

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### SHORT TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT

Individual Consultant for strengthening of Immunization System for Ministry of Health, Samoa.

### BACKGROUND

Ministry of Health in Samoa, has been implementing a Health System Strengthening project for roll out of newer vaccines since 2019. Under this project, UNICEF supports cold chain strengthening and provides technical assistance for vaccine introduction, including policy and planning, procurement, effective vaccine management, service delivery, and demand creation through social behavior change communication and community engagement. Between 2021 and 2022, three new vaccines – rotavirus, PCV, and HPV – were introduced with UNICEF’s support. The country also completed its first-ever Effective Vaccine Management Assessment (EVMA) in 2023, followed by an improvement plan endorsed by the Ministry of Health. Several activities identified in this plan require specialized external technical assistance to ensure timely and high-quality implementation.

**Develop / update national Immunization strategy, policy and procedures (SOP):** As part of this project, the national Immunization Policy was developed for the first time in 2020 – 2025. As this policy has now expired and the 2023 EVMA identified gaps, especially in the immunization supply chain (iSC), it is necessary to review and update the policy to address these issues, including strengthening monitoring iSC performance through key performance indicators (KPI). This process also presents an opportunity to develop a costed National Immunization Strategy (NIS) tailored to Samoa’s needs. In addition, the existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for iSC will be reviewed and updated in line with EVM guidelines.

**Capacity building on immunization:** The Ministry of Health employs its health work force across 12 health facilities, including the EPI clinic in the Apia Urban Area. To work in the EPI programme, health workers must be trained in standard Immunization practices as per the country’s Routine Immunization guidelines. With UNICEF’s support, the Ministry has developed training modules and a national pool of trainers to deliver these courses. Because of high staff turnover, the Ministry needs to organize vaccinators’ training annually for newly recruited health workers, with support from UNICEF. As these trainings are largely project-supported, there is a need to institutionalise vaccination training through strengthened pre-service and in-service mechanisms aligned with the country’s scope of services and health workforce development plan. To ensure sustainability, the Ministry of Health proposes developing an SQA-accredited professional short course on vaccination and building national capacity to deliver it annually. These approaches will also be reflected in the updated National Immunization Policy and Strategy.

**Data Quality Assessment:** High-quality immunization data is essential for effective planning, resource allocation, and monitoring programme performance. Samoa’s National EPI programme generates significant amount of EPI data at service delivery and national levels, yet inconsistencies may arise from incomplete documentation, poor data management practices, reporting errors, or weak supervision systems. An Immunization Data Quality Assessment (IDQA) provides a systematic approach to identify the root causes of these issues and to evaluate the reliability, completeness, and timeliness of immunization data across the health system. The assessment enables programme to detect gaps in recording and reporting, verify consistency between facility records and national reports, and evaluate the functionality of data management tools and processes. By improving data quality, the programme can make evidence-based decisions, strengthen accountability, and enhance the performance of

immunization services. Hence, carrying out an IDQA would be an essential step toward strengthening routine immunization systems, optimizing resource use, and improving health outcomes for the population.

In this context, UNICEF seeks for an international consultant to provide technical assistance to the Samoa Ministry of Health in strengthening immunization system with focus on the above areas.

## **OBJECTIVE / SCOPE OF WORK**

The objectives of this assignment are to provide technical assistance in

- Developing a costed National Immunization Strategy and National Immunisation Policy, alongside the updated SOP for iSC, for the Ministry of Health in Samoa.
- Compiling the Vaccinator Course content ready for Samoa Qualification Authority (SQA) accreditation.
- Carrying out the Immunization Data Quality Assessment

The selected consultant will work closely with MOH Samoa, with overall guidance and technical support from the UNICEF Samoa Field Office. More specifically, the assignment includes:

### **Develop / update national Immunization strategy, policy and procedures (SOP):**

- Conduct a desk review of the existing National Immunization Policy, EVMA report, and SOPs to identify gaps, areas requiring consultation, and opportunities for further improvement.
- Carry out stakeholder consultations to inform the update of National Immunization Policy and the development of the costed National Immunization Strategy.
- Based on the above review, assessment and consultation, prepare a draft country-specific costed National Immunization Strategy and revised draft of the National Immunization Policy. Ensure that iSC component is fully integrated, including mechanisms for monitoring iSC performance through KPI.
- Review and update existing SOPs, customizing them to meet the current requirements of the iSC system in Samoa.

### **Capacity building on immunization:**

- Review the existing training material and training reports used by the Ministry of Health for the EPI Programme to assess current content, delivery approaches, and identify gaps.
- Clarify the accreditation requirements of the Samoa Qualification Authority (SQA) for the Vaccinator Course, including curriculum structure, competencies, assessment methods, and documentation standards.
- Align and revise the course content and supporting materials to meet SQA accreditation requirements, and facilitate the accreditation process of the Vaccinator Course in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and SQA.
- Review the pre-service curriculum for nursing cadres in Samoa and identify opportunities to strengthen practical immunization skills, ensuring alignment with the country's scope of services and health workforce development priorities. Provide recommendations to enhance both pre-service and in-service vaccination competencies.
- Integrate policy considerations related to institutionalizing immunization workforce development into the updated National Immunization Policy and Strategy, ensuring long-term sustainability of training, accreditation, and capacity-building systems.

