TERMS OF REFERENCE
International institutional consultancy to conduct an assessment of the social protection system in Montenegro

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

After gaining sovereignty in 2006, Montenegro is on a steady path of Euro-Atlantic integration. European Union (EU) accession negotiations were opened in June 2012, while in June 2017 Montenegro became a member of NATO. The progress in the accession process is evident, as 30 negotiations chapters (out of 35) were opened and three have been provisionally closed. Gaining independence and advancement in EU integrations required an expansion of government capacities and the establishment of national institutions to assume new roles and functions.

One area where Montenegro has high ambitions, and there remains room to progress, is in terms of ensuring its social protection system achieves the stated aim of “improvement of life quality and strengthening of an individual and the family for independent and productive life” (Government of Montenegro 2013). Poverty in Montenegro, using the relative poverty line set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income, stood at 23.6% in 2017; a 1.6 percentage point decline from 2013 (MONSTAT 2018). Poverty is strongly related to status in the labour market, with the highest poverty rates being for people who are unemployed (44.8% in 2017) and those who remain inactive (31%). These figures are in the context of persistently high, though declining, unemployment rates (18% in 2014 and 16% in 2017), with most unemployed people having been unemployed for more than a year (World Bank 2013). Child poverty is also a concern, with 31.7% of children living in income-poor households, 8 percentage points higher than the national relative poverty rate. In addition, the At risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE) rate of children stood at 40% in 2017 (MONSTAT 2018).

Current situation in the sector:
Montenegro already has a strong, and recently reformed, social protection system, comprising non-contributory social assistance (including family material support, a child allowance, personal disability benefit, carer’s allowance and foster family benefit) and contributory social insurance (including old age, survivor and disability pensions, health insurance and unemployment insurance). The Law on Social and Child Protection (2013) is the main legal framework for social services and social assistance in the country, with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) the main institution in charge. In addition, some forms of social assistance are the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) (cash benefits for the elderly and payments in lieu of contributions to the pension system) and Ministry of Education (free text books, free meals for children attending pre-school education which come from families who receive social assistance), while in the context of a decentralised system of governance, at the municipality level decisions are made to offer and deliver a range of forms of social services and social assistance (including one-off financial support).

Implementation of social assistance and social services is the responsibility of Centres for Social Welfare (CSW – for social assistance and non-residential social services, as specified under the Law on Social and Child Protection), residential institutions (for institutional care for children and adults), the MARD and the municipal

2 Activation and Smart Safety Nets in Montenegro: Constraints in Beneficiary Profile, Benefit Design and Institutional Capacity.
governments for their own programmes. Meanwhile, the Employment Agency plays a crucial role in the ‘activation’ agenda, or in facilitating beneficiaries of certain types of social assistance to gain productive employment.

Despite an extensive social protection system, recent reviews highlight the importance for social protection programmes to be better tailored to meet the needs of different groups including children, people of working age and the elderly. For people of working age, it is important that social protection promotes employment for those excluded from the labour market; with 48% of social assistance beneficiaries having the potential to be working (World Bank 2013). As part of this, it is important to address the specific barriers that different groups, including women and Roma, face in accessing employment (EC 2018). Meanwhile, for the elderly there is a need for improved integration of services, including of social protection with social care services, to respond in a better way to their requirements, while supporting them to remain in their homes. There also need to be improved efforts to enhance social inclusion through social protection, including of particularly vulnerable groups such as Roma and people with disabilities (EC 2018).

Meanwhile, despite approximately 2% of GDP being spent on social assistance (World Bank 2013; ASPIRE database), there is little evidence that social assistance is contributing to poverty reduction in the country. The release of several new datasets, including Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC, released in December 2018) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) (expected in the first half of 2019), as well as data held in the recently implemented Social Welfare Information System (SWIS) – a Monitoring Information System (MIS) currently covering programmes implemented by the CSW and residential institutions - and by the Employment Agency provide opportunities for future evidence-based reforms.

