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THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX

of the Commission Decision amending Commission Decision C(2015)799 on the Annual Action Programme 2014 in favour of the Kingdom of Lesotho to be financed from the European Development Fund Bridging Facility

Action Document for “Strengthening the Governance of Social Protection in Lesotho: Building an Integrated Social Protection System”

1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number	Strengthening Governance of Social Protection in Lesotho: Building an Integrated Social Protection System. CRIS number: LS/FED/025-008 financed under the 11 th European Development Fund (EDF)	
2. Zone benefiting from the action/location	Lesotho The action shall be carried out at the following location: All ten districts of Lesotho	
3. Programming document (if applicable)	11 th EDF National Indicative Programme (NIP) (2014-2020) for cooperation between the Kingdom of Lesotho and the European Union	
4. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (if applicable)	SDG 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere SDG 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture SDG 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages SDG 5 Achieve gender equality and empower women and girls SDG 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries	
5. Sector of intervention/ thematic area	Governance	DEV. Assistance: YES ¹
6. Amounts concerned	Total estimated cost: EUR 21 532 924 Total amount of EDF contribution: EUR 21 532 924 of which EUR 8 000 000 from the European Development Fund Bridging Facility and EUR 13 532 924 from the 11 th European Development Fund	
7. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)	Project Modality Indirect management with United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)	

¹ Official Development Assistance is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective.

8 a) DAC code(s)	16010 – Social protection			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	41000 - United Nations agency, fund or commission (UN)			
9. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and Women's and Girl's Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade Development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, New-born and child health	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Internal markers	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19 response	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X

SUMMARY

In line with the 11th EDF National Indicative Programme (NIP), the response by the EU to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis calls for and adaption of existing EU programmes. Even though Lesotho did not report a confirmed COVID-19 case until mid-May 2020, a state of emergency was declared with a lockdown. This will have devastating short-, medium- and long-term social and economic impacts. The hardest hit people are those who are living in poverty in remote mountainous villages, people living with HIV and AIDS, and poor families with children.

The overall objective of this proposal is to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the people living in the most vulnerable situations and socially excluded segments of society in Lesotho. The specific objective is to achieve an inclusive social protection system that protects the most economic and socially vulnerable segments of Lesotho's population.

This proposal focuses on scaling up existing social protection systems by supporting about 55,960 families living in vulnerable situations, consisting of 257,416 individuals, through social protection. It builds further onto the current social protection systems that are already in place, including the National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) and cash distribution via contracted companies. 40,000 households that are currently beneficiaries of the Child Grant Programme (CGP) will receive an additional one-off top-up of LSL 1500, and 15,960 additional households that are already identified by NISSA but are not yet enrolled in the CGP will receive a one-off payment of LSL 2,268. Moreover, the action will focus on information dissemination and awareness raising on COVID-19 in communities.

This AD complements the action described in the previous version of the Action Document for "Strengthening the Governance of Social Protection in Lesotho: Building an Integrated Social Protection System".

1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a lower-middle income country with a low human development index, ranking 164 of the 189 countries in 2019. Economic development of the country is largely dependent on the Southern African Custom Union (SACU). The overall development of the country is persistently weak due to persistent poverty and inequality, high levels of HIV and AIDS, unemployment, food security driven by cyclical emergency, and political instability.

About 49.7 % population of the country live in poverty. More than one in three people (34 %) live below the food poverty line (extreme poverty) of LSL 138 (US\$10.30) per adult per month with disparities between rural and urban population². Lesotho is ranked one of the ten most gender unequal countries in the world with a Gini coefficient of 0.45 in 2017. Women are more likely to live in poverty, and face unemployment, gender-based violence and have a higher prevalence of HIV than their male counterparts across the country.³ Children of Lesotho are the hardest hit by poverty: about 65 % of all children in Lesotho are simultaneously deprived of at least three basic social services⁴.

AIDS is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in Lesotho. About 25 % of adults aged 15-49 years old in Lesotho are infected with HIV. Unemployment remains high at 28 % with the youth unemployment rate being especially high at more than 43 %⁵.

