



BENUE STATE

SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICY- Implementation Plan

1. Introduction

The Social Protection Implementation Plan 2024-2030 (IP) accompanies the Benue state Social Protection Policy (BSPP). It is built on the strategic objectives of the BSPP and defines a set of activities to guide the implementation of the policy. Possible areas for immediate action covered by the IP include progressive expansion of coverage through new and existing schemes, strengthening leadership and coordination, monitoring and evaluation and financial arrangements. The plan is intended to facilitate discussions between key social protection stakeholders on how to prioritize, design, and fund next steps for effective implementation of the policy. It also ensures that support from development partners (DPs) and civil society organizations is aligned and harmonized with the government's policy.

The activities of the Benue state social protection implementation plan are defined across four implementation areas/goals:

1. Establish and strengthen social protection leadership, coordination, and implementation mechanisms.
2. Increase coverage of social protection policies and programs to meet the policy objectives.
3. Strengthen social protection system for the effective planning, delivery and monitoring of social protection programs.
4. Develop a sustainable financing strategy and mechanism to fund the implementation of the BSPP and other specific programs.

For each implementation area, the operational details are set out in a matrix, which describes specific activities for achieving each outcome, the responsible lead agency, the timeline for each activity and the indicative budget. The matrix is envisaged to be updated on an annual basis by the Social Protection Technical Working Group (SPTWG). Relevant line ministries should complement the implementation plan by producing detailed annual action plans.



2. Benue State Social Protection Policy Framework

The long-term vision of the policy is to: “establish by 2035 an inclusive, integrated and comprehensive social protection system that will effectively protect, prevent, promote and transform the lives of all poor and vulnerable groups in Benue state and contribute to broader human development, greater economic productivity and inclusive growth.”

To move towards this long-term vision, we will gradually modernize the social protection sector and take the steps to broaden the coverage of social protection to those in need of government support, ensuring that selection processes prioritize the inclusion of the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and households.

In the short and medium term, the goal of the policy is to reduce multidimensional poverty and social economic inequalities for inclusive development. The objectives of the Policy are to:

- i. Increase access to social protection for all residents,
- ii. Enhance care, protection, and support for the vulnerable (children, youths, women, elderly, persons with disabilities, pregnant and lactating mothers), and
- iii. Strengthen the institutional and delivery framework for social protection.

To achieve this goal, over the life span of the policy, the policy will focus on:

- Addressing gaps in coverage and better aligning programmes to meet the varied needs of the population;
- Introducing new cash transfer and livelihood promotion schemes and scaling-up ongoing proven interventions in urban and rural settings;
- Ensuring that programmes put in place: a) provide long-term support for the most vulnerable; b) provide a safety net for the poor, should they need it on a temporary basis; and c) facilitate graduation from social protection for those who are able;



- Establish Social protection coordination platform to reduce system fragmentation and increase coordination of interventions;
- Identifying and creating fiscal space for the sustainable (long-term and predictable) financing of social protection and allocate specific budget for social protection.

This Implementation Plan is meant to practically guide a shift in the design and practice of social protection from the fragmented, uncoordinated, under-financed system that currently exists in Benue state to a more harmonized, integrated, and sustainable approach.

3. Overview of the implementation plan

This section provides a brief overview of the four main implementation areas that the IP is focused on, followed by operational details described in a matrix (see section 4).

Implementation Area 1: Establish and strengthen social protection leadership, coordination, and implementation mechanisms.

Strong leadership and coordination are vital elements in spearheading social protection reforms in Benue. The policy defines leadership and coordination institutions, which will drive the implementation of the policy and sustain reforms in the social protection sector. The Benue state Social Protection institutional and coordination framework is comprised of the following institutions/mechanisms:

- Social Protection Steering Committee to be headed by the Deputy Governor is mandated as a high-level committee meant to oversee matters on policy, advocacy and resource mobilization, as well as oversight and accountability regarding implementation of social protection programmes. The committee will consist of commissioners of implementing MDAs. The secretariat of the committee will be domiciled in the Social Protection Department of the Benue State Budget and Economic Planning Commission
- The Social Protection Department: The department will be responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the BSPP and IP.
- Technical Work Teams (TWT) will be established in line with the BSPP's key thematic and programme areas. TWTs will be responsible for providing technical guidance, support and implementation of specific policies and programs;
- Support Units (SU) will enhance effective, implementation and monitoring of the BSPP. These would include support units for management information system, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building, finance, and



The relevant institutions will be responsible for coordination and delivery of the activities under this implementation plan. Thus, strengthening the capacity of this institutions to undertake the coordination of the SPIP effectively is a priority in the short-term. This will ensure that the IP is well implemented with activities delivered on time and budget (see section 4.1 for details).