UNICEF CO in Montenegro is supporting the Government of Montenegro to enhance equitable systems for the progressive realization of the rights of children in Montenegro, with special focus on children affected by poverty, adversity and exclusion. In the framework of the Country Programme Document for 2017 – 2021, UNICEF will provide technical assistance for the full alignment of relevant policies and legislation with international standards, the development of more accessible and adequately financed social services, evidence-based policymaking, and the promotion of changes in social norms and public sector organizational culture and practice to make them more conducive to the protection and realization of child rights. Moreover, reducing child poverty will require concerted, coordinated efforts which is why UNICEF and partners will give due attention to boosting cross-sectoral integrated approaches. The proposed assessment of the social protection system is a key step in that direction and should results in different models for more efficient and cost-effective design and implementation of social protection policy for children (cash transfers and services) developed for consideration by the Government (one of the CPD outputs). Given UNICEF’s and partners’ extensive research agenda, links will be drawn to:

- Analysis of work and organisation of centres for social work,
- A roadmap for the transformation from institutional to community-based care based on a minimum package of family and community-based services including costing analysis
- Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2013-2017 (SILC)
- 2018 Montenegro and 2018 Montenegro, Roma Settlements Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)
- Analysis of the results and impact of the implementation of the Strategy on Development of Social and Child Protection System in Montenegro for the period 2013-2017
- Analysis of existing social transfers and assessment of new models: Child Allowance
- Analysis of multidimensional child poverty (upcoming).

Defined as those individuals of working age (15–64) who are not in full-time education or training, and who are not disabled.
2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

At the request of the MLSW, the purpose of this assignment is to support the strengthening of the national system of social assistance and social and child protection services. The aim is:

- to make the system more efficient through improving coordination and coherence across programmes and services,
- to improve its effectiveness; and
- to promote equitable outcomes through supporting the needs of the poor and excluded, including children.

The National Sustainable Development Strategy 2030, which effectively localised the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, references two specific targets linked to social inclusion and poverty reduction: eradicating extreme poverty of people, SDG 1 (1.1) and reducing by at least half proportion of men, women and children living below the line of absolute poverty, SDG 1 (1.2). Therefore, all efforts linked to continued social protection system reform should contribute to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals.

As part of its support to the MLSW, UNICEF is commissioning an assessment of the social protection system. The primary objective of the assessment is to provide evidence-based options for forthcoming reforms, by the MLSW, of the social and child protection system. The secondary objective is to provide a diagnostic of the current system, examining the extent to which social assistance and social and child protection services are aligned with the needs of the poor and excluded. The assessment will seek to answer the following questions:

- What are the social and economic vulnerabilities faced by households, especially households with children, in Montenegro?
- What is the legal, policy and budgetary framework for social assistance and social and child protection services?
- What forms of social assistance and social services are implemented at national and municipal levels, and what are the target groups, the methods and means of targeting and financing used? The objective here is to identify complementarities and possible duplications.
- To what extent are social assistance and social and child protection services ensuring equitable coverage of poor and excluded groups identified through the first question? This includes assessing potential exclusion from the system as a result of programme design and implementation.
- To what extent are social assistance and social services effectively supporting productive engagement in the economy and empowerment of beneficiaries that are able to work?

Given the complexity of the social protection system in Montenegro, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and other key partners propose that this assessment focuses on forms of social assistance and social and child protection services that are particularly relevant for poor and excluded groups. These are:

1) All social assistance programmes (termed ‘material benefits’) as specified in the Law on Social Protection and Child Protection (with 2017 revisions) and linked forms of social assistance (e.g. free textbooks, free meals, subsidised electricity, meals in pre-school institutions), with the exception of Reimbursement of salary compensation and salary compensation for maternity or parental leave and the maternity leave pay;

2) Services covered by the Law on Social and Child Protection (those providing support for life in the family, accommodation including fostering and family placement, and counselling, therapy and mediation services for improving family relations and as included in the SWIS);

3) Three forms of social assistance provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development – the elderly allowance, one-off cash transfers and the agricultural insurance scheme (payments made in lieu of pension contributions);

4) Assistance to Roma children – specifically textbooks for Roma children attending primary school and stipends for Roma children who attend secondary schools and universities;

5) Material benefits and non-residential services delivered under the social and child protection system by municipalities (including one-off cash support, packages/ payments for new-born children and free text books).
This would also include housing delivered for excluded groups in accordance with the Law on Social Housing and forms of social and child protection implemented in conjunction with the Employment Agency, including linking beneficiaries for activation and public works.

6) Benefits under the Law on Disability Related Benefits in Travelling.