The population of the country is highly food insecure due to climate change and consequent natural disasters. According to the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) 2019, about 508,125 people, including 118,000 children, will experience food insecurity in 2020. Gross harvest decreased by 29,918MT in 2019 from 64,652MT in 2018⁶. In the given situation, many households are likely to adopt negative coping mechanisms, such as selling of assets, reducing frequency of meals, pulling kids from schools and engage them in work, etc.

The country's economy is small and experienced about 1.1 % growth in 2018⁷. The private sector remains weak and is dominated by textile and apparel and mostly micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). More than 80 % of the population relies on natural resource-based industries such as agriculture. Political instability has resulted in weak coordination among and within ministries and agencies, delayed implementation of key reforms and negatively affected growth. Despite the importance of fiscal policies in tackling development challenges, fiscal space is limited.

² World Bank (2015). Lesotho: Systematic Country Diagnostic.

³ ibid

⁴ UNICEF (2018). Child poverty in Lesotho: the challenge and possible responses, UNICEF Lesotho

⁵ UN (2017): Common Country Assessment 2017, UN Lesotho

⁶ Bureau of Statistics (2019). Crop Forecasting 2018-2019, Lesotho

⁷ Ministry of Development Planning 2020. COVID-19 Impact Analysis, Lesotho

1.1 Context and problem description

In line with the 11th EDF National Indicative Programme (NIP), the response by the EU to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis calls for an adaptation of existing EU programmes.

Although the country did not report a confirmed COVID-19 case until mid-May 2020, the Prime Minister declared a state of emergency with a lockdown, following other affected countries. The action was critical for minimising people's movement and hence curbs any possible transmission of the virus. However, this will have devastating short-, medium- and long-term social and economic impacts⁸. The key short-term impacts are: (1) externally broken global value chains will affect Lesotho textile and apparel industry that employs about 40,000 people; (2) as imports of raw and intermediary materials in the textile and apparel sector have been significantly delayed, the exports of final products to the United States (accounting for 99 % of total exports) cannot take place; (3) employment in and revenue earned from tourism will decline significantly; and (4) as overseas economic activities are halted, financial flows through workers' remittances from South Africa will also decline. Domestically, the lockdown and containment measures lead to (a) further disruption of imports of goods and services from South Africa and logistics challenges within the country; (b) a major closure of business activities; (c) closure of key public services such as schools; and (d) a risk of job loss as most factories have stopped operations.

This combined with insufficient communication from the government has increased uncertainty among people, especially on the lack of essential goods and services and risk of COVID-19 infection. Although the COVID-19 crisis is impacting all population of the country, the hardest hit people are those who are living in poverty in remote mountainous villages, people living with HIV and AIDS, and poor families with children. According to National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) data, 101,820 families (468,372 individuals) are living in poverty; and 70,519 of these families are families with children (324,387 individuals). According to LVAC, about 500,000 people who are food insecure needed lifesaving support. However, in the current COVID-19 situation, the number of affected people has increased to 899,000 (179,000 in urban and 720,000 in rural areas)⁹ due to other factors such as reduction in income from agricultural activities and loss of productive assets.

Based on global experience, the Lesotho COVID-19 impact analysis recommends restoring public confidence, protecting the most vulnerable people by scaling up existing social protection systems, supporting learning at home, supporting private sector employees, and allocating government resources and mobilizing support from the international community. This proposal focuses on scaling up existing social protection systems by supporting about 55,960 families living in vulnerable situations, consisting of 257,416 individuals through social protection.

