**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**International Individual Consultancy for the development of National demand promotion for Immunization Strategy and Action Plan to increase and sustain demand for immunization services in Moldova.**

**Location:** Remote, with 2 in-country missions

**Duration and timeline: 30 days** (within a 3-month period, from September 2024 to November 2024)

**Background**

UNICEF in Moldova is supporting the Ministry of Health (MOH) to strengthen the National Immunization Program (NIP) to improve outcomes on vaccine-preventable diseases control. In 2023, the Government of the Republic of Moldova approved the National Immunization Program for 2023-2027, which prioritizes demand generation activities for immunization through community engagement (CE) and social and behavior change (SBC) interventions. UNICEF closely collaborates with the National Agency of Public Health (NAPH) and its partners to strengthen immunization services, including public awareness and demand promotion activities for vaccination.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, UNICEF has increased its support to awareness-raising interventions and capacity-strengthening of the MOH and NAPH. In 2022-2023, UNICEF supported a project on community engagement for immunization, focusing on areas with the lowest immunization coverage. Additionally, UNICEF provided support to social listening and misinformation management to counter misinformation spread on social media. In 2023, UNICEF partnered with the medical colleges and Medical University in Moldova to introduce curricula on interpersonal communication skills for in-service health workers and medical students.  Finally, in 2023, UNICEF together with NAPH and with the technical support from UNICEF Regional Office, implemented a national study on behavioral insights (BI) on drivers influencing immunization-related behaviors in Moldova. The BI research reports are being finalized and will be presented publicly in September 2024.

UNICEF Moldova is looking for an individual consultant to provide technical support to the development of National demand promotion for Immunization Strategy and a three-year Action Plan based on evidence from the BI study. The strategy will support the 2023-2027 National Immunization Program and aim at increasing demand for all childhood vaccines part of the national immunization calendar, including HPV vaccines.

1. **Purpose of the Activity/Assignment**

The purpose of the consultancy is to support UNICEF and NAPH/MOH with the development of a comprehensive National Demand Promotion for Immunization Strategy along with an action plan, to address psychological, sociological, and environmental barriers and enablers for immunization. This strategy aims to increase the demand for immunization services in Moldova. It should be informed by evidence and validated with national stakeholders. Through this strategic approach, the consultancy will support the efforts of UNICEF and the National Agency for Public Health in improving immunization coverage and overall public health outcomes.

1. **Work Assignment Overview**

The assignment will be carried out both remotely and in-country.

*Specific Tasks and Deliverables:*

1. **Conduct a desk review and analysis:** Review and analyze the research report on Behavior Insight on drivers influencing childhood immunization-related behaviors in Moldova, which was carried out in 2022-23, also relevant studies, publications and strategic documents on vaccination in Moldova, and propose a summary of key barriers to be included and addressed in the strategy.
2. **Conduct stakeholder consultations:** Plan and conduct meetings with national stakeholders and relevant partners involved in immunization (e.g., UNICEF SBC/Health, MoH, WHO, NAPH, etc.) to understand and agree on strategy’s objectives, priorities, based on identified barriers. approaches and actions. This will include a review and analysis of current SBC approaches employed for immunization services.
3. **Strategy development:** Develop a draft strategy using the template of national demand promotion strategy on immunization recommended by UNICEF ECARO and Action plan. Share the draft with relevant partners for feedback.
4. **Validation of the strategy and action plan:** With the support from UNICEF, organize and facilitate a presentation and discussion of the strategy and costing of the Action plan with a wider group of partners. This can be a 3-4-hour workshop with key stakeholders suggested by UNICEF.
5. **Final Strategy:** Finalize the Strategy and three-year Action Plan and provide the costing for the activities included in the plan.
6. **Prepare a two-page proposal** for a donor funding based on the Action Plan
7. **Details of how the work should be delivered.**

The international consultant will undertake a mix of in-country and remote work, based on the agreed work-plan. The consultancy envisages 30 working days, between September and November 2024, out of which 6 days will be in the country, through two in-country missions.

First mission will be dedicated to attend the public dissemination of the BI data on 17 September 2024 and to conduct field evaluation to supplement the findings from BI Study and get a deeper insight into the country's needs. During the second mission consultant will conduct a consultation workshop of the draft of CE, SBC Strategy with government and CSO partners.

1. **Deliverables**

| **No** | **Activity / Task** | **Deliverables** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Conduct a desk review and analysis: Review and analyze the research report on Behavior Insight on drivers influencing childhood immunization-related behaviors in Moldova, which was carried out in 2022-23, also relevant studies, publications and strategic documents on vaccination in Moldova. | A brief report with a summary of analysis of key barriers and opportunities and recommendations on strategic approaches to be included in the strategy | 5 working days – remote |
| 2 | Conduct stakeholder consultations: plan and conduct meetings with national stakeholders and relevant partners involved in immunization (e.g., UNICEF SBC/Health, WHO, NAPH, etc.) to understand and agree on key objectives and actions. | Desk review report summarizing secondary data analysis and stakeholders’ discussions with highlighted key findings, research gaps and recommendations | 5 working days – 2 days remote and 3 days in the country |
| 3 | Strategy development: Develop a draft strategy and Action plan using the template for the national promotion demand strategy on immunization recommended by UNICEF ECARO. Share the draft with relevant partners for feedback. | A draft strategy and action plan as per the template for the national demand promotion strategy for immunization | 10 working days – remote |
| 4 | Validation of the strategy and action plan: With the support from UNICEF, organize and facilitate a presentation and discussion of the strategy and costing of the action plan with a wider group of partners. | Agenda, a PowerPoint presentation and a summary of the feedback | 3 working days – in country |
| 5 | Final Strategy: Finalize the strategy and three-year Action Plan and provide the costing for the activities included in the plan. | Final strategy and action plan | 5 working days – remote |
| 6 | Prepare a two-page proposal for a donor finding based on the Action Plan | A two-page donor proposal | 2 working days – remote |