Implementation Area 2: Increase coverage of social protection policies and programs to meet the BSPP objectives

The policy sets out specific policy objectives and programmatic strategies as a means for achieving the policy vision (refer to Table 1). This will be achieved through identification of priority programs and sustainable funding mechanism for the policy. Further, technical design and costing of new programmatic instruments/programs as well as exploring feasible ways to scale-up existing ones is another key priority. The BSPP will coordinate these activities with the involvement of line ministries and development partners.

Technical program design will include definition of eligibility criteria, size of benefits, targeting, delivery mechanisms, implementation, and M&E arrangements. Implementation of the specific social protection programs will be the responsibility of involved ministries and local government institutions, while the Social Protection Department will prepare operational guidelines for establishing common objectives, targeting, M&E and reporting systems (see section 4.2 for details).

Benue SP Policy Strategic Objectives	Medium-term Programmatic Options
Objective 1: Support the extreme poor and other vulnerable groups in attaining an improved standard of living and enhanced human development by providing predictable, long-term income support and access to basic social services.	• School feeding programme • Education scholarship • Maternity and Child Benefit • Cash transfer for poor and vulnerable (Active age and aged population)
Objective 2: Address seasonal un- and under employment and provide livelihood opportunities and labour capacity for the poorest and most vulnerable groups.	• Public Works Program • Complementary skills development Program • Agricultural inputs and training Support
Objective 3: Improve Coverage of Social insurance programme and ensure shock responsive social protection.	• Contributory pension and non-Contributory • Social security schemes for informal sector* • Provide top up for beneficiaries during conflict and implement early warning systems.
Objective 4: Strengthen synergies between the formal social protection system and informal social protection structures and mechanisms to ensure that traditional forms of support continue to play their vital social protection role at the community level.	• Linking beneficiaries of social transfers with rotating savings Schemes • Training in financial literacy and Bookkeeping

Denotes new interventions

Implementation Area 3: Strengthen social protection system for the effective planning, delivery and monitoring of social protection programmes

The urgent focus of the policy is to strengthen systems to make programs more efficient and effective through development of a robust administrative system to facilitate evidence-based policy decisions, coherent programme design, programme management, monitoring and evaluation. The first phase of the implementation will focus on addressing system fragmentation. By addressing fragmentation and ensuring better coordination across actors and programs, the state will better leverage resources, enhance value for money, and promote stronger final outcomes in the delivery of social protection benefits.



Outcome 3.1: Integrated Management Information System (MIS) established with a functional single registry

As stated in the policy, it is vital to strengthen the management of information and knowledge on social protection to enable dissemination of relevant and updated information among stakeholders. Over a period of two years, Benue state will establish a common information-sharing platform among key agencies involved in the implementation of the social protection policy. As a priority action, we will scope, design, and build the MIS to ensure it is fully operational in two years. The present single social registry system that records all households and individuals enrolled in social protection programs in Benue will also be incorporated into the MIS. This system will be comprehensive, yet simple, and interoperable to ensure that information is shared effectively across different governmental levels. To ensure greater transparency and better targeting of social protection schemes, it will be also necessary to assess the scope for adopting a standardized and harmonized system to identify and target eligible individuals and households (see section 4.3 for details).

Outcome 3.2: Increased awareness across Benue State, of the impacts and benefits from state social protection programmes and lessons learnt

An Effective communication strategy to improve linkages and information flows among stakeholders would be developed. In addition to collection and management of information, efforts will be placed on ensuring effective generation and dissemination of knowledge products and services to inform policymaking and implementation of the policy. Government capacity would be strengthened to undertake policy analysis on the social protection policy, with development partners' support.

Knowledge and evidence generated through this analytical work would be regularly disseminated to stakeholders through policy advocacy campaigns to raise awareness and sustain the commitment to social protection reforms. To ensure effective dissemination of information and knowledge products, a web-based platform is urgently needed with regularly updated information that is easily accessible to both national and sub-national stakeholders (see section 4.3 for details).

