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1. IDENTIFICATION

Type of contract	Institutional Contract
Title of the Evaluation	Baseline survey evaluation of Social Protection for Gender Equality and Resilience (SP-GEAR) programme and midline survey evaluation of the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (MSCTP)
Purpose	To prepare and conduct data collection activities for a baseline and midline survey, deliver comprehensive datasets, high-quality analysis, and corresponding reports for each survey. This will provide critical evidence to support and strengthen the design and implementation of the MSCTP, particularly in relation to empowering Malawi's poorest and most vulnerable girls and women.
Objectives	<p>UNICEF is seeking to commission two pieces of work under this ToR:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Baseline household survey in three districts for the impact evaluation of the EU Delegation/Embassy of Ireland funded economic inclusion-related programme (SP-GEAR) within the framework of the MSCTP in Malawi. This will provide relevant evidence on the effectiveness of cash plus and shock-sensitive interventions on household resilience, as well as on the potential for scaling-up some of the innovations being introduced. b. Midline household survey in three districts as part of the ongoing 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation of MSCTP. This builds on the MSCTP baseline conducted in 2022, and will provide further evidence of the long-term protective, and resilience effects of the MSCTP.
Anticipated start date	January 2024
Location	Malawi – Lilongwe and selected districts
Duration	85 working days
Anticipated completion date	31 December 2024
WBS	TBC
Grant	TBC
Estimated Budget	\$566,771
Supervisor	Mussarrat Youssuf Chief – REKM Section

Background and justification

Over 20 per cent of the 19.6 million Malawians live in extreme poverty. Poverty and inequality disproportionately affect women and children, narrowing their access to social services and economic

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opportunities. According to national statistics, women head over 75 per cent of the households living in poverty, and the incidence of multidimensional poverty among children is 60.5 per cent¹. Within this context, the Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (MSCTP) has been providing monthly unconditional cash grants to ultra-poor and 'labor-constrained' households since 2006, when the programme was initiated in the pilot district of Mchinji with UNICEF support. The objectives of the programme are (i) reducing poverty and hunger; (ii) improving health and nutrition in vulnerable households; and (iii) increasing school enrolment for children. The MSCTP currently reaches over 300,000 households and over 1.3 million individuals (of which over 610,000 are children). The programme is fully executed by Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) and by District Councils. Funding for the MSCTP is provided by Irish Aid, the German Government (BMZ through KfW), the European Union, the World Bank, and the Government of Malawi, while UNICEF and GIZ provide technical support to the implementation, coordination, evidence generation and system strengthening. In 2018, the MSCTP was scaled-up to all 28 districts across the country, and the Government has begun an exercise to recertify households who have been on the programme for a period of four years or more. Currently, recertification and retargeting of beneficiary households is underway in 15 districts and is expected to be completed in all districts by 2024.

UNICEF and the Government of Malawi, in collaboration with development partners, commissioned a longitudinal impact evaluation of the MSCTP that ran from 2013 to 2016. Findings of the evaluation provided solid evidence that the MSCTP generates a wide range of positive impacts across most social and economic domains at the household and individual levels. The 2016 evaluation influenced the design of the second Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP II). The evaluation also significantly informed the scale up of the MSCTP to a national programme and remains a key reference document on the impact of the programme. The evaluation was however run before the SCTP was extended to all 28 rural districts.

Over the past ten years, Malawi has faced several shocks of different nature, from El Niño-induced drought and cyclones and tropical storms (namely Cyclone Idai, Tropical Storm Ana and Gombe and most recently Cyclone Freddy) to recurrent lean season or food insecurity emergencies and the recent effects of Covid-19. During this period, an average of 1.8 million people (10 per cent of the population) have been deemed acutely food insecure each year, triggering a substantial annual emergency response. Beyond consumption support, the MNSSP II dedicates two pillars to 'Resilient Livelihoods' and 'Shock-Sensitive Social Protection' and identifies pathways for graduation as a key priority.

Further, since the 2013-2016 impact evaluation, the MSCTP has evolved in several ways, including expanded coverage, increased financing, and a higher degree of digital integration in operational management and payment modalities. In addition, the humanitarian and development nexus has been strengthened, with increasing leveraging of the social protection system, such as regular vertical and horizontal expansions of the MSCTP during the lean season, floods recovery cash interventions, and the Covid-19 Urban Cash Intervention (CUCI).

These recent developments necessitated a new impact evaluation to understand the repercussions of certain changes and the sustained enhancement of beneficiaries' livelihoods. Therefore, in 2022,

¹ National Statistical Office (NSO) (2018), Child Poverty Report. The NSO is currently working on updating the child poverty analysis, based on the 2019/20 IHS.

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UNICEF with financial assistance from the European Union via GIZ and the Embassy of Ireland, supported MoGCDSW to design a 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation for MSCTP. This will assess MSCTP's role in safeguarding against unforeseen events, especially climate-related shocks, by monitoring households pre, during, and post-shock. By analysing different beneficiary cohorts, the evaluation will provide insights into MSCTP's influence on impoverished households over time, including long-term post-exit effects. The findings will inform government decisions regarding program design and execution, emphasizing resilience and effective graduation outcomes.

To-date, the MSCTP 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation has completed the baseline. Data was collected in three districts – Balaka, Dedza and Nkhatabay – in April/May 2022. The findings from the baseline report are being used to enrich policy dialogue on the relevance and economic impact of the MSCTP and inform future design improvements, including targeting reforms, benefit level appropriateness, and linkages to complimentary services.

Despite the adaptations and improvements to MSCTP, the complexity and multidimensionality of poverty and inequality, and how this disproportionality affects women and girls, requires a multidimensional and holistic approach that addresses the root causes, to empower vulnerable women and girls to graduate from the cycle of ultra-poverty and inequality. For example, there are persisting high rates of child marriage (almost half (46%) of women aged 20-24 married before age 18 in rural areas),² and one in five girls (21 per cent) and one in seven boys (14 per cent) have experienced at least one incident of sexual violence before turning 18.³ To address these issues more effectively, an upcoming EU-Irish funded programme Social Protection for Gender Equality and Resilience (SP-GEAR) will strengthen/introduce 'cash-plus' actions for MSCTP beneficiaries in nine districts, the government and development partners have agreed there is a need to explore the impact of these cash-plus approaches. The programme focuses on women and girls and will work across three pillars to enhance: 1) the efficiency and effectiveness of the Malawi National Social Protection Strategy (MNSPS); 2) the resilience and livelihoods of women and girls from vulnerable households through economic empowerment activities; 3) access to social services by women and girls from vulnerable households.

