

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EXPERTS

Terms of reference for on-site activities and missions

Action code and partner country: SOCIEUX 2022-01 UZBEKISTAN

Action title: *Strengthening capacities of the public health insurance fund in Uzbekistan in the area of price setting*

Partner institution: State Fund for Medical Insurance (SFMI) of Uzbekistan // Государственный фонд медицинского страхования Узбекистана (ГФМС)

Activity number and title:

A. 3: Developing and improving the principles for performance-based assessment and efficiency of healthcare

Date of implementation of activities:

Activity 3: October, 24 - December, 15, 2022 (on-site 14-25/11/2022)

Expert positions and responsibilities (by activity):

Expert 2: Health Insurance; Planning, budgeting & costing; Procurement

Workload:

Expert 2 : 21 days

Call for experts' reference: **22-01/UZB/3**

Version - #: 2 ☒ Draft

☒ Final

Date: 16 June 2022

SOCIEUX+ is implemented by

Partnership led by

Co-financed by the European Union



1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Country overview

Uzbekistan is a doubly landlocked country located in Central Asia that borders the countries of Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. It is the most populated country in Central Asia, 34,2 million people. Its capital and largest city is Tashkent (almost 2,7 million people). Other big cities are Namangan (almost 0,600 million people) and Samarkand (0,530 million people). The distribution between urban and rural population is 50/50.

Uzbekistan is a post-soviet country. It was governed by the first president Islam Karimov till his death in 2016. After the transition of power in 2016-2017, some liberalization reforms were conducted, and modernization of the state and public services has been engaged. After an initial phase of market liberalization, Uzbekistan is moving into a more complex phase of reforms of land, labor, capital markets, and state-owned enterprises, but also health and social services. The most significant medium-term challenge will be ensuring reform inclusivity and transparency. To mitigate the economic, social, and health consequences of the pandemic, the Government has been taking anti-crisis policy measures.

Uzbekistan is a lower middle-income economy (GNI per capita is 1 750 USD in 2020). It is an important producer of agricultural products (including cotton) and exporter of natural gas, oil, uranium and gold. The informal sector is estimated at 45% of GDP, with almost as many people employed formally as in informal work. Unformal employment concerns above all agricultural sector (seasonal work) and services. The economy is also characterized by high inflation (14,7% in 2020). About 12% of the population live below national poverty line. HDI is 0.72 ranking 106th.

1.2 Sector situation

Uzbekistan has been undergoing a major socio-economic transformation since 2016. Health is high on the political agenda and a key priority for the government, as reflected in a significant increase in the health budget in recent years.

As part of this transformation, the country has embarked on comprehensive and far-reaching reforms of its health system to achieve the goals of the "Vision for Health Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan 2019-2025". This includes a reform of provision and modernization of health services, capacity building for health workers, digital transformation, better quality and access to health services. Health financing is a part of the reform. Outpatient drug reimbursement via pharmacies will also be a part of the reform. Since July 1, 2021, a pilot project is being conducted in Syr-Darya region. Its results are supposed to be extended to 6 regions in 2023, and nationally starting from 2025.

1.3 Role of partner institution in the sector

In order to implement the reform of health financing the State Fund of Medical Insurance (SFMI) was established by presidential decree on December 1, 2020. It is a semi-autonomous institution under the Ministry of Health and is funded by tax contributions (not insurance principle). The mandate of the Fund is to improve the population's access to health services, while creating incentives to improve the efficiency of the health sector. The Fund responsible for elaboration of new health financing schemes and principles, for piloting them first in the Syrdarya Region and later other regions and introducing them nationwide from 2025. SFMI is managed by a multidisciplinary supervisory board, which includes the Presidential Administration, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Finance. At early stages SFMI has been supported by the WHO.

