**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**National Consultant – Elimination of Vertical Transmission of HIV AIDS and Syphilis (EVTHS)**

**Duty Station:** New Delhi

**Contract Duration:** 17 months, from July 2023 to November 2024

**Closing Date:** 16 June 2023

1. **BACKGROUND / RATIONALE**

Vertical transmission refers to the transmission of infection from mother to child, which can happen during pregnancy (in-utero), labour and delivery (perinatal), or after delivery (postnatal) through breastfeeding. In recent years, substantial efforts have been made to prevent vertical transmission of HIV and syphilis.

India has achieved significant progress in its efforts to reach the global 95:95:95 targets by 2025. According to the National AIDS and STD Control Programme (NACP) - Phase V, India is dedicated to achieving the World Health Organization's '95-95-95' targets for eliminating vertical transmission of HIV and syphilis (EVTHS) and ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030. There has been significant progress toward achieving EVTHS. While the registration of pregnant women in ante-natal care (ANC) services was 95% in 2021-22, the population-level coverage of HIV testing reported in pregnant women was 84%, which is below the target of 95%. Furthermore, the ART coverage for pregnant mothers with HIV infection was 64%, also below the target of 95%. At the facility level, the coverage of syphilis testing among pregnant women was 57%, again below the target of 95%. Additionally, the adequate treatment coverage of seropositive syphilis was 78%, still below the target of 95%.

1. **PURPOSE OF ASSIGNMENT**

The purpose of the assignment is to provide technical assistance and support to the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) to implement the strategy for Elimination of Vertical Transmission of HIV AIDS and Syphilis in phases across the country. The consultant will provide technical support, coordinate with and monitor service providers, liaison with state governments and develop implementation frameworks for phase wise implementation and fast tracking EVTHS across the country.

**3. RATIONALE**

To achieve the goal of eliminating vertical transmission of HIV and syphilis (EVTHS) at the national level, it's crucial to adopt an integrated approach that focuses on improving the health of women and children. This requires aligning the strategies for eliminating vertical transmission of HIV and syphilis and planning a patient-centric Primary Health care (PHC) approach toward dual elimination. An integrated and comprehensive PHC approach is necessary to focus primarily on enhancing the efficiency and quality of maternal and child health services. This approach should provide comprehensive primary care services for women, with the goal of reducing maternal and child morbidity and mortality rates. It's crucial to remember that the strategies aimed at achieving the dual elimination of HIV and syphilis are highly influenced by several factors, including differences in HIV and syphilis epidemiology, service delivery models, health service coverage, and optimal resources. To achieve EVTHS, strong political and public health commitment is essential. Additionally, ongoing robust surveillance, appropriate prevention and treatment services, and comprehensive monitoring to identify gaps are necessary.

Therefore, it's imperative to prioritize strategies, have detailed understanding of the diversity of states and status of HIV and Syphilis in all the states and devise tailor made strategies that address the unique challenges and complexities of HIV and syphilis prevention and treatment which will eventually contribute to fast track the elimination of vertical transmission of HIV and Syphilis. By doing so, we can make significant strides towards achieving the EVTHS goal and ultimately improve the overall health outcomes of mothers and children by 2030.

The prevention program for vertical transmission of HIV in India was initiated in 2002 under the second phase of the NACP by the Government of India and since then UNICEF has been providing technical support to National AIDS Control Programme (NACP).

UNICEF has been instrumental in supporting development of strategic road map for EVTHS, support programme reviews in UNICEF programming states for EVTHS and guiding Technical resource Group for EVTHS. However there is need to develop detailed operational and implementation guidelines on EVTHS based on evidence and status of HIV AIDS and syphilis in the states. This will require travel to field, interact with various stakeholders including People living with HIV AIDS (PLWHA), analyze the data, develop tailor made strategies, provide budget in State NHM PIP, mentor states and support fast tracking EVTHS backed up with periodic reviews.

