# 30 October 2015

# UNICEF Office of Research—Innocenti

# Terms of Reference

Consultancy for international academic expert to conduct desk-based study on “Integrating cash with complementary services: Strategies for Success”

1. **Background**:

It is widely accepted and acknowledged that social protection initiatives, if adequately designed, can simultaneously contribute to: (i) the creation of a healthy and educated population that directly contributes to economic growth; (ii) the creation of a cushion against economic shocks that households and a country may experience; (iii) eradication of poverty and the associated risks that households living in poverty face, such as abuse, violence and exploitation. Social Protection is a social, economic and political necessity for countries to reduce poverty and inequality, foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth as well as strengthen social cohesion. These programmes, if properly designed and implemented to target the poorest and most vulnerable, have been shown to have significant long-term, transformative impacts for the household and the entire nation.

In Ghana, the emergence of Social Protection programmes has been guided by the Ghana National Social Protection Strategy (GNSPS). The GNSPS portrays social protection as integral to the overall development architecture of Ghana, which is rooted in the human rights-driven philosophy of the 1992 Constitution. The strategy, developed in 2007 and revised in 2012, aims to spearhead the prioritization of sector-wide social protection interventions and to facilitate collaborative implementation of social protection in Ghana, to ensure that people are able to live in dignity through income support, livelihoods empowerment and improved systems of personal safety.

In January 2013, the government of Ghana underscored the importance of social protection in its poverty reduction efforts by restructuring the Ministry of Women and Children under the new Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP). The new Ministry, in addition to having direct responsibilities for family support services, social work and alternative care for children living without parental care, also has the mandate to coordinate social protection interventions (e.g. National Health Insurance Scheme-NHIS, school feeding, free school uniform, to name a few) across the multiple government implementing agencies, as well as implementing the flagship GNSPS programme, the Livelihoods Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) programme.

**Knowledge and research gaps on Social Protection in Ghana**

While the commitment of the Government on poverty reduction and social protection is strong, a number of challenges exist with regard to scaling-up and prioritizing its efforts. As in many other countries, social protection in Ghana has not yet evolved into a system of well-coordinated and integrated interventions. Instead, it encompasses a number of different programmes of varying degree of scale and coverage with implications for their effectiveness and impact. The programmes often lack effective administrative and monitoring and evaluation as well as legal frameworks. A lack of rigorous research and impact studies and information on the efficiency of some of the interventions limit the appreciation of outcomes of the overall social protection system and the development of synergies and complementarities between programmes. Furthermore, a number of social protection interventions in Ghana have not yet been able to exploit possible complementarities and synergies in programming, starting with different approaches to targeting the poor. This is due in large part to the lack of a well-established institutional, policy and legal framework to coordinate implementation, and monitor and evaluate impacts of social protection measures[[1]](#footnote-1).This is important because the experience of a number of Latin American countries such as Mexico and Brazil point to the essential role of research and evaluation in a) ensuring support across the political spectrum over time and in making the case for identifying fiscal space and undertaking expenditure switching to scale up (or scale down) successful (or unsuccessful) interventions and in b) contributing to shape the future models of social protection in these countries.

While Social Protection in Ghana has the potential to significantly impact incomes, equity, and access to social services for the extreme poor and vulnerable, the lack of rigorous research and studies on social protection may hinder achieving its potential. Developing a social protection system needs to be driven by up-to-date evidence-based research as well as comparative research that can support actions and strategies in the realm of legal frameworks, policy processes, coordination and system approach, to shape the present and future models for social protection for Ghana.

To provide comprehensive research and evidence for UNICEF and the Government of Ghana’s work on social protection, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti and UNICEF Ghana are collaborating on a Social Protection Thematic Research programme. The research programme will produce a series of **desk-based** social protection thematic studies. The scope of these studies is to add knowledge and evidence on how policy and legal frameworks can contribute to the development of an integrated social protection system in Ghana, the role of politics, and ethics in the process, enablers and barriers in expanding cash transfer schemes, linkages and complementarities among social protection programmes, among others.

Two thematic studies have been commissioned so far:

* #1 The Ethics of Poverty and Social Protection
* #2 Policy and Legal Framework for National Social Protection Systems

This Terms of Reference refers to the third thematic paper in the series:

**Thematic paper #3: Enhancing the impact of cash transfers through complementary programming**

Since the early start of cash transfer programmes in Latin America, programme effects have been rigorously analysed and have consistently shown positive impacts on poverty, vulnerability, health and schooling of beneficiaries. However, the effects of cash transfers combined with other complementary interventions (i.e. ‘Cash Plus’) are less well known. From a research side it is also not easy to disentangle the effect of the ‘plus’ from the ‘cash’. Complementary programs include for example service extension, market enhancements, school fee waivers, health insurance waivers, etc.

