**Terms of References**

**Evaluation of the UN Joint Programme on Strengthening Social Protection in Uzbekistan**

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| **Duration:** September 2021 – February 2022 |  |  |
| **Location:** Uzbekistan |  |  |
| **Estimated total budget:** 83,856 USD |  |  |
| **Grant reference:** Other Resources (OR) |  |  |
| **Relevant UNSDCF outcome/output:**  Outcome 4: By 2025, the most vulnerable benefit from enhanced access to gender sensitive quality health, education and social services.  Output 4.3. By 2025, the national social protection system is strengthened to deliver progressively universal social security and social protection benefits (child-sensitive, gender and shock responsive), community-based family services, and inclusive multi-sector response to vulnerabilities and gender-based violence in line with international standards.  **Relevant UNICEF outcome/output:**  Outcome 1: By 2025, the most vulnerable children and youth benefit from policy coherence, evidence-based and inclusive decision-making and financing for social development in line with the national SDGs and international standards (contributing to UNSDCF outcomes 1–3).  **Anticipated start Date:** August 2021 |  |  |
| **Supervisor:** M&E Specialist |  |  |
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**I Background and Context**

Uzbekistan is the county with the largest population in Central Asia region, which gained its independence in 1991. In 2021, it totalled 34.6 million people of which 34 per cent were children under 18 years old. In 2010, Uzbekistan was re-classified by the World Bank as lower-middle income country, with high rates of reported economic growth though coupled with existing regional and income disparities. Following presidential elections in 2016, country embarked on the new path of ambitious economic and social reforms as outlined in National Development Strategy 2017-2020. These include ongoing economic liberalization, administrative and judiciary reforms, reforms of social sector programmes and strategies.

The current UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) between the Government of Uzbekistan and the UN covers the period 2021-2025. It is closely aligned with overall Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Uzbekistan has confirmed its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in October 2018 passed a resolution adopting 16 national SDGs, 125 related targets, and 206 indicators to monitor implementation of the SDGs. A Coordination Council was established to oversee SDG implementation across 21 government agencies. The UN SDG MAPS mission to Uzbekistan in 2018 identified social protection as one of the potential accelerators for the achievement of SDGs and suggested to strengthen its national system, including by adopting nationally defined social protection floor.

Obligations of Uzbekistan towards the social protection of its citizens are stipulated in the Constitution of Uzbekistan and key international conventions including, but not limited to, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified in 1994), CEDAW (ratified in 1995), International Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights (ratified in 1995), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified in 2021) and 17 ILO Conventions.

Uzbekistan’s expenditure on social protection amounted to 9.7 per cent per cent of GDP in 2018 which reflected a decreasing trend from 11.3 per cent of GDP of 2011 in the level of investment. Alongside the reduction in investment, the total number of social protection recipients fell from 8.1 million people in 2012 to 6.4 million in 2017, a fall of 21 per cent per cent. During this period, the greatest fall was recorded among children and the active age population, including persons with disabilities, while there is also a growing coverage gap in the old age pension system. However, in the period of 2019-2020 total coverage of social protection programs increased from 6,4 million to 9,3 million in 2020.

Overall, the distribution of the government’s investment in social security programmes is imbalanced. Around 72 per cent per cent of spending is for benefits for older persons, despite Uzbekistan having a relatively youthful population. Indeed, Uzbekistan’s investment in old age pensions as a proportion of GDP is higher than in many high-income countries with ageing population and the largest part of the pension is based on social insurance contributions. Another 13 per cent of investment is on persons with disabilities of working age. Only 9 per cent of social protection expenditures are spent on children (which includes maternity benefits) while even less is invested in unemployment and social assistance for poor households.

Social protection is financed by a mix of social insurance contributions and general taxation. Until recently, both workers’ and employers’ made contributions to social insurance, complemented by general taxation. At the beginning of 2019, employees’ social insurance contributions were discontinued. Instead, all citizens pay personal income tax at a flat rate of 18 per cent. This reflect changes in the approach to contributory social insurance and, as such, requires careful monitoring for impact.

Currently, responsibilities for the governance of Uzbekistan’s social protection system are distributed among different ministries and further devolved to the local level. Overall leadership of the system after the recent process of government reorganisation is not clearly defined, but it nominally comes under the Office of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers. However, the responsibility to draft the national social protection strategy has been delegated to the Ministry of Finance. Responsibility for the main social security schemes is divided between: the Ministry of Finance, which is responsible for the Pension Fund – for delivery of old age and disability benefits – and for the control of state expenditures, the delivery of child benefits and social assistance allowances through Single Registry; the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, which is responsible for labour, employment, unemployment benefits, public work programmes and active labour market policies and development of employment programme and its links with social protection; the Ministry of Health, which manages health-related programmes and social services for the elderly and persons with disabilities; and, the Ministry of Public Education which oversees small, in-kind schemes for schoolchildren. The newly established Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support is responsible for administering the social allowances for women (so called women note-pads) and identifying those who need specialized social services and referring them to the responsible line ministries and/or agencies. The Ministry of the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction is responsible for the development of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, and inter-alia, its linkages with the social protection system. The involvement of the workers’ and employers’ organisations as well as representatives of civil society groups interested in social protection is limited and on ad-hoc basis.

Social care services in Uzbekistan are limited. State-organised social care services for adults and children with disabilities predominantly take the form of home-based support or placement in residential institutions. Around 11,200 elderly people, people with disabilities and children without parental care live in residential institutions. According to official data in 2016, there were 26,500 children living in various types of residential institutions and 63 per cent of those were children with disabilities. Only 16,200 elderly people and persons with disabilities with no next of kin receive home-based social care support. Further, almost 21,700 persons with disabilities were assessed as eligible for assistive devices and medical rehabilitation in 2017 and, of these, only 57 per cent were actually accessing support. Services focused on the empowerment and self-representation of persons with disabilities are still few. Most are initiated by civil society organisations representing persons with physical and sensory impairments – while missing for those with learning and intellectual disabilities – and have limited funding.

There are growing concerns that COVID-19 pandemic and associated economic shock could result in declines in employment, well-being, and incomes as well as lead to shrinking fiscal space that may hinder the social protection reform agenda and/or divert resources to short-term solutions. Studies done by UN agencies show that self-employed population suffered the most. It is also expected that poverty and vulnerability among population has gone up. Government has introduced number of measures to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, including but not limited to: Anti-crisis Fund (around 1 billion USD) was created; number of households receiving social allowances has doubled from 552,000 in 2020 to 1.2 million families in 2021; duration of social allowances was prolonged from 6 months to 12 months; lonely elderly and disabled people in need of care during the quarantine period received a set of food and hygiene products; deferral of taxes, lease payments, credits and other payments, etc.

**II The object to be evaluated**

UN SP Joint Programme covers the period of 2020-21. It is based on the UN SP Joint Programme Theory of Change (attached in Annex A) and the associated Workplan 2020-21. The workplan was partially modified in 2020 and included additional activities related to the COVID-19 response that became integral part of the UNCT’s COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Framework (SERF).

It is expected that implementation of the Joint Programme will contribute to the acceleration of the progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16. ToC is formulated using the Results Based Management (RBM) language (i.e. RBM chain of activities – outputs – outcomes – impact). It consists of one outcome and three outputs as following:

The expected **Impact** of the Joint Programme is: “Vulnerable groups, and especially children, women, NEET youth, unemployed, and PWDs, are effectively protected from potential risks and vulnerabilities and benefit from more equitable access to resources, leading to acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.”