Key objectives:

1. Undertake in-depth analysis of the situation of HIV AIDS in UNICEF programming states and develop robust implementation guidelines for elimination of vertical transmission of HIV AIDS and Syphilis (EVTHS) for high burden states and national guidelines and get this endorsed by National AIDS Control Organization (NACO)
2. Support and facilitate states in development of NHM PIP proposals for implementation of EVTHS based on guidelines endorsed by NACO
3. Provide mentoring support to high burden states, conduct regular programmatic review and guide states to fast tracking EVTHS
4. Liaise with NACO and state AIDS Control Society (SACS) of high burden states to disseminate findings of EVTHS implementation, unpack the learnings and contribute to the development of national EVTHS guidelines
5. Develop key indicators for regular review of EVTHS and develop a system for tracking progress of states for achieving the EMTCT target by 2030.

**4. MAJOR TASK, ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND DEADLINES**

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| **S. No.** | **Major Tasks & Objectives** | **Deliverables/Outputs** | **Timeline/Date for submission of Deliverable** |
| 1 | Development & Implementation of detailed guidance note on first phase implementation of EVTHS in seven high burden states- Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh | Submission of Detailed guidance note/ implementation plan on Elimination of Vertical Transmission of HIV & Syphilis developed after thorough analysis of HIV AIDS situation of the seven high burden states and endorsed by NACO (50-60 page report) | 15th August 2023 |
|  | Submission of detailed report on implementation and roll out of the EVTHS guidelines for the three states- Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra including Mumbai (10-12 page per state) | 15th August 2023 |
|  | Submission of detailed report on implementation and roll out of the EVTHS guidelines for the four states - Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (10-12 page per state) | 30th August 2023 |
| Development of Detailed report on the situation of HIV AIDS in the country | Development and submission of report on myths/ misconceptions and frequently asked questions on HIV with focus on adolescent HIV AIDS situation in India | 20th September 2023 |
| 2 | Development of Detailed ready reckoner on adolescent health issues | Development and submission of detailed report on In- depth analysis of HIV AIDS situation in the country and  | 15th October 2023 |
| 3 | Development of state PIP proposals for fast tracking EVTHS for seven high burden states- Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh | Development and submission of Financial proposals for EVTHS for seven high burden states and incorporated in supplementary PIP 2023-24  | 30th November 2023 |
| 4 | Status report on road safety for children and adolescent |  Submission of Detailed report on advocacy and approval of proposed PIP budgets for EVTHS for the states of Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra  | 25th December 2023 |
| 5 | Development of state PIP proposals for Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics and District mental Health cells | Submission of Detailed report on advocacy and approval of proposed PIP budgets for EVTHS for the states of Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh  | 15th February 2024 |
| Detailed report on the key learnings of first phase implementation of EVTHS in seven states with key recommendations to NACO for fast tracking EVTHS with systems strengthening approach | Submission of Detailed report on Review and in-depth analysis of first phase of EVTHS in seven states  | 30th March 2024 |
| 6 | Detailed analysis and development of State fact sheet on adolescent health for evidence based decision by decision makers using various data sets like census 2011, NFHS, Global Tuberculosis Survey, National Crime Records Bureau reports, Accident and Suicide report, World Health statistics, Status of World’s Children report etc.  | Development and submission of detailed learning report on EVTHS implementation with key recommendations  | 15th May 2024 |
| Development and submission of National guidelines on Elimination of Vertical transmission of HIV and syphilis | In depth analysis and submission of detailed report about EVTHS status in all 23 UNICEF programming states | 30th June 2024 |
|  | Submission of detailed report on technical resource group (TRG) consultations for review of the situation reports for development of National EVTHS guidelines | 15th August 2024 |
|  | Development and submission of National guidelines on EVTHS | 15th September 2024 |
| 7 | Development & Implementation of detailed guidance note on first phase implementation of EVTHS in seven high burden states- Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh | Submission of Detailed guidance note/ implementation plan on Elimination of Vertical Transmission of HIV & Syphilis developed after thorough analysis of HIV AIDS situation of the seven high burden states and endorsed by NACO (50-60 page report) | 15th October 2024 |
| 8 | Status of Adolescent Health | Submission of detailed report on implementation and roll out of the EVTHS guidelines for the three states- Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra including Mumbai (10-12 page per state) | 30th November 2024 |

