

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SPECIALIST

BELIZE COVID-19 RESPONSE PROJECT

1. BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020. COVID-19 is an acute respiratory illness caused by a novel human coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). SARS-CoV-2 causes coronavirus disease or COVID-19, the first non-influenza pandemic to affect the world. As of May 16, 2022, there were 58,028 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 676 reported deaths in Belize. In response to the pandemic, the Belize COVID-19 Emergency Response Project supported by the World Bank aims to prevent and respond to the threat posed by COVID-19 and strengthen the national health system for emergency response to the pandemic.

Prompt support to vaccine purchase and deployment is critical for Belize to reduce the disease burden from COVID-19 and enable economic recovery. Expedient actions to support vaccine procurement and vaccine deployment in Belize are necessary to scale up ongoing immunization efforts and provide the MOHW much needed resources to the health sector during this period of significant fiscal constraints. Moreover, due to the global spread of COVID-19 variants, increasing immunization rates is paramount to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

The vaccine doses Belize has so far secured are sufficient to fully immunize (including booster vaccines for adults) up to 80 percent of the total population. In terms of primary vaccination (no booster), the secured doses are sufficient for primary vaccination of 521,825 people or 121 percent of the total population. When considering that everyone aged 18 and older will be eligible for a booster vaccination during the Project implementation period, the hitherto secured vaccines are sufficient to vaccinate 80 percent of the population, somewhat below the Government of Belize's (GoB) target of 88.5 percent. The GoB plans to use donated vaccines for boosters.

The Belize COVID-19 Response Project will form part of an expanded vaccination effort led by the GoB and supported by several international partners. The IDB, PAHO, UNICEF, and the European Union have played a key role in supporting the GoB's financial and technical response to COVID-19, including COVID-19 immunization. Moreover, Belize benefited from COVID-19 vaccines donated by foreign governments (Barbados, India, Mexico, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America). Close coordination with other partners, under the leadership of the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW), will avoid duplication of efforts and maximize synergies.

The Project has two main components

Component 1: COVID-19 Response (US\$5.8 million). The support for vaccines will be financed as part of the containment and mitigation measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and deaths and to strengthen the ability of the health system to respond to future health emergencies. Vaccine purchase and deployment activities carried out under this component will be guided by the Belize COVID-19 Vaccine Introduction Plan (VIP). The Project will contribute to climate resilience and mitigation measures through vaccine deployment to increase the resilience of the health system and vulnerable populations. This component will support the Belize COVID-19 response through two subcomponents as follows:

- **Subcomponent 1.1. Vaccine purchase (US\$3.9 million).** This subcomponent will support the procurement of vaccines from the COVAX and AVAT facilities. Other sources to be determined may be included.
- **Subcomponent 1.2 Vaccine deployment (US\$1.9 million).** Envisioned support under this subcomponent includes vaccine deployment and supporting the health system emergency response capacity:
 - a) procurement of ancillary supply kits that may include PPE for vaccinators, syringes, and other medical supplies;
 - b) scale up the outreach program (e.g., by supporting human resources, procurement of vehicles and operating costs) to strengthen the emergency response and provide critical health services – starting with COVID-19 vaccines - to

everyone, with a focus on specific target groups such as poor people living in rural and urban areas, people with vaccine hesitancy and lower uptake for essential health services, women and girls, persons with disabilities, indigenous population groups, and populations groups vulnerable to climate change;

- c) capacity building of human resources to: (i) strengthen infection prevention control (IPC) and waste management practices and updating the MOHW health care waste management plans, (ii) increase climate awareness and resilience, and (iii) increase awareness and knowledge about gender-based violence and better equip male and female frontline workers with leadership and self-care skills;
- d) strengthen the Belize health information system through digitizing data reporting systems in hard-to-reach areas (e.g. through support of human resources and the procurement of IT equipment) to monitor vaccines uptake and use of other services provided through mobile clinics;
- e) the development of contingency plans to maintain vaccination campaigns during climate shocks;
- f) supporting the COVID-19 immunization campaign and the development and distribution of risk communication products for COVID-19 vaccination, including communication on the risks related to climate shocks and respectful attitudes towards male and female health workers, with special attention to the specific needs of women and men, and disadvantaged population groups (e.g., urban poor, indigenous people);
- g) ensuring adequate and climate and environmentally friendly medical waste management;
- h) support *analytic activities for evidence-based decision making*, including a knowledge, attitudes and practices survey around COVID-19 vaccination which will provide critical information to the MOHW on possible interventions to increase uptake of public health services in case of future epidemics and natural disasters, and
- i) support the procurement of medical equipment to strengthen COVID-19 case management.

Component 2. Project Management and Monitoring (US\$0.4 million). This component will finance the required project management activities and administrative and human resources to manage the Project. The main activities will be carried out by the MOHW team as the Policy, Planning and Project Management Unit (PPPMU) and working closely with the MCH and EPI teams and will include: (i) financial management (FM), procurement, environmental and social requirements, and due diligence; and (ii) monitoring and evaluating the Project. These activities will be carried out per Bank's guidelines and procedures.

