

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Functional Analysis of Centers for Social Work (CSW) for SWIS Implementation and Digital Organizational Restructuring

I. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia has received a Loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to implement the Second Social Services Improvement Project (SSIP II).

The SSIP II development objective is to expand access to and improve the quality of social services through investments in the social protection delivery system, ensuring that services reach the most vulnerable groups and improve access to quality Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in a way that further supports teacher professional development and promotes the inclusion of poor and marginalized children through extension of the supply for preschool spaces through repurposing/upgrading unused primary school spaces or other public buildings into ECEC playrooms services.

In alignment with national priorities for modernizing social services, the Government of North Macedonia's undertaking a comprehensive review and transformation of the social protection system. A central component of this transformation is the rollout of the new Social Welfare Information System (SWIS), which is designed as a key digital tool to streamline workflows, enhance case management, and promote an easy-to-use social protection system.

The Centers for Social Work (CSWs) are critical in implementing this transformation. They are responsible for administering social protection programs, including cash benefits, social services and public authorizations. However, existing challenges such as fragmented processes, administrative overload, and evolving beneficiary needs necessitate a robust digital approach. The SWIS software will serve as the cornerstone for this digitalization effort, under the close oversight of both the Ministry for Social Policy, Demography and Youth and the Institute for Social Activities (ISA).

II. SPECIFIC BACKGROUND

Centers for Social Work (30) are public social protection institutions with public authorizations to carry out social protection activities. According to the Law on Social Protection, the Centers for Social Work carry out the following activities:

- Decide on the rights to social protection, determined by the Law for Social Protection,
- Decide on the rights determined by the Law on Child Protection,
- Decide on financial assistance to persons with recognized refugee status and under subsidiary protection, determined by the Law on International and Temporary Protection,
- Decide on the matters determined by the regulations on family-legal relations,
- Decide on the rights determined by the Law on Social Security for older people,

- Act on the matters of its activity determined by the Criminal Law regulations, and
- Perform other tasks determined by law.

A key objective of the 2019 social protection reform was to ensure that cash benefits, social services and public authorizations were tailored to meet the specific needs of each individual, family, and household. This reform sought to address several challenges:

- Individuals were often assessed and supported in isolation, without consideration of their family context or awareness of assistance provided to other family members.
- There was a significant division of responsibilities within the CSWs, with some staff focused on cash benefits and others on social services and public authorizations, often specializing in specific programs. This division limited the ability to understand and address the overall needs of beneficiaries, particularly when vulnerabilities were interconnected.
- Social workers consumed a considerable amount of time by performing administrative tasks related to the registration and processing of cash benefits.
- Significant time and effort are spent on administering numerous documentation and data in paper.

To address these challenges, the 2019 reform introduced the Case Management Method and streamlined the registration process. Key changes implemented by this reform include:

- Transitioning from a one-size-fits-all approach to a needs-based assessment for each individual, considering their family/household and community context to develop customized action plans.
- Establishing a single-entry point for both benefits and services/public authorization, with a Case Manager as the primary contact, responsible for managing the case and thoroughly understanding its details. This change allows caseworkers to focus on families or households rather than individual programs.
- Reducing the administrative burden on caseworkers by delegating daily tasks (e.g., document processing), enabling them to concentrate on addressing the social needs of families.
- Reducing administrative barriers for beneficiaries and minimizing victimization by avoiding the need for them to repeatedly describe and thereby relive their situation.
- Strengthening collaboration between CSWs and Employment Agency Centers, by integrating their information systems and requiring them to jointly develop and sign an 'Activation Plan' with the beneficiary.

Starting in January 2025, a new integrated Social Welfare Information System (SWIS), which will streamline workflows for cash benefits, social services and public authorizations through case management, is introduced in all CSW. The initial introduction and use of this integrated information system shows that it already increases efficiency in case management, especially in certain perceived challenges of the reform, such as high administrative burden on social workers, time for data collection, etc.

The development, testing and implementation phases of the SWIS, as well as the implementation of case management, have shown a necessary need for internally restructure and reorganize the CSWs, in accordance with SWIS.

III. MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The functional analysis aims to assist the Ministry for Social Policy, Demography and Youth (MSPDY) management in implementing an internal re-organization at the CSW level, ensuring the fulfillment of MSPDY's strategic goals, including the deployment in all CSW of the new software solution (i.e., SWIS) that aims to facilitate work and processes in the social protection system in North Macedonia.

