### Terms of Reference

**for International and National Consultants to develop Policy Recommendations on reforming Social Protection Mechanisms to achieve greater impact on children outcomes**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program (No. &amp; Name)</td>
<td>Access to responsive child friendly services</td>
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<td>Project (No. &amp; Name)</td>
<td>Child Care Reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity Reference</td>
<td>Advocacy and technical support to the implementation of the State Program on De-Institutionalization and Alternative Care (SPDIAC) and Law on Social Services</td>
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### Background and Context:

Azerbaijan is a resource-rich country, which weathered the recent global economic crisis much better than many other countries. In 2012, 3% of GDP was allocated for Education, 1.2% for Health and 3.6% for social protection including all pensions - low compared to the rest of the region. As a result of earlier double-digit economic growth, the poverty rate has fallen sharply, from 49 per cent in 2001 to 6 per cent in 2012\(^1\) largely due to increase in real wages and social cash benefits. At the same time, only 25% of the recipients of the Targeted Social Assistance lived below the national poverty line suggesting that the programme remains insufficiently targeted. The Government intends to advance to the “second generation” of social protection reforms, which will aim to develop a broader set of social services that could address the root causes of poverty\(^2\).

Despite the efforts of the Directorate for Child Protection and Deinstitutionalization, at the end of 2013, there still were 42 institutions, which serve more than 9,800 children, out of which about 1/3 were children with disabilities.\(^3\) Currently, 168 children aged under 3 are in baby homes under the Ministry of Health\(^4\). Reforms are slow, mainly due to challenges in coordination between different Ministries, and there is a need to build substantial community-based services to support families so that they do not have a need for institutional care.

The social inclusion of children with disabilities remains a serious challenge in Azerbaijan, which ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. According to official statistics, there are more than 62,000 children with disabilities registered across country, with less than 10% of them receiving education services. Due to lack of community-based support services, many children with disabilities grow in isolation at home or sent to large-scale residential institutions. Lack of adequate health and social services are the main barriers to the full development of children, whose rights are enshrined both in the UN CRC and the national Law on the Rights of

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\(^3\) Figures provided by the Ministry of Education Directorate of Child Protection and Deinstitutionalization. The Directorate runs a database of all institutions and has the most up to date information. The figures of MoE and the State Statistical Committee may differ due to various reasons, most notably due to differing definitions/reporting requirements about the number of children staying/receiving education in the institutions. Since UNICEF supported the MOE to establish their database, we tend to trust it more.  
Child. In 2013, 520,793 people with disabilities receiving pensions and benefits were registered; 62,866 of them are children (2.5% of child population).5

Suicide is another important issue. In the absence of official statistics, anecdotal evidence suggests that in 2012 there were 482 suicides registered (105 of them were females and 34 were school children and teenagers)6. Since the beginning of 2014, 19 suicides have been already reported by different media. Lack of adequate and community-based psycho-social support services further exacerbates the fragile situation.

No data and evidence is available in public domain on the scale of child labour, sale of children, child prostitution, trafficking in children and other child protection issues. The country has a child protection system, which involves many government organizations, sometimes with overlapping duties and mandates. The complexities of this system results in unfulfilled rights of many vulnerable children in need of protection and services. A crucial figure is missing in the system – the figure of the social worker that should be part of the key decision making bodies of the child protection system.

In order to tackle these and other issues facing the nation, the Government of Azerbaijan has adopted the Law on Social Services, which enabled more government funding to the needy social services at the community level. NGOs have been engaged to provide such services, materializing their long and useful experience. However, recent Social Services Needs Assessment Study indicate that there is no synergy between the existing social protection system (for instance, Targeted Social (cash) Assistance) and newly added social services. Also, there is no unified view on what and how the social services system should be constructed and scaled up. There are also questions on how best integrate the child cash benefits with the social services, which are both administered by the same government agency.