⁸ ibid

⁹ Government of Lesotho policy document on COVID-19 response

2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Main risks as identified in RMF	Risk Level (H/M/L)	Mitigation Measures
Political instability can lead to further loss of legitimacy of the government/state	Medium Instability can lead to a breakdown of the current government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development partners and South African Development Community (SADC) aim to strengthen democratic practices in Lesotho; Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN) and Christian Councils have been supporting civil society and church leaders engaging with political leadership; Grass root work of "community parliaments" being implemented with EDF 11 Participatory Initiative for Social Accountability (PISA) and LCN projects.
Coverage of social protection programmes and budgets are not adequate to cover all people living in vulnerable situations sufficiently, which may destabilise social cohesion and create corruption	High Non availability of compensation and protection for workers who will lose their jobs and the limited coverage and budget to cover needs of the vulnerable may destabilize social cohesion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restoring public confidence by Government Ministries; A robust system for cash delivery and rigorous monitoring will be established; Government has prepared a plan to support all people living in vulnerable situations and is committed to mobilise resource; Analyses of the vulnerabilities which are multifactorial and include increased poverty, hunger, HIV, fragile ecosystems and natural disasters including droughts and flooding.
Increased number of people in need of food assistance due to increasing prices and loss of jobs (resulting in increasing poverty levels)	High 500,000 people had already been declared food insecure by the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) 2019/2020 report. It is assumed that COVID 19 impact could increase the numbers further.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government had already declared a state of emergency in late 2019. Some response efforts are therefore in place; A COVID-19 coordination committee was established to oversee the response to the pandemic. The Government has put aside budget to address some of the challenges although insufficient; Medium term response options, including adaptation and upscaling existing social protection programmes to address COVID-19 impact on the people living in poverty and vulnerable situations.
Sectorial Risks	Risk Level (H/M/L)	Mitigation Measures
Inadequate commitment of leadership of the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) due to political instability, which is critical to direct all relevant stakeholders to a common vision on how to address the crisis	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN agencies and other development partners are working together to strengthen the institutional capacities of all social sector Ministries in general, and the MoSD in particular to manage COVID-19 related interventions including social assistance intervention. UNICEF has been supporting particularly the MoSD to strengthen its capacity and has established a stringent monitoring and assurance system to ensure the funds are used as planned following agreed terms and conditions.

COVID-19 may delay the payment	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government will prepare a standard operating procedure (SOP) for administering payment during COVID
Assumptions for Sector		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MoSD and other relevant Ministries are strongly committed to reduce the impact of COVID-19 by implementing relevant interventions. Development partners including UNICEF and EU will provide the Ministry with technical support on a day to day basis; The existence of a single registry National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) along with a Management Information Systems (MIS), which unites different social protection interventions, creates conditions for improved targeting of the poorest and most vulnerable households. It further reduces operational costs, simplifies case management, reduces response time and minimises duplications of support; All stakeholders including the population living in poverty and vulnerable situations in rural and urban areas will pursue sustainable livelihoods, self-reliance, improved food security, and higher levels of economic and social well-being to strengthen social cohesion; Thus, the Government would continue its commitment to strengthen the integrated social protection system in Lesotho. 		

3 COMPLEMENTARITY, SYNERGY AND DONOR COORDINATION

In the EU response to the crisis, synergies are sought between this programme and the following operations:

Social Protection

Over the years, the people living in poverty have benefited from the long-standing commitment of the Government to the principles of social protection, which has led to the creation of a diverse set of programmes (Child Grant, Public Assistance, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) Bursary, Old Age Pension, etc) to support households and individuals. The share of gross domestic product (GDP) devoted to non-contributory social assistance programmes alone, excluding subsidies, is nearly triple the average for sub-Saharan Africa, at 4.5 % of GDP compared with an average of 1.7 %. Social protection is crucial to help individual and households cope with the crisis, by reducing social and economic risks and protection of the livelihoods and wellbeing of all affected. Vertical and horizontal expansion of the Child Grant Programme (CGP) supported by the British Department for International Development (DFID) and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in the previous drought emergency proved that an additional cash injection into the already vulnerable households help families to improve their food security and avoid adopting negative coping mechanisms.

In 2019/2020, UNICEF through the support of ECHO developed the Scalability Framework to provide guidance on how vertical and horizontal expansion on the CGP should be done in a systematic manner. The framework will now be used to provide guidance during COVID-19 response.

Health, Hygiene and Protection

The Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) will work with the health sector to sensitise and inform communities and beneficiaries about the disease. In areas where cash will be delivered, the front-line service providers who will be involved in cash payment will be provided with Personal Protective Equipment and hand sanitisers for staff from ECHO funds.

