

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS

PART I	
Title of Assignment	National Consultancy: Six (6) District Health System Strengthening Coordinator
Overall, Purpose of the Assignment	The assignment requires each of the consultants to have a 100% presence in the district to ensure effective coordination, implementation and monitoring of interventions planned under the United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP). The role necessitates full participation in district planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of interventions which do not have set dates and times and are subject to change. Therefore, each consultant needs to be based in a district to effectively manage these responsibilities. The consultant will be required to do regular travels to Lilongwe and other districts for inter-district Collaborative Learning.
Requesting Section	Health and HIV/AIDS
Location	<p>Place of assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This assignment will be based in six UNJP districts of Chikwawa, Nsanje, Kasungu, Ntchisi, Rumphu and Mzimba South with frequent visits to various health facilities and communities within the assigned district and quarterly travels to the zone. A district will have one consultant each. • Each coordinator will be expected to actively participate in DHO activities in their assigned districts (Chikwawa, Nsanje, Kasungu, Ntchisi, Rumphu or Mzimba South) including meetings as scheduled. • In addition, the coordinator will be expected to participate in quarterly regional/zonal and national activities when required.
Contract Duration, including a review period following the submission of the final deliverable.	12.5 months
Estimated number of working days	Monthly
Planned Start and End Date	From: 1 October 2024 To: 14 November 2025

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Background:

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a global call to action to end poverty, protect the environment, and ensure peace and prosperity for all. UN support to Malawi aligns with these goals through the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2023-2028, which complements Malawi's national development priorities as outlined in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) IV for 2019-2023. The UNSDCF represents UN Malawi's commitment to addressing national challenges through a system-wide response.

UN investments under the Cooperation Framework focus on three main pillars:

1. **Peace, Inclusion, and Effective Institutions**
2. **Population Management and Inclusive Human Development**
3. **Inclusive and Resilient Growth**

The UN Joint Programme on “Health Systems Strengthening for Equitable Health Outcomes” (UNJP-HSS) is part of this framework, supporting the pillars of population management, inclusive human development, and inclusive and resilient growth. The programme is coordinated by three UN agencies—UNICEF, UNFPA, and WHO—with UNICEF as the technical lead.

Introduction:

Despite recent improvements, Malawi faces significant challenges in health outcomes. The UNJP-HSS, funded by the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, aims to improve health and survival rates for the most vulnerable populations in Malawi. Health care resources are disproportionately allocated to tertiary facilities and services. Achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) requires a cost-effective equity-focused Essential Health Package (EHP) that leaves no-one behind prioritizing primary and preventive care, improves quality, and strengthens health systems.

Programme Focus:

- Reaching the poorest and most vulnerable with cost-effective primary and community-based health services.
- Improving quality of care to ensure better life-saving outcomes and increased demand.
- Establishing effective district governance and accountability for service delivery and outcomes to optimize resource use.

Key Objectives:

- Increase the provision and uptake of quality, cost-effective, life-saving primary healthcare (PHC) services.
- Improve equitable resourcing and district management of services.
- Strengthen government accountability and citizen participation in health service delivery at the district level.

The UNJP-HSS will emphasize the 4 Ps (People, Product, Place, and Policy), leveraging the comparative advantages of participating UN agencies. The Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO) will coordinate the programme, providing technical support to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality integrated Sexual Reproductive Maternal Newborn Child Adolescent Health (SRMNCAH) services at primary care and community levels, aiming to achieve good health by 2025 for women including those pregnant, children, and adolescents.

Justification:

Previous implementation cycles revealed a disconnect between Participating UN Agencies (PUNOs) and district health management teams, hampering effective program operations at the district level. A single consultant will serve as a liaison, enhancing resource efficiency and maximizing results.

Role of the District Health Systems Strengthening Coordination Consultant :

- Provide technical and operational support for planning, delivery, and reporting of RMNCH interventions at the district level.

- Serve as a liaison between PUNOs and District Health Offices to ensure efficient program implementation.

