

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Strengthening Online Vital Registration and Social Security Allowances (SSA) Registration in Nepal

Consultancy assignment for Agency

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#### 1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION:

Nepal is committed to providing a comprehensive social protection (SP) system for all its citizens, including children. Nepal's social protection system primarily comprises social assistance, social insurance and labour market interventions with about 80 schemes in operation.

The Social Security Allowances (SSA) is the largest social assistance programme which includes a range of non-contributory cash transfer programme targeting vulnerable groups (single women, children, elderly, people with disabilities, minority ethnic groups) throughout their life cycle. In 2019/2020, approximately 2.9 million individuals received SSAs. Within this, the senior citizens' allowance has the highest number of beneficiaries (over one million), followed by the single women's allowance and child grant.<sup>1</sup> As per the administrative data 143,592 People living with Disabilities (PwDs) receive regular cash support—red card holders receive an allowance of NRs. 3000 a month (approx. USD 25), while blue card holders receive an allowance of NRs. 1600 a month (approx. USD 13). Social Assistance schemes are managed by the Department of Civil Registration (DoCR) under the Ministry of Home Affairs and delivered through local governments.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, there has been an increasing need for the local governments to shift their operations online, particularly there has been efforts to register vital events such as birth registration using online platform. UNICEF held local level consultations with *Palikas* wherein strengthening online registrations emerged as one of the key areas of focus. Strengthening will require a change in the current practices of birth registration and cross-agency collaboration, especially with health.

In this regard, the UNICEF Nepal seeks services of a highly proficient agency to review the current semi-automated online registration systems in four *Palikas* each of Province 2, Province 3 and Province 6 and provide pragmatic operational models to strengthen the online vital registration and SSA registration systems. The primary aim of the assignment is to help address exclusion error, especially within child grant and disability allowance through strengthened SSA registration.

The Consultancy will seek to mitigate some of the existing issues such as transaction costs along with providing international experiences/lessons learnt on strengthening SP systems in the similar contexts. The assignment should be able to provide models/system that can be implemented in Nepal to conduct online vital events registration, including validation of submitted documents and issuing of the registration certificates. The emphasis will be on registration of births, which is a key requirement for accessing the universal child grants programme. In addition, the assignment will help strengthen the linkages between online vital events registration and SSA registration, including registration of PwDs.

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<sup>1</sup>The Child Grant was introduced in 2009/10 to support better nutrition for children under five years of age. A cash transfer of NRs. 400 (about US\$3.50) is paid every month to the mother or primary caregiver of eligible children (up to two children per family) in disadvantaged (most-deprived) districts and to Dalit households across the country.

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The assignment will review both technical feasibility, interoperability issues as well as an analysis of access issues for end-users, document storage and withdrawal, and data governance issues including data validation, storage and recovery.

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#### 2. OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the assignment is to provide UNICEF Nepal and local government with implementable model/s through assessment of online vital event and SSA registration system and practices in selected *Palikas* in Province 2, 3 and 6. Among the selected *Palikas*, some will be at a more advanced stage of transitioning to online registration system, while some *Palikas* would be at a nascent stage, and might face particular challenges in digital registration, from public service delivery viewpoint as well as beneficiaries' perspective. The proposed model will take into account all different layers of governance, access, inter-institution coordination, sustainability, upgrade and maintenance, including, timelines/ sequencing, accountabilities, and key milestones with a mention of when different modalities will need to co-exist and how they'll be coordinated.

The study findings will be useful in providing critical insights, and giving policy advice to the Government of Nepal, coupled with evidences based on international experiences. The assignment findings will support the implementation of online vital events registration in selected wards, which could include technical IT solutions, policy instruction and coordination between relevant agencies such as health posts and *Palikas*. Overall, the assignment will help improve vital events registration, and child grant and disability allowance registration which can contribute to address exclusion error.

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#### 3. SCOPE OF WORK:

- Review of current semi-automated online registration systems and its linkages with SSA registration, especially child grant and disability allowance in selected *Palikas* of three provinces.
- Comparative analysis of international experiences in similar settings which includes experiences of digitization including a mix of technologies (e.g. SMS, apps) and drawing relevant insights to feed into recommendations for Nepal.
- Extensive discussions with federal and local government, including key SP ministries as well as engagement with stakeholders in ICT sector to understand the needs, capacity, resource constraints and opportunities. Ensure review through public finance lens and be cognizant of engagements needed at federal and local levels, particularly given Nepal's vulnerability to disasters and subsequent challenges around data storage, recovery and so on for sustainability.
- Based on this, provide models towards immediate remedy for effective remote and online registration in the COVID-19 context, as well as towards longer-term, scalable digital solutions to SP strengthening.
- Explore linkages of possible entry points to connect the health system to CRVS processes such as notification processes.
- Analysis should focus on both demand-side and supply-side constraints and opportunities related to CRVS, thus include an assessment of end-user experience of the service,

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including assessment of how digitisation works from the perspective of those who facilitate registration (parents/ health workers, registrars, other stakeholders involved, data recipients, and technology providers, including scope for building interoperable systems with health care providers, using different progressive scenarios such as from simple notification to all the way of full integration in health system (co-location/ integrated digital set-ups etc.).

