**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANCY FOR**

**DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN MILK BANK**

1. **Background:**

Breastfeeding is the optimal form of nutrition for newborns and infants under 6 months of age, and remains crucial for infant and young child feeding thereafter. During this period, breastmilk provides all of the nutrients infants need to grow, and reduces the risk of infection and malnutrition. It also protects against several non-communicable diseases1.

However, sick and vulnerable newborns including preterm and low birthweight newborns do not have access to their mother’s own milk for a range of reasons, including baby’s illness or inability to suckle, or delay in milk production, resulting in increased rates of morbidity and mortality. Infants with low birth weight (LBW), and very low birth weight (VLBW) account for more than 70 per cent of total newborn mortality cases. and breastfeeding is of particular important for them due to their higher risk of infections, long term consequences and death. In these special cases, the World Health Organization recommends the use of donor human milk.

Since 1992, Mongolia has been implementing policies to support breastfeeding, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Code of Breast Milk Substitutes. The 2017 Infants and Young Child Food Act defines the establishment of mother`s milk banks to meet the nutritional needs of sick and preterm infants. Establishing donor milk banks is crucial given the increasing number of premature births, perinatal mortality in Mongolia.

1. **Purpose of Assignment**:

The purpose of the assignment is to provide technical support to the Government of Mongolia in establishing the first Human Milk Bank to supply life-saving human milk for at-risk babies who do not have access to their mother's milk. The consultant will provide technical guidance and support in setting up and operationalizing the human milk bank.

1. **Scope of Work:**

The consultant will provide expert guidance and support in the establishment and operationalization of the Human Milk Bank (HMB) at Amgalan Maternity Home, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The scope of work includes the following tasks:

Specific tasks:

* + **Development of Detailed Work Plan:** Create a comprehensive schedule of activities with timelines.
  + **Design of Milk Bank Layout:** Ensure the layout complies with health and safety standards.
  + **Drafting Policies and SOPs:** Develop standard operating procedures for all HMB operations including donor screening, milk collection, storage, pasteurization, and distribution.
  + **Development of procurement list of essential equipment and supplies with technical specifications:** Recommend a procurement list of necessary equipment and supplies with technical specifications for the Human Milk Bank (HMB).
  + **Capacity Building and Training:** Develop training materials and conduct training sessions for health workers and milk bank staff on the operationalization and importance of HMB, including donor recruitment and community engagement.
  + **Monitoring and Reporting:** Develop a framework for data collection and reporting to track the impact of the HMB on neonatal health outcomes.
  + **Facilitation of Technical Meetings:** Provide technical advice in discussions with government departments and relevant stakeholders to support HMB implementation.
  + **Technical guidance on smooth operationalization of HMB:** Once the HMB is set-up at the Amgalan Maternity Home, provide technical guidance on smooth **operationalization of HMB and on** implementation of SOPs to ensure the highest standards of milk safety.

1. **Contract duration (start and end date): 4 months (tentatively starting from 15 October 2024)**
2. **Type of engagement:** Deliverable based consultant
3. **Deliverables, Timeframe and Payment Schedule:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Deliverables | Delivery deadline | Payment Schedule and % |
| Deliverable 1: Proposal of work plan including schedule of activities with timelines | 1 week after contract signing  (mid-October 2024) | 10%-within two weeks upon receipt of the deliverable 1. |
| Deliverable 2:   * + **Design of Human Milk Bank Layout** and the list of essential supplies for procurement   + Comprehensive policies and SOPs, and quality control and assurance protocols. | 1 month after the first deliverable  (mid-November 2024) | 40%-within two weeks upon receipt of the deliverable 2. |
| Deliverable 3: Trainings conducted for health professionals with training materials, manuals, and M&E framework and tools. | 1 months after the second deliverable  (end of December 2024) | 40%-within two weeks upon receipt of the deliverable 3. |
| Deliverable 4. Final report | 1 month after the third deliverable until end of contract  (end of January 2025) | 10%--within two weeks upon receipt of the deliverable 4. |

\*Dates will be adjusted according to the start date of the contract

1. **Travel plan:**

The consultant is expected to travel to Ulaanbaatar at least 2-3 times for approximately 2-4 weeks during the contract period to set up the HMB, develop SOPs, train health personnel, and observe the implementation. The consultant should submit all inclusive lump sum fee.

1. **Project Management:**

**Direct Supervisor:** Nutrition Officer, UNICEF Mongolia

**Frequency of Performance Review:** Review monthly progress report

**UNICEF's Role in Review and Approval:**

* The UNICEF technical team will periodically review each deliverable in coordination with relevant government departments. Feedback and suggestions will be provided, and the consultant must incorporate these before finalizing each product.
* Office will provide consecutive oral translation support during his/her visit for the official purposes.
* Consultant is not expected to travel outside Ulaanbaatar. And s/he will not be provided with UNICEF email address, nor ICT equipment.

**Contractor Responsibilities:**

1. **Communication:** Maintain open communication with UNICEF, providing timely updates on project progress and any potential issues, challenges.
2. **Coordination:** Ensure close coordination with UNICEF and attend all required meetings and appointments on time.
3. **Reporting:** Provide timely reporting and updates.

**Performance Progress Reports:**

* A performance progress report will be required at each stage of contract payment (refer to Payment Schedule and Deliverables).

1. **Qualifications and requirements:**

The contractor should meet the following specific requirements:

* **Educational Qualifications:** Advanced degree in medicine, public health, nutrition, or a related field.
* **Relevant working experience:** At least five years of extensive experience in establishing and managing Human Milk Bank.
* **Knowledge/expertise/ skills required:**
* In-depth knowledge of national and international guidelines and standards for Human Milk Banks. Strong training and capacity-building skills.
* Fluency in English (verbal and written).

1. **Evaluation Criteria**

A two-stage evaluation process will be employed:

1. **Technical Evaluation:**
   * The technical proposals will be evaluated first, with a weight of **70%**.
   * Only candidates who attain a minimum of **70** points in the technical evaluation will be considered technically qualified.
2. **Financial Evaluation:**
   * The financial proposals of those candidates who meet the technical evaluation threshold will then be reviewed and evaluated, with a weight of **30%**.
   * The maximum number of points for the financial proposal will be awarded to the lowest-priced proposal among the technically qualified candidates. Other financial proposals will receive points in inverse proportion to the lowest price.
3. **Cumulative Analysis Method:**
   * The Cumulative Analysis Method (weighted combined score method) will be used for the final evaluation and selection.
   * The contract will be awarded to the candidate who achieves **the highest combined technical and financial scores, subject to satisfactory reference checks.**