The assessment will just cover current laws and programmes and will not be expected to include previous or future planned programmes or legal frameworks.

In addition to the above, as way of background, the full assessment will provide an overview of the number of beneficiaries and spending on the major national contributory social insurance schemes. The team will do this to the extent that this information is readily available.

The ambition is that this assignment will not only provide a stocktake of the existing system of social assistance and social and child protection services for poor and excluded groups, its gaps and challenges, but also generate new evidence for an actionable roadmap on future system reforms that has the buy-in from the main stakeholders in the sector, including the MLSW. Moreover, the assessment should provide insights regarding: a) improving cost-effectiveness of the system and b) coordination and information exchange between the main actors, including on mechanisms through which evidence informs processes of reform.

A key mechanism through which the findings from this assessment will feedback into the ongoing process of reform of the social protection system is through engaging the Steering Committee that is being established by the MLSW for this assessment, and which will comprise representatives from state and municipal government, development partners and NGOs. It is important that the assessment team engages with the Steering Committee throughout the assessment period, keeping its members up-to-date with preliminary findings and working closely with them to develop and propose an actionable roadmap for reforms.

3. SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

1. Assessment of the overarching social and economic vulnerabilities experienced in Montenegro and their trends

Areas to be covered:
- Macro-economic context, economic growth and employment trends
- Income poverty and material deprivations
- Social – discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, disability
- Manifestations of risks and vulnerability across the entire life cycle, noting differences on the basis of gender and disability status where applicable.

Proposed activities:
- Analysis of World Development Indicators (WDI)
- Analysis of household survey data (MICS and SILC)
- Review of existing literature

2. Review of the social protection policy environment, including:

Areas to be covered:
- Vision and objectives of social protection within the legal, policy and strategy framework. While this should consider the wider social protection environment, there should be a clear focus on social assistance and social services and how they operate and interact with other national policies. Moreover, there should be an assessment of whether moving some of the details on specific programming from legislative documents primary to programme guidelines would simplify the process of programme revision.
• Alignment of policy objectives (identified above) with the needs of population (identified in 1.).
• Do social protection and employment policies, specifically the activation agenda, complement each other?
• Policymaking process, specifically what are the roles and responsibilities of the Government ministries/bodies in relation to policymaking and what are coordination mechanisms. What are the mechanisms for evidence and programme lessons to feedback into decision making? Does the policy making process require participation of relevant stakeholders or consultations outside the national government and if so, are stakeholder participation processes institutionalized or ad-hoc?

Proposed activities:
• Interviews and Focus Group Discussions with key stakeholders
• Review of key documents, laws, policies and strategies

3. **Assessment of social assistance and social services (Design)**

Areas to be covered:
• Mapping of the type of instruments utilized at the national and municipal level (including cash and in-kind transfers, school feeding, and public works). This mapping is to include targeting type, eligibility, benefit design, incentives and obstacles to access, including any hidden costs. Mapping both across the lifecycle and across needs (as identified in 1) and analyse overlap and complementarities between national and municipal programming.
• Mapping of stakeholders involved on social protection (Government, international agencies, INGOs, NGOs, CSOs, etc.).
• Budget available for, sources of finance, and unit costs of delivering MLSW, MARD, and municipality-led social assistance programmes.

Proposed activities:
• Interviews and Focus Group Discussions with key stakeholders – at both the state and municipal level
• Review of programme documents
• Analysis of budget data
• Stakeholder mapping
• Programme mapping

4. **Analysis of the implementation of social assistance and social and child protection services provided by MLSW**

Areas to be covered:
• Information dissemination and awareness raising about the scheme
• Inclusion of different groups in social assistance and social and child protection services
• Use of the SWIS, main challenges, and potential to improve data analysis and reporting from it
• Use of complaints and appeals mechanisms
• Implementation of the activation agenda in terms of coordination, existing procedures and incentives.

Proposed activities:
• Beneficiary assessment – incorporating beneficiary perceptions of barriers to access and spanning those beneficiaries categorised as ‘able to work’ and ‘unable to work’ by the CSW
• Analysis of information held in the SWIS
• Analysis of SILC data
• Interviews with key stakeholders – including the CSW and Employment Agency
5. **Actionable roadmap for future reforms**

Develop an actionable roadmap on how to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and coordination of social assistance and social services in reducing poverty and increasing social inclusion in Montenegro, including recommending steps for integrating evidence and learning into system reform processes.