The expected **Outcome** of the Joint Programme is: “By 2022, the Government has an integrated and sustainable social protection system and initial capacity in place to improve social protection coverage for all citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, across Uzbekistan”

There are three participating United Nations organizations (PUNO) – United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United National Development Programme (UNDP) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) - that are directly involved in joint programme implementation. While all three participating agencies work together on the joint programme, each take a clear lead on the different pillars/outputs, leveraging their comparative advantages.

**Output 1:** By 2022, an integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems and operations with sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection to every citizen of Uzbekistan is designed (**led by UNICEF**).

The output supports the government in establishing a dedicated institution/entity to provide leadership and coordination to the social protection sector, as well as to be responsible for overseeing the delivery of social protection schemes. During this period, the following programme interventions have been undertaken under this output:

* The draft Concept Note of institutional design for providing integrated social protection is prepared and shared with the national partners for review. The concept considers number of options, inter alia expanding the mandate of one of the state agencies providing social protection to cover all components, creating of an overarching coordination body to facilitate provision of social protection by individual agencies or creating a new agency to provide integrated social protection. These options are also being costed.
* The action plan to operationalize the integrated social protection entity/mechanism, including elaboration of functions, standard operating procedures, protocols and capacity building plan is being developed.
* Advocated for broad-based coalition with key stakeholders for the social protection system reform. As a result, strategic partnership with the Ministry of Finance as a lead national partner is established. A roundtable with the Parliament on social protection system reform was conducted.
* The national roll-out and operationalization of the Single Registry for Social Protection management information system is completed. To-date Single Registry incorporates 1.2 mln. households around the country.
* A model to test integrated provision of social services through a case management approach is developed. Currently this model is being piloted in collaboration with the Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support.

**Output 2:** By 2022, a National Social Protection Strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda is developed and costed jointly with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries (**led by ILO**).

The output supports designing an evidence-based and costed national social protection strategy based on wide multi-stakeholder consultations and citizens’ engagement. During this period, the following programme interventions have been undertaken under this output:

* Draft Concept Note on the National Strategy for Social Protection (NSSP), Technical Briefing Notes on the scope and process of NSSP development and operational guidelines for strategic and technical working groups are developed;
* The concept note and the roadmap for the NSSP development was developed jointly with the Ministry of Finance and adopted by President’s Decree. The decree proposes to set up a council for NSSP development led by the Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan.
* National social protections strategy is being developed through a participatory national consultative process. In addition, costing exercise of the national social protection strategy, analysis of the fiscal space and gap analysis of the government social protection measures will be conducted.
* Key national partners capacity to design a social protection system in line with international social security standards strengthened through a series of training courses
* An evidence-based assessment of COVID-19 impact on socio-economic situation in Uzbekistan (income, employment and access to social protection) to support to shape design of unemployment benefit scheme is conducted

**Output 3:** By 2022, the Government of Uzbekistan has tested the disability assessment procedures and service delivery design based on ICF and CRPD norms and has taken on board relevant policy recommendations (**led by UNDP**).

The output aims to improve accessibility of social protection for persons with disabilities and promote their full inclusion. It is being achieved via modelling implementation of the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) in disability assessment and promoting the social model of disability in line with CRPD. During this period, the following programme interventions have been undertaken under this output:

* Joint Programme has contributed to development of the national Law “On rights of People with Disabilities”. Adopted law has incorporated standards and principle of CRPD.
* Established strategic partnership with the Agency on Medical and Social Services on ICF implementation. Capacity of medical expert commissions (VKK and VTEK) on disability have been strengthened on the application of International Classification of Functioning (ICF) and CRPD norms in disability assessment of adults and children through number of capacity-based trainings and consultations.
* Prepared policy reports to promote delivery of social services in line with the CRPD and the ICF requirements on a) accessibility and affordability of public services, including technical, medical and social services for PWDs in Uzbekistan and b) situational analysis on women with disabilities and their access to employment opportunities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.
* Consultations were held with DPOs and CSOs working on disability and inclusion to identify possible cooperation areas and support them in their mission. The micro-grants initiative was launched to support the local user-led pilot initiatives based on the ICF and CRPD principles prioritizing small projects on the rights of women and young persons with disabilities.

***JP management arrangements***

In order to manage the joint programme implementation, the UN Joint Programme project team is created consisting of the Project Manager and dedicated staff in each PUNO.

The overall budget of the Joint Programme is $2 million provided by the SDG fund. It is expected that the Joint Programme will directly influence government decisions over a very significant area of expenditure, equivalent to around 9.7 per cent of GDP, or US$4.5 billion annual and will deliver significant value for money.

***Key Stakeholders***

The main national and international stakeholders in charge of the implementation of the Joint Programme and key primary stakeholders and users of the evaluation are described below.

The UN Joint Programme on Strengthening Social Protection in Uzbekistan is overseen by the Deputy Prime Minister for Social Development. From the UN side, the joint program is led by the UN Resident Coordinator.

The UNDAF Results Group on Social Protection serves as the Steering Committee for the UN Joint Programme. It is comprised of the representatives from the following ministries and Join Programme main partners: Legislative Chamber and Senate of the Oliy Majlis, Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support, Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction, Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, Ministry of Health, Agency for the Development of Medical and Social Services, Ministry of Preschool Education, Ministry of Public Education, Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, General Prosecutor’s Office, Pension Fund, Federation of Trade Unions, National Confederation of the Employers of Uzbekistan, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Youth Agency, National Centre for Human Rights, Centre for the Youth and Children with Disabilities «Mehrli qo’llar», Association of the organizations of disabled people, National Association of NGOs and others. The Steering Committee meets two times per year and is responsible for approving plans, monitoring the joint programme implementation and reporting. This arrangement allows to avoid the creation of parallel structures and to fully integrate the programme management into UNDAF processes and substantively reduce coordination and transaction cost for UN and the Government.

At a more operational level, four Technical Working Groups were established which comprised the above-mentioned members of Steering Committee and PUNOs at the technical level who are directly involved in the implementation of the joint programme. The Technical Working Groups meet regularly to review progress and adjust workplans, as required.

The main beneficiaries/rightsholders of the joint programme are defined as children, youth, women, persons with disability, elderly and people from the rural area. It is expected that these categories of the population will benefit the most from reform of social benefits system, improving provision and access to social services and enhancing the system of social work.

**III Rationale and purpose of the evaluation**

This summative evaluation will come at the end of the joint programme implementation. In this context, the evaluation offers the opportunity to critically assess the joint programme contribution to social protection sector reforms and provision of more equitable and quality social care services in the country. In addition, the evaluation should also focus on assessing UNICEF specific contribution towards establishment of the Single Registry (i.e. social protection management information system) considering its growing importance for social protection sector reform and plans of government for its further national roll-out. The findings of the evaluation will be used as a basis for discussions, planning and programming between UN, Government of Uzbekistan and other key national and international stakeholders.

