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## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **CONSULTANT – STOCKTAKE AND REVIEW OF SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN THE COOK ISLANDS**

#### **A. JOB INFORMATION**

<b>Location</b>	Cook Islands
<b>Application deadline</b>	18 August 2020
<b>Type of Contract</b>	Individual Contractor
<b>Post Level</b>	International Consultant
<b>Languages required:</b>	English
<b>Duration of Contract:</b>	36 working days from September 2020 to November 2020
<b>Title:</b>	Consultant for the Stocktake and Review of Social Protection Systems in the Cook Islands.

#### **B. PROGRAMME TITLE**

**Strengthening Resilience of Pacific Islands States through Universal Social Protection (also known as the ‘Social Protection Joint Programme’).**

#### **C. BACKGROUND**

The 'Strengthening Resilience of Pacific Island States through Universal Social Protection' (SP) programme is a joint initiative by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) <sup>1</sup> and Governments in Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau. The Joint Programme is being implemented in these four Pacific Islands and Territories (PICTs), from June 2020 to December 2021.

The four PICTs are among the most fragile Small Island Developing States (SIDS) due to their isolated geography, small economies and vulnerability (to climate change and external shocks). With limited economic opportunities, quality of life for many of the local people have deteriorated with increased, poverty, social exclusion and inequality.<sup>2</sup> An increased number of local people are facing economic hardships unable to meet basic needs. Urbanisation and monetisation are changing lifestyles and social dynamics creating new forms of hardships, such as high costs of living and lack of access to basic services and decent employment opportunities. Increased non-communicable diseases, alcohol abuse and domestic violence are key concerns.

<sup>1</sup> The participating UN agencies are the UNDP (UN Development Programme), UNECAP (UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), UNICEF (UN International Children's Fund), UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), and ILO (International Labour Organisation).

<sup>2</sup> Approximately 13% of the population in Niue, 19% in Samoa and 28% in Cook Islands are living below the national poverty line.

Social Protection (SP) is relatively novel in the four PICTs, and existing SP initiatives are fragmented and limited in scope. The SP Joint Programme (JP) aims at increasing resilience through viable and financially sustainable SP systems that will address life cycle vulnerabilities, strengthen SP floors and enhance employability. The objective is to develop universal, evidence-based, nationally owned SP systems and introduce SP floors to help accelerate SDG progress through integrated programming and Leaving No One Behind. Government ownership and leadership are critical for sustainable inclusive SP systems. The SP governance structure involves a Multi Country Steering Committee (MCSC) and a Technical Committee for each of the four PICTs.<sup>3</sup> The Technical Committee will be actively involved with steering the implementation of the Joint Programme.

In line with the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of the UNDP Pacific Strategy 2018-2022, the Social Protection Joint Programme (SP-JP) will work through five strategic interventions in developing and strengthening of coherent SP frameworks and systems - data and evidence; inclusive participation and partnerships; sustainable finance; institutional coordination and capacity; and outreach. Inclusive SP systems will include fiscally sustainable social insurance schemes for the active population seeking or holding jobs, self-employed or voluntarily contributing; non-contributive social welfare (child allowance, social safety nets and social services) for all people in need; as well as labour market interventions to facilitate access to jobs and incomes. SP will be evidence based (including using digital data and innovative data systems), developed and implemented through participatory consultations, have equitable financing mechanisms, forge strong partnerships with stakeholders including faith, community based organizations and the private sector, induce smarter institutional coordination, bolster capacity for implementation, and expand outreach.