PURPOSE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The District Health Systems Strengthening Coordination consultant will liaise between Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs), District Health Offices and other key stakeholders. The Consultant will support the planning, implementation, monitoring, and reporting of integrated PHC and SRMNCAH interventions at the district level within the UNJP-HSS programme.

SCOPE OF WORK/OBJECTIVES

1. Build the capacity of DHO for evidence-based planning, budgeting, supervision, and monitoring of District Integrated Plans with a focus on PHC and SRMNCAH.
2. Enhance the capacity of the DHO to implement and monitor SRMNCAH-specific interventions, ensuring alignment with national health policies and guidelines.
3. Support integration of community-based and facility-based systems and coordination with other sectors at the district.
4. Strengthen DHO capacities for conducting monthly and quarterly meetings, performance reviews, and follow-up on action points.
5. Facilitate the development and/or operationalisation of multi-year Strategic Plans for SRMNCAH services at the district level, promoting sustainability and long-term impact.
6. Assist DHO in conducting integrated supportive supervision to improve PHC and SRMNCAH intervention quality.
7. Collaborate with UNJP technical teams and DHO to strengthen institutional capacities and enhance SRMNCAH service delivery at both facility and community levels and referral pathways.
8. Maintain collaborative relationships with implementing partners, government counterparts, and civil society organizations.
9. Develop and implement capacity-building workshops for the DHO on advanced SRMNCAH topics, including maternal and neonatal health, family planning, and adolescent health.
10. Support the implementation of Quality of Care standards and Quality Improvement initiatives.
11. Support capacity building of human resources for health, including training and mentorship, focusing on PHC and SRMNCAH service delivery and documentation.
12. Coordinate and support the functionality of a robust supply chain management system to ensure continuous availability of SRMNCAH commodities and reduce stockouts.
13. Support DHO to generate, analyze and use data from HMIS/DHIS2 platform for programme planning, monitoring and decision-making.
14. Coordinate the strengthening of community-based health systems to create demand, drive accountability and ensure the provision of essential PHC and SRMNCAH services.
15. Facilitate the planning and implementation of joint field missions for UNJP programme performance monitoring and reviews.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant will:

- Operate under the direct supervision of the UNJP-HSS Programme Manager in UNICEF and the technical guidance of program coordinators from UNICEF, UNFPA, and WHO.
- Consult and interact with DHO and implementing partners.

Reporting and Communication:

- Participate in bi-weekly technical meetings with UNJP.
- Provide monthly summaries of deliverables and quarterly consolidated reports.

- Maintain regular communication through face-to-face and virtual meetings, telephone, emails, and online platforms.
- Produce a monthly work plan outlining key deliverables, to be reviewed by the Health Specialist for Systems Strengthening and adjusted as necessary

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

In alignment with the scope of work described above, the consultant will:

- Perform activities and deliverables aligned with the scope of work.
- Submit monthly deliverables based on an agreed work plan and delivery schedule.
- Ensure satisfactory performance and service delivery, with monthly payments contingent on meeting performance criteria.

This assignment requires consistent outputs across months to ensure continuous support and improvement in health system strengthening at the district level.