Therefore, this ToR ensures a new baseline is conducted for SP-GEAR with a representative sample in three additional districts. The three new districts are purposively selected to ensure they cover a control and treatment group who are receiving cash-plus complementary services, and/or shock-sensitive social protection interventions.

To increase efficiency and value for money, funding for this ToR also contributes to ensuring the first midline of the MSCTP 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation is conducted. This will be a separate and parallel process to the above-mentioned baseline.

Scope of work

1) Goal and objective of the evaluation

The overall goal is to prepare and conduct data collection activities for a baseline and midline survey, deliver comprehensive datasets, high-quality analysis, and corresponding reports for each survey. This will provide critical evidence to support and strengthen the design and implementation of the MSCTP,

²<https://www.unicef.org/malawi/media/6296/file/Malawi%20Multiple%20Indicator%20Cluster%20Survey%20Report.pdf>

³ Violence Against Children Survey (2015): <https://files.mutualcdn.com/tfg/assets/files/Malawi-VACS-report.pdf>

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particularly in relation to empowering Malawi's poorest and most vulnerable girls and women. It will also provide evidence for the impact of the SP-GEAR programme for empowering vulnerable women and girls to graduate from the cycle of ultra-poverty and inequality.

The **objectives** of this assessment through this consultancy are:

- To assess, to the best possible extent, relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the Programme, with a particular focus on equity/inclusion, gender equality, as well as UNICEF's strategic positioning in relation to its child rights mandate.
- To identify and document key lessons learned, good practices and positive effects in the implementation of the Programme, which will be used to inform and support advocacy efforts for future investment and scale-up of the Programme.
- To provide a set of forward-looking and actionable recommendations to strengthen programmatic strategies and activities in the continuation of the Programme, taking into consideration national development priorities relating to social protection, such as the new National Social Protection Policy (NSPP), Malawi National Social Protection Strategy (MNSPS) (2023-28), Malawi Short-term Implementation Programme (MIP-1) operationalizing the Vision 2063 for the first 10 years (2021-31), and National Resilience Strategy 2018-2030.

Specifically, UNICEF is seeking to commission two pieces of work under this ToR:

- c. **Baseline** household survey in three districts (proposed - Mulanje, Mwanza, and Phalombe⁴) for the impact evaluation of the EU/Embassy of Ireland funded economic inclusion-related programme (SP-GEAR) within the framework of the MSCTP. This will provide relevant evidence on the effectiveness of cash plus and shock-sensitive interventions on household resilience, as well as on the potential for scaling-up some of the innovations being introduced. The initial data collection will be complemented by an endline survey in 2026. The endline survey is not part of this ToR.
- d. **Midline** household survey in three districts (Balaka, Dedza and Nkhatabay) as part of the ongoing 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation of MSCTP. This builds on the MSCTP baseline conducted in 2022, and will provide further evidence of the long-term protective, and resilience effects of the MSCTP. Successive midline surveys are planned in 2026, 2028 and 2030, with an endline survey in 2032. These midlines and endline surveys are not part of this ToR.

2) About MSCTP and SP-GEAR

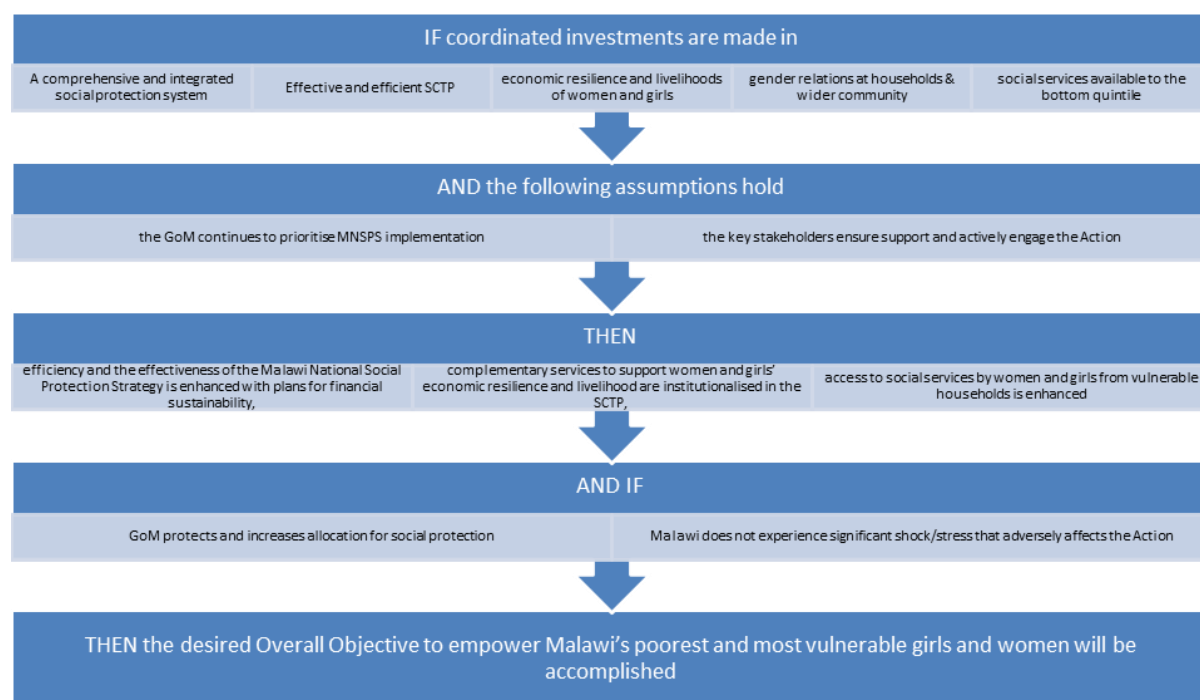
The MSCTP has been providing monthly unconditional cash grants to ultra-poor and 'labor-constrained' households since 2006. The objectives of the programme are (i) reducing poverty and hunger; (ii) improving health and nutrition in vulnerable households; and (iii) increasing school enrolment for children. The SCTP currently reaches approximately 300,000 households and over 1.3 million individuals (of which over 600,000 are children). Within this framework, SP-GEAR will be implemented in 9-districts, and will focus on the objective of empowering Malawi's poorest and most vulnerable girls and women, through the following specific objectives: 1) Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Malawi National Social Protection Strategy (MNSPS); 2) enhancing the resilience

⁴ The proposed districts are Mwanza, Phalombe and Chikwawa based on type of interventions to be evaluated and donor national representation.