4. **METHODOLOGY AND MAIN TASKS**

Based on the Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI), one of the key tools under the Interagency Social Protection Assessments (http://ispatools.org/), the review will use the CODI questionnaire to guide the analysis. When applied as a theoretical exercise the CODI might result in a passive statement of the existing situation. This assignment should however have a strongly operational focus and the review should be conducted in an interactive and participatory manner, involving government staff wherever possible, specifically in the formulation of policy recommendations.

In addition, the successful provider will receive guidance on amending the CODI to ensure that it is most relevant to Montenegro and existing demands for information. The consultant(s) should review the questionnaire to ensure it is sufficiently gender- and child-sensitive and amend it as necessary. The review will utilize the following modalities:

A. **Desk review**
   - Conduct a desk review of available secondary sources (policy papers, program documents, etc.)

B. **Data collection and analysis**
   - Focus group discussion, semi-structured interviews, site visits and a beneficiary assessment
   - Review and analysis of surveys, including SILC and MICS and programme data, including in the SWIS and the database held by the Employment Agency

C. **National Consultative Process**
   - Meetings and workshops with key national and international institutions and stakeholders, including members of the Steering Committee, involved in social assistance and social and child protection services to verify information gathered in the desk review and to collect additional information.

The consultant(s) will be responsible for elaborating the methodology to be employed in their technical proposal and within the inception report.

Under the management of UNICEF’s Social Policy Officer, and in consultation with MLSW and UNICEF more broadly, the assessment team will undertake the following tasks:

- Develop an implementation plan with details on the methodology and information gathering tools;
- Adapt the CODI tools to incorporate a gender and child-sensitive lens and ensure that they are relevant to inform an evidence-based reform process in Montenegro;
- Obtain policy and programme documents from internet and concerned agencies;
- Develop an interview guide based on the components of the mapping set out above to be used for focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews;
- Conduct interviews/focus group discussions with Government partners, implementing agencies and other concerned stakeholders;
- Conduct qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with current beneficiaries of social assistance and social and child protection services. An ethical review process will need to be completed before undertaking primary research with beneficiaries;
- Conduct data analysis based on available surveys and program data
- Compile the information in a database;
- Draft the final report (analysis and executive summary)
- Draft a policy brief, with recommendations of next steps and an actionable roadmap for the reform of the social protection system and prepare a PowerPoint presentation with overview of findings and recommendations.
Participate in a technical meeting to present and discuss the findings of the report and produce a roadmap for a future reform process.

Following the technical meeting and finalisation of the report and brief, it will be the responsibility of UNICEF and the MLSW to continue to communicate the analytical findings, mapping and actionable roadmap from this assessment to a range of stakeholders in Montenegro, ensuring that the findings from the assessment continue feed-into the planning and budgeting processes. If members of the assessment team wish to engage in external academic publishing of the assessment findings (either in print or digital form) then they must follow UNICEF’s Guidance on External Academic Publishing (January 2017).

Data sources:
This assessment will draw-on analysis of secondary data (both household survey data and programme MIS) as well as the collection of primary qualitative data. Specifically, it is expected that this assessment will draw on existing data in the form of:

- **SILC** – Statistics on Income and Living Conditions data, based on Eurostat’s methodology. Findings and analysis of the data from the period 2013 to 2017 were released in mid-December 2018 and include both cross-sectional and longitudinal data. One possibility is for the assessment team to request, through UNICEF, that MONSTAT – the national statistical agency – undertake further analysis of the data as required, in-line with the objectives of this assessment (in that case, this segment should not be included in the financial proposal). However, key questions for further inquiry into SILC data will need to be formulated by the selected consultancy. Bidders are requested to familiarise themselves with the questionnaires of EU SILC so that they are aware of the scope of information collected with regards to receipt of social assistance and social services. It is expected that SILC data be used to understand the condition of poverty and vulnerability in Montenegro and, to the extent possible given in the information collected, to investigate exclusion and inclusion errors for social assistance programmes.

- **MICS** – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – data for 2018. MONSTAT has completed data collection for MICS6 and it is anticipated that findings will be available in the first half of 2019. The assessment team can conduct further analysis of the data (open access via [http://mics.unicef.org/surveys](http://mics.unicef.org/surveys)). It is anticipated that MICS data be used to gain an understanding of poverty and vulnerability in Montenegro, adding to the analysis as to whether the social and child protection system is aligned with the needs of the poor and vulnerable in the country.

