

## TERMS OF REFERENCE UNICEF KYRGYZSTAN

<b>Programme/Project Title:</b>	<b>Nutrition and Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)</b>
<b>Consultancy/Services Title:</b>	<b>Dietary Diversity for Children 6-23 months: BI based Solution Development</b>
<b>Consultancy Mode:</b>	<b>National X International X</b>
<b>Duration of Contract:</b>	<b>From: 15 July 2023 To: 15 April 2024 (9 months in total)</b>

### 1. Background

In Kyrgyzstan, the overall nutrition situation among children 6-59 months of age less than 5 years of age has improved over the past two decades. However, children's development continues to be affected by the triple burden of malnutrition (stunting, overweight and obesity and micronutrient deficiencies). It is increasingly important to ensure the quality and diversification of nutritious diet. Diet quality is associated with nutrition status: children who are fed at least a minimum acceptable diet are less likely to be stunted or underweight.

The recent findings of the National Micronutrient and Anthropometric Survey (NIMAS 2021) show that in the country, only 15 per cent of children 6-23 months receive the minimum acceptable diet and 26 per cent of children meet minimum dietary diversity. Minimum dietary diversity among children 6-23 months old was found considerably lower in Bishkek city and Chui province: only 9.7 per cent in Bishkek and 12.8 per cent in Chui province consumed 5+ food groups and is also significantly higher in rural children. Jalal Abad province has the third lowest ranking of dietary diversity among children 6-23 months (27 per cent), including Suzak village.

The drivers of malnutrition in Kyrgyzstan are interrelated with determinants spanning across various systems. Among key drivers contributing to malnutrition, main factors that exacerbate nutrition security are as follows:

- **Food insecurity** is mainly driven by poverty and is a notable problem in Kyrgyzstan with 25.3 of population living in poverty. The poorest households that spend 65 per cent of their income on food are the most affected, with the same food basket costing significantly more.
- **Inadequate household and institutional level knowledge about nutrition.** An unvaried and monotonous dietary pattern undermines the nutritional status of individuals. The typical diet in Kyrgyzstan is characterized by a high consumption of wheat, potatoes and sugar. Similarly, poor diets of pregnant and lactating women put not only themselves at risk of micronutrient deficiencies and overweight and obesity, but also their fetus' health through poor nutrition and pregnancy complications.
- **Social-cultural factors and gender norms** may affect women from healthy practices and hinder access to information and participation in food and nutrition, counselling and financial assistance.

This behaviour insight (BI) based solution development is needed to analyze barriers and enablers, and design effective, scalable solutions in the priority locations. The findings of the study will help UNICEF to design relevant activities that address barriers to malnutrition and enablers to enhancing more acceptable diet.

BI study findings will also inform development of the national Social and Behavior Communication Strategy with the addition of an exploration of gender roles related to nutrition.

### 2. Objectives/goals/purpose & expected results

The proposed consultancy aims to support Government and UNICEF to better understand dietary practices of families with children under two, and what factors affect family diet, child feeding and nutrition

status using behavioural insights (BI) approach; and develop, test and evaluate 1-2 solutions to address identified barriers, by using experimental research design.

The BI should include a study of enablers and barriers, such as beliefs, perceptions, social norms, taboos, gender and intrahousehold dynamics, market access, seasonality etc. for mothers, fathers and grandparents of children under two years old, and other caregivers (to be specified) in the absence of mothers, fathers or grandparents. The target locations will focus on areas with low rate of minimum dietary diversity, such as Bishkek and Chui province and Jalal Abad province including Suzak village. The BI study will be undertaken, drawing on qualitative methods.

### 3. Description of the assignment, incl. key tasks

#### **Stage 1: BI study in Bishkek, Chui province, Suzak village and Jalal Abad province - 4 months**

- To conduct a desk review and do secondary analysis of the existing research data (including NIMAS) to inform the finalization of the BI study methodology (qualitative)
- To finalize the BI study methodology
- To arrange for the ethical review (local or international)
- To conduct the BI study
- To organize a workshop for key stakeholders (including representatives of the health behaviour experts participants) to present and discuss the BI study results, and verify the key findings
- To submit the BI Report in Russian and English (for the use of UNICEF and key partners)

#### **Stage 2: Development and testing of 2-3 solutions for Bishkek, Chui province, Suzak village and Jalal Abad Province - 1 month**

- To organize a workshop for key stakeholders to discuss and present at least 5 context-relevant solutions and prioritize 2-3 of them
- To test 2-3 solutions for further evaluation
- To submit the Solution Testing Report in Russian and English (for the use of UNICEF and key partners)

