Development of a model set of questions for the household budget survey
Prepared for UNECE by Rafkat Hasanov

Introduction
The training was devoted to the development of a model set of questions for HBS. Two presentations were presented, which were based on the report "Developing a model set of questions for the household budget survey" for the second phase of the UNECE project and covered the following topics:

- Analysis of country surveys of household budgets in order to harmonise survey questionnaires.
- Development of a model set of questions for HBS.

The first part of the training included general developing questions, as well as the development of separate sections, in particular, modules on expenditures, incomes and deprivations. This part of the training was described in detail in the reports on the results of the missions to Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, so there is no need to repeat the description of the results of this part of the training.

The second part of the training: discussion of selected issues
After the presentation, a number of issues were discussed, the content of which is summarised below.

Discussion of the consumption expenditures module

1. The Questionnaire 3 "Diary of the recording of household expenditures for food" the food groups (14 groups) do not match the COICOP, which makes it difficult to harmonise the country and Model questionnaires. Is it possible to regroup them?

Comment: it was explained that the groups of food, beverages and tobacco products are formed based on the SSCP. According to the results of the training, representatives of the NSC KR agreed to consider the issue of changing the list of these products; however, this may require time and some technical efforts.

2. The forms of sections 1 (filled in by the household) and 2 (filled in by the interviewer) of The Questionnaire 3 "Diary of the recording of household expenditures for food" do not match: section 1 indicates what was purchased, and section 2 indicates the sources of food received. In this regard, the question arises: do the terms "bought" and "used" differ?

Comment: it was clarified that there is no actual difference between the questions "Purchase of food, beverages and tobacco products" and "Consumption of food, beverages and tobacco products".

3. How difficult will it be to translate the coding of food, non-food products and services used in the NSC KR into the CAICOP codes, at least at the class level?

Comment: this process for Kyrgyzstan will be time consuming, because within the current Government Statistical Classification of Products (GSCP), the NSC works with large lists of goods. The list of food has
about 1,170 items, the list of non-food items, including industrial goods, is more than 7,000 items. Nevertheless, the work has already begun on putting down the COICOP codes in these lists, however, this work is in the initial stage and so far only at the level of the COICOP sections. To complete the recoding the technical assistance is necessary.

4. Why does the section 1 of Questionnaire 3 attempt to take food stocks in household into account (the purpose of the purchase is for storage, processing ...), however, in the section 2, stocks are not indicated as a source of food?

Comment: There is no special recording of stocks within statistical forms for household budget surveys in Kyrgyzstan. In the section 1, this position is defined as a simple clarification of the purpose of the purchase.

5. Why the section 3 does not give answer "food delivery to home"?

Comment: were agreed to consider the possibility of adjusting the question of expenditure on food outside the home.

6. Do households keep records of service expenditures? Or should they, at the time of the interviewer’s visit, remember the expenditures of services rendered "last month, a month ago, two months ago"? What if there are no receipts or checks?

Comment: The verification and records The Questionnaire 5 "Journal of the recording of household expenditures on non-food items" is conducted during the first, third, fifth and seventh visits during the year. Thus, the interviewer collects data for the three previous months and, as a result, provides data on the expenditures of every surveyed household for 12 months. It was agreed that it is sometimes difficult for a family to remember value of payment for services, especially if there are no checks or receipts for them.

7. Does the list of non-food products in groups 1-19 of section 1 of the Questionnaire 6 fully comply with the COICOP classes, in the sense that it is possible to move from the list of Kyrgyzstan to the COICOP through a simple aggregation procedure?

Comment: there is no full concordance between the lists of non-food items, for example, the "Personal hygiene products" group includes both shaving and manicure accessories, blades, and electric hair dryers, hair tongs electric or ordinary. These products belong to various classes of COICOP – 12.1.2 and 12.1.3. Therefore, to bring the list in accordance with the COICOP will require additional thorough work.

8. Why in the section 2 "Housing and communal expenses" are taken into account the size of subsidies and compensation?

Comment: these questions have already been excluded from the questionnaire "... due to loss of relevance". In support of this, the document on revising questionnaires on household statistics was provided.

9. What is the purpose of section 3 "Expenditures on healthcare" asking questions 2 and 5 (the number of visits for medical assistance)? How appropriate are questions 1, 4, 7? Maybe it will be better to use the wording "If you went to the doctor, then estimate the costs ...." A similar question for other sections of the Questionnaire.

Comment: These questions are asked to obtain information for different study - regular monitoring of the SDG indicators in the health sector.
10. In section 5 "Expenditures on education and child care" with the right integrated approach, however there are no columns for recording expenditures for school clothes and shoes, textbooks, books and stationery ... Why?