Availability and access of secondary data is key to be able to draw a poverty and vulnerability profile and to investigate issues of targeting. The consultant(s) should from the start of the assignment engage with MONSTAT to ensure data access will be possible. If access to one of the two data sources is not possible, the consultant(s) should investigate whether any other potential secondary data can be used for the analysis.

This assessment will also draw on the following administrative data:

- **MIS data held in the Social Welfare Information System (SWIS).** It is the responsibility of staff in the CSW to enter information into the SWIS for each application for social assistance or social services, using a case management approach, whereby each individual is identified by their unique national ID number. Amongst other data on individual characteristics, the SWIS includes information on any reasons for rejection of support, information on receipt of ongoing services/ support and any grievance or complaints. The SWIS does not include information on programmes implemented by the municipalities. Meanwhile, information in the SWIS is structured in terms of individuals and the same individuals within a household are not systematically linked. This should be borne in mind when proposing household level enquiries.

- **MIS held by the Employment Agency.** We understand that the MIS of the Employment Agency does not contain reliable and up-to-date information specifically on beneficiaries of social assistance.
However, the full assessment team may wish to analyse this MIS to investigate the viability of the current activation agenda with relation to social assistance. This MIS includes comprehensive information on individual characteristics, training and employment experience.

In addition, the service provider should look into the Montenegrin Education Information System (MEIS), to better understand the links between various social protection benefits and the education system.

Access to and analysis of administrative data can be more challenging than that of survey data. The consultant(s) will have to build a cooperative relationship with the owners and administrators of both the SWIS and the MIS held by the Employment Agency from the start of the assignment. Moreover, they should hold realistic expectations on the types of analysis that can be carried on using administrative data.

In addition, it is anticipated that this assessment will collect new qualitative data, including in the form of:

- **Beneficiary assessment** – this will require an ethics procedure to be completed (see below). This assessment will specifically investigate programme implementation – including outreach mechanisms, grievance and complaints and hidden barriers to access – all examining potential barriers to equitable coverage of vulnerable groups. The assessment will also investigate potential complementarities between programmes that household members are receiving. The focus will be on beneficiaries of social assistance and social and child protection services delivered in the home (so not including issues of geographic coverage etc. of institutional services). In addition, this assessment will investigate beneficiaries’ perceptions of improvements in their lives through engagement in services and social assistance, including in the realm of empowerment and in relation to the implementation of the activation agenda (which should feature prominently in the beneficiary assessment). This is likely to include FGDs and interviews. Beneficiaries will be purposively sampled using the SWIS. It is not intended that the sample be nationally representative or that the findings from it be generalisable across the population. Rather, the purpose of the beneficiary assessment is to provide relevant insight for policy and programme design and implementation from the experiences of beneficiaries in accessing, and receiving support from, various programmes. The sample will comprise beneficiaries from across the range of major social and child protection programmes, as identified during the programme mapping and from across a range of geographical areas (e.g. from the poorer more sparsely-populated north as well as wealthier southern municipalities). It is not expected that the beneficiary assessment will cover all municipalities.

- **Interviews with policy makers, implementers and development partners** – including at the state and municipality levels.

It will be important for the assessment team (consultancy firm) to try and sample beneficiaries on the basis of a range of characteristics, related not only to programme involvement but also in terms of household characteristics – including in terms of household size, gender of household head and number and age of children. This though, will also mean that the number of beneficiaries in the different groups will be relatively small and so will have limitations for the generalisability of the findings.

**Dissemination of findings**

Final report on the assessment (analysis and executive summary), a policy brief on recommendations of next steps and an actionable roadmap for the reform of the social protection system feature as the key deliverables of this process. Due to the expected high volume of data and analysis contained in the full assessment report, the dissemination strategy will involve:
- Preparation of an executive summary as a standalone document, suitable for both expert and general audience,
- Preparation of slide decks with key findings and proposed reform options,
- Preparation of human interest stories based on the beneficiary assessment,
- Publishing of the full assessment report in electronic format,
- Crafting advocacy messages, based on the full assessment report, which UNICEF and partners will use in policy advocacy.