In view of these questions, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan has requested UNICEF to provide technical assistance on assessing the impact of the current social protection programmes (cash allowances) on children and proposing policy recommendations on how best reform the current programmes. In order to conduct the assessment and develop policy recommendations, UNICEF is inviting interested and experienced parties/organizations/individuals for a short term consultancy.

3.  Purpose of the assignment:

The purpose of this assignment is to conduct assessment of the current social protection mechanisms of the Government of Azerbaijan that target children through cash allowances, in order to measure the impact of these programmes on children outcomes. The assessment should feed the development of the Social Services Strategy – a policy document, which will set the vision on the government’s Social Services and Protection System.

The implementation period is: October – November 2014.

Key intended users of the Strategy and related products:
- Government of Azerbaijan
- UNICEF and its partners

4.  Duty station: N/A
6. **Deliverables**

The assessment needs to be guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and recommendations of the UN CRC Concluding Observations 2012. But it also needs to meet the needs of other vulnerable population groups as deemed necessary by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

By reviewing the existing data and reports available, the consultant(s) should provide:

1. Review of the current international trends in social protection for most vulnerable populations, particularly children;
2. Review and report on the impact of the existing social protection mechanisms on children outcomes, such as poverty, education, health, protection, family environment and overall well-being;
3. Based on the assessment, provide evidence-based policy recommendations on what needs to be reformed in the social protection mechanism;
4. Evidence-based policy recommendations on how best the social services and social protection mechanisms can be aligned, so that they complement each other, rather than overlap;
5. Evidence-based policy recommendations on how to move away from the current cash-benefit-only system towards more holistic system, which comprises of both the cash allowances and support services.
6. Evidence-based policy recommendations on how to ensure that both the social services and social protection programmes ensure greater positive impact for the protection of the rights of vulnerable children.

The Consultant(s) will spend **31 working days in total** from October thru December 2014 to develop the assessment in close cooperation with UNICEF Office in Baku and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

**Suggested Methodology**

- Desk review and analysis of the key studies, research, policies, legislation and other;
- Consultations with key stakeholders;
- Expert focus groups and interviews as needed.

8. **Time-Frame:**

The selected International and National Consultant will work together during the period of October – December 2014 based on the schedule of activities to be agreed with UNICEF.

9. **Qualifications or specialized knowledge/experience required:**

The qualifications, experience and competencies required from the consultants will be the following:

- Advanced university degree in Social Sciences, Policy Analysis, Economics, or related field
- Minimum 5-8 years of consultancy experience in the area of Policy Analysis and Social Policy
- Experience and knowledge of the regional developments, particularly the issues of child protection systems in Azerbaijan (or post-Soviet countries).
- In depth knowledge of social protection and child protection systems of Azerbaijan and the region;
- Knowledge of poverty, deprivation and social exclusion issues; women and child related issues; social and economic aspects of wellbeing.
Experience of working with Household Surveys, Panel Surveys, large datasets
Experience in provision of a high level policy advice, development of policy documents and drafting the legislation.
Experience with modelling and simulations
Experience with costing and evaluations
Excellent writing skills
Experience with proxy means testing methodology is an asset
Ability to work in a team with tight deadlines
Familiarity with UNICEF’s mission and mandate.
Fluency in English; knowledge of the Azerbaijani or Russian is an important asset.

10. Estimated cost:
Consultancy fee is to be proposed by a potential individual and agreed with UNICEF in line with UN rules and regulations.

UNICEF does not provide or arrange health insurance coverage for consultants.

14. Application:
Interested individuals should send:
a) A Technical Proposal;
b) Individual resume;
c) Reference of previous relevant work (if applicable);
in a sealed envelope/email to:

Human Resources
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Dalgha Plaza, III floor
24 Neftchilar Ave,
Baku AZ1095, Azerbaijan

or send the documents mentioned above electronically to baku@unicef.org, bakuvacancies@unicef.org

All applications will be treated with strict confidentiality. UNICEF is an equal opportunity employer.

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.

Deadline for applications: October 9, 2014, 15:00 hrs. GMT +4