#### **Stage 3: Evaluation of 2 solutions in Bishkek, Chui province, Suzak village and Jalal Abad Province – 4 months**

- To develop Solution Evaluation Study methodology(ies) for the 2 solutions
- To arrange for the ethical review (local or international)
- To present preliminary results of the Solution Evaluation Study to key stakeholders and discuss scaling up implications
- Based on test results, to develop a Guide for scaling up (including proposed actions, workplans and cost estimates) and verify it with key partners (round of review or a workshop discussion).
- To submit the Guide for scaling up in Russian and English (for the use of UNICEF and key partners)

### 4. Deliverables, expected timeframes and payment schedule

#	Deliverable	30 Oct'23	1 Jan'24	1 Apr'24
1	BI Study Report in Russian and English	40%		
2	Solution Testing Report in Russian and English		30%	
3	Solution Evaluation Study; Guide for scaling up in Russian and English			30%

### 5. Delivery and reporting requirements

*Deliverable 1: BI Study Report in Russian and English*

*The Report should include a two-pager with key findings. The Report should be designed to be ready for publication.*

*Deliverable 2: Solution Testing Report in Russian and English*

The Report should include description of the solutions, testing methodology and revised version of solutions.

*Deliverable 3: Solution Evaluation Study and Guide for scaling up in Russian and English*  
The Guide should include methodology and results of the Solution Evaluation Study and training materials for implementers. The Report should be designed to be ready for publication.

**6. Location and official travel involved**

Field work of the BI study in Bishkek and Chui province (at least 5 villages and 2 small towns) Jalal Abad Province including Suzak v., (at least 3 villages and 1 small town).

Field work of the testing in Bishkek and Chui province (at least 1 village and 1 small town), Jalal Abad Province including Suzak v., (at least 1 village and 1 small town).

Field work of the Solution Evaluation Study in Bishkek and Chui province (at least 5 villages and 2 small towns) Jalal Abad Province including Suzak v. (at least 3 villages and 1 small town).

It is essential that:

- i) travel costs are calculated based on economy class travel, regardless of the length of travel;
  - ii) costs for accommodation, meals and incidentals shall not exceed applicable daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates, as promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC);
- Unexpected travels shall also be treated as above

**7. Selection Criteria, including qualifications/specialized knowledge/experience required**

<b>MANDATORY SELECTION CRITERIA</b>		<b>Yes/No</b>
1	Company or organization has valid registration (certificate enclosed)	
2	Company or organization has a minimum of 3 years of experience in research and/or development/implementation of SBC interventions	
3	The team members should be fluent in spoken and written in English	
<b>MAIN SELECTION CRITERIA</b>		<b>Points</b>
1	<u>To the organization:</u>	
1.1	Organization’s experience in at least one BI research project and one research project on Nutrition or Health related issues, based on the list of completed project. Share a link or enclose sample of one report.	10
1.2	Organization’s experience in development, testing and evaluation of at least on BI based solutions, based on the list of completed projects. Enclose one reference/recommendation letter.	10
1.3	Organization’s experience in the Central Asia is an asset. Enclose the list of completed projects.	Yes/no
2	<u>To staff (based on CVs):</u>	
2.1	Competencies of team leader: Education: Master or higher degree in Sociology, Psychology, Management or related	20

	Experience: At least 5 years of experience in managing of research / SBC solution development teams Command of language: English. (Russian is an asset)	
2.2	Competencies of chief researcher Education: Master or higher degree in Sociology or related Experience: At least 10 years of experience in leading research teams (including BI studies, evaluations, testing) Command of language: English. (Russian is an asset)	20
2.3	Competencies of BI specialist: Education: Master or higher degree in BI related disciplines Experience: At least 3 years of experience in leading BI projects Command of language: English. (Russian is an asset)	20
3	<u>To the Project Proposal:</u>	
3.1	Quality of Project Proposal (structure; draft sampling and methodology for the BI research). Enclose a draft	20

**Total: 100 points**

The proposed team must correspond to the minimum criteria – team composition and minimum of the proposed staff. In case of deviations in the leadership team composition, the offers may be considered **technically non-compliant**.

## **8. Project management and administrative issues**

Day-to-day support of the assignment will be provided by UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Nutrition Officer and Social and Behaviour (SBC) Specialist. It will include relevant information sharing, briefing and de-briefing, sessions and meetings. UNICEF will provide Contractor with guidelines, additional information.