In the response of the international community, close coordination will be ensured between the EU and the following entities:

- UNICEF Lesotho

The Resident Coordinator leads the coordination and response efforts in Lesotho under the technical guidance of relevant technical agencies. UNICEF has prepared its own response plan, aligning with the Government's plan and focusing on Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), Social Assistance, Education and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) and procurement of emergency supplies. Key partners include World Health Organisation (WHO), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Education (MoE), media, development partners (CDC, PEPFAR, EU, World Bank) and other UN agencies. UNICEF will provide related technical assistance to the project and will execute overall project management and oversight jointly with the MoSD. More specifically, UNICEF will:

- Work closely with the Ministry of Health and WHO to be kept informed on the epidemiological situation and to ensure alignment with the national response;
 - Follow emergency standards, preparedness and response procedures, focusing on protection of service personnel and communities. A key priority will be to ensure that clear and correct information (and in a format that is understandable to all including to persons with disabilities) is communicated to all communities to counter disease spread and negative coping mechanisms;
 - Collaborate and work closely with the MoSD to ensure that beneficiaries of CGP receive financial support to prevent negative coping mechanisms;
 - Engage services of technical personnel to provide technical and oversight support (assist payment coordinator to manage and disburse cash) to ensure smooth implementation of the response;
 - Conduct quality assurance activities including spot checks and field monitoring (if SOP allows) to ensure a successful implementation of the project; and
 - Prepare quarterly and final reports and submit to EU.
- MoSD at central and district level (Government)

The MoSD at central and district level will provide overall project leadership as well as guidance. The Ministry will:

- Lead the implementation of the project and will be responsible for targeting beneficiaries, enrolment (collecting required information from selected beneficiaries), monitoring distribution of cash benefit, cash management processes (addressing any appeals or grievance within the programme) and services; and
 - Partner with communities and private sector entities such as G4S and mobile payment agencies. Security companies such as G4S, together with Vodacom and Econet, might be contracted for providing cash distribution services to individual households at designated Cash Distribution Points (CDP). The MoSD will ensure that the complaints and grievances of the community regarding the project are dealt with. Standard Lesotho Bank is the main financial institution to work with G4S for coordinating the transactions as necessary.
- Community leaders and community at large

Community sensitisation and awareness creation activities will be conducted to address the issue of social tensions because the intervention will cover only a certain portion, and not all of the vulnerable households and individuals that are eligible for the grant identified by NISSA. Therefore, community leaders including

Chiefs, community councillors, religious leaders, and extension workers will be provided with the information on the objectives of the intervention, duration of the intervention and benefit amount, selection rationale which is critical for the success of the project. The community at large will also be kept abreast and be encouraged to support the implementation of the initiatives. Moreover, as soon as social distancing measures are relaxed, the intention is to develop synergies with the ongoing Participatory Initiative for Social Accountability (PISA), a civil education programme in Lesotho funded by the EU and implemented by GIZ. PISA is currently working on COVID-19 information dissemination and raising community awareness.

- CGP beneficiaries

They will be the primary target for all the interventions. During community mobilisation, adapted messages will be directed to them to ensure their participation and collaboration including women, men and young people, as well as to understand their situations and needs.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

Inclusive social protection through targeted cash transfers to households and individuals living in vulnerable situations is a strong instrument to support livelihoods in emergency response. It contributes to the improved wellbeing of those living in the most vulnerable situations such as women, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, labour migrants, orphans and sex workers. The Child Grant Programme (CGP) targeting and delivery system will be used to reach all targeted beneficiaries. In addition, strengthening the linkage between emergency responses with regular social protection instruments, such as the use of National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) and the payment system at an early stage, ensures smooth transition from emergency response to development, which is the best pathway to build resilience. In 2013, almost 3,500 households who were targeted during the emergency became beneficiaries of a regular government programme like CGP. As such, funds provided will have an effect on the long-term social protection of thousands of children and people living in the most vulnerable situations far beyond the emergency response. The following key activities will be covered:

Community Mobilisation

In preparation for disbursement of COVID-19 benefits and enrolment of new CGP beneficiaries, community sensitization is critical to inform beneficiaries (women, men and young people) and entire communities about the purpose of the intervention, to understand their needs and situations and to mobilise them to adhere to COVID-19 messages and instructions. Given the situation, the information will be mostly provided through radios and mobile technology to improve efficiency gains, but there are areas that can only be reached through public gatherings. Wherever possible existing communication channels with communities, established through the EU funded programme Participatory Initiative for Social Accountability (PISA), shall be used with due consideration to the needs of persons with disabilities, including the organisations that are representing them.

