**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS**

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| **Title** International consultancy for collecting the evidence and reporting on Kyrgyzstan efforts to achieve EMTCT of HIV, hepatitis, and syphilis. |  | **Type of engagement**  Consultant International | **Duty Station:**   Kyrgyzstan |
| **Purpose of Activity/Assignment:**  The main purpose of the assignment is to provide technical assistance to the national task force group in collecting the evidence, conducting the assessment of barriers for pregnant women to access the PMTCT services and developing report with recommendations on how to achieve elimination of mother-to-child transmission (eMTCT) status. Although the report will be for national pre-validation of EMTCT of HIV and Hepatitis, the consultant will ensure Syphilis data and information is included and integrated in the report as part of the program assessment component. Component related to Syphilis is optional for current consultancy if candidate has technical expertise in all three areas (HIV, Hepatitis, Syphilis). | | | |
| **Scope of Work:**    Beginning in 2007, the Kyrgyz Republic embarked on a national commitment to integrate prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV services within the perinatal health care service delivery system. Over a period of almost 15 years, this policy and program goal has largely been achieved. By following a steady course of policy directives, training for perinatal health care staff and regular updates of clinical protocols the country has  successfully established PMTCT as a core component of antenatal care and delivery services. As the country moves forward, the focus has shifted to strengthening the quality of PMTCT services, improving linkages to ancillary health and social services, and extending outreach and support to ensure that those women and children who are most vulnerable have access to PMTCT services and are not lost to follow-up.  According to the “Information brief on best practices and common bottlenecks in eliminating MTCT in seven UNICEF priority countries from Eastern Europe and Central Asia,” prepared by UNICEF International expert (January 2024 <https://www.unicef.org/eca/reports/best-practices-and-common-bottlenecks-eliminating-mother-child-transmission-hiv>), almost all new HIV infections in younger children from EECA are diagnosed in 0-4 years age group, indicating they occur either through pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding[[1]](#footnote-2).  Kyrgyzstan went through the process of national evaluation, but did not yet requested external validation by RVC.  On Hepatitis and Syphilis, it is also necessary to collect information for a national pre-validation assessment using the WHO Global guidance on criteria and processes for pre-validation  to examine the current progress, assess  the gaps and propose key actions to be taken   to achieve  EMTCT of HIV, Hepatitis and Syphilis.  Following a request from the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan is providing support to the country to prepare for and develop national eMTCT pre-validation report. To achieve this, the Republican Center on control of hemocontact virus hepatitis and HIV (executing institution on behalf of MoH) and UNICEF Kyrgyzstan is looking for an international individual consultant to support the country and the national team to guide data collection and develop a quality and comprehensive pre-validation report in line with WHO validation criteria. The Ministry of Health and UNICEF will provide the consultant with all the required data and information including providing translation for the most relevant national policies and strategies. The national team will collect data based on consultant guidance to ensure availability of information for the national eMTCT pre-validation report.  This assignment will contribute to the objectives of planned output 4.1 and activity No.1.2 of 2024-2025 workplan of UNICEF agreed with and signed by the MOH. | | | |
| **Main objectives:**   * To conduct pre-validation assessment on national readiness for dual elimination of mother to child transmission of HIV and Hepatitis at the national and sub-national level, with benefiting the model for low HIV prevalence in general population and concentrated countries on 4 core areas including data quality, laboratory quality assurance, program and service assessment, and human rights, gender equality and community engagement. * To develop the national pre-validation report which includes the current progress, bottlenecks/barriers to be addressed and proposed actions.  The technical consultant will organize a consultative meeting to present the draft pre-validation report for discussion with stakeholders to address barriers and gaps which could translate to solid, practical, and clear recommendations in each area on how to overcome the bottlenecks. * Jointly with national team develop a action plan/road map along with recommendations on monitoring tool for execution of the plan with a clear timeframe.     **Methodology and Technical Approach:**  The consultant will be required to work closely with the MoH and UNICEF Health specialist and Chief Health unit.  Prior assessment consultant is expected to 1) conduct desk review of all available reports, publications and indicators from national HMISand 2) Based on the desk review and meeting with national team to develop a pre-validation assessment plan.  To conduct the national pre-validation assessment on EMTCT of HIV, Hepatitis and syphilis, consultant should consider the four fields of validation assessment:  a)           Data and surveillance systems including desk review to assess the reliability of the generated/ existing data (public/ private sectors) to evaluate achievement of the elimination targets, and to ascertain that the impact and coverage targets are achieved.  b)          Programme evaluation and assessment, including reviewing and validating current recording and reporting system for PMTCT activities, key gaps in surveillance, monitoring and evaluation of PMTCT of HIV, Hepatitis and syphilis service delivery system.  Selective cross checking must be made with the national data.  c)           Laboratory assessment including reviewing Quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) on HIV/Hepatitis/syphilis diagnosis in Kyrgyzstan to verifie the existence of an adequate laboratory network to provide the services needed to achieve and maintain programme for EMTCT, and to ensure that the results generated by the laboratory network are accurate and reliable.  d)          Health rights, gender equality and community engagement including reviewing the laws for human rights protection (women and children, adolescents/ young people, marginalized/ key populations) and sexual and reproductive rights.  This will also include a review of international human rights and gender equality instruments - conventions, treaties, protocols that Kyrgyzstan has signed and/or ratified to date.  The assessment should be run based on the UNICEF/WHO documents for concentrated HIV epidemic countries.  Based on assessment results, draft national pre-validation report and action plan/road map should be prepared. The report and action plan should be finalised based on a national stakeholder’s feedback. | | | |