For the purpose of this research, we have identified three typologies of Cash Plus Interventions:

Typology 1: This typology includes cash transfer programs, both conditional and unconditional, that deliver additional benefits to the cash transfer beneficiaries, such as micronutrients or education equipment for the school going children. Here, the additional benefits are also managed within the cash transfer program and are ad-hoc benefits designed and initiated to provide additional support the cash transfer beneficiaries.

Typology 2: This typology refers to conditional cash transfer (CCT), which encourage households to comply with specific rules to be able to receive their cash transfer. These specific rules often compel households to use existing services, such as health (e.g. visiting regularly health centers) and education (e.g. sending children to school), or to attend informational or educational sessions.

Typology 3: This typology refers to linkages between cash transfer programs and other existing nationwide services or interventions, whose access is not a condition to enter or remain in the program. An example of Typology 3, which we also refer to as the ‘integrated service model’, is the integration between the Ghana Cash transfer scheme’s Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) and National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). Household that are selected for the LEAP programme (managed by the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection) are entitled to be enrolled without the payment of any fee in the NHIS (managed by the Ministry of Health).

This paper will focus on typology 3, the integrated services model, since little is known and understood on the mechanisms that enable *coherence* across existing sectoral interventions (e.g. NHIS) and cash transfer programmes (e.g. LEAP). In other words, on how existing policies and interventions that have similar target households (e.g. extremely poor households) are brought together as complementarities at the policy and implementation level, to maximize efforts of reducing poverty and vulnerability.[[2]](#footnote-2)

As defined by the FAO in a forthcoming publication on Social Protection and Agriculture, Coherence is defined as *“A systematic promotion of complementary and consistent policies and programmes across sectors, thereby creating synergies to combat rural poverty and food insecurity more effectively…”* Coherence is therefore a means to an end, and is as much about “*ensuring that potentially conflicting interactions between policies and programmes are avoided and/or minimised, as it is about actively exploiting complementarities and synergies*…” Coherence can be horizontal, for example cross-sectoral collaboration between social protection, agriculture, health, or education, as well as vertical. Vertical coherence refers to ensuring consistency across different levels of government – from national, regional, district and community levels - to translate policy agreements and objectives into programmes and service delivery at the household level. As stated in the FAO document, “*Coordination is a critical action for pursuing coherence. Although coherence may evolve as the result of fortunate chance, systematically developing coherence requires deliberate coordinated action between various stakeholders (Slater et al., 2015b).”[[3]](#footnote-3)*

1. **Objective(s):**

The objective of this research paper is to explore the dynamics that enable coherence among cash transfer programmes and other existing and nationwide policies/programmes, and to identify the conditions or protocols that can facilitate inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination at the policy or implementation level in order to provide integrated services to cash-transfer beneficiaries at the household level.

Key research questions to be addressed are the following. These research questions need to be addressed at a global or theoretical level.

* What are main examples of this integrated-service models globally? What is the existing evidence on this integrated-service model on poverty or other improvements in welfare among the poor?
* What are the key factors and triggers that initiated inter-sectoral collaboration between an existing sector interventions and a cash-transfer programme?
* What are the mechanisms required for translating policy-level inter-sectoral collaboration down to tangible integrated-service for cash-transfer beneficiaries at the household level?
* What are the challenges of linking sectors together and key lessons learned? How can sustainability be ensured?
* What examples and lessons can be drawn for Ghana?

At the Ghana country level, the following research questions are to be addressed, building on a recent case study by UNICEF:

* The key integrated-service model in Ghana is the LEAP - NHIS partnership. What are the operation mechanisms of this model at the national and subnational level? What have been the successes and challenges of the implementation?
* What are further areas of opportunity for an integrated platform of multi-sectoral services for cash transfer beneficiaries in Ghana?

1. **Specific activities to be completed to achieve the objectives:**

The selected international academic expert is expected to take the lead on this research and collaborate with the Office of Research – Innocenti, an expert from UNICEF Ghana, and a Ghanaian researcher. The international academic expert (incumbent) is welcome to provide recommendations of preferred Ghanaian researchers based on previous professional experience. Specific activities to be carried out include:

