based on “policy demonstration” through service delivery pilots to “upstream policy engagement”, based on high-level policy advocacy, strategic partnerships, and purposeful knowledge sharing and exchange. In order to successfully advocate policy changes in favor of children in China, the CCO needs to have a thorough understanding of the country’s highly complex Public Financial Management (PFM) systems. Understanding how PFM frameworks could determine what resources are invested in the particular groups of children, and identifying the key catalytic changes to the PFM practices that could result in a more equitable allocation of resources for children (“equity triggers”) is the first step to achieving results at scale and improved outcomes across the board for children in China. Therefore, a high-quality PFM equity assessment is expected to serve as a critical public finance for children (PF4C) tool for UNICEF CCO in advocating for effective changes on PFM systems, processes, and practices that increase the weight given to equity in general, and with respect to children in particular, in public expenditure decisions.

**Purpose of Activity/Assignment:**

To help the UNICEF CCO more effectively engage with the Government of China (GoC) at the upstream policy level to move towards increased, more sustainable, and more equitably distributed public expenditure for children, ensuring that the allocation and use of resources could contribute as much as possible to child development and the realization of children’s rights in the country.

**Major Tasks, Deliverables & Timeframe:**

The assignment will assess equity of China's Public Financial Management System, with a focus on the systematical analysis based on protection of children's rights and interests. The assignment will provide a clear understanding of the public expenditure policy cycle in China and the PFM systems, processes, and practices within which it takes place, which will provide a thorough understanding of how budgets are allocated, executed, oversighted and evaluated, especially in the social sectors. In addition, this assignment will identify the key formal mechanisms (or lack thereof) through which China’s PFM systems aiming at integrating equity considerations, as well as the implicit decisions, practices, rules, procedures, or lack thereof, within each stage of the public expenditure policy cycle that have a known or potential impact on the expenditure equity. Based on the evidence generated, the assignment will develop recommendations on ways to integrate equity in the different stages of the expenditure policy cycle and in the PFM systems.

The expected deliverables of the assignment include:

• Deliverable 1: Drafting a Research Plan indicating scope of analysis and report outline; based on existing materials, conducting the PFM equity assessment through reviewing budget documents and available budget data, distilling, and developing a report on Equity Assessment of the Public Financial Management (PFM) Systems in China with more succinct analysis both in Chinese and English, by February 28, 2023.

• Deliverable 2: Conducting workshops for UNICEF as well as for dissemination, based on the final report by March 31, 2023.

**Methodology & Expected Output:**

This assignment is expected to adopt a quantitative and qualitative mixed approach, with desk-review, interviews and consultations with UNICEF staff, researchers, government partners, and other key individuals used as needed. Disaggregated data will be collected and analyzed. Qualitative data collection method could be used to elicit information about budget allocation and expenditure from senior government officials and other stakeholders. The assignment is expected to result in a single deliverable, a report on Equity in PFM systems in China and Pathways to Improvement.

**Start Date:** October 15, 2022

**End Date:** March 31, 2023

**Total Working Days:** 38 Days (subject to adjustment within USD 9,999)

**Consultancy Requirements:**

* **Minimum Academic Qualifications required (Bachelors, masters, PhD, other) & disciplines:**
* Master’s degree in economics, public finance, public policy, social sciences, or a related field of study.
* **Knowledge/Experience/Expertise/Skills required:**
* At least 10 years' experience in the areas of PFM. Experience in Public Finance for Children or such type of PFM assessments in China, would be considered an asset;
* Previous work experience in analytical report writing in public finance, preferably in China;
* Proven familiarity with the Chinese socioeconomic context, China’s governance structures, and the current and emerging socioeconomic policy and governance issues and debates in China;
* Be fluent in both English and Chinese.
* Have demonstrated ability/track record of effectively facilitating and communicating.