**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Principal Investigator, Dry Zone social protection baseline**

**1. Background**

The LIFT donor consortium has approved a project to be implemented in Myanmar’s Central Dry Zone called the “Dry Zone Social Protection Project”. The three-year project will be implemented by HelpAge International in collaboration with the Mandalay YMCA. To help vulnerable households in the Dry Zone to cope and manage risks, this project aims to expand social protection. It will do this by enhancing informal community-based mechanisms and practices; strengthening government and community capacity to protect the poor; and delivering cash benefits to vulnerable groups (people with disabilities and older people). The project activities will lead to two project outcomes: poor households have expanded access to community assistance in times of stress, and vulnerable groups have greater income security. The project outcomes will contribute directly to the following Dry Zone programme outcome defined by LIFT: The basic needs of poor households in the target villages are met through effective social protection interventions.

The ***locations*** of the project are 30 villages in each of six target townships of two regions: Pakkoku and Yesagyo Townships (Magway Region) and Mahlaing, Myingyan, Taungtha and Natogyi Townships (Mandalay Region). The total number of target villages is 180.

One activity at the beginning of this project is a baseline to be conducted through a household sample survey. This will be conducted to assess the context and to enable us to measure change in the project indicators, as well as vulnerability and social protection more generally over the course of the project. The study will also serve a wider purpose by providing information for LIFT, other practitioners and government regarding the situation in the Dry Zone. Under this TOR, HelpAge will first contract a Principal Investigator consultant to design the study and a vulnerability and social protection index. After the design is agreed, a local company (a “Myanmar Research Firm”) will carry out data collection through questionnaire-based field work in target areas, under a separate contract. The Principal Investigator will subsequently analyse the data from the field research and produce the final report.

**2. Purpose**

The purpose of this assignment is to design a baseline survey and an index related to social protection, analyse the data collected and produce a baseline report. A Myanmar Research Firm will be separately contracted to do field data collection.

**3. Methodology and specific tasks for consultant**

Aside from one visit to Myanmar around January 2016 (if not in country), this assignment will be home based and include distance communications with HelpAge and the firm collecting field data. The Principal Investigator will undertake these tasks:

* Discuss and confirm the scope of the study with HelpAge by distance. This particularly includes the purpose of the study and the structure/content of the Outputs (see below).
* Review relevant documents, including project documents, the project Measurement Plan, other related research and documents from Myanmar or other countries. Review the EVS/Economic Vulnerability Scale (Umbrella model for measuring economic vulnerability) from Myanmar’s REVEAL project, as a starting point.
* Investigate international literature for examples of indices that attempt to measure vulnerability and social protection at community level, and straightforward means of presenting the results.
* Draft Output 1 (see below) and agree with HelpAge before moving on.
* Communicate by distance with HelpAge and the selected Myanmar Research Firm about the study and baseline survey design.
* If outside the country, travel to Myanmar for a visit of one week (dates to be agreed, anticipated second half January 2016) to discuss the survey tools and present ideas on the index. This visit is expected to include meetings with HelpAge and the contracted Myanmar Research Firm, and possibly local stakeholders if relevant.
* Draft Output 2 in discussion with the Myanmar Research Firm. After the visit, provide additional support by distance for questionnaire development and other issues. Revise Output 1 if needed.
* In light of the index, gaps in contextual information and the project Measurement Plan (indicators), review and revise the draft survey questionnaire. Agree a final version with HelpAge and the Myanmar Research Firm (final Output 2).
* Analyse the data after the survey is completed and data is available, in consultation with the Myanmar Research Firm and HelpAge.
* In discussion with the consultant carrying out a separate qualitative study on informal social protection mechanisms in Dry Zone communities (to be conducted early 2016), incorporate initial findings from that study as possible into the analysis.
* Draft Output 3 and revise it based on feedback. Produce the final Output 3.

**4. Outputs**

There are three Outputs associated with the consultancy, plus one visit to Myanmar:

* Output 1: A proposed index to measure changes in vulnerability, resilience and social protection at community level
* Output 2: Survey questionnaire (design of survey content)
* Output 3: Analytical baseline report incorporating data analysis

***Output 1: Vulnerability and social protection index*** - The consultant will propose a basic index with several variables that can be used to measure changes in vulnerability, resilience and social protection (or two separate indices to measure each of those aspects, if recommended). For example, HelpAge in a previous project used an index that measured 10 factors: assets, expenditure, debt, food security, livelihood diversification capacity, health, watsan, dependents, social participation and decision making. However, that index proved to be rather complex for the project team to make practical use of it. This index should benefit from any lessons of international experience in measuring vulnerability and protection at community levels, preferably tied to internationally accepted indicators. The index should not be overly complicated but straightforward, easy for HelpAge national staff to understand both the concept and the means of measurement. Ideally, if feasible, staff should be able to assess broad changes in the index without relying on a full household survey to measure it. The index should also be represented graphically.