The knowledge generated by the evaluation will be used by:

* The Cabinet of Ministries, key sectoral line ministries and other relevant stakeholders to identify and further address existing barriers to support social protection reform agenda and strengthening the national social protection system to ensure more effective coverage and support to those “left behind”
* PUNOs (UNICEF, ILO and UNDP) for taking stock of lessons learnt and best practices and informing revision of their respective programmes towards strengthening the system of social protection
* UNICEF to assess the status of the Single Registry model implementation with lessons learnt and identification of possible adjustments, if needed.
* PUNOs to contribute to the relevant Social Protection knowledge generation and dissemination platforms, such as the ILO social protection platform intended for global knowledge sharing and extension of social security and the Social Protection Floor Initiative.
* Other UN agencies and relevant development partners to identify potential synergies and avoid overlaps in planning and implementation of interventions in area of social protection
* UNCT to assess contribution to SDG acceleration and to promote the UN coherence.

**IV Objectives of the Evaluation**

The evaluation is focused on learning, assessment of what worked and what did not in designing, implementing and assessing the UN SP Joint Programme in Uzbekistan. The evaluation will also specifically focus on the UNICEF contribution towards establishment of the Single Registry platform.

The main objectives of this evaluation are:

* Assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, coherence and, to the extent possible, impact of a) the UN joint programme in general and b) UNICEF contribution towards establishment of the Single Registry.
* Provide recommendations to guide policy level decision-making by PUNOs and the key relevant stakeholders on social protection system reform.
* Provide recommendations to guide UNICEF’s further work on Single Registry.
* Provide recommendation on how to better incorporate gender equality and equity issues, including disability into the social protection reform agenda.
* Identify and document successes, challenges and lessons learnt both for the joint programme and the UNICEF contribution.
* Identify contribution of the UN joint programme to SDGs acceleration and UN coherence.
* Assess the role of the Joint Programme to increasing awareness about social protection among key stakeholders and beneficiaries

**V Scope of the Evaluation**

As mentioned, the evaluation will look at the UN joint programme holistically in the framework of the broader social protection sector reforms as well as the national and global priorities. In addition, the UNICEF contribution should be analysed to provide additional insights on the Single Registry model implementation. It will cover most of the implementation period, from January 2020 and until start of the evaluation in 2021. The geographical scope of the evaluation will be nationwide. Specific sites in the regions will be identified for the visit in consultations with the UN Joint Programme project team during the inception stage, as required.

The evaluation will focus on the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and sustainability. The contribution to the impact will also be assessed to the extent possible.

It is also expected that the evaluation will adopt equity-based and gender-sensitive approach to understand whether the undertaken interventions managed to address the needs and uphold the rights of the most vulnerable groups in Uzbekistan as well as the root causes of inequities. This is particularly important as the UN Joint Programme is designed with a view of strengthening social protection system to address the needs of the most marginalized groups of population.

As persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups across countries and considering the critical role that social protection can play in supporting their inclusion, most joint programmes had identified them as direct or indirect beneficiaries.

A special consideration on COVID-19 is added to the original scope of the UN Joint Programme given the current context that the UN Joint Programme has been operating during the pandemic.

**VI Evaluation Questions/Framework**

The questions that will guide this evaluation are aligned with the evaluation criteria developed by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)[[1]](#footnote-2). To this end, the criteria in use reflect the new DAC guidelines in which the criterion “Coherence” is introduced. Also, a set of specific questions on Persons with Disabilities is included. However, questions may be further fine-tuned during the Inception Phase based on considerations of evaluability, time and resource constraints.

***Assessing relevance***

* How relevant was the JP to priorities/policies at the national level and to the needs of the main vulnerable groups?
* How relevant was the jointness in programme design, implementation and management for addressing the country’s development priorities and challenges?
* Is the JP relevant in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic? What adjustments were needed to be made to keep it relevant to the changing needs of its target population?
* How relevant was UNICEF’s contribution towards establishment and nationwide rollout of the Single Registry to deliver social assistance to the most vulnerable?

***Assessing effectiveness***

* To what extent were the planned results achieved?
* To what extent were gender and equity aspects effectively mainstreamed and delivered in the JP?
* To what extent has the JP contributed to accelerating the SDGs at the national level?
* To what extent the JP produced a catalytic effect in terms of generating systems change across sectors to leave no one behind?
* To what extent the JP contributed to achievement of UNDAF/CF outcome/s and national development priorities?
* To what extent was it possible to achieve the key stakeholders (i.e. government, employers, workers representatives, organizations of people with disabilities, CSOs representing other vulnerable groups) involvement in and thus ownership of the Programme? To what extent have workers and employers’ organizations, organizations of people with disabilities, CSOs representing other vulnerable groups have been associated with the JP? And has the JP increased their involvement in the design and operations of national social protection systems?
* How effective was UNICEF’s contribution towards establishment and nationwide rollout of the Single Registry to deliver social assistance to the most vulnerable? To what extent was the Single registry able to simplify the application and benefits issuance process to the most vulnerable? How flexible was the Single Registry to respond to the COVID challenges and provide support to the most vulnerable without delays?
* To what extent the COVID-19 affected the achievement of intended results contributing to/reversing the expected impact of the JP?
* Were there any unintended negative or positive outcomes and, if so, were they appropriately managed?

***Assessing efficiency***

* How efficiently have the JP been managed in terms of its human / financial resources and organizational / governance structure? Were the available financial, material and human resources adequate to meet the set objectives, including in times of the pandemic?
* To what extend did the JP contribute to enhancing UN efficiency (reducing transaction costs, staff enhancement, leveraging investments in development of tools/capacity development, resource mobilization efforts and partnership arrangements, offering multi-partner funding and operations)? Was the JP intervention more efficient in comparison to what could have been done through a single agency intervention?
* How efficiently did UNICEF manage its resources to support the Single Registry rollout and delivery of benefits to the most vulnerable?

***Assessing sustainability***

* To what extent has the strategy adopted by the JP contributed to sustainability of results, especially in terms of codifying international social security standards into national legislation, policy and practice, ensuring the LNOB principle and enhancing the social protection system?
* To what extent has the JP supported the long-term buy-in, leadership and ownership by the Government and other relevant stakeholders? How likely will the results be sustained beyond the JP through the action of Government and other stakeholders and/or UNCTs?
* To what extent JP contributed to the development of knowledge and its dissemination (guides, tools, country briefs, trainings)? Is there an evidence of use of these methodologies, cross-country support and establishment of successful partnerships?
* How likely will the Single Registry be fully taken over by the Government and successfully run in years to come?

***Assessing Impact***

* To what extent can the JP be considered to have contributed to possible improvement of the situation of vulnerable groups identified in the JP? How have vulnerable groups, including women, children and persons with disabilities benefited (directly and indirectly) from the JP?
* To what extent vulnerable groups benefited from the establishment of the Single Registry?
* What are the main results achieved by the JP or most salient success stories? Why were these activities successful/what were the enabling factors?

***Assessing Coherence***

* To what extent did participating United Nations organizations (PUNOs) coordinate with development partners and other UN agencies to avoid overlaps, leverage contributions and catalyse joint work?
* To what extent did UNICEF coordinate with the participating agencies and other international organizations as well as government stakeholders its work on the Single Registry?

In addition to the main evaluation criteria, the evaluation will also add **Assessing Disability Focus** as standalone criteria. As persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups across countries and considering the critical role that social protection can play in supporting their inclusion, most joint programs had identified them as direct or indirect beneficiaries. In line with the Leaving No One Behind principle and the obligations stemming from the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, even programs that do not target directly persons with disabilities should ensure that persons with disabilities within targeted population can access the program without discrimination.