Logistical issues

The research will involve the research team visiting selected municipalities in Montenegro. The research team will be responsible for arranging, and paying for, their own road transport while working in the country.

5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The research will be administered in line with the Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, and Data Collection and Analysis (UNICEF, 2015) to ensure the highest ethical standards in all stages. This is necessary both in its own right and as a significant contributor to ensuring quality and accountability in the evidence generation process, especially when it involves children.

To achieve that goal, UNICEF Country Office in Montenegro established an independent Ethical Review Committee in 2016, which reviews and approves research methodologies and final research reports, before their publication. The committee is multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral in composition.

As per the Terms of Reference, functions of the Ethical Review Committee include the following:

1) Reviewing Relevant Research, Data Collection and Analysis Inception Reports, focusing on a detailed research methodology: to contribute to respect and protection of dignity, rights, safety and well-being of all children, groups and persons related to the concerned project/programme/activity. This would include participants in the research/evaluation, community at large, researchers, research community and institution/s. Tentatively, the Committee is expected to:
   - Provide feedback on the inception report and/or proposed research methodology within 5 working days following the submission;
   - Provide feedback on the draft research report no later than 5 working days following the submission;
   - Provide feedback on the final research report no later than 5 working days following the submission;

2) Guidelines: Provision of Guidelines with respect to:
   - When a full or expedited review is required and the arrangements and timelines for both.
   - Where significant ethical issues arise or where significant changes to the methodology or project occurs during the implementation of the project, the Committee should be notified and a decision made as to whether the changes or issues require ethical review.

3) Analysis and Documentation: Ensuring learning at UNICEF Montenegro and targeted capacity building of national partners through training and sessions related to ethics and other relevant issues of social research. Therefore, ethical considerations of respondents will be of utmost priority in determining the most appropriate methods and their implementation and will be documented and included in all reports. Special measures will be put in place to ensure that the assessment process is ethical and that the participants in the process can openly express their opinion. This will be particularly relevant for the data collection as part of the beneficiary assessment. Specific attention should be paid to issues specifically relating to:

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4 https://www.unicef.org/supply/files/ATTACHMENT_IV-UNICEF_Procedure_for_Ethical_Standards.PDF
• Harm and benefits: the selected service provider will be expected to avoid constituting a risk to participants in the assessment, as none of the participants will be stigmatised for taking part in the assessment, prevented from benefitting from social protection interventions or enticed to participate by e.g. inadequately high participation fees;

• Informed consent: With regard to child participants, the prior written consent of both the child and their parent/ legal guardian will be required in order to participate in the FGD (if relevant), using the consent form template the selected service provider will need to develop;

• Privacy and confidentiality: The sources of information will be protected and known only to the research team., i.e. ensuring ethical conduct in data generation will be imperative.; and

• Conflict of interest of the research informants: UNICEF expects that any potential or actual conflict of interest will be declared beforehand.

Consequently, the Team Leader has to ensure that it is clear to all subjects that their participation in the assessment is voluntary. All participants should be informed or advised of the context and purpose of the assessment, as well as the privacy and confidentiality of the discussions.

The inception report, draft and final report of the assessment will need to undergo stakeholder and external quality review, including the Steering Committee and independent Ethical Review Committee. The consultancy firm is expected to address these comments in a reasonable amount of time, and to create and update the comments matrix, with justification provided to explain how each of the comments were treated.