*\* Exact deadlines will be mutually agreed upon contract signature.*

The consultant will report to the UNICEF Social and Behavior Change Officer and Health Specialist, who will regularly communicate with the consultant and provide feedback and guidance on his/her performance and all other necessary support so to achieve objectives of the consultancy, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to consultant’s performance and quality of work.

The consultant is expected to deliver each component of the workplan electronically (in Word format) and in English. At each stage, the deliverable shall be sent to the UNICEF Social and Behavior Change Officer and Health Specialist.

1. **Performance indicators for evaluation of results:**

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

* Completion of tasks specified in ToR;
* Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables;
* Quality of work;
* Demonstration of high standards in cooperation and communication with UNICEF and counterparts.

1. **Qualifications and experience**

* Advanced academic degree in Communication, Public Relations, Social science, Marketing, or a related field.
* At least 7 years of professional experience in the field of communication, behavior and social change communication, public relations, etc.
* At least 5 years’ experience in developing and implementing behavior change communication strategies targeting child health and working on vaccine hesitancy issues is crucial.
* Experience in qualitative and quantitative data analysis and access to experience fieldwork to support data collection.
* Experience working in the ECA region is an advantage.
* Advanced knowledge of English is required. Knowledge of Romanian or Russian is considered a strong asset.

1. **Content of technical proposal**

* Relevant experience with similar type of assignments (max 300 words)
* Proposed approach and methodology (max 1500 words).
* Curriculum Vitae

1. **Content of financial proposal**

The applicant should fill in the Financial Offer Template and specify the consultancy fee in USD, per day of work, requested to complete the deliverables in the Terms of Reference, as well as breakdown of international travel and daily subsistence allowance (DSA) costs.

Other expenses directly related to the ToR assignments and deliverables such as: (translation/ interpretation costs, local transportation etc.) may be included in the financial offer unless specified that UNICEF will cover them separately (see paragraph 14 and 15 below).

The final selection will be based on the principle of “best value for money” i.e. achieving desired outcome at lowest possible fee.

If not provided by ToR, UNICEF will not reimburse costs not directly related to the assignment. This contract does not allow payment of off-hours, medical insurance, taxes, and sick leave.

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/output is incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet deadlines.

1. **Evaluation criteria for selection**

The candidate is expected to reflect in the submission the qualifications, knowledge and experience related to the requirements listed above. Technical evaluation will be performed through a desk review of applications, evaluation of technical proposals, and if necessary, may be supplemented by an interview.

The total amount of points to be allocated for the price component is 30. The maximum number of points (30) will be allotted to the lowest price proposal of a technically qualified offer. Points for other offers will be calculated as Points (x) = (lowest offer/ offer x) \* 30.

The selection process is aimed at selecting the applicant who obtains the highest cumulative score (technical evaluation + financial offer evaluation points) following “best value for money” principle.

1. **Payment schedule**

The payment will be linked to the following deliverables upon satisfactory completion and acceptance by UNICEF:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Deliverable (delivered according to the timeline agreed upon with UNICEF)** | **Proportion of payment** |
| Inception Report of desk review and analysis | 30% |
| Final CE and SBC Strategy | 60% |
| Two-page proposal | 10% |

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/outputs are incomplete, not delivered for failure to meet deadlines.

1. **Definition of supervisory arrangements**

The specialist will work under the oversight of Social and Behavior Change Officer and Health Specialist of UNICEF Moldova. Payments will be rendered upon successful completion of each task, as per the schedule outlined above.

1. **Work location and official travel involved.**

The consultancy envisages 30 working days between September and November 2024, out of which 6 days in the country. All travel arrangements and expenses are covered by the selected consultant and should be included in the submitted financial offer.

1. **Support provided by UNICEF**

UNICEF in coordination with other partners 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. UNICEF will provide an initial package of relevant documents and available research, and an initial list of relevant experts and counterparts to work with. UNICEF will also request relevant data – as agreed upon with the consultant – from relevant government counterparts.

1. **Child Safeguarding**

Is this project/assignment considered as “Elevated Risk Role” from a child safeguarding perspective?

YES ☐ NO ☒ If YES, check all that apply:

**Direct contact role** YES ☐ NO ☒

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

**Child data role** YES ☐ NO ☒

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the Child Safeguarding SharePoint and Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates

1. **Ethical considerations**

The Consultant will ensure that the process is in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines1. The Consultant should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty while interacting with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Furthermore, the Consultant should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual information. All participants should be informed about the context and purpose of the Assessment and the confidentiality of the information shared. The Consultant can use documents and information provided only for the tasks related to these terms of reference.

As per the internal PROCEDURE ON INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS, together with the Notification letter, the consultant will be sent the link to UNICEF 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 acknowledgment. The selected candidate must complete the applicable mandatory online courses on UNICEF’s learning platform prior to signature of contract. All certificates should be presented as part of the contract.