

TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT: Social Policy Specialist (Public Finance for Children – PF4C)	
UNICEF Malawi is seeking to engage a temporary appointment tasked with providing technical and programmatic support and assistance in all stages of Public Finance for Children (PF4C) programming and related advocacy from strategic planning and formulation to delivery of concrete and sustainable results for the children of Malawi. This includes programmes aimed at (i) improving social sector financing; (ii) strengthening transparency, accountability and oversight of public finances at national and sub-national level; (iii) supporting the reform of Malawi’s decentralized systems; and (iv) production of cutting-edge and tailored evidence on social sector financing and wider public finance management (PFM)	
Engagement contract	Temporary Appointment
Post Level	NOC
Location	Lilongwe – Malawi
Duration	364 days
Supervisor	Social Policy and Economic Specialist

1. ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

The fundamental mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything the organization does — in programs, in advocacy and in operations. The equity strategy, emphasizing the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, translates this commitment to children’s rights into action. For UNICEF, equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias or favoritism. To the degree that any child has an unequal chance in life — in its social, political, economic, civic and cultural dimensions — her or his rights are violated. There is growing evidence that investing in the health, education and protection of a society’s most disadvantaged citizens — addressing inequity — not only will give all children the opportunity to fulfil their potential but also will lead to sustained growth and stability of countries. This is why the focus on equity is so vital. It accelerates progress towards realizing the human rights of all children, which is the universal mandate of UNICEF, as outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, while also supporting the equitable development of nations.

Strategic office context: The new country programme (2024-2028) envisages the progressive fulfilment of the rights to survival, development, education, protection and participation of all children, including adolescents, especially the most vulnerable and those at risk of being left behind, in an inclusive, resilient and protective environment. This vision is aligned with the Malawi 2063 vision and its 2021–2030 implementation plan (MIP-1), the African Union's Agenda 2063; UNICEF's Strategic Plan, Gender Action Plan III and Innovation Strategy; and the SDGs. The country programme includes child survival and development, learning, skills development and protection, and social policy. All components are supported by the programme and operational effectiveness and efficiency

imperatives. Risk-informed programming across the humanitarian and development nexus in all three outcome areas will strengthen disaster preparedness, enhance climate adaptation/mitigation and response, and increase the resilience capacity of institutions, communities and young people. Programming aligns with UNICEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Transformative Agenda.

The Social Policy Specialist (Public Finance for Children – PF4C) contributes to Malawi Country Office's (MCO) efforts to leverage greater, more effective, and equitable public investments in the social sectors (health, education, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), social protection, nutrition and child protection). These efforts are aligned to MCO's PF4C strategy as well as UNICEF's global and regional strategies on PF4C and Local Governance and Decentralization.

2. PURPOSE OF THE JOB

The Social Policy Specialist (PF4C) is part of the Social Policy team. Under the general guidance and supervision of the Social Policy and Economics Specialist, the Social Policy Specialist (PF4C) is responsible for providing technical and programmatic support and assistance in all stages of PF4C programming and related advocacy from strategic planning and formulation to delivery of concrete and sustainable results for children. This includes programmes aimed at (i) improving social sector financing, including social protection; (ii) strengthening transparency, accountability and oversight of public finances at national and sub-national level; (iii) supporting the reform of Malawi's decentralized systems; and (iv) production of cutting-edge and tailored evidence on social sector financing and wider PFM.

3. KEY FUNCTIONS, ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RELATED DUTIES/TASKS

The Section pursues these objectives by:

- Providing technical assistance, supporting evidence generation and providing capacity building for Government and CSOs in the areas of (a) child poverty; (b) social sector financing; (c) budget transparency, accountability, and oversight; and (d) fiscal decentralization and sub-national PFM.
- Ensuring effective collaboration with Government, including the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MoFEA), National Local Government Finance Committee (NLGFC), the National Planning Commission (NPC) social sector ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), Local Government Authorities (LGAs), Parliamentary Committees, the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO), international financial institutions (IFIs), Donors, other UN Agencies and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as well as UNICEF programme staff.

The Social Policy Specialist (PF4C) is specifically responsible for:

- Strategic planning, policy influencing and monitoring and evaluation activities for Child Protection, early childhood development (ECD), Disability and Social Protection financing interventions with the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW).

- Leading the strengthening of social protection financing, focusing on evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy, and strengthening social protection financing mechanisms, their sustainability, and responsiveness.

The Social Policy Specialist (PF4C) supports in:

- Identifying and implementing system strengthening activities in the area of upstream PFM at national and sub-national level.
- Generating and analyzing evidence on socio-economic issues and social sector financing to inform Government and UNICEF programming.
- Advocating for more efficient, effective and sustainable financing for social sector service delivery with Government, Parliament and other relevant stakeholders.

4. QUALIFICATIONS

Education:

- An advanced university degree in one of the following fields is required: Economics, Public Policy, Public Finance, International Relations, Political Science, or another relevant technical field.

Experience:

- A minimum of five years of relevant professional work experience is required.
- Proven experience in upstream Public Finance Management is required, more specifically having worked in planning and budget preparation within line ministries (in the social sectors), Ministry of Finance or Public Sector.
- Proven experience in working within a Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)/Programme-Based Budget (PBB) system (selection and monitoring of inputs, outputs and outcomes) is required.
- Proven experience in the preparation of costing models, investment cases, surveys or other evidence generation activities to support improved investments in Social Protection and other Social Sectors is required.
- Proven knowledge of the Social Cash Transfer Programme and of other social protection interventions within Malawi's National Social Protection framework is required.
- Experience working on programme or project evaluation is considered as a strong asset.
- Experience in management of consultants is considered a strong asset.
- Experience working in a developing country is considered a strong asset.

Expected technical knowledge and skills:

- Knowledge of Public Finance Management procedures, processes and standards is required, specifically for upstream PFM (planning and budgeting) in MTEF/PBB settings.
- Knowledge of Child Protection and Social Protection policies, programmes and interventions in Malawi is required.
- Knowledge of Government sectoral financing and management processes and procedures is required.
- Knowledge of STATA or other statistical analysis programmes is required.

- Strong analytical and critical thinking skills are required, particularly in the area of macroeconomics, public finance management and financing of social sectors.
- Strong drafting skills are required. The person will be requested to draft clearly and concisely to support the production of UNICEF's own products (Budget briefs, etc.) as well to support quality assurance and improvements to reports produced for UNICEF or with UNICEF's financial support.
- The capacity to work in an international team, with different profiles and in a multi-cultural setting is a required.

Language:

- Fluency in English, both strong verbal and written skills, is essential.
- Fluency in Chichewa is a strong asset.

5. COMPETENCIES

Core Values

- Care, Respect, Integrity, Trust, Accountability and Sustainability

Core Competencies

- Demonstrates Self Awareness and Ethical Awareness (2)
- Works Collaboratively with others (2)
- Builds and Maintains Partnerships (2)
- Innovates and Embraces Change (2)
- Thinks and Acts Strategically (2)
- Drives to achieve impactful results (2)
- Manages ambiguity and complexity (2)