***Output 2: Survey questionnaire and report structure*** – The Principal Investigator will work with HelpAge and the Myanmar Research Firm to ensure that the survey gathers the baseline information needed. The Principal Investigator will focus on designing the content of the survey questionnaire. Survey techniques including sampling will be handled by the Myanmar Research Firm, though the Principal Investigator will review and comment on the firm’s proposal. Part of Output 2 is also an elaborated structure for the baseline report (Output 3). The survey should efficiently gather information for several purposes:

* to measure progress against the project indicators in the Measurement Plan
* to help set a baseline for the index (Output 1) in the surveyed villages
* to understand the context, in order to assist project implementation and know the target areas better

***Output 3: Baseline report*** – After the survey is complete and data input by the firm, the Principal Investigator will analyse the data in SPSS or similar software and produce a baseline report of roughly 25-30 pages plus attachments as needed (e.g. additional tables, quantitative or descriptive information needed). The analytical report will present key findings by location and variable and provide overall assessments of the situation regarding vulnerability and means of addressing it in target areas. The Principal Investigator will also review initial findings from a qualitative survey on community-based informal social protection mechanisms and cross-reference them in the report if that report is drafted in time. The report will also present (a) a baseline calculation for the index described in Output 1 by location and variable/factor, presented numerically and also visually; (b) a baseline calculation for all project indicators which can be measured through the baseline survey, as discussed with HelpAge; (c) an agreed methodology for measuring any remaining indicators not covered in the survey.

The consultant should write all outputs above in clear language so that they can be easily understood, avoiding long sentences, jargon, abbreviations and technical terms to the extent possible, and should as necessary define the terms used. If appropriate, the outputs may also contain charts, diagrams or other visual materials to illustrate.

**5. Time requirements and duration**

The assignment is expected to start in early January 2016, data collection in February-March and all outputs completed around April 2016. A timeframe should be proposed by applicants (see section 7 below) and will be refined and detailed during discussions with the selected Myanmar Research Firm and HelpAge and coordinated with dates of the data collection field work.

**6. Qualifications of the consultant**

Essential

* Degree(s) in a field highly relevant to the nature of the study
* Strong research experience, both quantitative and qualitative, in developing countries, ideally Myanmar or Southeast Asia
* Strong skills in SPSS or other suitable database software (beyond Excel)
* Exceptional data analysis, quantitative and summarising skills
* Clear understanding of vulnerability, social protection and community development
* Familiarity with academic research on vulnerability and social protection in Low and Middle Income Countries
* Demonstrable experience producing similar documents
* Strong writing skills in English with a clear, straightforward writing style
* Good communications and interpersonal skills
* Strong IT/computer skills including graphs and charts

Desirable

* Master’s degree or doctorate in related field
* Work experience in Myanmar, ideally on issues relevant to the assignment
* Demonstrable expertise in social protection
* Hands-on experience with community development work
* Experience with sampling techniques

**7. How to apply**

Interested consultants are invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for delivery of the assignment. The short EOI (about 3-4 pages) should include:

1. Initial ideas on methodology and any comments on TOR and Outputs
2. Work plan: Including outputs/deliverables and detailed time frames including any periods the consultant is not available to travel to Myanmar, or uncertain about availability. Confirm number of days anticipated in Myanmar.
3. Budget: Total costs including daily fee rates based on past contracts and any additional costs anticipated, excluding costs of travel to or within Myanmar and living costs in Myanmar (to be paid directly by HelpAge). Home base or departure city for Myanmar should be stated.
4. Appendixes (not included in the 3-4 pages)
   1. CV of the consultant(s)
   2. Contact information for 2 professional references
   3. 1-2 relevant studies previously produced, if available

HelpAge is working within an indicative consultant budget of $9,000 to $12,000 for the assignment described in this TOR, depending on the qualifications and experience of the applicant. As noted above, the costs of travel to Myanmar, as well as living costs and field travel in Myanmar, will be met separately (according to HelpAge standards) and do not need to be included in the EOI budget. Selection of the consultant will be by a HelpAge panel and based on the experience of the consultant, the quality and relevance of the EOI, and the proposed budget, keeping in mind value for money within the resources available. Final negotiated terms and fees will be specified in the consultancy contract.

The deadline for submission is midnight **Sunday, 10 January 2016.** Please contact Ms Chitlekar Parintarakul (Fon) by email at **fon@helpageasia.org** for further information or to submit your EOI.