Table 1: Expected Deliverables against Task and Milestones

Task/Milestone	Deliverable/Outcome	Planned Completion Date	% of the total fee payable
Develop inception report and work plan for the first 3 months outlining the understanding of the assignment with key activities to be completed. Engage with UNJP partners and MoH for input and guidance.	Inception report (3-5 pages) Monthly status report (3-5 pages)	30-Oct-24	Monthly
Develop and submit a quarterly work plan.			
Ensure and support the capacity building of DHO to implement and monitor SRMNCAH-specific interventions, ensuring alignment with national health policies and guidelines.			
Facilitate and support the capacity building of DHO for evidence-based planning, budgeting, supervision, and monitoring of District Integrated Plans with a focus on PHC and SRMNCAH.	Training report(s)	30-Nov-24	Monthly
Facilitate the integration of community-based and facility-based systems and coordination with other sectors at the district.	Monthly status report (3-5 pages)		
Strengthen DHO capacities for conducting monthly and quarterly meetings, performance reviews, and follow-up on action points.			
Facilitate the development and/or operationalisation of multi-year Strategic Plans for SRMNCAH services at the district level, promoting sustainability and long-term impact.	Progress report Monthly status report (3-5 pages)	31-Dec-2024	Monthly
Report on the technical and operational support provided for the implementation of the UNJP Umoyo Wathu programme at the district level, highlighting key achievements and challenges.	Technical support report	31-Jan-25	Monthly
Assist DHO in conducting integrated supportive supervision to improve PHC and SRMNCAH intervention quality.	ISS Reports	28-Feb-25	Monthly
Support the implementation of Quality of Care standards and Quality Improvement initiatives.	Progress report	31-Mar-25	Monthly
Ensure that reports cover the status of the supply and provision of at least three modern family planning methods (including self-injectables) and the offering of postpartum family planning (PPFP) at all times.	Family planning status report	30-Apr-25	Monthly
Document the technical support provided to EmONC and NICU Centres of Excellence to ensure the availability and quality of	EmONC and NICU support report	30-May-25	Monthly

BEmONC and Newborn services at district and health center levels.			
Report on the support provided to Centres of Excellence in developing multi-year capacity development plans and progress in achieving these plans.	Capacity development report	31-June-25	Monthly
Facilitate and assist in establishing and reporting on a system for facility and community referral, including feedback mechanisms and support for skills development.	Quarterly Referral system progress report	31-Jul-25	Monthly
Ensure reports include updates on maternal and perinatal death audits conducted, including the timely response and actions taken after each review by the MPDSR team, and coordination with district teams and technical officers for HSS.	MPDSR audit report	31-Aug-25	Monthly
Facilitate and support district level evidence-based prioritization and planning activities inline with the HSSP 3 reform on one plan, one budget and one monitoring framework. Support emergency response planning at district and community level and contribute to health system resilience.	Progress Reports	31 Sept -25	Monthly
Final report incorporating lessons learnt and challenges faced.	Final Report		

Note: As the actual starting date may impact the dates estimated in the TOR, a detailed work plan with exact timeframes and actual delivery dates will be jointly agreed upon between the consultant and the supervisor upon contract signature and updated regularly as needed

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EVALUATION OF RESULTS

The performance of work will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

- **Completion of Tasks Specified in TOR:** Ensuring all assigned tasks are completed as outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR).
- **Compliance with Established Deadlines for Submission of Deliverables:** Meeting all deadlines for submitting reports, work plans, and other deliverables.
- **Quality of Work:** Delivering high-quality work that meets or exceeds UNICEF's standards.
- **Demonstrating High Standards in Cooperation and Communication:** Maintaining effective communication and collaboration with UNICEF, government counterparts, and other stakeholders; Ensuring clarity, consistency, and responsiveness in all interactions.
- **Adherence to UNICEF's Child Safeguarding Policy:** Strictly following UNICEF's child safeguarding policies and procedures; Demonstrating a commitment to protecting the rights and well-being of children in all activities and interactions.

These indicators will form the basis for assessing the consultant's performance and ensuring the successful completion of the assignment.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

All payments, without exception, will be made upon certification from the supervisor of the contract of the satisfactory and quality completion and submission of deliverables and upon receipt of the respective and approved invoice. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment if the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or if there are delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant. Once monthly reports are approved and signed by the supervisor, the consultant will issue a receipt for payment against the approved monthly report.

The consultancy cost will be based on an all-inclusive fee, which will cover all costs related to this assignment, including professional fees, travel, and living costs, data, stationery, communications, etc. No other costs are payable under this consultancy.

DESIRED COMPETENCIES, TECHNICAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE

Academic Qualification:

- Masters degree in medicine, nursing, midwifery, epidemiology or statistics, public health, or International Health, Health Policy and Management and M&E from an accredited/recognized institute.