**6. DELIVERABLES**

1. Inception report including implementation plan and methodology including adapted CODI tools, FGD and interview guides
2. Completed ethical review procedure
3. Overview mapping of the legal, policy and strategy framework
4. Descriptive statistics on information collected from the SWIS
5. Mapping of social assistance and social and child protection services at the national level and municipal level
6. Characteristics and trends in poverty and vulnerability from secondary sources, including MICS and SILC
7. Write-up of findings from beneficiary assessment
8. Regular status updates for the Steering Committee
9. Draft of final report that addresses the five overall questions for the assessment and includes an actionable roadmap for reforming the social protection system recommendations on mechanisms to strengthen the use of evidence in decision making. This draft will also need to include an executive summary. It will be structured as follows: introduction; methodology; assessment of poverty and vulnerability; analysis of legal and policy framework; assessment of programme design; analysis of programme implementation; actionable roadmap for reforms. This report will need to conform to UNICEF guidelines on length, format and style.
10. Draft of briefing outlining the next steps, and an actionable roadmap, for reforms of the social protection system
11. Slide deck for the final technical meeting
12. Final analytical report also including an actionable roadmap for reforming the social protection system and policy implications brief incorporating feedback from the technical meeting and from external quality assurance reviews.
7. WORKPLAN, TIMELINE AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Work is expected to start in July 2019. A proposed timeline is presented below. It is expected that the consultancy firm will report any adverse events that may cause the timeline to slip, or any delays during project implementation to UNICEF’s Social Policy Officer. Consultancy firm may propose suitable inputs and level of effort to deliver the outputs, including a breakdown of estimated consultancy days for each of the proposed team members. Applicants to this consultancy are asked to submit their daily rate for the work to be undertaken (for each of the proposed team members), based on the estimate of the number of days (level of effort) required to complete the work by the deadlines proposed below.

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<th>Key deliverable</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Payment schedule</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Inception report to include: Implementation plan and methodology including adapted CODI tools, FGD and interview guides</td>
<td>Mid-August</td>
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<td>2. Preparation for, submission, and revisions in the light of the ethical review</td>
<td>August</td>
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<td>3. Report on the characteristics and trends in poverty and vulnerability</td>
<td>Mid-September</td>
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<td>4. Mapping of the legal, policy and strategy framework</td>
<td>July-August</td>
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<td>5. Mapping of social assistance and social services at the national and municipal level</td>
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<td>6. Findings from SWIS and other information systems</td>
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<td><strong>Upon submission and approval of deliverables 3 – 6</strong></td>
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<td>7. Findings from beneficiary assessment</td>
<td>October to mid-November</td>
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<td>8. Throughout the assessment period: reports to the Steering Committee</td>
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<td>9. Draft Report and policy brief on analysis findings and with reform roadmap</td>
<td>End of December</td>
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<td><strong>Upon submission and approval of deliverables 7 – 9</strong></td>
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<td>10. Final technical meeting</td>
<td>Early February</td>
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<td>11. Submission of final report and policy brief following technical meeting and external peer review</td>
<td>March 2020 – April 2020</td>
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<td><strong>Upon submission and approval of deliverables 10 – 11</strong></td>
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8. TEAM COMPOSITION, QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

This assessment will be contracted by UNICEF as one institutional contract, with the assessment team comprising at least four members. The team will include an international team leader and three national consultants, including the following experience and skills, first by the team leader, and then across the team:

Requirements for the team leader:

- An advanced university degree in social sciences – including economics or social policy;
- At least 10 years of experience working in the field of social protection and social policy, including having previously led overall assessments of social protection systems.
- Knowledge of international tools for the assessment of social protection systems, including the CODI.
- Experience working on social protection or social and child protection services in southern or eastern Europe.
- Experience at working with policymakers and developing actionable roadmaps for reforming policies and programmes.

Requirements for the national quantitative analyst:

- An advanced university degree in the social sciences – including economics or social policy, including a quantitative component
- At least five years of relevant experience
- Expertise of and knowledge about MIS and reporting from MIS;
- Understanding and experience of analysing household survey data to assess living standards and of the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to analysis.
- Experience of using the findings from MICS and EU-SILC datasets and working alongside national statistical agencies would be a particular advantage;
- Experience at working with policymakers and developing actionable roadmaps for reforming policies and programmes.
- Fluency in Montenegrin and English.

Requirements for the national qualitative researcher

- An advanced university degree in the social sciences – including economics or social policy, including a qualitative component
- At least five years of relevant experience
- Expertise in designing methodologies for primary research, including those collecting information from vulnerable respondents;
- Knowledge of the situation of poor and vulnerable families in Montenegro and of the main policies and programmes to support them.
- Knowledge of Montenegro’s social protection system, with a particular understanding of current debates concerning social assistance and social services.
- Fluency in Montenegrin and English.

Requirements for the national public financial management consultant:

- Advanced university degree in finance, public administration, economics, or another relevant field
- At least five years of relevant experience in conducting public financial management studies, costing and budget analysis
- Experience at working with public financial management systems, budget preparation and in calculating unit costs of programmes and services;
• Experience at working with policymakers and developing actionable roadmaps for reforming policies and programmes.
• Fluency in Montenegrin and English.