### **Immunization Data Quality Assessment:**

- Gather and review various types / sources of immunization data, data management platforms / systems being used by the EPI programme in Samoa, including data registers, reporting tools, electronic platforms, and any parallel data systems, to understand current data flows and documentation practices.
- Develop a standardized data collection tool for the assessment and train assessors on its use, ensuring consistent understanding of definitions, procedures, and validation methods.
- Facilitate the data collection process and monitor the quality of the data collection process.

- Compile and analyze the collected data, and draft a comprehensive assessment report, including a practical and time-bound data-quality improvement plan for submission to the Ministry of Health.

<b>ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINES, PLUS BUDGET PER DELIVERABLE</b>			
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE</b>	<b>PAYMENT</b>
<b>Develop / update national Immunization strategy, policy and procedures (SOP):</b>			
<b>Inception</b> Outline approaches to undertake the assignment with a work plan, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a desk review of existing documents</li> <li>• Specify key milestones under each component and their expected timelines</li> <li>• Describe the methodology for stakeholder consultation and engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception report with a work plan</li> </ul>	10 days	10% upon completion of deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate site visits and consultative meeting sessions for information gathering in the respective country</li> <li>• Develop a country-specific National Immunization strategy and prepare a revised draft of the National Immunization Policy and SOPs</li> <li>• Present the strategy, policy and SOPs to MoH and other relevant stakeholders for feedback.</li> <li>• Finalise the strategy, policy and SOPs, incorporating the stakeholder feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costed National Immunization Strategy</li> <li>• Revised National Immunization Policy and SOPs</li> </ul>	40 days	30% upon completion of deliverables
<b>Capacity building on immunization</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the existing Training Material and training reports</li> <li>• Assessment of the requirements of the accreditation process for the Vaccinator Course.</li> <li>• Review of the pre-service curriculum for nursing cadres and identify opportunities to strengthen practical immunization skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inception report outlining SQA accreditation requirements and identified gaps of the existing training materials; recommendations to enhance pre-service and in-service vaccination competencies)</li> </ul>	10 days	10% upon completion of deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured organization of the Training Modules, logistics requirements, training evaluation tools and other requirements for meeting the accreditation standards of SQA, Samoa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restructured Vaccination Course materials ready for SQA accreditation</li> <li>• Facilitate the Accreditation process of the Vaccinator Course</li> </ul>	20 days	20% upon completion of deliverables

<b>Immunization Data Quality Assessment:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather the various types / sources of Immunization data, data management platforms / systems being used by the EPI program in Samoa.</li> <li>Develop the Data collection tool for the assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IDQA protocol with a data collection tool</li> </ul>	10 days	10% upon completion of deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training of the identified assessors on the Data Collection tool</li> <li>Facilitate the data collection process and monitor the quality of the data collection process.</li> <li>Carry out the data compilation, analysis and draft a report based on the analyzed data and submit to Ministry of Health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Quality Assessment Report, including data improvement recommendations</li> <li>Dissemination of findings and feedback from stakeholders</li> <li>Finalization of report, data improvement plan, and submission to Ministry of Health</li> </ul>	30 days	20% upon completion of deliverables
		<b>120 Days</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

Bachelors  Masters  PhD  Other

Preferably Public Health, Epidemiology, Management, Supply chain, Public Health Policy, Global/International Health/ or other related fields

#### Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:

The selected consultant should have the following experiences and essential skills:

- At least seven years of experience, at the national and international levels, in Immunization Program / Supply Chain Management, cold chain management, logistics, equipment maintenance and management, or operations management, and experience in immunization/public health programmes.
- Experience working in UNICEF, providing technical assistance in National Immunization strategy / Immunization policy development, capacity building, training, data management is preferable.
- Proven expertise in providing training, implementing, and monitoring immunization assessments and/or health programs.
- Ability to work in a multidisciplinary team and have the initiative to work independently to meet deadlines.
- Strong interpersonal communication and writing skills, with the ability to lead/train a group of individuals and impart knowledge.
- Skills in adult training methodology are strongly preferred.
- Proficiency in English, verbal and in writing
- Computer skills, including quantitative analysis and reporting tools.

#### CONDITIONS OF WORK AND CLARIFICATION ON SUPERVISION

The consultant will travel to the country once to carry out the on-site work in the country. All other tasks, including report writing, data cleaning, and strategy drafting, can be completed remotely. UNICEF will process the consultant's fees upon submission of the deliverable report, which must be certified by the supervisor.

The Health Specialist at the UNICEF Samoa Field Office will provide monitoring and overall supervision.

The duration of the consultancy is six months.

**Start date:** 01 March 2026

**End date:** 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts. UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant.
- Consultants will be required to complete mandatory online courses (e.g. Ethics, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Security) upon receipt of offer and before the signature of contract.

#### **NOTE FOR CONSULTANTS:**

Please submit a **separate financial offer** along with your application. The financial proposal should be a **lump sum amount for all the deliverables** but should show a break down for the following:

- Monthly / Daily fees– based on the deliverables in the Terms of Reference (120 days)
- Travel (economy air ticket where applicable to take up assignment as well as any in country travel)
- Living allowance for international consultants
- Miscellaneous- to cover visa, health insurance (including medical evacuation for international consultants), communications, and other costs.