The evaluation will therefore also assess:

* To what extent, joint programme design, implementation, and monitoring have been inclusive of persons with disabilities (i.e. accessibility, non-discrimination, participation of organizations of persons with disabilities, data disaggregation)
* To what extent, joint programme effectively contributed to the socio-economic inclusion of persons with disabilities by providing income security, coverage of health care, and disability-related costs across the life cycle.

Some guiding questions that may help answering to the evaluation questions on persons with disabilities above are provided in the Annex B (attached with this ToR) and could be further elaborated in the evaluation matrix and/or analysis framework.

**VII. Methodology of the Evaluation**

The evaluation methodology will be guided by the Evaluation Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), as well as in line with UNICEF’s Evaluation Policy, UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluations and Data Collection and Analysis and UNICEF’s reporting standards as it was agreed among PUNOs based on the UNICEF’s lead in the JP evaluation.

***Evaluability Assessment***

This is a preliminary evaluability assessment. At inception stage, the evaluators are expected to conduct a thorough review and analysis of secondary data available to identify information gaps and other evaluability challenges and discuss solutions to address these. The documents listed below provide background information, including quantitative data, qualitative information and regular monitoring data from the UN Joint Programme implementation.

The UN Joint Programme project team will be able to provide more specific guidance on these issues during the inception phase. In such cases, during the inception phase, the evaluation team is expected to suggest and agree with evaluation manager(s) on the most rigorous design and methodology to effectively evaluate the UN Joint Programme that is possible given the limitations. The chosen design must be suitable to the evaluation and answering the evaluation questions once they are agreed and finalised during the inception stage.

***Information sources***

The following list includes general information sources related to country context in general and social protection system in particular:

**Background:**

* Uzbekistan Common Country Assessment (UN, 2019)
* UNDAF 2016-2020
* UNSDCF 2021-25
* Uzbekistan MAPS Report (UN, 2018)
* UNICEF Strategic Plans 2018-2021
* UNICEF Gender Action Plans (2018-2021)
* UNICEF Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2020
* UNICEF Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) 2016-2020
* UNICEF Country Programme Evaluation (UNICEF, 2020)
* UNICEF Country Office Annual Reports 2020, 2019, 2018,
* Situation Analysis of Children in Uzbekistan (UNICEF, 2019)
* MICS Uzbekistan 2006
* Statistical Year Books 2019, 2018, 2017 (State Committee on Statistics)
* Uzbekistan National Development Strategy 2017-2020
* UN CRC Concluding Observations on Uzbekistan (2013)
* Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment (ADB, 2018)
* Women and the World of Work in Uzbekistan. Towards Gender Equality and Decent Work for All (ILO, 2021)
* Laws and by-laws related to SP sector

**Social Protection sector related publications**

* Assessment of the national social protection system in Uzbekistan (ILO/UNICEF/WB 2020) - <https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_760153/lang-en/index.htm>
* Building a national social protection system fit for Uzbekistan’s children and young people. (UNICEF, 2019)
* Situation analysis on children and adults with disabilities in Uzbekistan (UN, 2019)
* The Social Service Workforce in Uzbekistan: Strengths, Challenges and Ways Forward. (UNICEF, 2018)
* Uzbekistan Social Assistance Targeting Assessment (World Bank, 2019)
* Assessment of COVID-19 impact on socio-economic situation in Uzbekistan: overview of crisis response and areas of improving public policies (ILO, 2020)

**UN SP Joint Programme related documents**

* UN SP Joint Programme Theory of Change (ToC)
* UN SP Joint Work Plan 2020-2021
* Concept of the National Strategy of Social Protection (2020)
* Concept Note on Institutional reform designs (2020)
* Inception report on Institutional reform of social protection system in Uzbekistan (2020)
* Technical Briefing Note on the Relationship between the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the National Strategy for Social Protection (NSSP) (2020)
* Technical Briefing Note on Creating Consensus for the Progressive Realization of the National Social Protection Strategy in the Republic of Uzbekistan (2020)
* Technical Briefing Note on Key Concepts for Framing the Republic of Uzbekistan’s National Strategy for Social Protection 2030 (2020)
* Technical Briefing Note on Stakeholder Engagement Plan (2020)
* Technical Briefing Note on Public Financial Management, Costing & Fiscal Space Analysis (2020)
* Operational Guidelines for TWGs (2020)
* Methodological Guidance Note for TWGs (2020)
* Concept of the testing of social services based on case management (2020)
* Project proposals, project progress reports and presentations
* Minutes of the meetings
* Training reports

***Evaluation Approach***

The evaluation will be conducted in a participatory manner and participation of key stakeholders will be ensured in all phases of the evaluation, including the planning, inception, fact-finding, reporting as well as the management response phases. To this extent, Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) comprised of representatives of the Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Education, Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction, Agency for Development of Medical and Social Services, the Association of Disabled People of Uzbekistan, Federation of Trade Unions, the National Confederation of Employers, UN RCO, UNDP, ILO, WB and UNICEF programme staff is planned to be established to oversee the evaluation throughout the entire process.

The overall evaluation approach will be based on the overarching UN SP Joint Programme’s theory of change. Generally, the evaluation will use a non-experimental design. Data collection will be based on a multiple method approach, including primarily desk review of reference materials (including programme monitoring and other secondary data sources) and interviews (mainly qualitative) with different partners, independent experts, and concerned UN staff. In some cases, site visits and observations may be required. Triangulation of data (combining qualitative and quantitative data as well as data from a range of stakeholders) will have to be used to increase reliability of findings and conclusions. The evaluators will be required to take into consideration the gender and equity issues while refining the evaluation questions and data collection methods.

During the Inception Phase, the sample of stakeholders to be interviewed and locations to be visited will be defined based on agreed criteria. At this point, the evaluation questions will need to be refined; the evaluator(s) should also develop a more precise evaluation work plan.

***Ethical Considerations***

Adequate measures will be taken to ensure that the process responds to quality and ethical requirements. The team is responsible to ensure that the process is in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines[[2]](#footnote-3) and adhere to the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis[[3]](#footnote-4).

Evaluators need to specify potential ethical considerations, approaches and review processes in their proposal and an inception report, including of harms and benefits, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, payment and compensation and conflicts of interest.

The evaluator(s) should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relationships with all stakeholders. Furthermore, they should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information. All participants should be informed of the context and purpose of the evaluation, as well as of the confidentiality of the information shared. Interviewees should be protected (e.g. references to information sources should remain confidential and the report will not contain names unless explicit permission is granted).

Once the evaluation methodology and all the details of data collection and analyses accommodate the comments from the relevant parties and are clearly presented in the Inception Report, an evaluation manager jointly with evaluation team based on the "Criteria for Ethical Review Checklist" will decide whether or not the evaluation will have to go through an ethical review board. UNICEF has a Long-Term Agreement (LTA) for such a service.

***Limitations to the evaluation***

There are several limitations to the evaluation which can hinder the process.

* Even though all efforts were made to generate and/or access to the needed data, one of the limitations which may also affect the evaluation is the limited availability of data. The available data is not often disaggregated that might hinder assessment, for example, of the gender equality, disability, or equity issues.
* Lack of systematic documentation of the joint programme implementation and key factors that enabled or affected the implementation process could also be a limitation to the evaluation.
* Another limitation that affected the joint programme implementation and hence the evaluation is the lack of institutional memory due to high turnover of key staff in line ministries/agencies and among other key stakeholders.
* Interviewing government counterparts for the evaluation may depend on their availability especially during the period of the pandemic. Likewise, vulnerable groups and beneficiaries, in particular children and women, might not be reachable at the time of evaluation, especially during the pandemic.