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and livelihoods of women and girls from vulnerable households through economic empowerment activities; and 3) enhancing access to social services by women and girls from vulnerable households.

SP-GEAR Intervention Logic



CGP's stakeholders

SP-GEAR is implemented within the MSCTP, which is a government programme. The programme is fully executed by MoGCDWS of Malawi and by the District Councils, and in World Bank-funded districts, the National Local Government Finance Committee (NLGFC), with policy coordination and oversight from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. Technical assistance and financing is provided by various development partners (including UNICEF, World Bank, EU, Embassy of Ireland and KfW etc.).

As part of this assignment, the evaluation is commissioned by UNICEF Malawi, under the supervision of the Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Management (REKM) Section, in close collaboration with the Social Policy section, on behalf of the MoGCDWS, with funding from the EU, Embassy of Ireland and KfW. The evaluators will report to UNICEF directly, but the MoGCDWS will play a key role in reviewing and providing feedback on all major deliverables.

3) Evaluation scope

Evaluation criteria and research questions

The evaluation will seek to answer the below questions for both the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline (referred to collectively as the 'Programme'. This are indicative and not exhaustive.

Evaluation criteria	Key evaluation questions
Relevance	Is the intervention doing the right things? The extent to which the Programme objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and

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	<p>partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Programme appropriate in the current context, to meet the needs of the beneficiaries and the priorities of the government of Malawi? • Are the Programme’s current implementation modalities (e.g. targeting, enrolment process, case management, payments, cash amount and grievances) appropriate to deliver and achieve its targets and objectives? • Are the interventions and outputs of the Programme consistent with the intended outcomes/impact of the Programme? Are the Programme’s objectives still valid?
Coherence	<p>How well does the Programme fit? The compatibility of the Programme with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the Programme been complementary with other interventions carried out by the Government? If yes, how and to what extent has the Programme been aligned to their strategy and priorities on social assistance and protection? • How has the Programme been complementary and aligned with interventions by other external actors’ (e.g. CSO, NGOs, etc.) in the same context? • How has the Programme added value while avoiding duplication with other similar interventions in the country? • What are some potential linkages to other social services or interventions that would improve the resilience and graduation potential of households?
Effectiveness	<p>Is the Programme achieving its objectives? The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the level of transfers and payment timeliness, regularity and predictability or lack thereof affected the effectiveness of the Programme and its impacts. • What are the potential key enabling factors of Programme administration and most common characteristics of the households that have successfully built their resilience and graduated from ultra-poverty? Is there a causal relation between the duration of Programme support and the beneficiaries’ poverty status? • How does the Programme perform in terms of administrative delivery (i.e. targeting performance, case management and GRM mechanisms), overall achievement of intended objectives, and ability to support households to become more resilient and sustainably exit from extreme poverty? • Does the Programme address the strategic and practical needs of women and girls? • Does the Programme facilitate division of labour that challenges gender stereotypes? • Is the programme inclusive of people with disabilities?
Efficiency	<p>How well are resources being used? The extent to which the Programme delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.</p>

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	<p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on other similar programmes/interventions in the country or in the region, to what extent are the Programme interventions cost-effective? What areas can be made more cost-effective and how? • Are Programme interventions or processes time efficient? What processes can be more time efficient and how?
Sustainability	<p>Will the Programme benefits last? The extent to which the net benefits of the Programme continue, or are likely to continue.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the Government be able to maintain the Programme operations and functions after the end of the funding support? • What key Programme interventions can enable beneficiaries to improve levels of education, health and nutrition of their children on a long-term basis? • Given the current context and upcoming potential shocks, how shock-responsive is the current Programme? And how can the Programme be adapted to become more shock-responsive and flexible as a social assistance programme?
Impact	<p>What difference does the intervention make? The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.</p> <p><u>Indicative sub-questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the welfare impacts of the Programme for the household and its members (e.g. poverty levels, household and caretaker stress, food and nutrition security (including anthropometric measures), asset accumulation and shelter, health status of adults and children, education outcomes), both while on the Programme and after being removed from the Programme? • What are the socio-economic impacts of the Programme on beneficiary households and their communities? How do people identified as ineligible benefit indirectly from transfers and how does this contribute to overall Programme effectiveness? • What is the impact of the Programme and its complementary interventions including cash plus interventions on the resilience of households against shocks (covariate and idiosyncratic)? • Do households that have exited remain out of extreme poverty after leaving the Programme? Did they have a resilience-base that allowed them to withstand shocks or did they have to resort to negative coping mechanisms? What links did households have to other interventions related to livelihoods that assisted graduation? • Does the Programme guarantee improved status and position of women in society? • Does the Programme lead to better access and control of vital resources for women?

Additional detailed evaluation questions will be provided during the inception phase of the consultancy.

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Note that most of these evaluation questions can only be answered with follow-up data from future mid-line and end-line surveys. UNICEF expects applying firms to provide a list of the answers they plan to answer and how.

The main topics covered in the quantitative household survey for the MSCTP baseline are listed in Table 1, and are motivated by the key evaluation questions listed above. The key measure of well-being or living standards is consumption, hence a full consumption module similar to that implemented in the Malawi Integrated Household Survey is included. This is key to understanding overall well-being as well as how the cash is spent by households. An extensive set of modules captures economic activity (including time-use) in order to understand the determinants of graduation, a module on subjective well-being complements the monetary well-being measure, a module on SCTP operations will help us understand the functioning of the programme as perceived by beneficiaries, and modules on schooling, nutrition and health will measure children's outcomes.