- Include analysis of exclusion risks as well as opportunities for greater digital inclusion.
- Whilst ensuring strengthening of national Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System (CVRS), propose solutions that aims to complement the existing system instead of creating a parallel mechanism. For this, ensure discussion with other SP actors such as World Bank and DFID. Likewise, it would be particularly important to understand the current developments in relation to National Identity Card and align the system with the National ID System.
- Ensure that the suggested models help better integrate CRVS processes with SSA registration for improving child grant and disability allowance registrations.

#### 4. DURATION:

The project is expected to be completed by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

#### 5. WORKING LOCATIONS:

The company is expected to lead the review and coordination meetings mainly through online platforms.

#### 6. DELIVERABLES:

- A report with review of online vital events and SSA registration systems in the selected *Palikas* of three provinces and an implementable model to the local government for adopting online vital events and SSA registration system.

#### 7. PROPOSED PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

Deliverable	Date	Percentage
a) Inception Report with clear methodology and field consultation plans	Two weeks after signature of the contract	30%
b) Local level consultations with Palikas and Wards	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> week	-
c) Presentation of findings and recommendations to strengthen the online	5 <sup>th</sup> week	

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registration system with UNICEF office and local government		
d) Final review report with implementable model after incorporation of comments/inputs from UNICEF and stakeholders	6 <sup>th</sup> week	70%

#### 8. CONTRACT SUPERVISION:

The institution shall carry out the assignment in close coordination with the Social Policy, Health and Child Protection sections team and under the supervision of social policy specialist. In particular, the research team will attend a virtual call every two weeks to update on the progress.

#### 9. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED:

This contract will be awarded to an institution and not to an individual or team of individuals not sponsored by an institution. The assignment is expected to be delivered by a team of experts, comprising of at least two Experts in the following area— i) An Expert in the field of digital and remote vital events registration systems (ICT/digital platform), and ii) a national Social Protection expert to facilitate local level dialogue.

The institution is required to meet the following key requirements:

- A minimum of five years of experience working on Social Protection, civil registration particularly on digital/ remote solutions to improving registrations
- Strong track record of producing reports, policy briefs to feed into policy discussions and SP policy influencing
- Knowledge and experience of research and policy analysis of social policy sector in South Asia, especially in Nepal is necessary
- Extensive experience of undertaking research with the government, UN agencies and I/NGOs

The IT/ Digital Platform Expert should meet the following requirements:

- Minimum 7 years of relevant professional experience in the field of digital civil registration, vital statistics and social protection
- Advanced degree in social sciences (information systems, economics, sociology, social policy, development studies or fields relevant for the assignment)
- Demonstrated experience and expertise in leadership and coordination of SP analysis for policy influencing especially in Nepal
- Proven and extensive experience of undertaking digital analysis
- Demonstrable ability to simplify technical writing for a designated target audience

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- Extensive experience of undertaking research with the government, UN agencies, I/NGOs

The National Consultant is required to have the following key competencies:

- Minimum of 7 years of professional experience on Social Protection analysis
- Advanced degree in social sciences (economics, social policy, sociology, development studies)
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge of social protection systems, their design, operations, implementation and monitoring, especially in Nepal
- In-depth knowledge of SSAs registration processes, including existing challenges and overall policy economy.

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#### 10. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCESS:

Each proposal will be assessed first on its technical merits and subsequently on its price. In making the final decision, UNICEF considers both technical and financial aspects. The Evaluation Team first reviews the technical aspects of the offer, followed by review of the financial offers of the technically compliant vendors. The proposal obtaining the highest overall score after adding the scores for the technical (Total: 70 points) and financial proposals (Total: 30 points) together, that offers the best value for money will be recommended for award of the contract.

The bidders are required to submit two proposals:

i) **The Technical Proposal should include but not be limited to the following:**

- **Methodology (20 points)**  
Detailed Methodology / approach to requirement detailing how to meet or exceed UNICEF requirements for this assignment
- **Company Profile, including References (15 points)**  
*Ensure to include information related to the experience of the company as required and outlined in item 9 of this document.*  
**References:** Details of similar assignments undertaken in last *three* years including the following information:
  - Title of Project
  - Year and duration of project
  - Scope of Project
  - Outcome of Project
  - Reference / Contact persons
- **Work Plan (10 points)**  
Proposed work plan showing detailed sequence and timeline for each activity and human days of each proposed team member
- **Team Composition (25 points)**
  - Title and role of each team member
  - CV of each team member (including qualifications and experience)

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Ensure to include information related to the qualifications and experience of each proposed team member as required and outlined in item 9 of this document. Also include any project dependencies or assumptions.

#### **ii) The Financial Proposal should include but not be limited to the following:**

Bidders are expected to submit a lump sum financial proposal to complete the entire assignment based on the terms of reference. The maximum number of points will be assigned to the lowest price proposal. The lump sum should be broken down to show the detail for the following:

- **Resource costs**  
Daily rate multiplied by number of days
  - **Any other costs (if any)**  
Indicate nature and breakdown
  - **Copy of the company registration**
  - **Recent Financial Audit Report**  
Report should have been carried out in the past 2 years and be certified by a reputable audit organization.
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