The applicants should discuss the above or other potential limitations in their proposal and propose a methodology mitigating these limitations.

**VIII. Work plan of the Evaluation**

The evaluation process will consist of three phases:

* 1. Inception phase including:
* In-depth desk review of available sources so that the evaluator(s) improve their understanding of related programme areas, involved stakeholders, and the country context
* Preliminary discussions with the UN Joint Programme project team and other relevant actors, to facilitate an in-depth common understanding of the conceptual framework;
* More in-depth evaluability assessment
* Refining the evaluation questions and adjusting data collection methods and sample; discussions will be held to choose the most suitable and feasible ways of collecting data from a range of stakeholders and especially from the beneficiaries of the joint programme. Sites to visit will be selected during the inception phase based on criteria developed by the evaluation team in collaborating with UN Joint Programme project team and other key partners.
* Inception report preparation, including: Evaluation Matrix for each finally agreed evaluation questions, data collection and analysis methods, sample (list of stakeholders to be interviewed and locations to be visited), and operational plan.
  1. Data collection phase, including an appropriate mix of data collection methods, as indicated above. At the end of data collection, the evaluators will be required to present the preliminary findings to the Evaluation Reference Group.
  2. Analysis and reporting phase. Following the completion of the fact-finding and analysis phase, a draft evaluation report should be shared with key stakeholders and validated. The validation meeting with key stakeholders from Evaluation Reference Group will be organized to collect the feedback on the evaluation findings and recommendations. Following the review and comments received, the draft report will be finalized. Evaluation results will be disseminated amongst government, donors, civil society, UN agencies and a joint management response will be produced upon completion of the evaluation process. Final evaluation report and joint management response to be made publicly available on the evaluation platform of UNICEF and other PUNOs, as relevant.

An independent external review facility, managed by UNICEF, will review the quality of all main deliverables (ToR, inception report, and evaluation report) throughout the process.

The process will be guided by the following schedule expected to take place in September 2021- February 2022.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timeframe** | **Location** | **Deliverables** |
| **Inception Phase: 17 working days** | | | |
| Introduction discussions on evaluation planning and logistics | 2 working days | Home-based | Inception report |
| Preliminary desk review, evaluability assessment and preparation of the Draft Inception Report including evaluation matrix, data collection and analysis tools and Ethical Review (as required) | 10 working days | Home-based |
| Consolidating comments and finalizing Inception Report | 5 working days | Home-based |  |
| **Data Collection Phase: 17 working days** | | | |
| In-depth desk review to gather secondary quantitative/qualitative data | 5 working days | Home-based |  |
| Primary data is collected from target groups and partners based on the methodology described in the inception report. | 12 working days | Uzbekistan  (or remotely, based on COVID-related travel restrictions) | Presentation of preliminary findings |
| **Analysis and Reporting Phase: 19 working days** | | | |
| Preparation of draft evaluation report | 12 working days | Home-based | Draft report |
| Validation of evaluations findings and recommendations with key stakeholders | 2 working days | Home-based with Team Leader’s visit to Uzbekistan  (if possible, due to COVID related travel restrictions) | Presentation and validation of findings and recommendations with key stakeholders |
| Consolidating comments and preparation of the final report | 5 working days | Home-based | Final report |

**IX Evaluation Management**

UNICEF M&E specialist will act as the evaluation manager and report to the UNICEF Representative who will be in charge of the overall evaluation and ensuring its independence.

The UN Joint Programme project team will support UNICEF M&E specialist and coordinate with key stakeholders at key milestones such as preparation of terms of reference, inception and data collection stage, report validation and discussion of findings and recommendations. It will also ensure operational support as required, including support in organizing primary data collection where needed to complement data available from the existing monitoring systems and other documents.

The Evaluation Reference Group, comprised of key national and international stakeholders including PUNOs and UN RCO, will oversee and advise on the evaluation process starting from the development and validation of the present terms of reference, selection of the evaluator(s), act as liaison between the evaluator(s) and partners/stakeholders involved, validate and ensure quality of the report and contribute to the development of management's response to the evaluation findings and recommendations.

***Required qualifications and areas of expertise***

This will be international institutional consultancy. The international institution will be responsible for engaging international and national team members and division of workload between them.

To this extent, it should be kept in mind that there is no evaluation society in Uzbekistan, and it would be more realistic to expect the national team member(s) to be consultants rather than evaluators.

The international evaluators will be mainly responsible for the overall evaluation including designing evaluation methodology, developing tools, leading the data collection, analysing data, drafting inception and final reports with recommendations.

The national consultant(s) will support the adaptation of the design, the implementation of the data collection phase, and quantitative and qualitative analysis of secondary information, especially when in national language and by bringing in specific expertise and knowledge of the local context and help to facilitate interviews/focus groups, as required.

The evaluation will have to be conducted by a gender-balanced team of international evaluators comprising one international team leader, one international team member and national consultant covering the below requirements:

* All evaluators with Master’s or PhD degree in social sciences or public policy.
* Team-leader with documented extensive experience (at least 8 years) in conducting development evaluations, with a focus on social protection sector;
* Team leader with previous experience of managing the multi-disciplinary teams;
* International team member(s) with documented extensive experience (at least 5 years) in conducting development evaluations, including in social protection sector;
* All team members with solid knowledge of social protection systems and/or social services provision;
* At least one team member with solid knowledge of gender equality issues;
* At least one member with solid knowledge of disability issues, including International Classification of Functioning (ICF) and CRPD;
* All team members with proven extensive experience in quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis;
* All team members with knowledge of UN evaluation policy, norms and standards, including ethical requirements
* All team members with excellent report writing skills in English;
* Good understanding of national/regional evaluation expertise will be preferred (previous work in CEE/CIS region and/or Uzbekistan is an asset);
* Experience conducting evaluations for UN is an asset;
* Experience conducting remote data collection is an asset;
* Fluency in English. Fluency in Russian is an asset.

The proposals will be evaluated against the technical criteria listed below. Proposals passing the minimum technical pass score (49 points – at least 70 per cent of the maximum points obtainable for technical proposal) will continue into the Financial Proposal evaluation. The Financial Proposal will be evaluated for the remaining 30 per cent of overall score.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **CATEGORY** | **SCORE Maximum** |
| **1** | **Agency Profile and Evaluation Record** | **6** |
| 1.1 | Track record of experience in conducting of large complex development evaluations for international organisations, e.g., UN agencies | 6 |
| **2** | **Proposed Methodology and Approach** | **34** |
| 2.1 | Meets UNEG standards | 8 |
| 2.2 | Approaches to data generation and analysis are clearly justified and explained | 8 |
| 2.3 | Approaches to triangulation is clearly justified and explained | 6 |
| 2.4 | The proposed work plan/timeline is in concord with the ToR | 5 |
| 2.5 | The proposed approach to quality assurance is clearly justified and explained | 7 |
| **3** | **Profile of Evaluation Team** | **30** |
| 3.1 | Team members have higher academic/post-graduate degree | 3 |
| 3.2 | Team Leader have more than 8 years of experience in conducting evaluations, including in area of social protection | 4 |
| 3.3 | International Team member(s) have more than 5 years of experience in conducting evaluations, including in area of social protection | 4 |
| 3.4 | Team Leader has solid experience in managing a multi-disciplinary team | 3 |
| 3.5 | Team members have experience in quantitative and/or qualitative data collection and analysis. Experience of online data collection by team/team member is an asset | 4 |
| 3.6 | Evaluation team’s expertise covers the evaluation requirements outlined in the TOR in the following areas: social protection system strengthening, social services provision, disability and gender | 4 |
| 3.7 | Experience working in Uzbekistan or CEE/CIS region is an asset | 2 |
| 3.8 | Experience working with UN is an asset | 2 |
| 3.9 | Fluency in English. Fluency in Russian as an asset. | 4 |
|  | **Total** | **70** |

**X Deliverables, including Structure of the evaluation report**

As described in section on “Work Plan of the evaluation”, the below is a suggested initial timeline:

* October 2021 – Finalizing of Inception report with Annexes;
* November 2021- Data collection and presentation of the preliminary findings;
* December 2021 – Processing of data, analysis and submission of the first draft report;
* January 2022 – Feedback on draft evaluation report and validation meeting;
* February 2022- Submission of final evaluation report and dissemination.