Table 1: Survey questionnaire topics

- Roster and Orphan Status Education — 3+ years Health — All
- Disability
- Child Health and Diet— 0-5 years
- Women's empowerment and gender equity
- Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) /Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- Access to Educational and Health Services Fertility— women ages 12-49
- Time-Use (chores, agriculture, other)— ages 6+ Labor (wage/ ganyu)— ages 10+
- Household Enterprises Transfers Received and Made Other Income
- Credit and Loans Subjective Well-Being
- Stress Scale, Resilience Scale Food Security
- Social Safety Net Receipt
- Shocks and Coping Strategies Covid-19 effects
- Expenditure (IHS expenditure module) Land-Use
- Crop Production and Sales Agriculture and Livestock Hired Labor
- Housing Conditions and Household Assets Mortality and Changes in Household Membership
- SCTP Operations

Primary intended users and intended uses

This evaluation is meant to support primarily the MoGCDSW to ensure accountability and learning for the ongoing and future implementation of the MSCTP being led by the Ministry. However, it is anticipated the evaluation will be used by the Ministry of Finance and Economic and Affairs (MoFEA) - Poverty Reduction and Social Protection, to inform SP policy and programme decisions. This evaluation is also aimed at supporting the Social Policy team within the Malawi Country Office of UNICEF, who are expected to use the results to continue its support to government counterparts to strengthen and adapt MSCTP's key activities to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate to the current context, and for scale-up. The evaluation will also be useful for Development Partners, both for decision-making, accountability, and learning purposes, while supporting their efforts to strengthen the MSCTP, and secure future investment in the broader sphere of social protection. In addition, UNICEF evaluation specialists and social protection specialists, will have great use of this evaluation as findings will contribute to the global evidence on social protection and assistance and to UNICEF's evidence base in this thematic area. Finally, the evaluation will add to existing knowledge

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on social protection broadly, and be a source of additional evidence to aid policy debates. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in the social protection sector will have access to the evaluation data and trends and use these in their work to influence policy and practice.

Table 2: Summary of evaluation users and usage

Primary users	Evaluation use
MoGCDSW / MoFEA – PRSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform programming • Ensure accountability and learning • Inform government’s work around social protection practices and social assistance policy • Share learning and recommendations with target communities/beneficiaries and ensure meaningful accountability
UNICEF Malawi Social Policy and Evaluation teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform programming • Inform and support advocacy work • Inform other social protection programmes or similar work in Malawi • Ensure accountability and learning internally and with partners • Share learning and recommendations with target communities/beneficiaries and ensure meaningful accountability • Use findings to contribute to the UNICEF’s evidence base in social protection and assistance • Drive Malawi Country Office’s evaluation agenda and build Malawi Country Office’s evidence base
UNICEF ESARO Social Policy team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use findings to contribute to the global evidence on social protection and assistance • Inform other similar programmes in the region
Development Partners: European Union Delegation / Embassy of Ireland / KfW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform programming • Inform and support advocacy work • Inform other social protection programmes or similar work in Malawi • Demonstrate accountability and learning • Improve current and future funding in social protection sector
Researchers, practitioners and policymakers in social protection sector (general)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to available data for further research • Access to findings to inform similar programmes in the country or region • Access to findings to inform policymaking in the region

Evaluation approach and methodology

Evaluation design: It is expected that the study will be based on a mixed-method longitudinal evaluation design that is gender-sensitive and socially inclusive, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods. In line with UNICEF’s data quality standards, all data collected and analysed will be disaggregated by gender, age, locations and where possible, by vulnerable groups (including disability). The consulting firm is expected to utilize electronic data collection for this work. While the

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evaluation will be independent, it will be designed and implemented in collaboration with the Government and overseen by a multi-stakeholder Evaluation Technical Reference Group (TRG).

Building on the agreed design for the ongoing 10-year longitudinal impact evaluation of MSCTP, the MSCTP baseline (2022) tools will be adapted to include cash plus and shock responsive questions, which can be administered for both the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline. As per the MSCTP baseline, a stratified multi-stage sampling selection strategy will be employed for both surveys. A district will constitute a strata, and data will be collected from a representative sample in 3 districts for the SP-GEAR baseline, and 3 districts for the midline survey. The multistage sampling entails first sampling village clusters (VCs) (stage one) and then within the sampled VCs, sampling households from the below four groups (stage two). For both surveys, consideration and mitigation of potential spill-over (e.g., resource sharing between transfer recipients and non-recipients, cash plus activities etc.). For SP-GEAR this may require reassessment of the above-mentioned sampling approach.

The four groups are:

- 1) New beneficiaries – households identified as eligible for MSCTP but who have not received cash transfers in the past.
- 2) Exiting beneficiaries – households who have been receiving MSCTP for at least 4 years and, due to socio-economic or demographic changes are no longer eligible for the programme.
- 3) Continuing beneficiaries – households who have received MSCTP for at least 4 years and identified as still eligible for the programme.
- 4) Control households - households who have never received MSCTP but are similar in key demographics and other variables to beneficiary households.

The sample frame will be based on the household-level dataset provided by the MSCTP with information about each household's eligibility/recertification status and whether it is a current MSCTP beneficiary.

In alignment with the MSCTP baseline, the SP-GEAR baseline survey is expected to be administered to approximately 3,400 households identified randomly in VCs across the districts of Mulanje, Mwanza and Phalombe. The SP-GEAR baseline survey will be conducted in the last quarter of 2023, immediately after the retargeting exercise is completed, and households have been enrolled, retained, or exited from MSCTP. The retargeting process is ongoing, and UNICEF will follow-up with government counterparts to obtain clear timelines.

The MSCTP midline will follow the same process as the MSCTP baseline – covering approximately 3,418 households identified randomly in 64 VCs across the same districts of Balaka, Dedza and Nkhatabay. The midline survey will be conducted in April/May of 2024 to match the same timeframe as the 2022 baseline.