The Social Protection Joint Programme (SP-JP) has four outcomes, all of which UNDP will be contributing to:

- **Outcome 1:** Universal, inclusive & equitable SP systems Leave No One Behind. Introduction of SP floors and design of contributive and non-contributive schemes to respond to multidimensional vulnerability.
- **Outcome 2:** SP floors are efficiently and effectively administered (financial management, institutional framework and capacity, evidence-based planning drawing on robust information management systems). Digital data and information management systems in all four countries will strengthen integrity of the SP system, keep SP equitable, responsive and geared to inclusive distribution of resources while increasing efficiency and effectiveness of delivery set up. Data innovation will be used including through the mechanisms that the Pacific Pulse Lab will develop to measure poverty and address vulnerability of 250,000 people in the four countries.
- **Outcome 3:** Financial inclusion enables low transaction cost transfers of SP benefits. Payment system for all benefits through banks and involving mobile banking will be designed. Individual accounts will also collect remittances. Monthly revenues will be used to guarantee borrowing for small business start-ups. Efficiency gains due to low transaction costs will be an indirect benefit.
- **Outcome 4:** Increased resilience as disability, gender, youth and climate related contingencies are being mainstreamed. While SP floors will be developed, emphasis will be placed on labour market integration of job seekers including persons living with disabilities, school dropouts, women and youth more generally. Also, as natural hazards and other climate change-related

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<sup>3</sup> Includes representatives of the Government, Private Sector and Civil Society organisations in the Cook Islands that are dealing directly with social protection.

risks impact the poor more significantly, recognizing the solidarity nature of the SP systems, specific benefits will be designed to help individuals and households recover from disasters.

Owing to its wide scope that spans life-cycle vulnerabilities, the developed and strengthened SP floors are expected to improve Human Development indices, reduce inequalities; and support skills development and employment generation. Income security will reduce poverty and hunger, minimize inequalities and ensure equitable access to basic services. Inclusive, rights-based SP floors will empower women, remove discrimination in access to services and facilitate access to decent work for all including persons with disabilities, school dropouts, youth and women.

To assist with the implementation of the Social Protection Joint Programme component for the Cook Islands, UNDP is seeking the service of a qualified consultant to work with the UNDP and the SP-JP Cook Islands Technical Committee in the review of existing social protection systems and coverage gaps in the Cook Islands.

## D. SCOPE OF WORK

### Objectives

The objectives of the consultancy are to:

- i). Carry out a stock take of social protection systems (social protection floors, policies, laws, schemes, coverage, budget, operating and administrative, monitoring and evaluation systems, etc.) in the Cook Islands; and
- ii). Conduct a comprehensive review of the social protection systems in the Cook Islands for the identification of gaps, implementation and administrative issues, and areas for improvement.

### Tasks

To achieve the above objectives, the Consultant is expected to ensure the effective and efficient performance and completion of the following tasks:

- i). Carry out a complete stock take of all SP systems (social protection floors, frameworks/policies, laws, schemes, coverage, budget, operating and administrative systems, monitoring and evaluation systems, etc.) in the Cook Islands.
- ii). Carry out the required consultations with stakeholders on the review of social protection systems in the Cook Islands.
- iii). Carry out a comprehensive review of the SP systems in the Cook Islands through the lens of inclusiveness, equity, financial sustainability, gender sensitivity; and prioritized areas for improvements. The review must encompass all required components of the SP systems.
- iv). The Review must address the following areas:
  - Views of key stakeholders on the SP systems in the Cook Islands.
  - Strengths and weaknesses of the SP systems, which will include a benchmark of the SP systems in the Cook Islands against key components of a universal SP system.
  - Gap analysis of existing SP systems – policies/frameworks, laws, schemes, coverage, budget, governance, operating and administrative systems, extent of effective and efficient implementation, monitoring and evaluation systems, implementation deficiencies, capacity gaps, etc.
  - A gender-sensitive analysis of the SP systems in the Cook Islands.

- Contribution of both the formal and informal systems (current and potentials) to the social protections systems in the Cook Islands.
- v). Prepare and submit the following requirements as part of the Review’s recommendations:
- Prioritized recommendations on areas needing improvement.
  - An implementation plan outlining the strategies, actions, and budget.
  - Required arrangements for the implementation of the recommended areas for improvement.
  - A Business case for the submission and presentation of the proposed recommendations to the Government of the Cook Islands for decision-making.
- vi). Seek other expert inputs on the Review of the Social Protection Systems for the Cook Islands.
- vii). Present the Review of the SP systems in the Cook Islands to the key stakeholders including the Cook Islands Technical Committee and the Multi Country Steering Committee (MCSC).
- viii). Ensure incorporation of expert, stakeholder, MCSC and Technical Committee inputs into the finalisation of the Review of the Social Protections in the Cook Islands.