The Project includes an option for retroactive financing which can be applied to vaccine purchase (within 12 months from project signing) if the Government of Belize (GOB) decides to seek reimbursement from the World Bank (WB) and the Loan disbursement conditions are in compliance.

Project Implementation Arrangements

The key departments at the MOHW will lead project implementation. Specifically, the Policy, Planning and Project Management Unit (PPPMU) will be responsible for project implementation with technical support from the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) and the Expanded Program for Immunization (EPI) teams. The MCH unit will be responsible for vaccine deployment. The MOHW is Belize's primary sector ministry responsible for the national health care system. The implementation of project activities will require complementary staffing in the PPPMU to ensure adequate monitoring, supervision and reporting throughout the Project. The Project activities will be carried out in accordance with the Operational and Vaccine Delivery and Distribution Manual which will be prepared and adopted by the GoB within 60 days from project effectiveness. A well-developed VIP and the District Vaccine Deployment Plans currently guide the transport, storage, and deployment of COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, the Project activities will be coordinated with support from other partners to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize synergies. Project implementation will also be coordinated with other line ministries and agencies where necessary.

PPPMU staffing

The PPPMU will be strengthened with the following technical staff: (a) Project Officer; (b) M&E Officer; (c) Environmental and Social Officer; and (d) Senior Accounts Officer.

Project Duration:

The proposed Project would be implemented until April 30, 2024, to allow the GoB sufficient time for implementation.

Environmental and Social Management

The Project will comply with Belize national regulations and policies and the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). The potential environmental and human health risk associated with the Project are identified as: (i) community health and safety risks from inadequate handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of infected medical waste and expired and used vaccine vials; (ii) occupational health and safety impacts related to the availability, supply, and appropriate use of PPEs; and (iii) health care waste management and disposal. The potential social risks are related to: (i) challenges in ensuring distribution of the vaccines inclusively and equitably so that socially vulnerable and disadvantaged people can adequately share in the benefits of the Project; (ii) challenges in service and supply delivery to rural and remote areas of the country; (iii) inadequate public engagement and consultation regarding the vaccine delivery rollout, including lack of reliable, pertinent, well-timed, and culturally appropriate information in terms of its safety or effectiveness; (iv) lack of enforcement of measures at vaccination sites to avoid crowding and contagion; and (v) inadequate management of needles, sharps, PPEs, and other materials left over from the vaccinations that could put community members at risk if not properly disposed of.

To mitigate the Environmental and Social (E&S) risks and impacts, E&S instruments have been/are being prepared. The GoB has developed, consulted and disclosed the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) with its Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). The SEP includes elements of an Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) to outline principles and practices that ensure full uptake of Project benefits by Indigenous Peoples. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been prepared which includes actions keeping in line national and WHO standards as well as the Bank's Environmental Health and Safety General and Specific Guidelines. The ESMF includes Labor Management Procedures (LMP) detailing the rights and protections for project workers, as well as a labor grievance mechanism. The Project has an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) which covers all measures and actions needed to ensure compliance with the ESF and the Project's E&S instruments as well as implementation details, monitoring and reporting activities. In addition, a Rapid E&S Assessment for retroactive vaccine financing was conducted to evaluate the E&S systems, guidelines and institutional capacity in place and identify significant E&S issues with regard to COVID-19 vaccine deployment activities implemented by the GoB as of March 2021.

2. OBJECTIVE

The E&S specialist is responsible for overall environmental and social aspects of the project and for coordinating, implementing actions, monitoring and reporting on the projects' compliance with the environmental and social standards and commitments, including those set forth in the ESMF (and LMP), SEP, ESCP and any other Project E&S documents.

3. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Overview

The E&S Specialist will be responsible for ensuring that the Project's E&S outcomes are achieved, and that any adverse impacts are effectively avoided and/or mitigated in a timely manner. Duties/responsibilities of the E&S Specialist include, but are not limited to:

- Undertake the implementation, monitoring and reporting of E&S measures to ensure compliance with the E&S requirements.
- Ensure implementation of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and the E&S instruments i.e. ESMF (and LMP); SEP including the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and IPPF; and the Rapid E&S Assessment.
- Update of E&S instruments as needed.

- Monitor the implementation of the ESMF, SEP, Rapid E&S Assessment, and any other E&S requirements.
- Review, and ensure sure that relevant aspects of the ESCP and E&S risk management instruments are duly incorporated into the procurement documents.
- Work with the PPPMU procurement staff to ensure that environmental and social aspects are incorporated as appropriate in contracts for goods and services and that suppliers and contractors are fully aware of their responsibilities in this regard.
- Ensure that the necessary environmental authorizations and permits are obtained where needed.
- Support with monitoring to ensure that the consultants and contractors comply with the environmental and social health and safety (ESHS) specifications of their respective contracts.
- Provide contributions to the regular, semi-annual and annual progress reports on projects' implementation as required by the MOHW and the World Bank.
- In collaboration with the Director, PPPMU, monitoring and evaluation officer, and other team members, monitor and report on the implementation of the Citizen Engagement (CE) indicator.
- Lead the organization and implementation of training to project workers on Environmental and Social Standards, stakeholder engagement, GRM, sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEA/SH) and other topics of relevance for E&S compliance.
- Perform other duties in line with the scope of the project leading to compliance with environmental and social aspects and related instruments.
- Provide trainings as needed take into consideration, the Project instruments and requirements (as applicable) of the E&S Standards of the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) of the Bank.
- Proficiency in Microsoft/Open Office applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint will be necessary to fulfil duties.

