

Summary

Title	Social Protection Consultant, Child Sensitive Social Assistance in Viet Nam
Purpose	To provide technical support for the initial phase of the Child Sensitive Social Assistance programme in Da Nang.
Location	Viet Nam
Duration	15 May 2022 - 31 December 2022 (100 days)
Start Date	15 May 2022
Reporting to	Vincenzo Vinci, Chief of Social Policy and Governance
Type of consultancy	International
WBS/PBA Expiry Date	Regional Thematic Fund on Social Protection SC180821
Project and activity codes	WBS 5200/A0/06/884/002

Background

Social protection is a key policy instrument for reducing poverty and vulnerability, building human capital, empowering women, and girls, improving and safeguarding livelihoods from economic shocks, climate and environmental risks and pandemics.

Only 10 per cent of children and less than 1 per cent of children under 36 months of age in Viet Nam have access to cash assistance.¹ In addition, Viet Nam allocates only 0.04 per cent of annual GDP for regular cash support to children.² Furthermore, the coverage of social assistance is inadequate to produce positive outcomes due to its fragmentation, the inadequate financial resources allocated and the complex targeting system, resulting in high exclusion error and therefore not reaching those people most in needs (such as persons and children with disabilities, the elderly, or the poor single parents with children).

Insufficient recognition of covariate risks and lack of a legal basis for shock-responsive and gender transformative social protection challenge effective preparedness and response to economic, climate, environmental and health risks. This is further constrained by the limited capacity to generate evidence and use the data to inform decision-making. This requires the development of appropriate reforms to support the strengthening of the national social protection system for all children.

Over the past decade, the reform agenda of social protection in Viet Nam has seen significant progress. In 2017, Viet Nam marked a key milestone when the Prime Minister approved the Master Plan on Social Assistance Reform and Development (MPSARD) 2017-2025 and Vision to 2030, serving as the first comprehensive social assistance framework in Viet Nam. The plan envisages an ambitious scaling up of social assistance, with the overall aim of progressively realizing universal access.

In 2021, the Government issued the Decree 20/2021 replacing the Decree 136/2013 serving as the most important decree on cash assistance in Viet Nam. With the renewed focus in the first 1,000 days of life. As of 2021, more than 3.1 million people received regular benefit (about 3 per cent of the population) of which about 51,000 are orphans and 70,000 are disabled children (MOLISA,

¹ UNICEF (2017) Assessment of Targeting Approaches and Mechanisms (Inclusion and Exclusion Errors) in Existing Social Assistance Schemes.

² UNICEF calculation based on the household survey data of 2019.

December 2021). The newly issued Decree 20 reflects an expansion in social assistance coverage for only a small group of children under 3 years old from poor households living in ethnic minority communities in mountainous areas. The Decree 20 also includes an important article allowing provinces and cities with an existing and potential fiscal space to have the flexibility to make decisions on the coverage and the value of the benefits to be transferred to beneficiaries. However, the revised Decree 20 is still categorical, narrowly targeted and without a roadmap for a progressive introduction of a universal social assistance for children, especially those aged 0-3 years old nor the inclusion of emergency and shock responsive cash assistance for children. Finally, the Decree 20 does not provide guidance to strengthen the linkages between social assistance beneficiaries and access to essential services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has showed that social protection system needs modernization. The support provided to households and children in response to the pandemic has been limited in terms of coverage, linkages to essential services, the adequacy of the benefits delivered, the complexity of targeting and limitation in the current management information system which have resulted in inclusion and exclusion errors in the identification of the people most in need.

The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Assistance (MOLISA) is the government body responsible for the administration, implementation, and general oversight of social protection in Viet Nam. Over the past years, MOLISA and UNICEF have developed a strong partnership to promote and protect children's rights in Viet Nam. Under the new Country Programme Document of 2022-2026, UNICEF Viet Nam Country Office continues its collaboration with MOLISA in strengthening the integrated and child-sensitive, shock responsive and gender transformative social protection systems.

At sub-national level, UNICEF Viet Nam has cooperated with Da Nang City since 2020 with a focus on evidence generation to inform the planning, development and implementation of child sensitive socio-economic development plans and City Programme of Action on Children. Da Nang is a vibrant economic hub and has been experiencing rapid urbanization and stable economic growth. Da Nang is one among few self-financing provinces in Viet Nam. In addition, Da Nang is one of the sub-national authorities to have increased the level of social assistance allowance, expanded the group of beneficiaries for social assistance, and added an education subsidy.