The below tables provide indicative sample sizes, but during the inception phase, the evaluators will be expected to review the sampling frame and use it to confirm the powered sample size for the quantitative data collection and analysis. This will need to factor-in potential attrition between this round and future rounds of surveys.

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Indicative sample sizes:

BASELINE (SP-GEAR)				
Timeline	Districts	TAs	Clusters	Number of households
<i>Data collection in late December 2023 or January 2024 – pending contracting and retargeting timelines</i>	Phalombe	TBD	TBD	1,310
	Mwanza	TBD	TBD	600
	Mulanje ⁵	TBD	TBD	1,490
	TOTAL			3,400⁶

MIDLINE (MSCTP)				
Timeline	Districts	TAs	Clusters	Number of households
<i>Data collection in April/May 2024 to align with the MSCTP baseline (2022)</i>	Balaka	4	19	1,239
	Dedza	3	32	1,402
	Nkhatabay	7	13	777
	TOTAL	14	64	3,418

Data collection tools: All the beneficiaries will be administered a quantitative survey that will be supplemented with qualitative survey targeted at a smaller segment of the sample population. The existing survey tools used for the MSCTP 10-year Longitudinal Impact Evaluation Baseline will be provided.

The **qualitative component** will encompass In-Depth-Interviews (IDIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with beneficiary households, and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with Programme/implementing stakeholders to gather feedback on operations dynamics. The purpose of the qualitative component is to provide richer details on beneficiary and implementer experiences/perceptions of the Programme.

Quality of work: The quality of all work undertaken as part of this assignment will be assessed against UNICEF’s Evaluation Quality Standard. UNICEF’s REKM Section will be monitoring the quality of each deliverable and ensure that all key deliverables achieve the required quality per UNICEF standards. UNICEF will encourage the Evaluation Team to refer to UNICEF/UNEG standards in their development of the Inception Report and the Draft and Final Evaluation Report.

Potential risks and challenges

The main foreseen risk and challenge that may arise while conducting this impact evaluation is the window to collect data. The data must be collected after the retargeting exercise, but prior to cash transfers being provided to households. There have been delays with the retargeting process, but the current estimation is that retargeting will be finalised in one of the districts at the end of December. To mitigate this risk, UNICEF will closely engage with government counterparts to better understand the timeframe, however, the recruited firm will also need to be able to adapt the existing MSCTP survey with cash-plus and shock responsive elements and mobilise enumerators rapidly after the contracting is finalised. UNICEF will also assess other potential districts that could replace the districts mentioned in the TOR if the window for data collection is deemed too narrow.

⁵ Mulanje is replacing a previously selected district due to retargeting timelines.

⁶ The exact number of TAs, clusters, and households will need to be assessed during inception.

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Evaluation ethics

Evaluators must clearly identify any potential ethical issues and approaches, as well as the processes for ethical review and oversight of the evaluation process in their proposal. It is required that the evaluation will follow the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards (available online) and UNICEF's standards for ethical data collection. The REKM Section will share these with the selected evaluation team at the outset of the evaluation. The principle of 'do no harm' should be at the forefront of all ethical planning and application.

Evaluators will be required to develop an ethical approach to ensure complete compliance with international good practice relating to research ethics and protocols, particularly with regards to safeguarding children and vulnerable groups. The ethics plan should recognise the power dynamic between evaluators, clients, and programme stakeholders, and address this imbalance for the evaluation process, as well as ethical safeguards for participants of the evaluation (including fair representation, respect for dignity and diversity, confidentiality, avoidance of harm, etc.). In addition, the evaluators will have to apply for ethics clearance and approval from the Government of Malawi before data collection can start.

Considerations should be given to:

- Administrative, technical and physical safeguards to protect the confidentiality of those participating in the research
- Obtain informed consent for voluntary participation of beneficiaries and stakeholders in the evaluation, as well as ensuring data protection protocols are implemented and met.
- Safeguards for those conducting research
- Do No Harm safeguards for people participating in research, including physical safeguards as well as emotional/psychosocial safeguards
- Parental or caregiver consent concerning data collection
- Appropriate spaces and methodologies tailored in consideration of unique needs of vulnerable adults, including those with disabilities
- Appropriate language and communication

4) Specific tasks/activities under this assignment

Once hired, the evaluation team is expected to carry out the following activities for both the SP-GEAR baseline and the MSCTP midline surveys, analysis and reporting. Since these are two different IEs, the evaluation team will be required to provide two sets of inception reports, data collection report and draft and final evaluation reports separately for the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline. This should be discussed and clarified during the scoping phase after contract confirmation. The below-mentioned key activities will be required separately for the baseline and midline, under separate timelines:

a) Inception activities

- Conduct a desk review of all relevant programme documents and existing social protection and social assistance data for the programme focus area.
- Prepare and apply for ethics approval/clearance in Malawi
- Attend inception meetings
- Develop an inception report, which includes sampling methods and sampling frame for both quantitative and qualitative data collections, detailed workplan, list of tools and mapping of tools in relation to the evaluation criteria/questions, mapping of secondary and primary data to respond to evaluation criteria / questions, fieldwork strategy, data quality assurance, etc.

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- Develop quantitative and qualitative data collection tools and materials
- Translate the data collection tools into Chichewa
- Finalize and validate data collection tools based on consultation with Evaluation Technical Reference Group and other relevant stakeholders, and pre-testing (tools piloting activity)
- Prepare for fieldwork with logistics

b) Conduct data collection / fieldwork

- Hire and train enumerators and/or research assistants on the tools for quantitative and qualitative data collection activities
- Prepare and provide all necessary tools for data collection, including print interview guides, consent forms, voice recording device as needed, etc.
- Lead and implement activities of primary data collection (quantitative and qualitative) in communities as needed (depending on sampling methodology)
- Lead and collect secondary data to be used for the evaluation analysis where needed
- Lead stakeholders' interviews (qualitative)

c) Data analysis and report writing

- Quantitative data analysis (including different disaggregation levels, e.g. location, gender, age range, disability status)
- Qualitative data analysis (including different disaggregation levels, e.g. location, gender, disability status)
- Write draft evaluation report, which includes populating the evaluation matrix, an executive summary, evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations; and submit for comments and feedback – **note, for the SP-GEAR baseline, findings and analysis will be compared with the 2022 MSCTP baseline, and a consolidated report will be drafted.**
- Produce final evaluation report based on comments and feedback received
- Develop a PowerPoint presentation on key findings, conclusions and recommendations
- Use the PowerPoint presentation to communicate findings, conclusions and recommendations to relevant staff and audience
- Produce a policy brief based on key findings, recommendations, and conclusions
- Produce infographics based on key findings

d) Coordination and technical support

- Lead on the full coordination, planning and execution of the evaluation activities in-country and remotely
- Liaise and report regularly to UNICEF Malawi
- Attend calls and meetings as needed, and assist in preparing background materials and taking minutes
- Responsibilities of the parties involved in the assignment