### Expected outputs and deliverables

In line with the scope of work outlined above, the Consultant is expected to ensure the effective and efficient completion and submission of the outputs and deliverables within the timelines specified in Table 1 below:

*Table 1: Outputs, deliverables and timelines*

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Timeline (days)</b>
i). Inception – detailing how the consultant will carry out the consultancy within the required scope and timelines.	Inception report outlining the approach, methodology and work plan for the consultancy.	2 days
i) Stock take of all SP systems in the Cook Islands, as per Terms of Reference.	A brief written outline of existing SP systems in the Cook Islands.	5 days
ii) Review of the SP systems in the Cook Islands – encompassing the areas stipulated under Section D of this Terms of Reference.	Draft Report on the Review of SP systems in the Cook Islands.	20 days
iii) Presentation of the Draft Review Report to the Technical Committee and Multi Country Steering Committee.	Presentation	1 day
iv) Address inputs from stakeholders, experts, Technical Committee and Multi Country Steering Committee on the Draft Report on the Review of SP systems in the Cook Islands.	Final Report on the Review of SP systems in the Cook Islands.	3 days
v) Brief submission for the presentation of the key Findings of the Review of the SP Systems in the Cook Islands to the Government.	Draft Submission for Review by the Technical Committee before submission to the Cook Islands Government.	5 days
Total		36 days

## Timeframe of the consultancy

Within the timelines specified in Table 1 above, the Consultant is expected to commence this consultancy in 31 August 2020 and to be completed by 30 November 2020.

## Payment schedule

The Consultant will be remunerated in accordance with the effective completion and submission of the required deliverables within the timelines of the required timelines in Table 1. The payment schedule will be processed in accordance with the payment schedule given in Table 2:

*Table 2: Payment schedule*

<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Target Due Date (days) for payment</b>	<b>Amount (USD) to be paid upon UNDP Certification of Deliverable Satisfactory Performance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inception report outlining the approach, methodology and work plan for the consultancy.</li></ul>	3 weeks from the effective date of contract.	1 <sup>st</sup> Payment: 10% of Total Fee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A brief written outline of existing SP systems in the Cook Islands following the completion of the stock take exercise.</li><li>• Draft Report on the Review of SP systems in the Cook Islands.</li></ul>	7 weeks from effective date of contract.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Payment: 25% of Total Fee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation of the Draft Review Report to the Technical Committee and Multi Country Steering Committee.</li><li>• Final Report on the Review of SP systems in the Cook Islands.</li></ul>	10 weeks from effective date of contract.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Payment: 35% of Total Fee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brief submission for the presentation of the key Findings of the Review of the SP Systems in the Cook Islands to the Government.</li></ul>	13 weeks from effective date of contract.	4 <sup>th</sup> Payment: 30% of Total Fee.
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 weeks</b>	<b>Total Amount – 100%</b>

## E. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

### Counterparts and line of reporting

The Consultant will work closely with the Social Protection Joint Programme (SP-JP) UNDP Programme Coordinator, Chief Technical Adviser, the Cook Islands Technical Committee, focal points in the other UN Participating Organisations and the Government of the Cook Islands.

### Inputs by stakeholders, UN agencies and other development partners

All key stakeholders, UN agencies and other development partners will make available to the consultant all relevant information which may assist the consultant in carrying out and completing the Terms of Reference.

## Duty station

Home-based with travel to the Cook Islands (for an overseas consultant as required).

The Consultant will be stationed with the Cook Islands Ministry of Internal Affairs and will also be required to ensure effective engagement with all other agencies and authorities of the Government of the Cook Islands including key stakeholders in the private sector, civil society and development community during the whole process for the Review of the SP Systems in the Cook Islands.