Outcome 3.3: An integrated monitoring and evaluation framework established and informing evidence-based policy and programming decisions, appropriate for Benue State

As a priority, a robust monitoring and evaluation system that undertakes regular monitoring and evaluation of programs and monitor progress towards the delivery of policy objectives will be developed. This would include development of an integrated and results-based M&E framework, and tools. The M&E data and evidence will enhance coordination of social protection efforts across government institutions, guide adjustments to current activities, inform the design of new programs and support resource management, and inform broader policy decisions and strategic planning. Effective monitoring will rely greatly on the MIS, and these two components must be established and made operational simultaneously. The evaluation will have both quantitative and qualitative components (see section 4.3 for details).



Outcome 3.4: Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders on designing, implementing and monitoring social protection policy and programmes

Capacity and leadership would be built at all levels of government. Upon confirmation of the institutional arrangements for policy implementation, a human resource and capacity assessment of institutions and organizations involved in delivering policy and programs would be undertaken, leading to the development of a human resource capacity building strategy for social protection implementation in the state. These would be achieved in phases with the first phase being to prioritize assistance for the Social Protection department and supporting the Social protection committee with coordination and policy oversight. Then capacity development assessment will be undertaken to determine various technical, human resource and financial needs at various levels. This will inform a detailed capacity development strategy (including a human resource development plan) and specific training curricula with detailed costings of activities required to strengthen capacity (see section 4.3 for details).



Implementation Area 4: Develop a sustainable financing strategy and mechanism to fund the implementation of the BSPP and specific programs

To ensure critical progress of the social protection policy implementation and advancing the reform agenda, the state will:

- Develop costing exercise on social protection interventions and enabling environment for the BSPP implementation;
- Allocate a specific budget for social protection;
- Identify and create fiscal space for the sustainable (long-term and predictable) financing of social protection programs.

To achieve these objectives and mobilize funds from government, donor, civil society, and private sources for social protection programs, a resource mobilization strategy(RMS) to be developed by Budget and Economic Planning Commission, Bureau for International Cooperation and Development, and with the Ministry of Finance (MoF), who will be the strategy lead. This strategy will be based on concrete proposals for social



protection interventions as defined in the policy and will also include a strategy for the expansion of fiscal space for social protection programs, including the option to set up pooled funding for social protection activities. As a matter of priority, the RMS team will organize consultations with key stakeholders to prepare a costing model and determine levels of financing to be committed to fund planned activities and interventions for the next five years (see section 4.4).

1. Operational details of the Implementation Plan

This section describes operational details of the Implementation Plan including specific activities for achieving each outcome, the responsible lead agency, the timeline for each activity and the indicative budget.

1.1 Implementation Area 1: Establish and strengthen the BSPP leadership, coordination, and implementation mechanisms.

Outcome 1: State leadership, coordination and implementation structures established, and their capacity strengthened.

Activities	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget (Naira)
Establish Social Protection Steering Committee and the Social Protection Department	BSBEPC	September 2024	
Develop Terms of Reference (ToR) that define roles and responsibilities of the committee members	0		0
Inauguration of the committee by the Governor			20,000,000
A budget line/code for Social Protection and Investment			2,000,000
Establish local government co-ordination mechanisms			
Set-up Social Protection Sub-committees, define their ToRs, and reporting requirements	BSBEPC	October 2024	1,000,000
Appoint LGA focal persons, define their ToRs, and reporting Requirements	BSBEPC	October 2024	0
Strengthen capacity of the Committee, Department, and LGA Coordination			
Undertake capacity assessment and development a capacity building and human resource strategy	BSBEPC	2025	5,000,000
Design and implement training course for the stakeholders in the committees, departments and LGA	BSBEPC	2025	10,000,000
Strengthen management and administration capacity			

State to provide adequate office space, equipment, and office supply for the department to ensure smooth function of the department (e.g., tables, chairs, computers, printers, photocopiers etc.)	BSBEPC	2025	5,000,000
Engage or re-assign principal officers to support daily management of the department	BSBEPC	2025	0
Develop ToRs to guide staff deliverables in line with the functions of the department	BSBEPC	2025	0
Ensure SP steering committee and department functions effectively			
Develop a detailed annual work plan for social protection	BSBEPC	2025	1,000,000
Steering Committee meets bi-annually to oversee the implementation of the policy	BSBEPC	2025	
TWG meets quarterly to support and facilitate coordination and delivery of the policy; secretariat to report to the steering committee on implementation progress	BSBEPC	2025	4,000,000
Quarterly submission of progress report by MDAs to Social Protection Department	BSBEPC	2025	2,000,000
Hold state social protection summit annually	BSBEPC	2025	20,000,000

