

Consultancy with UNICEF Belize

Social Policy response to COVID-19 in Belize

Terms of Reference

1. Short Description of Assignment

This consultancy will focus primarily on supporting the Social Protection response to COVID-19 in Belize, in the framework of the development of the National Social Protection Strategy/Policy, by providing technical expertise to identify, design and support the implementation of shock-responsive Social Protection initiatives, in particular for the most vulnerable children and families.

The consultancy will also support the continued building of a vision and path towards the establishment of a comprehensive and sustainable Social Protection Floor, the development of a national multidimensional poverty measurement, and the analysis of levels and gaps of investments/public finance for children, with a special attention to vulnerable children and adolescents' needs.

2. Duty station

Belize City, Belize. Central America.

3. Background and Justification

Belize's medium term strategy, the Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy (GSDS) was launched in 2016, and highlights the importance of a more holistic social protection system in light of the high rates of poverty that affects the wellbeing of a substantial portion of the population, and that affects children and adolescents in greater proportion (50% of under 15 years of age, above the overall average of 42% and above any other age group¹).

In 2016 the MHDSTPA in collaboration with UNICEF and UNDP conducted a "[Comprehensive Review of Belize's Social Protection System with Policy Recommendations for System Strengthening](#)" (Otter, Butterworth and Villalobos, 2016). This report defined social protection within Belize, provided a number of recommendations including **implementing a social protection floor (SPF)**, and proposed an M&E environment for both social protection programs and the macro system itself, along with a **multidimensional poverty index (MPI)**, with an emphasis on multidimensional child poverty.

All these recommendations were adopted by the technical steering committee and the social sector CEO caucus (Ministries of Health, Education, Human Development and the Office of the Prime Minister).

In 2018 and 2019, with the support of a previous UNICEF supported consultancy "Strengthening the Social Protection System in Belize", the following results have been achieved:

¹ Source: *Belize Country Poverty Assessment, Final Report, August 2010*. In terms of multidimensional child poverty, in 2011, 58.1% of children aged under 18 in Belize lived in multidimensional poverty and 31.8% was living in extreme multidimensional poverty, according to estimations using a UNICEF-ECLAC rights-based approach.

Through a [series of 4 Social Protection \(SP\) conferences](#), the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation (MHDSTPA), with UNICEF, ILO and World Bank support, engaged national partners in dialogue on implementable recommendations to strengthen the SP system through the development of a SPF. The series built on an integrated approach, which included labour, multidimensional poverty and SP in emergencies.

Some of the concrete results of the Conference, in addition to the important [knowledge resources](#) generated by those events, include the following:

The CEO Caucus agreed to the development of a national SPF, and a Social Protection Performance and Expenditure Review is currently being finalized under the leadership of the Ministry of Human Development, and with the support of ILO and UNICEF. The World Food Programme (WFP) and Oxford Policy Management have also developed a case study on [Shock Responsive Social Protection in Belize](#). With the support of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), national capacities on concepts and measurement of multidimensional poverty have been strengthened. As part of strengthening national capacities to conduct Participatory Poverty Assessments, UNICEF also supported specific capacity-building on consulting children including the development of a specific toolkit.

While continuing to support the implementation of BOOST Plus, following the outbreak of COVID-19 in Belize, UNICEF has been providing support to the COVID-19 Food Assistance Programme, and is now supporting the Ministry of Human Development in expanding its cash transfers programmes, including in the design and implementation of the 6-months Belize COVID-19 Cash Transfer (BCCAT) programme (horizontal expansion of BOOST programme), through the collection of 10,500 households beneficiaries' data.

In this context, UNICEF Social Policy work in Belize will focus on supporting the MHDSTPA and country's efforts to ensure the most vulnerable children and the most affected by the impacts of COVID-19 are being reached by Social Protection initiatives, but also that the major policy recommendations coming out of the SPER are being acted upon, namely to develop a national Social Protection Strategy and continue the development of a sustainable Social Protection Floor -including analyzing options towards Universal Child Benefits-, and to continue supporting the adoption of a national Multidimensional Poverty Index, with emphasis on multidimensional child poverty. In addition, there is a need to analyze both the current levels and gaps of investments in children in the social sector, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. In supporting Social Policy work in Belize, close coordination will continue with relevant Social Policy partners, i.e. MHDSTPA, Statistical Institute of Belize, UN agencies and the World Bank.

4. Goal / Objective

4.1. Identify, design and support the implementation of shock-responsive Social Protection interventions amid COVID-19 crisis, including through supporting the current BCCAT, and expansion of BOOST/BOOST Plus, ensuring the inclusion of the most vulnerable children.

4.2. Support the drafting of a national Social Protection Strategy, and development of a National Social Protection Floor, including analyzing options towards Universal Child Benefits.

- 4.3. Support the development of an official national Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) along with a complementary Multidimensional Child Poverty index (MCPI).
- 4.4. Analyze both the current levels and gaps of investments in children in the social sector, in light of the impacts of COVID-19.