This timeline could be further adjusted considering the time needed for translation, sharing of documents, receiving feedback etc., as necessary.

The inception report (appr. 25-30 pages without annexes) at a minimum should contain the following:

* A concise description of the country context focusing on social protection system and priorities;
* A description programme and stakeholder analysis;
* The approach and methodology, including the data collection methods based on the conducted evaluability assessment;
* Ethical considerations and ways to address them;
* An elaborated evaluation matrix and related data collection tools for various categories of stakeholders including through various ways/platforms available remotely, as required;
* A description of the task distribution between the team leader and team members;
* Proposed outline of the final report.
* Proposed communication and dissemination plan

The evaluation report (appr. 50-60 pages without annexes) should comply with UNICEF Evaluation Report Standards[[4]](#footnote-5). The report should include:

* Executive summary,
* Description of the object of the evaluation (including theory of change and relevant information),
* Purpose of the evaluation, evaluation scope, objectives and criteria
* Description of the evaluation methodology (including evaluability assessment, limitations and ethical issues),
* Findings broken down by evaluation criteria,
* Conclusions and lessons learned,
* Recommendations,
* Annexes, including: Terms of Reference, data collection tools and other relevant information.

The quality of final evaluation report will be assessed by external independent company in the framework of UNICEF Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS).

**XI Procedures and logistics**

It is expected that international evaluators could visit the country for data collection and then a team leader would visit for the validation meeting. The evaluators will be assisted with logistics related to the assignment. During in-country visits, they will be provided with office space, vehicle for site visits and official meetings, translators and support with meetings arrangements. Laptops or computers will not be provided. Visa related expenditures shall be covered by evaluators, however UNICEF, within its means, shall facilitate the process.

In case if it will not be possible to visit the country, for example due to COVID-19 related restrictions, the international evaluators are expected to work remotely through the virtual meetings with support from the national consultant(s). UNICEF and UN Joint Programme project team will extend its support to the evaluation team by providing translators and helping with online meetings arrangements.

It is required that in the technical and financial proposals, the consultancy shall clearly account for such contingency and to provide plans and expenditures for two options mentioned above: A) with data collection visit in-country and B) with remote data collection. While the technical and financial proposals considered for the in-country visit will be the primary option to consider for the consultancy selection, at the inception phase the feasibility of the in-country visit will be once more reviewed based on the epidemiological and political situation at the time. If needed, the contract could be amended to reflect the changes in line with the proposed as option B plan for remote data collection.

**XII Payment schedule**

Payments shall be made as follows:

* 30 per cent will be paid upon submission of Inception Report;
* 30 per cent will be paid upon presentation of Draft Report;
* 40 per cent will be paid upon submission of Final Report;

**Please note in compliance with national laws, no cash will be paid in the country**

**XIII Resource requirements**

The rate per day of professional fees will be in accordance with the complexity of the TOR and the level of the expertise required. Tentative budget for internal planning purposes estimated based on a team of 3 evaluators (1 international team leader, 1 international team member and 1 national consultant). The final budget will be determined following the review of the submitted proposals and based on “the best value for money” principle.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Cost category** | **Cost description** | **Total, USD** |
| **Professional Fees** | | |
| Fee Team Leader – P4 | $ 650 x 53 days | $ 34,450 |
| Fee Team Member – P3 | $ 550 x 53 days | $ 29,150 |
| National consultant (NO-B) | $ 3,000 | $ 3,000 |
| **Sub-total** | | **$66,600** |
| **Travel related expenses** | | |
| Travel (ticket) | Round tickets (by air) $1000 x 2 persons –Fieldwork  Round ticket (by air) $1000 x 1 person- Validation | $ 3,000 |
| Travel (DSA) | $137 x 17 nights x 2 person – Fieldwork  $137 x 2 nights x 1 person - Validation | $ 4,932 |
| Terminal expenses | $188 x 2 persons – Fieldwork  $188 x 1 person - Validation | $ 564 |
| **Sub-total** | | **$8,496** |
| **Translation related expenses** | | |
| Translation services  (by UNICEF) | Desk Review, Written:  $12 x 50 pages = $600  Data Collection & Validation, Synchronous:  $260 x 2 translators x 12 days = $6,240  Evaluation Reports & Presentation, Written:  $12 x 50 pages = $600 – Inception  $12 x 100 pages =$1,200 – Final Report  $12 x 10 pages = $120 – Presentation/Handouts |  |
| **Sub-total** | | **$8,760** |
| **TOTAL** | | **$83,856** |

**XIV Annexes**

Annex A – UN SP Joint Programme ToC

Annex B - Guiding questions on Persons with Disabilities

**XV Remarks and reservations**

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if deliverable(s) incomplete, not finalized or for failure to meet deadlines. UNICEF reserves the right to request replacement of evaluation team member(s), if his/her performance is not satisfactory or profile of the candidate(s) does not meet the requirements of the assignment. UNICEF will reserve copy right of all developed materials and own primary data collected through this assignment. The materials cannot be published or disseminated without prior written permission of UNICEF. UNICEF will be free to adapt and modify them in the future. The contractor must respect the confidentiality of the information handled during the assignment. Documents and information provided must be used only for the tasks related to these terms of reference.

**Institutions interested in the consultancy should submit a proposal with approximate methodological proposal, estimated cost, timeline, and resume of the evaluators who will take part in evaluation process. The proposed evaluators cannot be replaced without prior written agreement from UNICEF.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Prepared by: | Reviewed by: | Reviewed by: | Approved by: |
| *Signature* |  |  |  |  |
| *Name* | Zokir Nazarov | Tinatin Baum | Zhanar Sagimbayeva | Munir Mammadzade |
| *Title* | CRM Specialist | Chief of Social Policy | M&E Specialist | Representative |
| *Date* |  |  |  |  |

**Annex A – UN SP Joint Programme ToC**

**Summary**

**IF** a national social protection strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda is developed jointly with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries and is costed and financed **and, IF** an integrated social protection entity is designed and capacitated, with appropriate administrative systems and sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection for every citizen of Uzbekistan, including all children, **and IF** the ICF and CRPD-compliant schemes and procedures of disability assessment and social service delivery are piloted, providing evidence base for further development of inclusive social protection system,

**THEN** the Government will have an integrated and sustainable social protection system and the capacity in place to improve social protection coverage for all vulnerable categories of the population in Uzbekistan **and THEN** all citizens will be able to access adequate protection across the lifecycle while vulnerable people, and especially persons with disabilities and children, will be effectively protected from the potential risks and shocks resulting from economic reforms and will have greater opportunities to benefit from economic growth, leading to acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.