Da Nang City People's Committee endorsed since 2017 the establishment of one social work collaborator³ at each ward/commune.⁴ While there has been existence of a social work collaborator at grassroot level in Da Nang and a linkage between the social assistance and the access to essential services including education, health and nutrition is still a major concern. Some contributing factors are the limited awareness and knowledge of social assistance clients, the capacity of frontline workers, the limited inter-sectoral coordination and the capacity to collect, analyse and take appropriate actions to respond to people's needs.

Therefore, it is key to work at central and sub-national level to test child sensitive social assistance interventions which will help to address the different forms of poverty with particular focus on children and the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Purpose and objective and rationale

The overall objective of this consultancy is to support the national and local governments in exploring avenues to assess feasibility to promote child sensitive social assistance interventions and promote the systems approach to social protection. This includes promoting and supporting the design of gender-, child-sensitive and shock responsive social protection approaches, strengthening the capacity of central and local administration; improve the linkages between social assistance beneficiaries and access to essential services for children and vulnerable

³ The social work collaborator is responsible among other for consolidating assistance requests from people in community, providing suggestions on referrals to social protection and social work centers, health-rehabilitation facilities, educational-training institutions and other suitable establishments.

⁴ Based on the Circular#07/2013 on the standards of social work collaborator at ward/commune level issued by MOLISA.

families, also via the involvement of the social service workforce. Furthermore, the initiative will help inform national social protection system's reform agenda and strategy. Furthermore, this assignment will support the development of TORs to undertake and evaluation of the project using qualitative methods and focusing on operational research, scalability and lessons learned. This assignment requires specialized expertise on social protection and experience with working with Government at both national and sub-national level.

Scope and methodology

Social Protection consultant will support UNICEF Social Policy and Governance section in the initial phase of the implementation of the Child Sensitive Social Assistance programme in Da Nang. This will include the review of the relevant documents on social protection and meeting and interview with local authorities and key informants.

This assignment includes:

- Geographical selection of the intervention areas, the development of relevant documents such as TORs, concept notes, and technical contribution to relevant consultation meetings.
- Design and coordinate the Launching workshop of the Programme
- Need assessment, esp. of the vulnerable groups and with gender perspectives
- Design of the Programme WP for the first two years and an M&E framework
- Development of a monitoring tool for the social assistance component
- Support to the policy advocacy work for social assistance policy reform

The position will be home-based (with the exception of two travels to Hanoi and Da Nang) for the period May – December 2022.

Tasks, deliverables and workplan

Activities	Deliverables	Time Frames (no of days) Tentative Dates
1. During the Inception Phase of the 'Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme', support the geographical selection of intervention areas in Da Nang based on a comprehensive dialogue with national and local authorities and general stakeholders (10 days): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In close consultation with UNICEF, MOLISA, local authorities (DOLISA, People's Committee, etc.) and relevant stakeholders (Development Partners, NGOs, etc.), to develop detailed criteria/check list for selection of districts and communes (rural)/wards (urban) for rolling out 'Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme' in Da Nang. • In close collaboration with UNICEF, MOLISA and Da Nang DOLISA, organize consultative 	<p>Agreed criteria for selection of geographical intervention areas in Da Nang.</p> <p>Consultation meeting conducted.</p> <p>List of specific districts and communes/wards for rolling out 'Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme' validated by MOLISA and local authorities.</p>	May-June 2022

Activities	Deliverables	Time Frames (no of days) Tentative Dates
meeting with related stakeholders to agree on geographical intervention areas.		
2. Conceptualize and coordinate launching workshop of the Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme in Da Nang (10 days): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In close collaboration with UNICEF, MOLISA and Da Nang DOLISA to develop the concept note for the launching workshop including the list of participants and agenda. In close collaboration with UNICEF, ensure smooth logistical arrangements for the workshop. In close collaboration with UNICEF and related stakeholders (MOLISA and DOLISA) to agree on main contents, facilitators and methodology of workshop sessions. To attend the workshop and support facilitation of sessions where required. To document workshop in a 5-10 pages workshop report capturing main agreed action points and recommendations. 	<p>Availability of the concept note for the launching workshop.</p> <p>Launching workshop of the 'Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme' in Da Nang conducted.</p> <p>Workshop report available</p>	May-June 2022
3. During Inception Phase of the programme, coordinate and advice on initial activities of the 'Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme' (25 days): <p>In close collaboration with UNICEF, MOLISA and DOLISA, to support the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a 'light' Needs Assessment in the selected areas to identify deprivations and assess the specific needs of the most vulnerable and beneficiaries of social assistance interventions. 	Availability of Needs Assessment Report	June-December 2022
4. Develop a detailed Workplan for the first two years of 'Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme' in Da Nang with explicit milestones (inclusive of easy-to-use Monitoring Framework) (15 days): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In close collaboration with UNICEF, MOLISA and DOLISA identify envisaged activities for implementation of 'Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme' in Da Nang in 2022-2023. 	<p>Availability of 2-year workplan on 'Child Sensitive Social Assistance Programme' in Da Nang</p> <p>Availability of monitoring framework</p>	June - July 2022