Vertical Expansion

The usual CGP transfer amounts are indexed to the number of children in the household as follows: a household with 1-2 children gets LSL 360 per quarter; with 3-4 children LSL 600 per quarter; and with 5 or more children LSL 750 per quarter. COVID-19 benefits consist of a top-up amount of LSL 500¹⁰ per month for three months. 40,000 CGP households (184,000 individuals) that are identified as most vulnerable by NISSA are currently receiving child grant benefits. As they are affected further by COVID-19 (directly or

¹⁰ The benefit amounts for both the top-up and horizontal coverage are decided by the Disaster Management Authority following the LVAC based on the value of a minimum expenditure basket.

indirectly) they will receive this additional top-up amount in a single disbursement of LSL 1500. Payment to these households will be linked with the CGP system. Hence the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) will use existing payment agencies such as G4S and mobile payment agencies to deliver the cash to the targeted beneficiaries.

Horizontal Expansion

Currently the CGP covers only 40,000 vulnerable households out of over 72,000 most vulnerable households identified by NISSA. Of those who are yet to be covered by the CGP, 15,960 most vulnerable households and individuals will be enrolled for COVID-19 support based on the available budget. In deciding on who would be among these 15,960 households, the Ministry follows the principle that the most vulnerable households and individuals come first. These potential beneficiaries have already been identified through the NISSA targeting process that involves several stages, with the Community Based Categorisation (CBC) being the central feature while Proxy Means Testing (PMT) corrects inclusion and exclusion errors. However, enrolment is necessary as it enables the programme to update household and individual information and capture changes that may have occurred after targeting. These 15,960 households will receive a single disbursement of LSL 2,268 for three months, consisting of LSL 756 flat rate per month, following the CGP payment system.

The estimate of cash transfers has been assessed on a LSL unit cost basis at the time of drafting the indicative budget. Given the currency fluctuations, that number may vary.

Due to the nature of the response, the personnel (MoSD staff, G4S, Village Assistance) that will be providing service to the communities will be provided with PPE to minimize the spread of the disease. The equipment includes masks, sanitisers and gloves

The disbursement of cash will equally benefit households and adult individuals as well as boys and girls. The CGP has an equal ration of beneficiaries. Payment of cash is made mostly to the female head of households; this enhances women's control over their decision-making power at household level.

Community Education about COVID-19

UNICEF and the MoSD will work closely with the Ministry of Health to promote hygiene education in the community as cash is being delivered. Education will be delivered through different channels like mobile phones, radio and pamphlets, in an inclusive and simple format, accessible to all. Building synergies, partnerships and consolidation of existing approaches between promotion of good practices and cash transfers will contribute to building resilience and prevention.

Programme Monitoring and end of intervention assessment

The overall monitoring and reporting system will be coordinated by UNICEF in close collaboration with the MoSD. A monitoring framework will be designed which will gather data for the indicators that contribute to the overall outcome of the project. The MoSD will submit a final report to UNICEF on the COVID-19 cash assistance, outlining the success and lessons learned.

Results chain			Indicator ¹¹	Source of data
IMPACT	Impact (overall objective)	Mitigate socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the people living in the most vulnerable situations and socially excluded segments of the society	1. % of the population living under the poverty line (disaggregated by sex and age) 2. GINI-coefficient	1. Household Budget Survey, Continuous Multi-purpose survey 2. Poverty Analysis Report
OUTCOME(S)	Outcome 1 (specific objective)	An inclusive social protection system protects the most economic and socially vulnerable segments of Lesotho's population	1. % of households and individuals registered in NISSA (disaggregated by sex and type of household by number of children, and people living with disability) 2. % of people living in extreme poverty receiving cash transfers (disaggregated by sex and type of household by number of children, and people living with disability)	1. MoSD quarterly/annual report 2. NISSA/MIS Reports
OUTPUT(S)	Output 1	CGP households identified as most economic and socially vulnerable benefit from cash transfers	1.1 # of households and individuals receiving supplementary COVID-19 cash transfers (disaggregated by sex, disability and district)	1.1 NISSA
	Output 2	CGP beneficiary households/individuals receive COVID-19 preparedness and prevention messages and have the capacity to give feedback on quality of public services	2.1 # of beneficiaries received information on COVID-19 preventive rules (disaggregated by sex, age and district)	2.1 Interventions completion report
	Output 3	MoSD frontline staff involved in providing services to vulnerable households are provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be protected	3.1 # of front-line staff using PPE during cash disbursement and beneficiary enrolment (disaggregated by sex and position)	3.1 Supply distribution list and project completion report

¹¹ Formulation of the indicators has to be in a neutral form starting with the measurement unit as in the example (number of; percentage of; status of). Please note it is NOT required to specify baselines and targets.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this action it is foreseen to conclude a rider to the financing agreement with the partner country.