1.1 Implementation Area 2: Increase coverage of social protection policies and programs to meet the BSPP objectives.

Outcome: Technical design and costing of new programmatic instruments undertaken and implementation and financing plans developed to scale-up the existing interventions

Activities	Responsibility	2024 (000)	2025 (000)	2026 (000)	2027 (000)	2028 (000)	2029 (000)	2030 (000)
Policy Measure 1: Free school meals will be provided to all pupils in public primary schools in Primary 4-6.								
Conduct a feasibility study for the scale up of the school feeding programme including institutional, and financial requirements	SPIA/MOE/BSBEPC/ SUBEB /LGEA	46,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Design of the top up school feeding programme with balanced meal plans, and estimate target population.	SPIA/MOE/BSBEPC/ SUBEB	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Estimate the financial cost of providing free meals (16,000)@N200.00 per meal	=DO=	5,522,536	5,522,536	5,522,536	5,522,536	5,522,536	5,522,536	5,522,536
Secure budgetary commitment with the help of the committee	=DO=	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conduct a pilot program in selected schools to test the feasibility(9 schools) 3per zone	=DO=	0	9,000,000	0	0	0	0	0
Gather feedback and make necessary adjustments	=DO=	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Establish Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) on the school feeding programme	=DO=	0	3,000	0	0	0	0	0
Evaluate the program's impact on student health, Attendance, and Academic ormanance	=DO=	100,000	0	0	500,000	0	0	500,000

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Policy Measure 2: Provide scholarships to children from poor households in primary and secondary schools and children living with disabilities (2,300 PUPILS @ N50,000/CHILD)

Undertake a review of the existing scholarship Programme	NON-EXISTENT	50,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Redesign selection and targeting criteria to focus on poor children and children living with disability	SPIA/MOE/BSBEPC/ SUBEB /LGEA	0	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adopt the MIS to suit the programme business process	SPIA/ MOE	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Develop M&E plan	TWG/ BSBEPC	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pilot the Scholarship Programme	MOE	0	115,000	200,000	300,000	450,000	675,000	1,012,500	1,012,500
Report regularly on coverage to the Social Protection Department	BSBEPC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Policy Measure 3: Provide child benefit to poor households with children and children living with disabilities(2,300 H/H)

Conduct Mapping of Social Protection Programme for children in the state	SPIA/Humanitarian/ M	0	23,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conduct a feasibility study for Universal Child Benefit	BSBEPC/SBOS	0	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Design Child benefit programme	WOMEN AFFAIRS/ BSBEPC	0	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0
Steering committee to secure	SWC	0	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0

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promotion scheme	/ CSDA AGRIC									
Establish “Graduation” policy guidelines										
Develop the graduation policy guidelines	BSBEPC	0	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Undertake first round of graduation / exit assessment and report on findings	BSBEPC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expand the coverage and strengthen delivery of the social insurance scheme										
Undertake a review of social security schemes for formal sector employees to ensure sustainability and improved effectiveness	BSBEPC/Humanitarian / Health/Education/SP HCA/SPIA	0	3,000,000.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Undertake a scoping study to assess the potential for extending coverage of pension, health insurance, and work injury schemes to the informal sector	BSBEPC/Humanitarian / Health/Education/SP HCA/SPIA	0	2,000,000.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estimate budgetary implications of extending social security to the informal sector (Actuarial Valuation)	BSBEPC/Humanitarian / Health/Education/SP HCA/SPIA	0	10,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legislative framework for social security provision developed and implementation commenced	SPIA/ MIN. OF JUSTICE	0	5,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ensure that programme design and implementation is sensitive to the needs of different target groups										

Prepare guidance note for child-sensitive social protection	MWA&SD/Humanitarian/MOE/SUBEB/BSBEP C	0	5,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Develop operational plan for strengthening synergies between social protection and child protection	SPIA/BSBEP C	0	2,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Design guidance for gender-sensitive social protection	MOH/Min of Women Affairs/ BENSACA	0	2,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Design guidance for HIV-sensitive social protection	MOH/Min of Women Affairs/ BENSACA	0	2,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Design guidance for ensuring social protection programming is sensitive to needs of people with disabilities	Humanitarian/BSBEP C/SPIA	0	5,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthen social protection support during disaster emergencies and food price shocks										
Conduct a vulnerability assessment to assess the type and level of exposure to food insecurity	Min. of Agric/Humanitarian/BSBEP C/Environment/BAD&M Min Of Rural Dev& Coop.	0	2,000,000.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Set up early warning systems linked to short-term	Min. of Agric/Humanitarian/	0	3,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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1.1 Implementation Area 3: Strengthen social protection system for the effective planning, delivery and monitoring of social protection programs