Activities	Deliverables	Time Frames (no of days) Tentative Dates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a detailed Workplan with explicit milestones for the first two years. Develop an Easy-to-Use Monitoring Framework based on the agreed Workplan. Develop in close collaboration with UNICEF comprehensive ToRs for an evaluation of the programme (qualitative approach based on operation research with focus on lesson learned and scalability of the programme interventions). Validate the Workplan and Monitoring Framework at national and sub-national levels. 	Availability of relevant TORs	
5. Develop monitoring tools for social assistance component (15 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing monitoring tools for monitoring social assistance interventions. Developed monitoring tools in line with child sensitive social protection objectives. Test monitoring tools at district level. Incorporate comments from stakeholders. 	Availability of monitoring tools for social assistance interventions	June - September 2022
6. Support the advocacy work on the expansion of child sensitive and shock responsive social assistance in selected provinces and cities (25 days): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary data analysis to provide budget estimates to support universal child grant in Da Nang, Soc Trang, Dien Bien and Gia Lai and power point. Develop concept note for an advocacy workshop with MOLISA and local authorities to promote gender-, child-sensitive and shock responsive social assistance (using social assistance evidence gathered). Develop advocacy paper and presentation to summarize proposed changes to policies on operational guidelines (currently being developed) adapted to provincial context. 	Availability of report and presentations on costing universal child grant in Da Nang, Soc Trang, Dien Bien and Gia Lai. Availability of concept note on advocacy workshops Availability of advocacy paper and presentation	July-December 2022

Travel

The consultant is expected to travel to Hanoi and Da Nang (tentatively two times for a period of two weeks each time).

Management

The consultant will be supervised by the Chief of Social Policy and Governance Programme /UNICEF Viet Nam. The consultant needs to coordinate with colleagues from UNICEF SPG team, programme sections, Government counterparts, especially MOLISA and Da Nang DOLISA.

Payment Schedule

Payment for the assignment will be made upon the delivery of key deliverables in three instalments as follows:

- The 1st payment upon the delivery of activity 1 and 2 (30%)
- The 2nd payment upon the delivery of activity 3 and 4 (40%)
- The last payment upon the delivery of activity 5 and 6 (30%)

Performance indicators for evaluation

- Quality of deliverables meet the standards set by UNICEF and specifications outlined in the contract.
- Deliverables are submitted in a timely manner as indicated in the contract.
- Technical assistance delivered in a contextualized and tactful manner, drawing on the inputs from UNICEF and partners.
- Performance evaluation will be completed at the end of the assignment.

Expected background and Experience

- Post-Graduate degree in Social Sciences, Development Economics, Social Protection, or any related field, PhD would be an asset;
- 5-7 years professional working experience with integrated Social Protection Programmes targeting the most vulnerable, ideally in rural and urban contexts of ASEAN region;
- Demonstrable professional experience in the Social Protection sector of Viet Nam;
- Extensive and applied knowledge of relevant Social Protection Policies in Viet Nam;
- Demonstrable experience at national and sub-national levels regarding the effective design and implementation of 'Cash Plus' programme in the countries with similar context of Viet Nam;
- Excellent knowledge of global Social Protection context and UNICEF policies in this area; Working Experience with UNICEF would be an asset;
- Excellent planning and monitoring skills;
- Excellent networking, communication and coordination skills;
- Outstanding analytical, negotiating and advocacy skills;
- Excellent writing and presentation skills;
- Fluent in English.

Assessment criteria

For evaluation and selection method, the Cumulative Analysis Method (weight combined score method) shall be used for this recruitment:

Technical Qualification (max. 100 points) weight 80 %

Financial Proposal (max. 100 points) weight 20 %

Technical Evaluation (80%)	100 points
An advanced background degree or equivalent in public health, nutrition, early childhood development, education development & management, public policy development, social protection or related fields, 30 points.	30
At least 8-10 years progress professional work experience at government ministry/national institution level in the field of school nutrition, maternal and child nutrition, public health, early childhood development; education development & management; food administration; policy analysis in Viet Nam, 30 points.	30
Familiar with government system work, especially in Social Protection at national and sub-national level.	20
Proven a strong experience in qualitative research work	20
Financial evaluation (20%)	100 points

The maximum number of points shall be allotted to the lowest Financial Proposal that is opened /evaluated and compared among those technical qualified candidates who have attained a minimum 70 points score in the technical evaluation. Other Financial Proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price.

The Contract shall be awarded to candidate obtaining the highest combined technical and financial scores, subject to the satisfactory result of the verification interview if needed.