The main objective of this assignment is to conduct a comprehensive functional analysis of all CSWs with a particular focus on:

- Analyze of current legislative and operational framework (laws governing the operation, employment and promotion in CSW) in the scope of integrating SWIS, and suggest changes if/where needed;
- Analyze the service delivery, organizational structure, human resources, and resource utilization (processes and technologies) of all 30 CSWs, according demographic changes and SWIS as tool for increasing efficiency, identifying gaps and inefficiencies;
- Recommend new internal organization and systematization of jobs positions (working tasks), staffing profiles, methods of work (case management) and budgetary allocations in each CSW that support the digital transformation using SWIS;
- Develop a set of policy recommendations for better understanding and implementing Case management (including specific rulebook) with focus on digitalization of CSW .
- Determine standards for optimal employee workload based on case time-flow in SWIS for each working position in CSW and role in the system.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant/firm will conduct a comprehensive review and analysis of all 30 Centers for Social Work (CSWs) with a particular focus on aligning operational digital processes and internal organization with the strategic deployment of the new Social Welfare Information System (SWIS).

The scope of the consultancy includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

1. Assessment of the current situation in the CSW

- 1.1. Analysis of the current legislation covering the functioning of CSW (existing laws and rulebooks that regulate the operation, employment, and promotion of the CSW to identify shortcomings and gaps);
- 1.2. Analysis of the current situation in the CSW according to the number of professionals by job position and professional profiles, as well as the number of active beneficiaries in the CSW;
- 1.3. Collect and analyze data on the effectiveness of current work processes, resources, and existing tools (separating social services and public authorizations, administrative tasks, cash benefits provision, etc.) for each CSW, including:
 - workload distribution among staff (considering gender, age, specialization, and salary);

- the adequacy of technical resources (computers, printers, internet access, vehicles); physical infrastructure (premises, building quality, accessibility), financial resources across CSWs;
- 1.4. Evaluate the current process in case management approach and the implementation of SWIS in each CSW;
- 1.5. Analyze employee engagement and motivation levels, along with any other identified challenges affecting staff performing their jobs;
- 1.6. Evaluate the quality of staff competence, including training needs, and opportunities for professional development;
- 1.7. Analyze the beneficiary journey (for cash benefits, social services, and public authorizations)¹ within the CSW system to identify inefficiencies or barriers to access the rights with a focus on user demographics, gender, but also specific needs of diverse client groups;
- 1.8. Review communication hierarchies within the CSWs;

2. Determination of standards for the optimal workload of employees

- 2.1. Analysis of tasks for each job position and professional profile individually (service providers, administrative staff, etc.);
- 2.2. Development of new standards for optimal workload when applying the „case management“ work method;

3. Determination of the necessary staff by position and professional profile for each CSW

- 3.1. Provide an assessment of the required number – by profiles of employees according to established norms, the scope of work, and the number of populations covered by the CSW;
- 3.2. Propose an optimal distribution of staff by job position and professional profile based on the volume of work and the number of users (considering the laws according to which they are employed and the possibility of redistribution);

4. Propose and determine appropriate systematization

- 4.1. Proposal new internal organization and standardization of systematization of CSW at the national level, theoretical and/or by size of the CSW or other dimensions than can be considered a recommendation of the consultant);
- 4.2. Defining straightforward job tasks for each working position and different profession based on the "case management" method of work, and budgetary allocations that support the digital transformation using SWIS;

5. Developing tools/support for the implementation of measures for more efficient operation of the CSW

- 5.1. Propose a framework/tool to overview the case management process and enhance collaboration among specialists within CSWs, reflecting legislative/operational changes. This tool is expected to be used by the MSPDY or Institute for Social Activities (ISA) to adjust the operational aspects impacting CSW efficiency, norms, standards, workload, and roles;
- 5.2. Propose clear definitions and operational procedures for active cases with different levels of complexity;
- 5.3. Planning activities for training and support of employees in the MSPDY, the ISA, and CSW for the implementation and use of the new tools proposed in points 1 and 2.

¹ Detailed plan will be established with the client.

6. Preparation for amendments and changes in the laws and rulebooks

- 6.1. Proposal for changes in the existing regulation or development of new laws and sub-laws to improve the work of the CSW in line with recommendations made for efficiency, systematizations, standardization and case management.
- 6.2. Propose specific rulebook for case management based on suggested changes in point 6.1. for support for digital transformation using SWIS in CSW.
- 6.3. Prepare new Case Management Guidelines Manual who will supports effective service delivery;
- 6.4. Present the proposed legal amendments to the relevant institutions and collect and integrate feedback received.

All activities should be carried out by the consultant in coordination and cooperation with MSPDY, CSW, and ISA.