2 ACTION DESCRIPTION

2.1 Overall objective

Access to employment and social protection is expanded to poor and vulnerable groups

2.2 Specific objective (s) (purpose)

S. 1: To improve efficiency and fairness of payments (per capita and per service) made by Fund to care providers

2.3 Expected results

R. 1: SFMI has necessary guidelines and tools to determine the costs of outpatient and inpatient services to be reimbursed to health service providers

2.4 Final deliverables

D. 1: Methodological guidelines for the designation of packages of reimbursable healthcare services including medicines

D. 2: Methodological guidelines for setting the prices of reimbursable benefits, including agreements with service providers

D. 3: Methodological guidelines for performance-based assessment and efficiency of healthcare

D. 4: A template for the establishment of conventions for the purchase and provision of healthcare services in the Syr-Darya region

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 General methodology (of the action)

The proposed action focuses on supporting the State fund for medical insurance of Uzbekistan (SFMI) in the development of its capacities for efficient and fair price setting for health services that are covered by the health insurance. To this end, the Action shall support SFMI in acquiring knowledge, developing suitable tools and set-up methodological frameworks for the different stages of a price-setting process. This will include (1) the designation of the typologies of benefits (health services, medical procedures, and drugs) to be covered by SFMI, (2) the definition of price-setting modalities, including the base for payments and the principles of contracting, and (3) the introduction of performance-based and efficiency considerations. The peer-to-peer exchange shall result in the joint development of three sets of methodological guidelines regarding, respectively, the designation of packages of reimbursable healthcare services including medicines, the determination of reimbursement prices of medical services and procedures and the agreements with service providers and, finally, a performance-based assessment of the provision of reimbursable benefits. At the final stage of the action, the experts will accompany the PI in putting the proposed recommendations into practice within the pilot project in Syr-Darya region and jointly establish a template of a service-provision agreement as main output.

At this stage SOCIEUX+ support excludes however direct participation of experts in tariffs negotiations with service providers. Nor final prices will be determined by experts.

The technical assistance methodology will be detailed by the mobilized experts. Notwithstanding this experts' responsibility, the overall methodology shall be centred on the international standards and EU good practice in the field of health coverage. SFMI disposes already of first outlines and political orientations for the new system of health coverage, therefore, the experts shall take into account the work that has been done so far by the SFMI and other its partners.

All activities are foreseen on-site.

3.2 Planned activities (work plan of the action)

The following activities are currently planned for the action:

A. 1: Developing and improving the approaches to the designation of healthcare service and medicine packages reimbursed by SFMI

A. 2: Outlining and improving the basic principles for the price-setting model and guidelines to determine the base of payment

A. 3: Developing and improving the principles for performance-based assessment and efficiency of healthcare

A. 4: Accompanying the practical application of price-setting mechanisms in Syr-Darya region

The present terms of reference cover the services expected for activities of the above work plan:

- Activity 3.

3.3 Inclusion of cross-cutting issues

SOCIEUX+ recognises the importance to include cross-cutting issues in social protection, labour and employment policies and systems. The following cross-cutting issues are duly taken into account:

- Gender equality;
- Good governance;
- Human rights (including rights of children, people living with disabilities, vulnerable groups and minorities); and,
- Social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups.

4 ACTIVITIES DESCRIPTION

4.1 Tasks

The action includes four activities.

Activity 3 will support the PI in developing guidelines on establishing a performance-based strategy and practical methods for monitoring and evaluating the quality and efficiency of the provision of healthcare by providers delivering services included the health insurance. The experts will advise on:

- tools for regular benefits package revision;
- principles, tools and periodicity of prices revision;
- monitoring of the quality of services;
- suitable sources and treatment of information/data relevant to a performance-based analysis.

The team of experts will deploy a peer-to-peer methodology involving the Partner's relevant staff in technical consultations. The principal expert will lead the missions on site. The same principal expert will participate in all three activities, in order to ensure the continuity and efficiency of technical assistance, fluid contact with partner institution and other stakeholders. He/she will be responsible for the production of the final deliverables of the activity. He/she will also be responsible for the preparation, coordination, implementation and reporting and/or coordination of the overall activity. A focal point from the Fund will be appointed to closely work with the experts during the activity.