***Detailed explanation: Theory of Change narrative***

Our theory of change (ToC) links together the three main outputs from the Joint Programme. These three main building blocks to our theory of change for the Joint Programme, which will be taken forward simultaneously.

The first component of our theory of change is focused on building a social protection entity that provides leadership and direction to the social protection sector while also significantly enhancing the capacity of the Government to deliver its social protection schemes. Only if there is leadership of the sector and greater capacity to deliver schemes will it be possible for a new policy direction to be agreed and implemented. Further, it will be important to establish an institution that is able to provide leadership as a new social work system is developed throughout the 2020s. Without this leadership, the likelihood of a National Social Protection Strategy being taken forward is significantly reduced. And, if the social protection system is to ensure the equitable inclusion of girls and women into the sector, alongside programme designs that empower women and girls rather than undermine them, it will also be necessary to incorporate gender sensitivity in our training of those staffing the new institution.

However, building an institution that provides leadership to the social protection sector is insufficient. There also is a need for the Government to develop a long-term vision for the sector that underpins the creation of a rights-based, inclusive, lifecycle social protection system, which is the second component of our ToC. Therefore, we believe that, to achieve our objective, we will have to support the Government in developing a progressive National Social Protection Strategy that will guide the evolution of the sector up to 2030. And, if no-one is to be left behind, we believe that it will be critically important to ensure that the strategy focuses on the empowerment of women, children, people with disabilities and other potentially vulnerable categories of the population.

Further, to provide models for the implementation of key principles with the National Strategy, our ToC also proposes that we should work alongside Government in developing and implementing practical solutions that can be expanded from 2022 onwards. Therefore, we believe that if we can demonstrate more efficient operational delivery of the child benefit system, pilot specific high impact and integrated interventions for people with disability – with a particular focus on women – and build a more effective disability assessment mechanism, then we will build trust within Government which will make it more likely that our proposals on the new entity and the national social protection strategy will be accepted.

If all three of these interventions are taken forward, then we believe that the Government will establish, between 2022 and 2030, an integrated and sustainable social protection system with capacity in place to improve social protection coverage and quality for all citizens who experience vulnerability, while enhancing gender equity and women’s empowerment.

As a result, vulnerable people, and especially children, women, and persons with disabilities, will be effectively protected from the potential risks and shocks brought by economic reforms and will have more opportunities to enter the labour market and benefit from economic growth, leading to an acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.

We believe that our proposed theory of change addresses the structural root causes of the currently fragmented and ineffective social protection system in Uzbekistan, in particular with regard to the integration of people experiencing vulnerabilities, including girls, women and people with disabilities. Specifically, developing a National Social Protection Strategy and building an integrated and efficient institutional mechanism to implement the Strategy is the foundational change that needs to happen to achieve social protection for all and ensure that no-one is left behind. In the short-term, the child benefit system will be expanded and delivered more effectively and efficiently. An integrated services pilot for people with disabilities will provide a model for the Government to learn from and later scale up, with particularly catalytic effects on the well-being of people with disabilities, in particular women. Alternatively, if the proposed programme is not implemented, the social protection system is likely to be further fragmented and reduced to a social safety net that offers no more than basic, highly targeted social safety net.

**Assumptions**

The following critical assumptions were identified for the TOC to become a reality. These assumptions will require sustained advocacy efforts by the UN and partners. They will also be systemically monitored and reported on. Key assumptions are:

* The Government establishes the Social Protection Leadership, Coordination and Delivery mechanism, once conceptually designed;
* The Government agrees to proposals to expand the child benefit system by reallocating funds, accompanied by improvements to its delivery system;
* The Government adopts the Social Protection strategy, once drafted
* The political will to protect vulnerable citizens is sustained;
* The Government ratifies UNCRPD and adopts new laws on disability;
* The Government and civil society partners take the piloted programme for people with disabilities to scale;
* IFIs provisions for social protection reform and their economic reform advice as well as Government’s interpretations of this advice supports design of transformative social protection system.

**Expected results and impact**

***Impact and outcome:***

The expected **impact** of the Joint Programme is: *Vulnerable groups, and especially children, women, NEET youth, unemployed, and PWDs, are effectively protected from potential risks and vulnerabilities and benefit from more equitable access to resources, leading to acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.*

The expected **outcome** of the Joint Programme is**:** *By 2022, the Government has an integrated and sustainable social protection system and initial capacity in place to improve social protection coverage for all citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, across Uzbekistan.*

**Outputs**

***Output 1:***

**By 2022, an integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems and operations with sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection to every citizen of Uzbekistan is designed.**

*Led by: Deputy Prime-Minister for Social Development and UNICEF in partnership with other PUNOs and national stakeholders*

*Indicators:*

* Institutional and costed design of an integrated social protection entity/mechanism exists and is submitted to the Government for endorsement (2019 Baseline – No; 2021 Target - Yes)
* Integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems with sufficient capacity is developed and ready for implementation (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target - Yes)

*Strategic Interventions:*

1. By 2021, Government is equipped with a costed institutional design concept for the integrated social protection system *[Assumption: Government adopts the concept of the integrated social protection system in line with the rights-based approach and commits sufficient resources]*
2. By 2022, Government has developed functions, standard operating procedures and protocols *[Assumption: Government is committed to develop the integrated social protection system]*
3. By 2022, Government has an action plan to operationalize the integrated social protection entity/mechanism *[Assumption: Government is committed to implement the action plan]*
4. By 2022, the Government has a capacity-building plan to operate the integrated social protection system in line with a rights-based approach, including training of trainers *[Assumption: The integrated social protection entity/mechanism is sufficiently resourced]*
5. By 2022, The Government has a model of integrated approaches in social protection on the basis of reforms in child benefits and social services
6. By 2022, the Government is equipped with a management information system (MIS) for two flagship programmes and capable of expanding in line with the strategic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for social protection *[Assumption: Government has the capacity to use the MIS]*

**Output 2:**

**By 2022, a National Social Protection Strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda is developed and costed jointly with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries.**

*Led by: Deputy Prime-Minister for Social Development and ILO in partnership with other PUNOs and national stakeholders*

*Indicators:*

* Existence of the Social Protection Strategy submitted to the Government for endorsement (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target – Yes)

*Strategic Interventions:*

1. By end of 2020, consultations on a National Social Protection Strategy – led by Government – have been held with social partners, citizens’ groups and representatives, through an engagement mechanism that has been designed by mid-2020 and which is built on existing mechanisms.
2. By mid-2021, Government discusses proposals and options for a progressive and inclusive National Social Protection Strategy designed through a multi-stakeholder participatory process including the National Tripartite Commission *[Assumption: Government is committed to design the national social protection strategy]*
3. By end of 2020, Government and social partners have the capacity to design a social protection system in line with international social security standards *[Assumption: Government and social partners are committed to uphold to rights-based social security standards and engage in capacity development]*
4. By 2022, Government has a costed and progressive national social protection strategy that ensures no-one is left behind *[Assumption: Government is committed to lead the process]*
5. By 2022, Government is equipped with the knowledge of the fiscal space for progressive social protection and the means to achieve that fiscal space *[Assumption: Government is open to transparently discuss public finance]*

