**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Implementation options for social transfers, Myanmar**

**1. Background**

Formal social protection mechanisms in Myanmar are currently very limited; however, the government has expressed interest in addressing serious gaps in social protection. At a conference on “Social Protection: Call to Action” held in June 2012, President U Thein Sein called for the adoption of a national social protection system based on the needs of multiple socio-economic groups, including children, women, the vulnerable, the elderly, and people with disabilities. He requested financial and technical support for developing frameworks on social protection. The government is now establishing new structures to accelerate its strategic response. The lead in social protection is the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR), which also supports the secretariat functions of a new working committee on social protection.

HelpAge International, established in 1983, is the only global network striving for the rights of disadvantaged older people. Building on its field experience, HelpAge began a new policy oriented project funded by the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) in 2014, called *Strengthening the Ministry of Social Welfare To Fulfil Its Role in Expanding Social Protection*. The project is addressing gaps in social protection capacity through support to and collaboration with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement which is set to play a central role in the extension of social protection systems. One activity of the project is a series of short-term technical support consultancies in designing and implementing social protection schemes for all age groups.

**2. Purpose**

The purpose of this assignment is to assess implementation design options for the delivery of cash transfers by the Government in Myanmar, with the delivery of social pensions as the case study.

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

This study will be carried out through (1) a desk study of documents, (2) interviews with key informants in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw, and (3) visits to a sample of sites in Myanmar where cash transfers may be piloted. The international consultant is expected to have an in-depth understanding of international experience in the delivery of cash transfers by the state (developing countries). The consultant should review potential implementation options for registration, enrolment and payment delivery within a cash transfer.

These should all be framed within Myanmar’s context and take into account the existing institutional structures in country. The goal of the operational system is to limit exclusion and inclusion errors in the delivery of cash transfers and to ensure reliability, confidence and accountability. The consultant is expected to undertake these main tasks:

* Review the assignment with HelpAge and make a detailed plan for implementation and the outputs.
* Review documentation on expanding social protection in Myanmar, including strategic documents of the government and development partners, to understand the current state of play.
* Conduct semi-structured interviews with key informants in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon. These key informants include Union government authorities (especially from Ministries of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement), sub-national authorities in proposed states/regions, HelpAge, and other development partners including UN agencies.
* After there is a clearer understanding of current services and service providers, visit a sample of sites in proposed pilot areas for new cash transfers, particularly to discuss implementation issues with relevant local government stakeholders.
* Produce a report according to the Outputs section below.
* Present the findings and join in a discussion with key staff involved in decision making in Myanmar.

The findings of the study should be broadly applicable for the delivery of cash transfers in Myanmar as a whole. However, the assumptions guiding the assessment include the introduction of a state-provided social (non-contributory) pension with universal coverage, phased in gradually by geographic area. The indicative first target areas are two regions/states, probably beginning with a limited number of townships initially, with an initial pilot beginning in the middle of the year 2015. Ultimately, the aim is a scheme that is national and universal in scope. Options under discussion for the benefit amount, target areas and age of eligibility will be discussed with the consultant, based on existing scenarios already discussed with the Ministry. Target areas may be assumed to include both rural and urban areas, and a wide range of contexts. The feasibility of various implementation mechanisms and phasing should be carefully considered.

**4. Outputs**

The consultant will produce a report with the following characteristics:

* A concise and accessible Summary Options Paper of about 15 pages presenting the key choices which need to be made in Myanmar, and recommendations to the extent possible.
* Attachments (notionally 40-60 pages) supporting each section of the options paper described above, providing greater detail about the implementation steps and pros and cons of the various options considered.
* Recommendations for next steps, including a summary of more detailed documentation needed for implementation after the basic implementation parameters are agreed by government.

This is an indicative structure of the Summary Options Paper, which can be revised in discussion with HelpAge:

1. Introduction
2. Overview of relevant lessons from international experience in delivering cash transfers
3. Registration mechanism options
4. Enrolment mechanism options
5. Payment delivery options
6. Communications, M&E and accountability overview including grievance mechanism
7. Options for institutional arrangements in Myanmar
8. Summary recommendations

Attachments

* Indicative timeframe and phasing considerations
* Reflections on training and HR requirements
* Attachments with details supporting conclusions of the Summary Options Paper, particularly on registration, enrolment, and payment issues.

The consultant should write the report in clear English language so that it can be easily understood. The Summary Options Paper, in particular, should avoid long sentences, jargon, abbreviations and technical terms to the extent possible, and should as far as necessary also define nationally specific terms. The report may also contain diagrams or other visual materials to illustrate material and guide the reader.

**5. Time requirements and duration**

The consultancy is expected to begin in early January 2015 and be completed by the end of the second week of February, including incorporation of comments from HelpAge and the government. A visit of about 2 weeks to Myanmar will be arranged including visit to typical delivery areas in proposed target sites. The consultancy is expected to be of about 25 working days duration.

**6. Qualifications of consultant**

International consultant

Essential

* Advanced degree(s) in a field relevant to the nature of the study
* Demonstrable experience designing implementation arrangements for cash transfer systems in low income contexts, preferably in Asia. This implies deep understanding of registration, enrolment, payment delivery and grievance mechanisms.
* Demonstrable experience producing similar documents
* Expertise in social protection mechanisms
* Strong writing skills in English with a clear, simple writing style
* Strong understanding of M&E and accountability systems
* Strong research and interviewing skills
* Exceptional analytical and summarising skills
* Diplomacy, tact and cultural awareness
* Appropriate IT/computer skills

Desirable

* Experience designing social pensions implementation arrangements in Asia
* Myanmar experience and Myanmar language skills an advantage
* Experience advising governments on social protection schemes
* Strong understanding of payment delivery mechanisms
* Experience in designing or managing MIS systems
* Deep understanding of ageing and the needs of older people

**7. How to apply**

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

1. Proposed methodology and any comments on this TOR
2. Clear work plan including output/deliverable and time frame for each stage
3. Costing (see below)
4. Appendixes (not included in 4 pages)
   1. CV of the consultant(s)
   2. Contact information for 2 professional references
   3. Relevant studies previously produced

The costing/budget (no. 3 above) should include professional fees and any other costs to carry out the full study, excluding travel costs to field areas, which will be discussed and separately negotiated with the selected consultant after the field sites are agreed. Field visits may require a total of e.g. about 5 days, but as not yet confirmed the costing should mention a daily rate for field visits (also mentioning any costs for travel time).

Selection of the consultant will be by a project committee and based on the experience of the consultant, the quality and relevance of the expression of interest, and the proposed budget (i.e. value for money, within resources available). Final negotiated fees will be specified in the consultancy contract.

The deadline for submission is midnight **Sunday, 21 December 2014.** Please contact Mr Tapan Barman **tapan.barman@helpagemyanmar.org** for further information or to submit your EOI.