Outcome 3.1: Integrated MIS established and operational

Activities	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget (Naira)
Develop Integrated MIS			
Outline the broad parameters and functions of the MIS Conceptualized	UNICEF/BSBEPC/ SPD		4,000,000
Host the MIS and the single registry system	BSBEPC/SPD		20,000,000
Pilot the Benue MIS for social protection	MIS OFFICE/SPD/BSBEPC		20,000,000
Develop guidance on how to use the MIS	UNICEF TECH. SUPPORT		5,000,000
MIS operational and used for reporting SP data	MIS TEAM/SPD/BSBEPC		2,000,000
Develop effective and efficient targeting system			
Identify and design standardized targeting system	TWG/UNICEF		3,000,000
Pilot the new targeting system	TWG/MIS TEAM/BSBEPC		4,000,000
Effective appeals and complaints mechanisms introduced into key social protection programmes	TWG/BSBEPC		10,000,000

Outcome 3.2: Increased awareness of impacts and benefits of social protection programs and lessons learnt

Activities	Responsibility	2024 (000)	2025 (000)	2026 (000)	2027 (000)	2028 (000)	2029 (000)	2030 (000)
Awareness of SP implementation levels in Benue State								
Organize bi-annual social protection forums	MIS/SPD/BSBEPC	0	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Organize quarterly LGA social protection forums	LG TEAM/SPD/BSBEPC	0	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Develop knowledge management component of the policy								
Develop knowledge management strategy	MIS/SPD/BSBEPC	0	15,000	0	0	0	0	0
Develop knowledge products (e.g. brochures, newsletters, policy briefs, media etc.) on social protection	=DO=		20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Design and launch a user-friendly website	□D□□	0	0	10,000	0	0	0	0
Design communication strategy for social protection programmes								
Develop communication Strategy	MIS TEAM/TWG/BSBEPC	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0
Quarterly newsletters	MIS TEAM/BSBEPC	0	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Bi-annual progress reports for the steering committee	TWG	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Annual progress reports	TWG/M&E TEAM/BSBEPC	0	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000

Outcome 3.3: An integrated monitoring and evaluation framework established and inform evidence-based policy and programming decisions

Activities	Responsibility	2024 (000)	2025 (000)	2026 (000)	2027 (000)	2028 (000)	2029 (000)	2030 (000)
Develop the monitoring & evaluation framework for the BSSPP								
Develop log frame for the BSSPP	TWG/BSBEPC	0	2,000	0	2,000	0	2,000	0
Develop M&E plan for BSSPP including agreement on data collection, storing and analysis	TWG/BSBEPC	0	10,000	0	0	0	0	0
Quarterly monitoring reports	SPD/TWG/BSBEPC	0	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Link M&E system into the MIS	MIS/SPD/BSBEPC	0	0	10,000	0	0	0	0
Annual evaluations of social protection programmes implementation	TWG - M&E/BSBEPC	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000

Outcome 3.4: Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders on designing, implementing and monitoring social protection policy and programs

Activities	Responsibility	2024 (000)	2025 (000)	2026 (000)	2027 (000)	2028 (000)	2029 (000)	2030 (000)
Undertake capacity needs assessment across all levels of government	TWG	0	10,000	0	0	0	0	0
Develop a capacity building strategy	TWG/BSBEPC	0	0	10,000	0	0	0	0
Develop the training programme on social protection for high ranking/policy makers and officers	BSBEPC/UNICEF	0	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Train key stakeholders on modules of the MIS	BSBEPC/UNICEF	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Train key stakeholders on identification and targeting of beneficiaries	BSBEPC/ UNICEF	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Train key stakeholders on inclusive programme design and planning	BSBEPC/UNICEF	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Train key stakeholders on M&E of social protection programmes	BSBEPC/ UNICEF	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Train key stakeholders on financial management	BSBEPC/UNICEF/ Facilitator	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

Implementation Area 4: Develop sustainable financing strategy and mechanism to fund the implementation of the policy and specific programmes

Activities	Responsibility	Timeline	Budget (Naira)
Set-up the 'social protection pooled funding' Mechanism	BSBEP/ Humanitarian/ SPIA		10,000,000



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SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICY-
Implementation Plan