Work Experience: Essential:

- At least five (5) years related experience in Primary Health Care (PHC) and Sexual, Reproductive Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Healthcare (SRMNCAH) service delivery.
- Experience working with government agencies, local authorities, international organizations, NGOs, and communities in implementing PHC and SRMNCAH service delivery.
- A minimum of 2 years of experience working or collaborating with either the UN and/or NGOs.
- Extensive experience in evidence based planning.

Desirable:

- Prior working experience at field level with MOH, other UN agencies, DHOs, NGOs.
- Familiarity with Health System Strengthening initiatives in Malawi or similar countries in the region is an advantage

Technical Skills, Knowledge, and Strength Areas:

Required

- Strong coordination and collaborative abilities within the health sector and across other sectors.
- Strong sense of team spirit and diplomacy.
- Good interpersonal skills, ability to build and maintain partnerships across government and NGOs, ability to work in multicultural settings and culturally sensitive communities.
- Ability to work under stressful conditions and a flexible approach in undertaking the assignment within a rapidly changing environment.
- Essential knowledge of Microsoft Office applications, working knowledge of online data collection applications, and statistical analysis packages (SPSS, Stata, etc.).
- Commitment to UNICEF's values and guiding principles.

Languages:

- Fluency in English – both excellent written and verbal skills are required.
- Chichewa – verbal skills is an asset.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

UNICEF will regularly communicate with the consultant and provide feedback and guidance and necessary support so to achieve objectives of the work, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to the performance and quality of work.

As per policy on consultants, the individual will be expected to complete a list of mandatory training, including policies on Prohibiting and Combatting Fraud and Corruption, Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and abuse of authority and other relevant policies for their information and acknowledgement upon acceptance of the offer.

Before the issuance of the official contract, the individual consultant is requested to:

- complete the applicable mandatory trainings.
- ensure that the visa (where applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. The consultant is solely responsible for both the visa and own health insurance.
- the selected consultant is 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. The vaccine mandate, 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 candidates to disclose their disability during their application in case they need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in their assignment.

Consultants must have their own equipment, tools and materials needed to perform their services. They will use their own laptops/computers, any application or system needed to complete the assignment.

The access to UNICEF email and system is restricted to UNICEF staff therefore consultants should not be granted access unless it is imperative to complete assignment. The need for email access will be determined in consultation with the contract supervisor and will require approval from management.

CONDITIONS

- The consultancy will be for a period of 12.5 months.
- The candidate selected will be governed by and subject to UNICEF's General Terms and Conditions for individual contracts.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant.
- The consultant will be based in in the designated district and with frequent travels to the health facilities and the communities. On a need basis, the consultant will visit the Malawi UNICEF Country Office (MCO), the zones and other districts.
- The consultant will be paid an all-inclusive fee (professional fee, travel, living costs, transport, stationary, communication and other miscellaneous expenses) as per the stipulated deliverable and payment schedule.
- The consultant is not entitled to additional payment for overtime, weekends or public holidays. There will be no additional costs or payments outside of the all-inclusive fee.
- Under the consultancy agreements, a month is defined as 21.75 working days, and fees are prorated accordingly for actual days worked.

- No travel should take place without an email travel authorization from section prior to the commencement of the journey from the duty station.
- Standard UNICEF procedures will apply for invoicing and all other financial management requirements set out in the contract.
- Standard penalty clauses will also apply for late and poor-quality deliverables. The supervisor of the contract will provide the consultant with the criteria for the evaluation of the quality of each deliverable.
- Additional details of UNICEF rules, regulations and conditions will be attached to the contract.
- The consultant will not have supervisory responsibilities or authority on UNICEF budget.
- Individuals engaged under a consultancy 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 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.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested consultants should provide the following:

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. Brief technical proposal (no longer than five pages) demonstrating the consultant’s understanding of the assignment and approach/methodology to the assignment.
3. Financial proposal including a breakdown of their all-inclusive fees (including professional fees, travel, living cost, visa and other costs). Complete the attached form.



Financial
Proposal.xlsx

4. References: details from at least 3 supervisors, including the current supervisor.