Responsibility of UNICEF Malawi

- REKM Section to provide overall supervision, in consultation with the Regional Office Evaluation Team. REKM will also provide all documents related to guidance on evaluation standards, inception report preparation and ethical review; providing quality assurance throughout the evaluation process including the training of enumerators and data collection phase.

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- SP team to provide all relevant technical documents, including previous impact evaluation reports, previous studies, programme reports, monitoring reports, previous datasets; and financial documentation to the evaluators as required
- SP team to provide overview of the programme, Theory of Change, results framework, list of target communities and households, and list of beneficiaries included in the last impact evaluation
- SP team to help receive confirmation of approval for the evaluation from the MoGCDSW; REKM team to ensure QA and get approval from the regional evaluation team
- SP team to provide contact list of key stakeholders and people in-country and in the field
- REKM to support identifying suitable local enumerators, if needed
- SP to support in setting up introductory meetings with relevant stakeholders and communities
- REKM/SP to review all deliverables submitted by the evaluators and provide feedback as appropriate
- Participate in interviews/focus group discussions if asked
- REKM/SP to promote the use of evaluation findings and recommendations
- Provide updates to donors and stakeholders as required

Responsibility of the Evaluators

- Meet evaluation standards for each deliverable including the inception report, data collection process, draft, and final evaluation report.
- Provide two different inception reports separately for the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline
- Describe the overall evaluation approach, drawing from prior evaluation reports and available datasets
- Collaborate with UNICEF Malawi to agree on final evaluation questions
- Identify options for methodologies and tools for the agreed evaluation questions
- Develop ethics protocols and apply for ethics clearance/approval from the Government of Malawi and UNICEF third party reviewer (through REKM)
- Design or modify tools as necessary and secure UNICEF Malawi approval for all data collection tools
- Report to the Evaluation Technical Reference Group and attend meetings as agreed with UNICEF REKM Section
- Submit (by email) to UNICEF's REKM Section bi-weekly or monthly progress reports as well as progress meetings/calls during the evaluation period, summarizing activities / tasks completed to date (% achieved), challenges and mitigation strategies, time spent, etc.
- Run analysis of the findings and produce reports, which sufficiently explore and explain the results
- Develop and agree on a reporting structure and format with UNICEF's REKM Section and the Evaluation Reference Group, including presentations of findings and produce any other relevant dissemination materials
- Conduct a thorough desk review, including examining available data from prior evaluations and from monitoring, from other country-specific reports and activities to inform tools, analysis, reporting.
- Conduct fieldwork:

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- Recruit and train research assistants / enumerators on data collection tools and research practices in the field
- Make own logistical arrangements to reach the selected communities and organize interviews, and ensure full logistical support for the entire exercise across all districts
- Supervise and take full responsibility for the behavior and performance of data collectors, including data collection quality checking in the field
- Ensure individual data collection reports outlining progress achieved and any challenges are completed by enumerators and that these are compiled into an overall fieldwork report

Technical Reference Group

The consultancy will be overseen by an Evaluation Technical Reference Group (TRG) composed of UNICEF CO and RO), MoGCDSW and other selected key stakeholders.⁷ The TRG will be co-chaired by the SCTP Coordinator in the MoGCDSW and UNICEF Chief of REKM. The TRG will provide inputs to the evaluation design, support the rollout of the evaluation and validate its findings at all stages. UNICEF REKM Section will manage the consultancy.

Responsibility of the Technical Reference Group

- Provide technical assistance when/where necessary
- Provide guidance to the final evaluation design during the inception phase
- Review and provide feedback on all key deliverables (inception report, evaluation report and dissemination plan)
- Participate in interviews/focus group discussions if asked
- Review and provide feedback on management response

Expected deliverables and reporting requirements

Table 3: Outlines the consultancy deliverables for both the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline, which will need to be submitted separately. Please note, the estimated days are the total for both the SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline deliverables.

Key tasks	Deliverables	Duration (Estimated # days)	Estimated Completion Date
Inception phase activities (refer to Section 4.a) <i>(both for SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set of final data collection tools (quantitative and qualitative) in both English and Chichewa ● Ethics approval completed and obtained ● Final inception report (both for SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP) 	15 working days	29 February 2024

⁷ For example – PRSP, NLGFC, EU, Ireland, KFW, GIZ, ILO, World Bank.

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	midline), including annexes		
Data collection / fieldwork activities (refer to Section 4.b) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(both for SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bi-weekly or monthly (TBC) fieldwork progress reports Data collection activities are completed 	40 working days	31 March 2024 (SP-GEAR baseline) 31 May 2024 (MSCTP midline)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data analysis and report writing activities (refer to Section 4.c above) <i>(both for SP-GEAR baseline and MSCTP midline)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft evaluation report with a 'satisfactory' or higher rating from GEROS Final evaluation report, including annexes Final PowerPoint presentation Final datasets (quantitative and qualitative) Validation workshop with key stakeholders held Policy brief Evaluation infographics 	30 working days	30 June 2024 (SP-GEAR baseline) 30 September 2024 (MSCTP midline)

The draft and final evaluation reports should be between 40-60 pages, excluding the executive summary and annexes. The report should indicatively be structured as follows:

- a. Executive summary
- b. Introduction
- c. Description of the project, including the Theory of Change
- d. Overview of the evaluation approach, the design and methodology, methods used, sampling details, limitations and challenges, ethical standards
- e. Findings
- f. Conclusions and lessons
- g. Recommendations
- h. Annexes

The UNICEF's Evaluation Quality Standard and Evaluation Report Standards can be found here: <https://www.unicef.org/evaluation/media/816/file/UNICEF-Adapted-UNEG-Evaluation-Report-Standards.pdf>

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All reports should be submitted in electronic form and in English. As annexes to this TOR, please find all relevant **UNICEF-GEROS2 Quality Assessment System and Checklists** for your review and understanding of our expectations.