Responsibilities related to LMP

- Ensure the implementation of the labor management procedures set forth in the LMP which is part of the ESMF.
- Ensure that all project workers, including those of the PIU, sign a Code of Conduct as part of their contracts, including provisions on sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment and violence against children.
- Lead the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the GRM of the LMP.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Ensure the implementation of the stakeholder process set forth in the SEP.
- Share Project information and support consultations to ensure that issues are addressed in a timely manner and that project beneficiaries are aware of project activities, in line with the stakeholder engagement process identified in the SEP.
- Lead the establishment, implementation, monitoring and reporting of the GRM developed for the Project.

4. DELIVERABLES

- Monthly reports on the implementation of the E&S requirements.
- Biannual reports that consolidate the E&S performance of the Project and as inputs to the project's biannual report. The environmental inputs for the biannual report will include but not limited to, the implementation of the ESCP, ESMF (including LMP), SEP (including IPPF), Grievance Mechanism and another E&S requirement, as well as stakeholder engagement activities.

5. EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants will be assessed against the following list of desirable qualifications according to the methodology outlined within the Evaluation Process section of this TOR.

- (i) At a minimum, a Bachelor's degree in environmental sciences, Environmental Health and Safety, Social Sciences or other related discipline.
- (ii) At least five years General Experience working in a professional capacity within private or public sector or NGOs.
- (iii) Post-Graduate (Master's Degree) environmental sciences, Environmental Health and Safety, Social Sciences or other related discipline.
- (iv) Specific experience working within the health sector and/or with health information systems in Belize.
- (v) Specific experience working with World Bank procedures.
- (vi) Specific experience working as an Environmental Specialist/Social Specialist in E&S risk management
- (vii) Specific Experience working with policies and legislation related to social issues within Belize.
- (viii) Specific Experience developing and implementing E&S policies.
- (ix) 2 years specific experience working with environmental and social issues of development projects.
- (x) 2 years specific experience in stakeholder/citizen engagement, community outreach, consultations and GRM.
- (xi) 2 years experience in outreach and awareness/capacity building programs.

6. EVALUATION PROCESS

The following outlines the evaluation process to be utilized:

I. Eligibility/Pre-qualification:

Applicants must meet the following minimum qualifications in order to be considered for this process. Note that applicants that do not meet these qualifications will not be considered.

- Bachelor's Degree + 5 years General Experience or Master's Degree + 3 years experience

II. Selection Criteria

Applicants that pass the Pre-qualification will further be assessed (graded) by an evaluation committee consisting of 3-5 persons. Each criterion listed within Experience & Qualifications section will have a maximum value of 10 points each.

0 Points:	Unacceptable: Does not Meet Experience
1-3 Points	Poor
4-6 Points:	Good
7-10 Points:	Very Good

III. Clarifications

A minimum score of 55 of 110 points is required to be considered as a candidate. Applicants that meet this 55-point threshold will be subject to a brief virtual meeting / telephone clarification session pertaining to their experience presented within their CV. The evaluation committee may alter their scores following clarifications provided by the applicant.

IV. Negotiation

Negotiations shall include discussions of the TOR, the methodology of work, employer's inputs, and special conditions and remuneration within the contract. These discussions shall not substantially alter the original scope of services under the terms of the contract. The highest scored candidate will be invited to participate in this phase. If the highest scored candidate does not accept the terms, an offer will be made to the next highest scored candidate(s) until a contract is signed.

V. Notification & Contract Signature

The candidate that passes the negotiation phase will be offered remuneration commensurate with experience which shall be paid either monthly or bi-monthly, as determined during the negotiation phase. Note that standard contract terms shall also consider a 12-month duration, and shall include a 10% gratuity and 20 vacation/personal days. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified within 5 business days of a contract being signed.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

DURATION

- The Officer is a full-time position required for one (1) year, renewable annually based on performance.

LOCATION

- The E&S specialist will work from the PPPMU of the Belize COVID-19 project at the Ministry of Health and Wellness where he/she will be assigned a workstation and will participate in face-to-face or virtual meetings, as is the case. He/she will also be required to visit vaccination sites to monitor E&S compliance.

COORDINATION.

- The E&S specialist will frequently and adequately coordinate with the other PPPMU staff, as relevant.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

- The E&S specialist will report directly to the Director, PPPMU

8. SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Interested applicants are to submit their Curriculum Vitae (CV) / Resume along with copies of educational qualifications and/or relevant certificates, and/or other supporting documents electronically as follows:

Address to:

Dr. Javier Zuniga
Director, Policy Planning and Project Management Unit
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Copy to:

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