Comment: agreed to consider the proposal to include these categories of expenditures in the forms of the education expenditure section.

11. In section 6 "Other family expenses", question 15 deals with real estate tax but questions on land and water taxes are not asked. At the same time, question 34 is "Did your family have expenditures to pay other taxes, fees and charges other than real estate, land, water and income tax".

Comment: Agreed on the need to clarify the list of mandatory tax payments in accordance with the legislation of Kyrgyzstan.

12. Why does section 6 include the question of passing technical inspection? Why is the question of buying grain included?

Comment: after discussing the issue of the expenditure of technical inspection, agreed to move it to the section on services related to the operation of personal vehicles. The issue of buying grain is included for those households (mainly in rural areas) that do not produce their own grain but buy it for baking bread.

13. Section 6 itself looks rather cumbersome due to the inclusion of questions like "Did you pay? "Yes / No". It is proposed to simplify the question: remove the such type questions and merge similar types of payments in the aggregated tables.

Comment: Agreed to consider this proposal when developing the new "Other financial expenditure" section within the pilot project.

14. Is it possible to modify the section 6.1 "Expenditures for payment of services" in the order that corresponds to the order of sections, groups, classes (and possibly categories) of the COICOP?

Comment: agreed with the rational of this change, but in a more distant future, after the end of the pilot project and based on its results.

Discussion of the income module

15. Consideration of the classification and coding of income.

Comment: the classification of received current transfers was of particular interest. It was agreed that the consultant, based on the questionnaire and the HS Instruction, would try to classify all the incomes indicated in them.

16. Clarification of individual elements of the questionnaire. Why are mandatory payments excluded from the definition of income from employment? How are these deductions recorded?

Comment: respondents provide information themselves, that is, data is collected without taking into account mandatory payments. However, the situation was considered when the tax is paid in a different time and accordingly the income is recorded not as net one, but as gross one. The possibility of this situation was accepted by staff of the NSC.
17. The questionnaire uses the indicator of income from self-employed. How are entrepreneurship income accounted for?

Comment: it was clarified that entrepreneurship income is also included under this indicator.

18. A large set of questions was discussed to clarify the components of social transfers.

Comment: Most of the indicators listed in the questionnaire and instructions were reviewed in terms of their functional purpose. It was found that the functional purpose of benefits could be determined easily enough.

19. How are sources of origin identified, especially for current transfers?

Comment: Sources of origin are indicated for individual questions, for example, what kind of financial assistance from relatives or friends did your family receive or social transfers from local authorities, enterprises or organisations. However, they are not included out separately.

20. A discussion was held on the proposals of the consultant to conduct a pilot survey.

Comment: The issues of expanding the list of indicators for income from employment, revision of the components of social transfers received and sources of origin were considered here.

Discussion of deprivation module

21. Assessment of deprivations in the questionnaire.

22. Development of harmonised forms based on country forms and model questionnaire.

Comment: Consultant jointly with the representatives of the NSC committee reviewed HS questionnaires and discussed the model questionnaire.

Consultant pointed out that unlike other countries, Kyrgyzstan’s HBS questionnaires have well-developed deprivations modules to assess deprivations in education and healthcare. The majority of questions about deprivations in housing conditions coincide with those proposed in the model questionnaire.

Consultant proposed a set of recommendations, which were discussed during the training. Overall general, the recommendations were well received by the NSC representatives, and they asked the consultant to clarify the following:

1. NSC representatives asked the Consultant to clarify the definition of “dilapidated” dwelling. Consultant mentioned that there is a nationally established methodology for defining dilapidated dwelling.

2. NSC representatives commented on the list of durable goods. They mentioned that the list has already been shortened by 20 items and it will be further modified in accordance with Consultant’s recommendations.

3. NSC representatives asked to describe the methodology of ranking problems listed in “Self-assessment of poverty” section. Consultant explained the methodology in detail.

4. Representatives of the NSC KR have questions regarding how to correctly determine material deprivations in clothes, changing worn-out shoes. The consultant explained that it was possible to clarify the wording of the proposed question, which was later reflected in the relevant section of the main report.
The consultant’s recommendations on deprivations module include the following:

- Creation of new sections on material deprivations, and further reduction in the number of durables up to six items.
- Adding new sections into current questionnaires that will assess deprivations in social protection system and internet access.
- Creation new separate sections on Self-assessment of poverty.

Overall, consensus about the proposed recommendations on model questionnaire introduction between NSC representatives and the consultant has been achieved.