V. CONSULTANT'S DELIVERABLES

The Consultants must prepare and deliver the following documents as part of their output at certain stages of the assignment:

1. **Inception Report:** Outline the consultancy approach, methodology, timeline and stakeholder engagement **detailed plan** - the consultant shall submit a detailed plan and schedule on how it intends to organize each activity separately, the number of people involved, the time needed, the explicit obligations of the client to meet the proposed timelines, etc.; Identification of key stakeholders and communication protocols; Data collection methods and preliminary tools for analysis
2. **Report** regarding the Assessment of the current situation in the CSW with started digital transformation using SWIS;
3. **Report** of beneficiary journey within the CSW system
4. **Report** regarding the determined standards for the optimal workload of employees regarding digitalization of processes;
5. **Report** for determination of the necessary staff by position and professional profile for each CSW;
6. **Propose a model** for the optimal distribution of staff that includes job position, task definitions, and workload regarding SWIS implementation;
7. **Proposal** for appropriate internal organization and systematization in CSW, aligned with proposed budget allocation;
8. **Propose tools/support** for the implementation of measures for more efficient operation of the CSW and plan and deliver training;

9. **Proposal** for new rulebooks, amendments and changes in the laws and rulebooks;

VI. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

I. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Firm's qualifications

The qualification requirements of the Consultant firm are summarized as follows.

- Proven experience in projects and verifiable track record in providing services in the public sector at the national level in the past five years
- Proven experience and verifiable track-record in implementing internationally funded projects with public institutions as beneficiary
- Proven expertise in at least two assignments related to functional analysis of state institutions, in the past ten years
- Proven expertise in assignments related to budgeting, financial management, and payment procedures

The credibility of mentioned experience and expertise shall be presented in a list of project references with a description of services provided (including information on contract value, contracting entity/client, project location/country, duration, percentage carried out by consultant in case of association of firms or subcontracting and main activities) and accompanied by certificates of orderly fulfilment of the contracts verified by another party from such contracts.

Qualification requirements	Total points	Max. Points
	100	
Proven experience and verifiable track-record in providing services in the public sector at national level in the past five years	15	5- One realized project in the public sector at national level in the past five years 10- Two realized projects in the public sector at national level in the past five years

		15- Three or more realized projects in the public sector at national level in the past five years
Proven experience and verifiable track-record in implementing internationally funded projects with public institutions as beneficiary	5	5-At least one implemented internationally funded project with public institution as beneficiary
Proven expertise in at least two assignments related to functional analysis of state institutions, in the past ten years	40	30- Two realized assignment related to related to functional analysis of state institutions, in the past ten years 40- More than two realized assignments related to functional analysis of state institutions, in the past ten years
Proven expertise in assignments related to budgeting, financial management and payment procedures	30	20- Two realized assignments related to budgeting, financial management and payment procedures 30- More than two realized assignments related to budgeting, financial management and payment procedures

2. Core team qualifications

The Consultant must provide at least the following expert staff for completing the assignment:

Project Manager

- At least university degree in Social Sciences;
- At least 3 years of managerial experience on projects conducting functional analysis of public institutions;
- Experience in strategy-operations alignment, analyses of institutional structure, employee and customer measurement, culture change;
- Awareness of the current government policy issues in general and the policy issues facing the social sector in particular in transition economy/ states;

- Excellent knowledge of Macedonian and English language.

Legal Expert

- At least Law degree
- At least 10 years of proven experience in providing legal advice in preparation of laws and subsequent secondary legal regulations
- At least 3 years of experience in providing legal advice in preparation of laws and subsequent secondary legal regulations in North Macedonia
- Excellent knowledge of Macedonian and English language.

Performance Monitoring & Evaluation Expert

- At least university degree in Social Sciences;
- At least five years of experience in monitoring and evaluation of working processes in government institutions;
- Awareness of the current government policy issues in general and the policy issues facing the social sector in particular in transition economy/ states;
- Excellent knowledge of Macedonian and English language.

Social Protection Expert:

- At least university degree in Social Sciences;
- A minimum five years of experience in the area of the reform of social protection systems;
- A minimum of five years of experience in the area of data in respect to the social protection system;

Excellent knowledge of Macedonian and English language

VII. SELECTION METHOD AND CONTRACT

The selection method is “Consultant’s Qualifications Based Selection” and the contract shall be Lump Sum according to the World Bank Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing (IPF) Borrowers – Procurement in IPF of Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, (Regulations) Fifth Edition of September 2023, www.worldbank.org

VIII. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The expected duration of the assignment is 12 months.