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| **Supervisor** Health Specialist NOC | **Start Date:** May 20, 2024 | **End Date:** January 30 2025 | **Number of Days (working):** 50 in case all three areas will be covered: HIV, Hepatitis, Syphilis or 40 days if only two areas will be covered - HIV and Hepatitis |
| **Work Assignment Overview** | | | |
| Tasks/Milestone: | Deliverables/Outputs: | Timeline | Estimate Budget |
| 1. Submission of executive plan and inception report | Preparation of executive plan based on the desk review and conducting the consultative meeting with the experts and stakeholders. This executive plan will address the methodology to reach the target including field visits, consultative meetings with experts, deliver of reports and explanation how the deliverables of the contract will be achieved and other schedules. The document will also specify the contents of the draft national pre-validation report and plan. | 15 days | 20% |
| 2.  2.1 Conduct pre-validation assessment jointly with national team (in country).  2.2 Facilitate a consultative meeting to discuss the results with stakeholders (on-line)  2.3 Submission of draft pre-validation assessment report and action plan. | Pre-validation report and plan on conducting the pre-validation assessment on 4 core areas of EMTCT approaches using WHO pre-validation assessment checklist.  one 10 days country visit to review and validate current recording and reporting system for PMTCT activities. | **25 days** if HIV, Hepatitis and Syphilis are covered.  Or  **15 days** if only HIV and hepatitis are covered | 50% |
| 1. Delivery of final report and action plan based on feedback and comments provided by national experts, stakeholders and UNICEF | Final report including the barriers, enablers, recommendations, and feasible action plan with time frame regarding eMTCT of HIV, Hepatitis and Syphilis. If current consultancy will not cover Syphilis, separately provided report prepared by other consultant should be added into this final report. | 10 days | 30% |

N.B.  All reports and presentations should be submitted in English or Russian – based on agreement with UNICEF.

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| **Estimated Consultancy fee** |  |  |  |
| Travel Local (please include travel plan) | One travel to Kyrgyzstan for 10 days travel to Osh for 3 days is planned |  |  |
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| **Total estimated consultancy costs** |  |  |  |
| **Minimum Qualifications required:** | **Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required:** | | |
| Bachelors   Masters   PhD   Other   Minimum medical university degree and Master of Public Health or equivalent experience. PhD is an advantage  **Enter Disciplines**   medicine, health, HIV, Infection Deassises, sexually transmitted infections or public health. | * Strong international experience with understanding of the HIV, AIDS M&E system including the surveillance system for prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV and Hepatitis and Syphilis. * Familiarity or experience with triple elimination process * Excellent knowledge and skills in research (qualitative as well as quantitative) methods with strong analytical and report writing skills. * Proven experience in conducting and/or managing HIV related research and studies, or EMTCT * Experience working with government organizations, especially with the MoH, and related institutions dealing with HIV/AIDS programme, major public health programs and key population network and other vulnerable populations * Previous working experience with UNICEF/UNs Kyrgyzstan in the area of PMTCT of HIV and Hepatitis is an asset. * Good command of written English. Knowledge of Russian will be an asset. | | |
| **Administrative details:**  Visa assistance required:  Transportation arranged by the office: | Home Based + Office Based:  If office based, seating arrangement identified:  IT and Communication equipment required:      N/a  Corporate account required:   N/A | | |
| Performance indicators for evaluation of results  The performance for the assignment will be assessed through weekly Zoom calls between the consultant and the country EMTCT task force. More specifically the assignment evaluation will be assessed through:   * Quality of work (i.e. work is acceptable by the Ministry of Health and UNICEF); * Timeliness of work (delivered according to schedule below). * Responsibility * Communication | | | |

1. UNICEF. 2021 HIV and AIDS Eastern Europe and Central Asia Snapshot, Pregnant Women, Children and Adolescents. November 2021. Available at: <https://www.childrenandaids.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/2021%20HIV%20and%20AIDS%20Eastern%20Europe%20and%20Central%20Asia%20Snapshot.pdf> Accessed on 18.11.2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)