5.2 Indicative implementation period

This point remains unchanged.

5.3 Implementation modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures¹².

5.3.1 Indirect management with an international organisation

This action with the objective of implementing the Government of Lesotho's National Policy on Social Development and National Social Protection Strategy may be implemented in indirect management with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in accordance with Article 58(1)(c) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

This implementation is justified because of the organisation's long history of close cooperation with the Government of Lesotho in providing support and capacity building in respect of the Lesotho public service and civil society not being able to meet the challenges of inequality, the HIV and AIDS pandemic and poverty. The entrusted entity would provide programme management support, including technical assistance and financial management. The entity (UNICEF) would provide capacity development training to relevant Government ministries and department, to District and Community Councils and to community and village level structures.

5.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

¹² www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

5.5 Indicative budget

	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
5.3.4. – Indirect Management Delegation Agreement with UNICEF (including the provisions for Communication and Visibility)	21 332 924
5.8 – Evaluation and 5.9 – Audit	200 000
Total	21 532 924

5.6 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

A steering committee was established to oversee and validate the overall decision and policy of the project. The steering committee comprises a representative of the Government of Lesotho (the National Authorising Officer (NAO)), representatives of the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), a representative of the Ministry of Development Planning (MoDP), a representative of UNICEF and a representative of the EU with observer status.

The strategic management team comprises a representative of the MoSD, a finance specialist of the MoSD, a Child Grant Programme (CGP) manager and a representative of UNICEF. They will meet on a monthly basis. The mandate of the team is to manage the relationship between UNICEF and the MoSD and to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of the intervention following agreed conditions. The MoSD, taking over full ownership of the social protection systems, puts in place an appropriate management mechanism and supports the capacity building interventions for the MoSD by UNICEF.

The tasks of the overall programme implementation and management are entrusted to UNICEF.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

5.7 Performance and Results monitoring and reporting

The monitoring system will be jointly agreed by the EU, UNICEF and the Ministry of Social Development.

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and submit regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results as measured by corresponding indicators disaggregated minimum by sex, using as reference the simplified Logframe matrix available in section 4 or the partner's strategy.

U-report will be used to receive feedback from beneficiaries. U-Report is a messaging programme for community participation, designed to address any issue that affects them by collecting information from them to improve policy and programmes, and by directly providing life-saving information to the people living in the most vulnerable situations in a timely way. U-Report is run in collaboration with government partners and UNICEF programmes. UNICEF and partners use it to share information, raise awareness, and collect quantifiable and disaggregated data on specific areas that impact those living in the most vulnerable situations - including child protection, health, education and emergency response. Received responses are analysed in real-time, mapped and displayed on a public dashboard. As such U-report will be used to deliver CGP and COVID-19 related messages and to collect feedback from beneficiaries on the receipt of cash and provision of information on access to services. The U-report will include information of gender and human rights aspects.

In addition to the use of its own monitoring system, UNICEF will support the implementing partner to monitor the implementation of the intervention efficiently and effectively. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results as measured by corresponding disaggregated indicators.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

5.8 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), considering in particular the fact that this is an innovative action. The evaluation will be gender and human rights sensitive, assess the results to women and men, to groups in vulnerable situation (persons with disabilities, living with HIV/AIDS etc.) and the application of the rights-based approach working principles (participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency) in the implementation of the project and in its respective outcomes.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 30 days in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the

follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

It is foreseen that evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.9 Audit

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

It is foreseen that audit services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.10 Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, to be elaborated at the start of implementation.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union.

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner country, contractors, grant beneficiaries and/or entrusted entities. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, the financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Requirements for European Union External Action (or any succeeding document) shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.