* Review available evidence on typology 3, the integrated service model that are built from inter-sectoral collaboration of existing national programmes/ policies, including the identification and summarizing of all relevant peer-reviewed and non-peer reviewed journal articles, research reports and other relevant studies. Based on the review, identify key examples of successful inter-sectoral collaborations, as well as key implementation challenges. Present and discuss key factors (mechanisms and triggers – political, economic or social) contributing to success of existing nation-wide policies being redirected toward CT beneficiaries, and strategies for implementation at household level. Present and discuss key challenges (political, economic or social barriers) of such complementary initiatives.
* In collaboration with the Ghanaian counterpart, review the state of Ghanaian social protection programmes. Identify the main integrated service models of existing national programmes and their mechanisms of operation, using the LEAP-NHIS example. Explore the way it operates at the national and subnational level. Analyse the successes and challenges of this particular inter-sectoral collaboration, particularly the implementation challenges at field/household level.
* Discuss recommendations for the way forward to enhance the inter-sectoral collaboration for in Ghana, including prospective areas for future multi-sectoral collaboration and the key components required for integrated service delivery. Examples of prospective collaboration include School Feeding Programme, Labour Intensive Public Works, Education Capitation Grant, and the Free Uniform and Textbook Programme.
* Produce a presentation of the outcomes of the thematic study and help disseminate the results to relevant stakeholders and institutions.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

* **International Academic Expert**: Provide the overall knowledge framework, direction and writing on how the study should be undertaken, including leading the review and identifying the various country case examples. Coordinating with the Ghanaian, OoR and UNICEF Ghana CO expert on the content;
* **Ghanaian Academic**: Focus will mainly be on the analysis of Ghana’s social protection system and discussing the Ghana model in comparison to other key examples from the global review, contribute to identifying the successes and challenges and providing general input to the final research paper.
* **UNICEF Ghana CO expert**: Provide inputs into the overall structure of the paper to ensure its usefulness to the Ghana context; provide inputs to the conceptual aspects and key examples; and inputs in the analysis of the current state of Ghana’s social protection system.
* **UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti**: Provide overall guidance and support to the thematic study; provide inputs to the conceptual aspects and global review of evidence; facilitate communication and coordination between researchers.

1. **Specific outputs/products/results with specific delivery dates:**

The thematic study is home-based, with frequent communication between the selected expert, OoR, UNICEF Ghana and the Ghanaian researcher.

The thematic study is expected to take place between December 2015 and April 2016.

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| **Deliverables** | **Due date** |
| Contract signature | 4 December 2015 |
| Annotated Paper Outline | December 20 2015 |
| First draft | February 1 2016 |
| Revised draft | March 1 2016 |
| Final paper and presentation | April 1 2016 |

1. **Qualifications and/or specialized knowledge/experience required and desirable for undertaking the assignment:**

* Advanced degree (PhD) in relevant disciplines such as, Economics, Public Policy, Sociology, Social Policy, Political Science or related disciplines;
* Minimum of 5 years of academic research experience in the areas of interest (social protection, social policy, international development or related fields)
* A track record of high quality publications in top rated journals in the areas of social protection, international development or related fields;
* Excellent written and oral English communications skills;
* Demonstrable interpersonal skills and strong ability to collaborate with other researchers;
* Fully computer literate;

1. **Duration of the consultancy**

7 December – 15 April 2016. Dates can be refined in consultation with the selected candidate.

1. **Supervision and work arrangements**

The supervisor of the assignment is Sudhanshu Handa, Chief of Social and Economic Policy, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

The researcher will work at his/her home base, in regular electronic and telephone consultations with the supervisor, relevant Office of Research staff, UNICEF Ghana and the Ghanaian researcher. All submissions will be made electronically unless other means are needed (e.g. voluminous documents, technical problems). Communication with the Office of Research – Innocenti is to take place over email, the phone or Skype. The selected researcher is expected to make one 2-day visit to UNICEF OoR under this contract to present the findings from the study.

For official travel, costs will have to be within UNICEF standard rates for travel and DSA.

Travel cost shall be calculated based on economy class travel, regardless of the length of travel.

Costs for accommodation, meals and incidentals shall not exceed applicable Daily subsistence allowance rates.

1. **Special instructions**

Supervision and work arrangements have been addressed in section 7 above. Travel and other additional costs are also addressed above, section 7.

The contractor is to deliver all deliverables electronically, via email to Sudhanshu Handa at [shanda@unicef.org](mailto:shanda@unicef.org). The contractor is to participate in teleconferences as necessary. No budget will be allocated to the contractor for telephone calls or internet usage. However, the Office of Research – Innocenti will initiate telephone calls and teleconferences whenever possible.

1. See ILO 2013, Rationalizing Social Protection Expenditures in Ghana. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. FAO - IDS(2015) Strengthening Coherence Between Agriculture and Social Protection to Combat Poverty and Hunger in Africa: Framework for Analysis and Action; Yet to be released; [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. IBID [↑](#footnote-ref-3)