Tasks:

Minimum tasks for each activity expected from the experts shall include:

- Ahead of the mission to get substantial knowledge of the local context; review any relevant background documents provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team and/or the Partner.
- Take part to the pre-mission briefing with SOCIEUX+ team (around 1 week before the start of the mission);
- Conduct preliminary contacts with the Partner in view of the preparation of the mission's methodology and agenda, to be transmitted ahead of the mission to the SOCIEUX+ team for approval;
- During the mission, to conduct consultations with the Partner's executives and staffs, as well as any other external actor that can support the positive deployment of the mission.
- To make themselves available for a meeting with the EU Delegation office in Tashkent;
- To present the outcomes of the mission to the partner in order to discuss and take into account comments on the contents of the deliverables before their finalization;
- At the end of the mission, timely submit to SOCIEUX+ of the final deliverables (10 working days after the mission), and be available to go through an eventual round of comments and adjustments in interaction with SOCIEUX+ and the Partner;

- To channel to SOCIEUX+ Communication officer any material that can be useful to inform the public about the activity (pictures, interviews, brief notes or articles).
- To employ the different templates and evaluation forms provided by the SOCIEUX+ team

4.2 Deliverables

4.2.1 Pre-mission deliverables (to be transmitted to SOCIEUX+ FMT at least three working days ahead of the activity):

- P1: A methodological note (max. 3 pages), detailing the working approach, tools and methods to employed, a risks analysis
- P2: A preliminary agenda (max. 2 pages), detailing the meetings and working sessions to be held

4.2.2 Final deliverables (to be transmitted to SOCIEUX+ FMT no later than ten days after the activity's completion):

- D. 3: Methodological guidelines for performance-based assessment and efficiency of healthcare
- ExMR: An individual Expert Mission Report in SOCIEUX+ format (template provided). This report is a confidential product intended solely for and use by SOCIEUX+. The expert team may also submit a single-joint ExMR report if they prefer to do so (see instructions on the template).
- ExF: An individual completed Expert Feedback Form completed online (see instructions and link on the ExMR template).
- AcR: A collective Activity Report in SOCIEUX+ format (template provided). This AcR is to be produced jointly by the mission team. It is intended for the Partner Institution, and will be shared, most probably, with key stakeholders of the action. The report will reflect the tasks conducted in during the activity. It shall provide a meaningful contribution towards the final deliverables of the action.

5 REPORTING AND SUBMISSION OF DELIVERABLES

5.1 Formats

All deliverables and products of the activity (notes, reports, presentations, etc) shall comply with the formats and templates provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

All deliverables are to be submitted in electronic in electronic editable versions [Microsoft Word 97-2003 [doc], PowerPoint 97-2003 [ppt] and Excel 97-2003 [xls]; or in equivalent OpenDocument format). Non-editable electronic document such as in Portable Document Format (PDF) shall not be accepted.

Templates for electronic presentations during the activity/mission are provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team. These templates are in Microsoft PowerPoint format and comply with the SOCIEUX+ Corporate Image standards. These templates are to be used as a sole format by all members of the expert mission team. They are to be used for all presentations by the experts during and for the activity/mission. The use by the experts of their own, or their organisation(s), templates or formats are not allowed unless otherwise instructed in written [by email] to the experts by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

All versions of deliverables or other products used or produced during activity/mission by the experts shall include the following disclaimer:

"Disclaimer:

The responsibility of this publication sole lies with its authors. The European Union, the European Commission, the implementation partners of SOCIEUX+ and the SOCIEUX+ Staff are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein."

Please refer to the expert information package for further guidance on communication and templates.

All deliverables are to be provided in English or Russian.

5.2 Submission and approval

All deliverables versions (drafts, final or other) shall be submitted directly and only to SOCIEUX+ Team, unless otherwise instructed in written [by email] to the experts by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

5.2.1 Pre-mission deliverables

- Pre-mission deliverables shall be submitted no later than 3 working days before the start of activity.
- Pre-mission deliverables will be shared and reviewed by the SOCIEUX+ and the Partner Institution. Feedback on the deliverables should be provided to the Principal Expert at latest 2 days before the start of activity or departure of the mission of the experts, whichever is the earliest. Comments and recommendation of this feedback shall be taken into account for the implementation of the activity/mission by the experts. Only the mission agenda shall be resubmitted with revision if requested by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

5.2.2 Final deliverables

- The first draft versions of the final deliverables are to be submitted no later than 10 working days upon completion of the activity or return of the experts.
- Feedback to the first draft version of the report should be provided 10 working days after its submission.
- Inclusion of the feedback on drafts versions is expected 5 working days upon reception of the comments by the principal expert. (In general, no more than one round of feedback and revision is required, unless the quality of the deliverables is considered unsatisfactory by the SOCIEUX+ Team or/and the Partner Institution.)
- Final versions of the deliverables should be approved or rejected no later than 10 working days upon their submission to the SOCIEUX+ Team.
- Final payments and reimbursement of travel costs to experts can only be authorised upon approval of the final version of the deliverables by SOCIEUX+.