It would be an asset for the consultancy firm and/or individual team members to have previous experience at working with UN organisations, particularly with UNICEF.
It is expected that, in addition to the core team above, the consultancy firm will engage national researchers to conduct the beneficiary assessment. It will be the responsibility of the consultancy firm to develop the methodology for this assessment, to train the national researchers, supervise and ensure quality for the assessment and analyse and write-up the findings.

9. SELECTION PROCESS

The potential contractors are expected to submit a proposal based on these Terms of Reference. The proposal will be evaluated against the following criteria:

(1) relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of proposed methodology and technical approach;
(2) organisational and technical capacity of the applicant;
(3) relevant experience in similar type of work; and
(4) budget.

The evaluation of submitted proposals against these criteria will be used as a basis for the selection of the contractor.

The technical proposal should contain:
- Profile of the organisation/institution/agency;
- Structure of the team - qualifications and experience of the members of the team;
- Detailed description of the methodology and technical approach, including level of effort to deliver the outputs (i.e. breakdown of proposed consultancy days, total and per each of the team members);
- Tentative work plan with timeframe and realistic deadlines for deliverables;
- Reference contacts from other clients.
- Supplier Profile Form

The financial proposal should contain:
- Daily fee rates for each team member, as well as total cost per professional based on the number of working days included in the technical proposal,
- Estimated reimbursable travel costs (all travel must be pre-approved by UNICEF and will be based on most direct and economy class ticket irrespective of the duration of the flight. UNICEF will reimburse the service providers upon the presentation of the travel tickets and boarding pass/receipts etc.). Daily subsistence allowance (DSA) will, where applicable, to be paid up to a maximum of the official UN rate,
- Other costs if applicable.

Each proposal will be evaluated against a weight allocation of 70 for the technical proposal and 30 for the financial proposal. The total maximum number of obtainable points is 100.

A) Technical evaluation - Maximum points: 70
- Professional profile - 20
- Proposed Methodology and Approach – 25
- Quality of Personnel and Suitability for the assignment - 25
## Technical Proposal Evaluation Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Professional profile</th>
<th>Max. Points Obtainable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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| 1.1 | Evidence of experience in similar projects  
   e.g. reviews/assessments of social protection systems  
   e.g. previous engagements with UNICEF or other UN agencies related to social protection | 5 |
| 1.2 | Evidence of familiarity with interagency assessment tools, e.g. the Core Diagnostic Instrument | 10 |
| 1.3 | Familiarity with key human and child rights instruments, Social Protection Floor (ILO Resolution 202) and other social protection resolutions | 5 |
| 2 | Proposed methodology and Approach | 25 |
| 2.1 | Overall understanding of the ToR and the needs and objectives of the assignment | 5 |
| 2.2 | Detailed methodology to conduct the social protection system assessment in Montenegro | 10 |
| 2.3 | Detailed workplan, key milestones and delivery plan for review by UNICEF | 10 |
| 3 | Quality of Personnel and Suitability for the assignment | 25 |
| 3.1 | Academic background and required professional experience for the position of Team Leader (as per the ToR) | 10 |
| 3.2 | Academic background and required professional experience for the position of national Quantitative Analyst (as per the ToR) | 5 |
| 3.3 | Academic background and required professional experience for the position of national Qualitative researcher (as per the ToR) | 5 |
| 3.4 | Academic background and required professional experience for the position of national Public Finance Management consultant (as per the ToR) | 5 |
| Total |                       | 70 points |

### B) Financial proposal (Budget) – Maximum points: 30
- Technical proposal evaluation. Proposals passing the minimum technical pass score (49 points - 70% of the maximum points obtainable for technical proposal) will continue into the Financial proposal evaluation.
- Financial proposal evaluation. The lowest price proposal will be awarded the full score assigned to the commercial proposal.
- Recommendation. The recommendation for award of contract will be based on best combination of technical and financial score.
- Final award and contracts. Based on verified nominations and final scores, contract negotiations could be initiated with one or more successful Proposers.
- Each proposal will be evaluated against a weight allocation of 70% for the technical proposal and 30% for the commercial (financial) proposal. The total maximum obtainable points is 100.
- The UNICEF evaluation team will select the Proposal which is of high quality, clear and meets the stated requirements and offers the best combination of technical and financial score.