**5. DUTY STATION**

New Delhi (home-based consultancy)

**6. OFFICIAL TRAVEL INVOLVED (ITINERARY AND DURATION)**

The consultant will be expected to travel Primarily Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh or any other State assigned to UNICEF for EVTHS and any other state as requested by supervisor. There will be 12 air trips with total 60 days.

**7. ESTIMATED DURATION OF CONTRACT**

17 months (approx.)

**8. QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES (CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT**

**Minimum Qualifications required:**

MBBS with Master’s degree in Medicine/ Community Medicine/ Public Health/ Child Health (paediatrics)/ Obstetrics and Gynaecology with at-least 2.5 years of experience at state or national level.

**Experience/Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:**

* Work experience with National AIDS Control Organization will be of added advantage.
* Fluency in English with demonstrated expertise of working in the thematic area of HIV AIDS and good writing skills required.
* Demonstrated skills in working with government departments (state or national)

**10. TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA (WITH WEIGHTS FOR EACH CRITERIA)**

Technical and Financial ratio is 80:20 (technical proposal-80 points and financial proposal-20 points)

**1) Educational Qualifications (10)**

MBBS with Master’s degree in Medicine/ Community Medicine/ Public Health/ Child Health (paediatrics)/ Obstetrics and Gynaecology

**2) Relevant Experience (20)**

At least 3 years of Experience of 2.5 years at state or national level required

**3) Technical Proposal – 20 Marks**

**4) Interview (30)**

**Notes:**

Candidates securing 40 points and above out of 50 (under criteria 1, 2, 3) will be invited for interview. Candidates need to score overall 64 points to qualify in technical evaluation.

**11. PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

Payment will made on submission and acceptance of deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant

**12*.* IMPORTANT NOTES**

* Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual 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 and Individual Contractors. 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 to ensure that the health insurance (and visa if applicable) 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.

**HOW TO APPLY:**

The application to be submitted through the online portal and must contain three separate attachments, as follows:

1. A cover letter (max 2 pages) outlining understanding of the scope and activities, motivation to undertake it and demonstrating fit for the assignment as per Terms of Reference. **(To be uploaded online under “Cover Letter” tab)**
2. An updated CV demonstrating all requirements stated above **(to be uploaded online under “Resume” tab)**
3. A financial proposal indicating all-inclusive amount (professional fee + travel cost as applicable) against each of the deliverable, as per the template attached. Please do not forget to specify your name in the file while saving **(to be uploaded online under “Financial Proposal” tab).**
4. **Technical Proposal**- Detailed Technical proposal on strategy to eliminate vertical transmission of HIV and Syphilis in India (5-6 pages) **(To be uploaded online under “Technical Proposal” tab)**

**Important Note: Please do not indicate financials anywhere else in the online application form, please mark "n/a or 00", under the fee related questions in the online application form.**

**Without all the above 04 documents, your application will be considered incomplete and invalid and will not be considered further.**

* Any attempt to unduly influence UNICEF’s selection process will lead to automatic disqualification of the applicant.
* Joint applications of two or more individuals are not accepted.
* Please note, UNICEF does not charge any fee during any stage of the process.
* Women, trans, non-binary and gender diverse candidates meeting the requirements are strongly encouraged to apply.
* UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion and encourages qualified candidates from all backgrounds including persons living with disabilities to apply.
* General Terms and Conditions for the Consultancy Contract is attached, for your reference.

**For any clarifications, please contact:**

UNICEF

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