6 REQUIRED EXPERTISE

6.1 Expertise profile

Expert 2:

Area(s) of expertise: Health Insurance

Specific skill(s) of expertise: Planning, budgeting & costing; Procurement

- Education: university level (Masters or PhD relating to the subject are considered a plus);
- At least 10 years of relevant professional experience within EU public administrations or academia;
- Relevant experience in the area of state procurement of health services/products;
- Particular knowledge of the principles of tax-based health coverage;
- Acute sense of diplomacy and institutional relations.

Additional assets (advantageous in selection):

- Fluency in English, written and oral; working level of Russian language would be appreciated.
- Computer fluency (Zoom, PowerPoint etc.) and good presentation skills.

6.2 Estimated workload

Activity 3

| | Preparation | On-site work | Travel | Reporting & deliverables | Total |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|----------|--------------------------|-----------|
| Principal expert (#1) | 5 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 21 |
| Expert (#2) | 5 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 21 |
| Total | 10 | 20 | 4 | 8 | 42 |

7 APPLICATIONS

7.1 Call for experts

All calls for experts for SOCIEUX+ activities are published online on the SOCIEUX+ website. Interested experts should submit their application on the SOCIEUX+ on-line expert database: <https://pmt.socieux.eu> (currently only available in English). The application process is:

1. If they have not already, experts create their SOCIEUX+ account by clicking on "Create an account" using an email address.
2. Login details for their account will be sent to experts by email, experts should create and submit their profile for review by¹:
 - a. Providing contact details
 - b. Providing information on the competences, skills and working history of the expert. Experts are required to provide only limited information through fields marked with an asterisk. However, *experts are encouraged to complete in most detail de sections on skills and competences as the SOCIEUX+ Team also regularly reviews profiles in the roster to identify and contact potential experts for future missions.*
 - c. Uploading of a curriculum vitae, preferably in Europass format².
3. Once their profile is approved by the SOCIEUX+ Team, they can apply to any available calls for experts accessible under the tab "Call for experts" and click on "Apply."

If more information is needed, please contact SOCIEUX+ by email at experts@socieux.eu with the reference number of the application.

Collaborative or interested institutions wishing to make expertise available for a specific call for application may directly contact the team of SOCIEUX+ at experts@socieux.eu.

7.2 Selection of experts

In principle, SOCIEUX+ mobilises experts from the public administrations and mandated bodies of EU member states, and practitioners working for social partners, including:

- Practitioners, civil servants and employees from publicly mandated bodies;
- Collaborators and employees of social partner institutions, such as trade unions and employer associations; and,
- Academic and research institutions.

Active public experts from collaborative institutions are given priority in the selection. Private consultants may also apply. Their application will be considered in case an appropriate public expert cannot be identified.

Only short-listed applicants may be contacted. The selection process may include interviews by phone or other communication means.

¹SOCIEUX+ expert database and other management tools comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

²Europass templates for CVs are available here: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

Interested candidates may download the **Guide for Experts and Collaborative Institutions** with detailed information on contracting with SOCIEUX+ at www.socieux.eu

7.3 Contracting of public experts

Public experts can be in active duty or retired. Retired employees from international specialised agencies or cooperation agencies can also be mobilised, without regard to their former employer's collaborating with SOCIEUX+ on a specific action. Retired experts are considered as public experts for all purposes, benefits, and financial compensation provided by SOCIEUX+.

Short-listed candidates may be required to provide the contact of employer or proof of their ability to be directly contracted under their status as civil servant or public employee.