**Output 3:**

**By 2022, the Government of Uzbekistan has tested the disability assessment procedures and service delivery design based on ICF and CRPD norms and has taken on board relevant policy recommendations.**

*Led by: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations and UNDP in partnership with DPOs and other national stakeholders*

The main problem of the current disability assessment is the medical approach which does not fully provide an opportunity to employ the human-rights based approach while supporting people with disabilities. Therefore, the output will select one district (potentially in Tashkent city or Gulistan district of the Syrdarya region) to develop and pilot ICF and CRPD compliant disability assessment and social services aimed at providing equal opportunities and improving economic self-sustainability capacities of people with disabilities. The results of the pilot will be used to identify the benefits and risks of ICF introduction and cost its national rollout. All this will contribute to development of the upstream and downstream policy advice on introduction and fully-fledged implementation of the ICF and CRPD compliant disability assessment and social services in Uzbekistan. About 200 first registered persons with disability will be directly benefiting from the pilot interventions. And if the pilot is subsequently scaled up countrywide, the system will have an impact on the entire population of people with disabilities.

*Indicators:*

* Existence of lessons learned on results of pilot initiatives on ICF and options for scale up shared with the government for endorsement (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target – Yes)
* Proposal for building an adult social services system developed in line with CRPD requirements and presented to Government (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target – Yes)
* An improved disability assessment mechanism is piloted, probably based on the ICF and compliant with the UN CRPD, and which also reduces barriers to access (2019 Baseline – a poor quality medical model; 2022 –ICF and UN CRPD compliant mechanism is piloted)
* Number of DPOs, which strengthened their capacities on CRPD and ICF and participated in the design and implementation of the pilot initiatives (2019 Baseline – 0; 2022 Target – 10)
* Strategy on social protection includes measures on improvement of Knowledge, Attitude and Practices towards people with disabilities in accordance to the CRPD norms (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target - Yes).

*Strategic Interventions:*

1. By 2021, the ICF and CRPD compliant procedures of disability assessment are piloted to identify the impact and implications expected from ICF introduction and CRPD implementation at the local level. *[Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives]*
2. By 2021, the CRPD compliant social services for people with disabilities focused on inclusion into economic activities are piloted to demonstrate opportunities for quality and accessibility improvements at affordable costs for state budget. *[Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives]*
3. By 2021, Government has an extended capacity to revise legislation to align it with CRPD and to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of the current state policies and programmes on social protection of PWDs via collecting disability related statistics in line with international standards and SDGs priorities / targets / indicators. *[Assumption: The Government is considering the need to align the national legislation with the international human rights standards]*
4. By the end of 2021, pilot initiatives are designed and launched to deliver social services and benefits, using innovative user-led and citizen-centered forms and methods that are compliant with the CRPD jointly with DPOs, experts, stakeholders and beneficiaries *[Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives].*
5. By the end of 2022, a CRPD compliant disability assessment mechanism has been revised and designed in collaboration with government, based on the ICF piloting results *[Assumption: Government is willing to move away from a purely medical model of assessment]*
6. By 2022, lessons learned on pilot initiatives are analyzed, codified and provided to Government through a series of policy papers and consultative workshops to fine-tune policy advice to Government *[Assumption: Government includes the tested pilots into Annual State Programme).*

**What will happen next, after the Joint Programme is finalized**

The Joint Programme will lay the basis for a major reform of the national social protection system, between 2022 and 2030. We will work very closely with Government in the establishment of the social protection entity, modelling integrated social protection for children, the National Social Protection Strategy, the pilot initiatives for persons with disabilities and the disability assessment mechanism. This will include working closely with key decision-makers. We will also take into account their concerns during the process and build their understanding of the value of building a more progressive social protection system. Therefore, we are confident that the Government will be in a position to undertake the reforms that will be proposed in the National Social Protection Strategy.

If the Government implements the reforms, we would expect to see significant changes in the national social protection system, gradually introduced up to 2030. The currently fragmented system of social protection will be transformed into an integrated shock-responsive system that effectively protects all citizens whenever they are vulnerable and in case of defined sets of risks across the entire lifecycle. We would hope for expansions in the child, disability and old age benefit systems, so that increasingly the more vulnerable members of these categories of the population would be included. Further enhancements would be in a more effective maternity and unemployment benefit systems. The current disincentives to work experienced by many people with disabilities and women – due to the design of the social protection system – would be eliminated and greater support put in place to enable women and people with disabilities to engage actively in the labour market. We would also expect that a national social work system would begin to be established, offering support to the most vulnerable members of society.

While in many countries, the expansion of social protection would require a major increase in budgets, we do not believe that this will be the case. Given that 9.7% of GDP is currently invested in social protection, prudent reforms and increases in efficiency will ensure that expansions in some programmes are possible while ensuring adequate benefits, in line with entitlements, for current recipients. However, we will support the Government in finding additional fiscal space if required, including through a more progressive tax system. Indeed, as the social protection system expands and citizens see that the Government is using their taxes wisely, we would expect to see a strengthening of the tax system and a reduction in tax avoidance. Given the Government’s commitment to support transition from informal work to formal employment, we expect measures leading to gradual expansion of social insurance contributions which in turn would contribute to social protection budget.

The end of the Joint Programme will not mark the end of the UN’s support to the Government as it seeks to strengthen the national social protection system. Each of the institutions involved in the Joint Programme will continue their engagement, recognizing that it will be important for continuing collaboration to enable the Government to keep the reforms on track.

**Expected progress on the indicated SDG targets**

We would expect progress across all of the indicated SDG targets beyond 2022:

* **Goal 1, Target 1.3:** As the social protection system expands, we would expect to see a reduction in national poverty, in particular as more families and individuals living in poverty are included within the system.
* **Goal 5, Target 5c:** The principle of gender equality will be firmly embedded within national social protection policy and more girls and women will be socially and economically empowered.
* **Goal 10, Targets 10.2-4:** The expansion of the national social protection system on an inclusive basis – linked to more progressive taxation – will reduce inequality and, by moving to more effective delivery systems for social transfers, there will be a significant reduction in discrimination within social protection.
* **Goal 16, Target 16.7:** We would expect a more cohesive society that opens the opportunity for greater democracy, while the threat of radicalization is reduced; due to greater income security in families, we would expect a fall in domestic violence.

**Annex B. Guiding questions on persons with disabilities**

* To what extent did the program target persons with disabilities?
  + Not specifically targeted
  + One of the groups of direct beneficiaries targeted
  + Main target group for the program
* To what extent did the design and implementation of activities of the joint program supported include disability-related accessibility and non-discrimination requirement?
  + No requirements
  + General reference
  + Specific requirements
* To what extent have persons with disabilities, in particular children and women with disabilities, been consulted through their representative organizations?
  + Not invited
  + Invited
  + Specific outreach
* To what extent did support to data collection and analysis, registries, and information system feature disability?
  + No reference to disability
  + Disability included via Washington group short set or similar but no analysis
  + Disability included via Washington group short set or similar
    - Part of general analysis
    - with specific analysis

1. The DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability were first outlined in 1991 under the OECD, and they are currently under revision. Please refer to OECD 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/102> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://www.unicef.org/supply/files/ATTACHMENT_IV-UNICEF_Procedure_for_Ethical_Standards.PDF> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/UNICEF_Eval_Report_Standards.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)