5. Specific tasks

- 5.1. Support the development of the Belize Social Protection Strategy, highlighting results achieved so far in strengthening the Belize Social Protection system, ongoing processes, and including a workplan with recommended actions, timeline and responsibilities of key partners;
- 5.2. Provide support for the further design and implementation of the Social Protection Floor, with emphasis on children and adolescents, through continuing the steps of the Assessment-Based National Dialogue, and supporting the implementation of the recommendations of the Social Protection Performance and Expenditure Review (SPER), in close coordination with ILO;
- 5.3. Identify, design and/or support the implementation of shock-responsive Social Protection interventions/Humanitarian Cash Transfers initiatives amid COVID-19 crisis, including through supporting the current BCCAT, and expansion of BOOST/BOOST Plus, ensuring the inclusion of the most vulnerable children;
- 5.4. In the context of the upcoming development of the official national Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), support the development of the complementary Multidimensional Child Poverty index (MCPI), i.e. support the determination of dimensions and indicators, and poverty consultations with children and adolescents;
- 5.5. Analyze both the current levels and gaps of investments in children in the social sector, in the context of COVID-19 impacts on children;
- 5.6. Develop a document ready for publication on lessons learned/best practices on Social Policy response to COVID-19, and support the development of a proposal to donors for fund raising;
- 5.7. Potential other tasks in support to Social Policy response to COVID-19, to be defined in close coordination with the supervisor.

6. Specific deliverables

- 6.1. Monthly report on activities and results, attaching the following specific products, to be reviewed and agreed by the supervisor;
- 6.2. Draft of the Belize Social Protection Strategy, including workplan with recommended actions, timeline and responsibilities of key partners;
- 6.3. Report on the implementation of the major steps of the Social Protection Floor Assessment-Based National Dialogue, including on the implementation of the SPER recommendations;
- 6.4. Identification and analysis of gaps and challenges, proposed solutions, and follow-up on implementation to ensure inclusion of the most vulnerable children in BCCAT and BOOST/BOOST Plus;
- 6.5. Proposal and report on: a) the proposed MCPI dimensions; b) participative poverty consultations with children and adolescents;
- 6.6. Document analyzing both the current levels and gaps of investments in children in the social sector, in the context of COVID-19 impacts on children, including policy/programmatic recommendations for policy advocacy;

6.7. Document ready for publication on lessons learned/best practices on Social Policy response to COVID-19;

6.8. Proposal on Social Policy response to COVID-19 ready to be sent to donors for fund raising purpose.

7. Duration of the contract and working conditions

The contract will have a duration of 11,5 months, of which a minimum of 6 months in-country. The contract could be extended depending of confirmation of need, satisfactory performance, and availability of funding.

Full-time consultancy supervised by UNICEF Belize Programme Coordinator and Social Policy Specialist.

8. Planned Budget and Funding Source

Funding source: CPD outcome 1 Regular Resources.

9. Proposed Schedule for Deliverables and Payment Scheme:

Deliverables	Dates	Payments
1. Workplan of the consultancy. Outline (1 st draft) of the Social Protection Strategy	End of month 1	Deliverable 1
2. Document of identification and analysis of gaps and challenges, and proposed solutions, to include most vulnerable children in BCCAT, BOOST/BOOST Plus	End of month 2	Deliverable 2
3. Draft document analyzing both the current levels and gaps of investments in children in the social sector	End of month 3	Deliverable 3
4. Donor proposal on Social Policy response to COVID-19; and 2 nd draft of the Social Protection Strategy	End of month 4	Deliverable 4
5. Proposal on MCPI dimensions, and poverty consultations with children and adolescents.	End of month 5	Deliverable 5
6. Final document analyzing both the current levels and gaps of investments in children in the social sector, including policy/programmatic recommendations for policy advocacy	End of month 6	Deliverable 6
7. Report on implementation of proposed solutions, to include most vulnerable children in BCCAT, BOOST/BOOST Plus	End of month 7	Deliverable 7
8. Report on the implementation of the major steps of the Social Protection Floor Assessment-Based National Dialogue, including on the implementation of the SPER recommendations.	End of month 8	Deliverable 8
9. Final Social Protection strategy, including workplan with recommended actions, timeline and responsibilities of key partners.	End of month 9	Deliverable 9
10. Report on: a) the proposed MCPI dimensions; b) participative poverty consultations with children and adolescents.	End of month 10	Deliverable 10
11. Document ready for publication on lessons learned/best practices on Social Policy response to COVID-19.	End of month 11	Deliverable 11
12. Final report	End of contract	Deliverable 12

*Estimated Travel-Related costs including accommodation costs: Lump sum

10. Minimum Qualifications Required

- Master's Degree in Social Policy, Economics, Public Finance Management, Public Policy and/or Administration, Social Sciences or other relevant disciplines
- Minimum of 5 years of relevant experience in social development, socio-economic analysis, and social protection. Experience in child related policies is an asset
- Extensive knowledge of social protection (including applied to emergencies), poverty measurement, and/or public finance
- Previous relevant experience with the United Nations, international cooperation agencies or government institutions is an asset
- Work experience in Belize or the Caribbean region is an advantage
- Experience in interacting with/coordinated work between government institutions, international cooperation and civil society
- Experience/knowledge of social policy research and analysis
- Ability to write high quality technical documents
- Capacity to work in a team, and to adequately juggle with competing priorities
- Excellent spoken and written English



----- 29 10 2020

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Programme Coordinator and Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF Belize



----- 29 October 2020

Approved by: Alison Parker

Representative, UNICEF Belize

Date: -----