7.4 Financial compensations

Contract officials or active-duty or retired employees are entitled to standard fixed allowances of 350 euros per working day worked. The fees of private consultants are negotiated according to their number of years of relevant expertise and the standard scale of SOCIEUX+.

Retired experts are assimilated to public employees for all intents and purposes, benefits and financial compensation provided by SOCIEUX+.

National regulations on remuneration and compensation of public employees and civil servants applies and may limit the payment of allowances by SOCIEUX+. The responsibility for compliance and verification lies with individual experts and their institutions of origin. The payment of income or other taxes is the sole responsibility of the mobilised experts and/or their organisations.

7.5 Travel costs

All travel expenses for the mobilised experts (public, private or international institutions) are covered by SOCIEUX in accordance with the **Guide for Experts and Collaborative institutions** with detailed information on contracting with SOCIEUX+ (version as on date of signature of the contract).

8 COMMUNICATION & VISIBILITY

SOCIEUX + can use its communication channels, such as the web, newsletter and other media, to share information about the implementation and results of the activities. For this, contributions of the experts mobilised are expected. The experts may be requested to provide such contributions in the field of communication as photographs, provide short texts, and interviews.

Short briefings, before and after the mission, with the Communication Officer of SOCIEUX+. These briefings will provide the opportunity to identify communication opportunities and strategies.

For specific activities, visibility products, such as brochures, USB sticks, notebooks and pens, can be made available to experts for on-site distribution.

9 CODE OF CONDUCT

The experts mobilised by SOCIEUX+ will provide technical assistance from the preparatory stages of each activity to the delivery of products. The SOCIEUX+ Team will assist experts to fulfil their assignments by supporting and advising on the preparation of background materials before meetings. The SOCIEUX+ team will collect feedback from partner institutions and relevant stakeholders to ensure that mission reports and recommendations are delivered to national authorities, the EU Delegations in the partner countries and EuropeAid.

The experts mobilised are not representing SOCIEUX+ or the EU. Technical opinions and recommendations expressed are their own. They shall not express negative opinions on the implementation of actions supported by SOCIEUX+ to third-parties. Nevertheless, they shall be aware of SOCIEUX+'s objectives and functioning, and promote its services at the best of their knowledge, whenever possible and feasible.

The experts shall perform their duties in the Partner Country in a way that is fully compliant with and respectful of the local institutions, policies and cultural behaviours. They shall particularly adopt a culturally-sensitive behaviour in their way to deal with the local counterparts.

10 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

11 ANNEXES

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ABOUT SOCIEUX+

The European Union (EU) promotes and maintains dialogue on social protection and inclusive employment policies with an increasing number of partner countries. This effort has been confirmed by the European Commission (EC) Communication COM (2016) 740 final - "Proposal for a new European Consensus on Development, entitled *Our world, our dignity, our future*. A significant number of cooperation initiatives in these fields are funded by geographic or thematic instruments of the EU in different countries. Those initiatives are highly structured and address the medium- to long-term needs of partner countries. However, short-term measures and peer-to-peer cooperation to promote the development of social protection systems are needed to complement the EU's cooperation with third countries. SOCIEUX+ - EU Expert Facility on Employment, Labour and Social Protection responds to this need.

The SOCIEUX+ facility was setup by the EU through co-funding from France, Spain and Belgium and the resources managed by the European Commission's Directorate for Development and Cooperation (EuropeAid). The facility is implemented by a partnership composed of development cooperation agencies from Member States: Expertise France (the partnership lead), Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas (FIIAPP) from Spain, Belgian International Cooperation on Social Protection (BELINCOSOC), and the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel).

The general objective of the Facility is to expand and improve access to better employment opportunities and inclusive social protection systems in partner countries. Its specific objective is to enhance the capacities of partner countries to better design, manage and monitor inclusive, effective, and sustainable employment strategies and social protection systems through short-term, peer-to-peer technical assistance and knowledge development.

SOCIEUX+ recognises the impact of social protection and employment in reducing poverty and vulnerability. It supports the efforts of partner governments in promoting inclusive and sustainable social protection and employment systems. SOCIEUX+ also complements the efforts made through other European Union initiatives.

The Facility is an expansion of SOCIEUX Social Protection EU Expertise in Development Cooperation, established in 2013.



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