



Terms of Reference
Project Policy and Research Officer- Shock-Responsive Social Protection
Ministry of Human Services and Social Security

Official Job Title	Project Policy and Research Officer-Shock Responsive Social Protection
Duty Station	Georgetown, Guyana
Grade	Service Contract with the Government of Guyana (GoG)
Contract duration	2 years – Renewable based on funding
Date job opening	Wednesday, March 24, 2021
Application deadline	Wednesday, March 3, 2021

The [Ministry of Human Services and Social Security \(MoHSSS\)](#) is hiring a Project Policy and Research Officer to assist in the completion of project activities under a technical assistance programme established in collaboration with the [United Nations World Food Programme \(WFP\)](#), to strengthen national social protection systems and programmes to improve their overall functions and responsiveness to shocks. The position will be based at the MHSSS in Georgetown for an initial period of two years (with possibility of extension based on available resources).

Background

In the Caribbean and globally, links are being made between social protection and disaster risk management (DRM). Social protection programmes that provide assistance to households, and the systems that underpin these programmes, may have a role to play in preparing for, responding to and mitigating the impacts of large-scale shocks such as hurricanes, floods, droughts and political and economic crises. We refer to this as 'shock-responsive social protection'.

A [case study on shock-responsive social protection in Guyana](#), conducted by WFP and Oxford Policy Management in collaboration with the MHSSS and the Civil Defence Commission (CDC) in 2019, highlighted a number of challenges that would limit the ability of social protection programmes to scale up in time of shocks, as well as a series of recommendations for investments required to make social protection more shock-responsive including with respect to institutional arrangements, data and information management, beneficiary targeting, delivery mechanisms (cash, in-kind), coordination and risk finance. Guyana regularly experiences flooding and drought. The country is also affected by an influx of Venezuelans fleeing political and economic instability. The COVID-19 pandemic has also severely impacted the country, resulting in the need of scaling up social protection systems to provide multiple relief measures ranging from cash assistance and food hampers.

Based on the analysis and recommendation generated by the case study and in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the MHSSS is implementing a capacity strengthening programme to improve the core functions of national social protection systems and programmes as well as their responsiveness to shocks. The programme is in collaboration with and the support of WFP Caribbean Office for Emergency Preparedness and Response and is broadly organised around the following workstreams: vulnerability analysis and mapping, strengthening social protection building blocks, including data and information management, beneficiary targeting, delivery mechanisms (cash/in-kind) and value of benefits, risk financing, coordination and end-to-end supply chain management.

Responsibilities:

Under the guidance and direct supervision of the Project Coordinator the incumbent will operate with considerable independence in his/her duties and ensure that project and policy objectives are fully achieved. S/he will be involved in a wide variety of project and policy activities and analytical work, some of which will be of considerable complexity. The Project Policy and Research Officer will perform background research (qualitative and quantitative) on project activities as well as provide support and strategic advice on key project interventions, which includes overseeing the research processes of the shock responsive social protection systems tailored to each region and their respective villages and/or towns.

The Project Policy and Research Officer works in close collaboration with the Project Coordinator and other project team members to ensure the effective achievement of results, anticipating and contributing to resolving complex project-related issues and information delivery. The incumbent is expected to exercise full compliance with WFP project management procedures.

Under the direct supervision of the Project Coordinator, the Policy and Research Officer will be responsible for the following:

- Contribute towards the development of projects and provide project management support, ensuring alignment with MHSSS project policies, standards and procedures.
- Contribute to the preparation of accurate and timely reporting on projects and activities that enable informed decision making, including proposals for improvement in operation and scope of projects, and ensure consistency of information presented to stakeholders.
- Provide support in ensuring alignment of projects and initiatives with national strategies and priorities, and promote coherence of approaches, in coordination and collaboration with UN agencies and other key stakeholders.
- Provide advice and support the government on the pilot and implementation of the project activities nationwide
- Provide technical advice or mobilise technical expertise on project and policy issues including assessment and analysis; the choice of objectives, activities, transfer modalities and appropriate products; the deployment and testing of innovative approaches and the development of strategies to support government strengthening of social protection systems.

- Establish and maintain operational partnerships to identify opportunities for collaborative approaches and initiatives that improve assistance packages and support advocacy work.
- Enhance MHSSSS' leadership status in forums relating to area of shock responsive social protection and development contexts through direct participation, briefings, information products and other materials.
- Manage operational research and evidence building on issues relevant to shock responsive social protection capacity strengthening per region and their respective villages and towns.
- Contribute to resource mobilisation efforts for MHSSSS project activities, including clearly articulating the need for strengthening social protections systems to be more shock responsive and related project opportunities.
- Assist with the design and implementation of a strategy focused on capacity development for shock responsive social protection for the Government in the areas of vulnerability analysis and mapping; data management and information systems; targeting; disaster risk financing; multi-stakeholder coordination; transfer value; supply chain and M&E, with the ultimate aim to develop sustainable Government owned measures that will contribute to the resilience of vulnerable sectors of the Guyanese society through strengthened social protection systems.
- Thoroughly review and present information for background research; implementation of the projects; preparation of draft project documents'; work plans, budgets, progress reports, policy briefs, position papers, and proposals on implementation arrangements. Compile the research material in a systematic way and prepare background briefs/briefings notes.
- Provide guidance to the consultants and international advisors on routine implementation of the projects and monitor quality of work completed by the consultants and international advisors.
- Collaborate with research institutions, ministries and government agencies, NGOs and INGOs on the preparation of research products relevant to the project and shock responsive social protection systems and/or emergency preparedness and response.
- Review the background of regions and their respective villages and towns on shock responsive social protection and assess them in view of the project and research results.
- Compile, analyze and synthesize information for the Project Coordinator
- Any other activity required by the project, MHSSSS and/or WFP Technical Focal team

Required Skills and Experience

- Postgraduate degree in Statistics, Development Studies, Economics, International Development or any related field.

- Minimum of 5 years of professional experience, progressively responsible, job related experience in development assistance projects, public sector management, or similar field.
- Experience in implementing and managing projects, as well as providing inputs into project design.
- Specific experience with disaster preparedness and emergency response projects will be further valued.
- Experience in government partnership implementation and in technical assistance areas will be considered as a strong asset.
- General knowledge of UN system policies, rules, regulations and procedures governing administration is an added advantage.
- Ability to interpret and analyze a wide variety needs, partners' requirements, etc.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain effective working relations with internally and externally counterparts, partners and stakeholders with persons of different national and cultural backgrounds.
- Ability to participate and promote open dialogue with the team, valuing the diverse opinion of others to achieve common goals.
- Result oriented attitude.
- Ability to work under pressure and tight deadlines while remaining calm and in good spirits.
- Resourcefulness, initiative, maturity of judgment, excellent communication skills both orally and in writing;
- Self-starter and able to work with minimum supervision;
- Good analytical skills and experience in report writing;
- Sound negotiation skills and ability to accept responsibility;
- Experience in use of computer software (particularly MS Word, Excel, Power Point, Project, etc.) Experience using SPSS, Tableau, and STATA and GIS will be an asset.
- Proven experience and understanding of data collection and analysis methods.

Institutional Arrangements

The Project Policy and Research Officer will be stationed at the MHSSS in Georgetown, with travel to other Regions as/when required, and work closely with WFP's office in Guyana.