In addition to the above:

1. Applicants are required **to provide a draft clear workplan in their application** incorporating all relevant tasks and milestones of the Evaluation study from start to finish, with roles and responsibilities clearly outlined for all proposed team members. A final version of the detailed workplan will be included in the Inception Report.
2. The Evaluation Team will be required to deliver a face-to-face and/or online **presentation** of the evaluation findings, as an integral part of the submission process.
3. Other **communication materials** (e.g. photo stories) for dissemination are encouraged. The project is particularly interested in materials, which will help us provide feedback to beneficiaries and communities we work alongside, engaging stakeholders more widely. These will be agreed with the project team during the inception phase.
4. **Final Data Collection Tools** – The Evaluation Team and UNICEF Malawi will work collaboratively on all methods of data capture for the Evaluation. At the end of the evaluation, the Evaluation Team will be expected to submit a clean copy of all data collection tools developed and used in the study to UNICEF.
5. **Clean and Final Datasets (including qualitative transcripts)** – The Evaluation Team will be expected to provide fully ‘cleaned-up’ datasets for both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the evaluation. For quantitative reporting, this may be in SPSS, Stata or SAS file format accompanied by the code used to carry out analysis and a variable codebook. Similarly, for qualitative work, this should include cleaned and anonymized transcripts and coding framework. UNICEF will have the sole rights to keep and use the datasets.

Reporting

Name of the evaluation manager:		Mussarrat Youssuf
Name of the programme Section:		REKM & Social Policy
Planned activity	Achievement indicators	Means of verification
Inception phase activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics approval obtained. • Timely delivery of deliverables and at least satisfactory rating (GEROS) on the key deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ set of final data collection tools (quantitative and qualitative) ○ final inception report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval document from the Department of Ethics in Research at the Ministry of Health (SP) • GEROS / UNICEF ratings and completed checklists on the final inception report (REKM)
Data collection/fieldwork activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of working relations and of written materials produced is high and satisfactory to UNICEF Malawi • Adherence to timeline and set deadlines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-weekly or monthly fieldwork progress reports reviewed and validated by UNICEF Malawi teams
Data analysis and report writing activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely delivery and at least satisfactory rating (GEROS) on the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEROS / UNICEF rating and completed checklist

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	final evaluation report, including annexes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely delivery and high quality of outputs produced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ final PowerPoint presentation ○ final datasets (quantitative and qualitative) ○ final policy brief ○ final infographics 	on the final evaluation report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final PowerPoint presentation, policy brief, infographics and final datasets reviewed and validated by UNICEF Malawi
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Desired competencies, technical background, and experience

Bidders are required to clearly identify and provide CVs for all those proposed in the Evaluation Team, **clearly stating their roles and responsibilities** for this evaluation. The assignment requires a team of consultants consisting of a lead institution partnered with a local research/academic institution/firm in Malawi. The terms of this contract will involve provision of technical support to a local research/academic institution/firm to support local capacity strengthening. Bids that respond to the Request for Proposals (RFP) should name the selected local institution and provide justification for its selection as well as clearly outlined roles and responsibilities of each institution. The arrangement of necessary human resources including evaluation assistants, enumerators and data entry clerks must be well defined in the RFP response.

The proposed evaluation team should include the technical expertise and practical experience required to deliver the scope of work and evaluation outputs, in particular with regards to:

Qualifications of the lead institution

- At least 10 years of demonstrable institutional experience in evaluations with a track record of leading and conducting impact evaluations; use of mixed method approaches, qualitative research, data collection and analysis are a mandatory requirement.
- Demonstrable experience in the design, implementation of longitudinal evaluations of large-scale government implemented social protection programmes in developing countries is required. Experience in such projects in sub-Saharan Africa is an added advantage.
- Demonstrable experience evaluating cash transfer programmes or other social protection interventions is a distinct advantage.
- Familiarity with poverty reduction issues including poverty assessment methodologies is an added advantage.
- Successful demonstration of effective rural household surveys focus group discussions and key informant interviews and Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP) is required.
- In depth understanding of development context of Southern and Eastern African countries and experience in working in Malawi, especially with the government and on the existing social protection programming (MSCTP), is desirable.

Qualifications of the local institution

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- At least 10 years of institutional experience in social research with demonstrable track record in impact evaluations, use of mixed methods, qualitative research, data collection and analysis are required.
- Demonstrable experience evaluating cash transfer programmes and familiarity with poverty reduction issues including poverty assessment methodologies.
- Proven experience of effective rural household surveys and use of participatory research methods such as focus group discussions and key informant interviews and Human Rights Based Approach to Programming (HRBAP) is required.
- In depth understanding of development context of Malawi and experience in working in with the government at national and sub-national levels is required.
- Previous experience with the MSCTP or other similar social protection programming highly desirable.

Qualifications of Individual Team members

Team Leader

- Advanced University degree (masters or PhD) in one of the following disciplines: Statistics, Data Management, Social or Public Policy, Development Economics, or other relevant social science.
- At least ten years working experience in designing, implementing and evaluating social protection/social cash transfer programmes.
- Demonstrable experience in designing and leading impact evaluations; statistical analysis and management of large dataset produced through experimental and quasi-experimental techniques, from impact evaluations or similar assignment.
- Demonstrable experience/understanding of such techniques as propensity score matching, difference in difference methods and sampling methods.
- Demonstrable experience of conducting social research utilizing a mixed methods approach.
- In depth understanding of development context of Eastern and Southern African, experience in Malawi preferred.
- Demonstrable experience with or understanding of the functioning, limitations and data provision through sectoral Information Management System.