The Consultant will be responsible for making his/her mission travel arrangements in line with UNDP travel policies. Such travel shall be at UNDP's expense and the Individual Contractor shall receive a per diem not to exceed United Nations daily subsistence allowance.

## F. COMPETENCIES OF THE REQUIRED CONSULTANT

### Functional Competencies:

- Strong policy knowledge and skills.
- Strong analytical skills and critical thinking skills.
- Excellent research and evaluative skills.
- Excellent report writing skills.
- Excellent inter-personal and teamwork skills, networking skills, and proven ability to work well in multicultural environments.
- Excellent facilitation and presentation skills.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with various partners including government, civil society, the private sector, UN agencies, development partners, and communities.
- Strong interpersonal and cross-cultural skills and ability to foster relationships with key stakeholders.
- Ability to work under pressure, effectively coordinate others and meet tight deadlines without compromising the quality of work.

### Corporate Competencies:

- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.
- Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards.
- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP.
- Treats all people fairly without favoritism.
- Fulfils all obligations to gender sensitivity and zero tolerance for sexual harassment.

### Qualifications:

- Minimum Master's degree in Political Science, Sociology, Economics, Law, Public administration, Social Policy and/or related social sciences.
- At least 10 years of work experience at international level in Social protection, Social sciences, Sociology, Development economics, Poverty reduction, and/or Labour market and skills development at theoretical and practical levels in the field.
- Proven experience in providing policy and programming advice in the area related to Social Protection, Social Security, Welfare and Well-being.
- Proven track record of experience in undertaking policy development and strengthening work.
- Substantial experience in research related to social protection, poverty reduction, analysing poverty and vulnerability, etc.
- Relevant work experience in the Pacific Islands is a strong advantage.

- Relevant work experience in developing countries in a multi stakeholder environment with a development organization, Government, civil society, private sector, or a research/academic institution.
- Sound understanding of project results-based management would be an asset.
- Proficiency in written and spoken English required.

## G. Assessment of competencies

The assessment of individual consultants will be in accordance with the evaluation criteria below:

- 70% for Technical; and
- 30% for Financial.

Technical Evaluation Criteria will be based on the information provided in the CV and relevant documents that are to be submitted as evidence to support the above required criteria.

Only the top 3 candidates that have achieved a minimum of 49 points (70% of 100 points) will be deemed technically compliant.

The technical competencies will be assessed as per follows:

Competency	Evaluative points
• Minimum Master’s degree in Political science, Sociology, Economics, Law, Public administration, Social Policy and/or related Social sciences.	10
• At least 10 years of work experience at international level in social protection, social sciences, sociology, development economics, poverty reduction, and/or labour market and skills development at theoretical and practical level in the field.	25
• Proven experience in providing policy and programming advice in the area related to Social Protection, Social Security, Welfare and Well-being.	15
• Proven track record of experience in undertaking policy development and strengthening work.	10
• Substantial experience in research related to social protection, poverty reduction, analysing poverty and vulnerability, etc.	10
• Relevant work experience in developing countries in a multi stakeholder environment with a development organization, government, civil society, private sector, or a research/academic institution.	10
• Relevant work experience in the Pacific Islands is a strong advantage.	10
• Sound understanding of project results-based management would be an asset.	5
• Proficiency in English.	5
Total	100

## H. Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

Given below is the recommended format for submitting your proposal. Proposals must include:

- CV or P11 form addressing the evaluation criteria and why you consider yourself the most suitable for this assignment.
- 3 professional references most recent
- A brief methodology on how you will approach and conduct the work,
- Financial Proposal specifying the daily rate and other expenses, if any

- Letter of interest and availability specifying the available date to start and other details (using the template the offer letter as in Annex)

Kindly note you can **upload only ONE document** to this application (scan all documents in one single PDF file to attach).

Proposals must be submitted by **18 August 2020**.

Incomplete applications will not be considered and only candidates for whom there is further interest will be contacted.

Queries about the consultancy can be directed to the UNDP Procurement Unit

[procurement.ws@undp.org](mailto:procurement.ws@undp.org).