Supporting International Consultant(s)

- Advanced University degree (masters or PhD) in one of the following disciplines: International Development, Social or Public Policy, Development Economics, Statistics or other relevant social science.
- At least one of the supporting consultants should be a statistician and/or data analyst.
- At least five years working experience in designing, implementing, and evaluating social protection programmes.
- Proven experience of conducting social research utilizing quantitative and/or qualitative research approach.
- Demonstrated experience in quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis.

Local/National Consultants

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- Advanced University degree at Master's level or higher in Statistics, Data Management and Analysis, Development, Social or Public Policy, Development Economics, Statistics or other relevant social science.
- At least five years working experience in designing, implementing and evaluating social protection/ social cash transfer programmes.
- Proven experience of conducting social research utilizing qualitative research approach.
- Demonstrated experience in Information Management System
- Familiar with social protection and poverty reduction issues including poverty assessment methodologies.
- Successful demonstration of effective rural household surveys, experience conducting of focus group discussions and key informant interviews in Malawi is preferred.
- Experience working with government at national and sub-national levels on social protection programmes (MSCTP).

CVs of involved professionals should be made available upon submission of a technical proposal.

Language Required for the Consultancy:

- Excellent spoken and written English is required.
- Local institution team must also be fully fluent in Chichewa, knowledge of other local languages in the country is desirable.

Other Skills and Attributes:

- Excellent analytical, research and report writing skills.
- Excellent communication and relationship-building skills.
- Excellent facilitation and problem-solving skills.

The institutional contractor must provide UNICEF with a Certificate of Incorporation or comparable proof of registration as a company or institution, according to the relevant national legislation.

Administrative matters

- The selected Institutional contractor will be governed by and subject to UNICEF's General Terms and Conditions for Institutional contracts
- The Institutional contractor will work on their own computer(s) and use their own office resources and materials in the execution of this assignment
- Provide necessary documentation for approval by UNICEF before engaging sub-consultants. The Institutional contractor, under ordinary circumstances, shall not engage any sub consultants for any part of the assignment, unless otherwise specifically approved by UNICEF.
- As per UNICEF DFAM policy, payment is made against approved deliverables. No advance payment is allowed unless in exceptional circumstances against bank guarantee, subject to a maximum of 30 per cent of the total contract value in cases where advance purchases, for example for supplies or travel, may be necessary.
- The Institutional contractor's fees must be 'all inclusive' of all administrative costs; and

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- The Institutional contractor is expected to be available and fully in charge of supporting all activities and operations of the consultancy for the full duration of the contract.

Payment schedule

The payments will be made upon satisfactory completion of tasks and deliverables (as reported in table 3), and submission of invoices. The final payment is made only upon certification of the **satisfactory** completion of the assignment as a whole, and completion by the supervisor of the evaluation.

Table 4 – payment schedule:

Deliverables	Payment
Final inception report for baseline (including final data collection tools and ethics clearance obtained) with a 'satisfactory' or higher rating from GEROS	25% of the total payment
Final fieldwork report for baseline	15% of the total payment
Final inception report midline (including final data collection tools and ethics clearance obtained) with a 'satisfactory' or higher rating from GEROS	25% of the total payment
Draft evaluation baseline and midline report with a 'satisfactory' or higher rating from GEROS	25% of the total payment
Final evaluation baseline and midline report, along with clean and final datasets (quantitative and qualitative), final policy brief, evaluation infographics and a final PowerPoint presentation	10% of the total payment

How to Apply and Technical Evaluation Criteria

Interested candidates will be required to submit the following application:

A two-element procedure shall be utilized in evaluating proposals, with evaluation of the technical proposal being completed prior to any financial proposal being compared.

For the first element, applicants will submit a **Technical Proposal**:

The technical proposal should be prepared on the basis of the tasks and deliverables (as per Table 3 above). The proposal should include approach and methodology for sampling and suggested evaluation design, as well as a draft detailed workplan and timeline for the different inception, data collection, and data analysis/report writing activities. The Technical Proposal shall also include updated CVs (as annexes), relevant examples of past work (e.g. evaluation reports) and 3 references for similar assignments.

TECHNICAL EVALUATION	Max score
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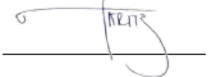

1. OVERALL RESPONSE & METHODOLOGY	35
Understanding of scope, objectives, and completeness of response	5
Quality of the proposed approach and methodology	15
Quality of proposed implementation plan, i.e., how the bidder will undertake and staff each task, and time-schedule, risk assessment	15
2. PROPOSED TEAM and ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY	35
Leadership Skills: Relevant leadership/management experience, skills, and qualifications	5
Technical expertise: quantitative and qualitative expertise and experience, experience in sampling and conducting fieldwork for data collection, skills, and qualifications for evaluations	10
Technical expertise: experience and expertise in research about children and women, about social assistance/protection, about cash transfers and vulnerable households in rural contexts.	10
Organization of the team, roles and responsibilities and presence in Malawi	10
TOTAL MARKS FOR TECHNICAL COMPONENT	70

As a second element, applicants should submit a **Financial Proposal (max score: 30)**.

The bidder must submit in US dollars (USD):

- Cost breakdown of consultancy fees, **inclusive of all costs**, daily subsistence allowance (DSA) and travel costs for the fieldwork in Malawi.
- Rates/prices offered shall remain fixed for the entire period from the commencement of the contract
- No Letter of Credit or Advance Payment
- The Financial Regulations and Rules of UNICEF preclude advance payments and payments by letter of credit, except in special circumstances. Such provision in a proposal will be prejudicial to its evaluation by UNICEF.

Approval of terms of reference:

Function	Name	Signature	Date
Prepared by	Mathew Tasker Chief Social Policy		11.12.2023
Reviewed by Supply	Tabinda Syed Chief of Supply		12.12.2023
Reviewed and cleared by REKM	Mussarrat Youssuf Chief of REKM	<i>mussarrat youssuf</i>	12-12- 2024 ²⁰²³
Approved by	Gerrit Maritz, Deputy Representative Programme		12.12.2023
Approved by	Shadrack Omol Representative, UNICEF Malawi		13December2023