

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Job title: National Healthcare Consultant to provide support for establishing of Training Centre and procurement of medical equipment for perinatal institutions from the Transnistrian region

Duty station: Chisinau and field trips to locations on the left banks of the Nistru river

Reference to the: Support to Confidence Building Measures (SCBM)

Contract type: Individual Contract (IC)

Contract Duration: March 2017 – February 2018 (estimated workload: 21 working days in total)

Job Content

I. BACKGROUND

The health care system for pregnant women and new-borns in the Transnistrian region faces difficulties and problems inherited from the Soviet system. Although constant efforts to direct the pendulum in mother and child care to cost-effective interventions, family environment in maternity hospitals, participation of women in the decision-making process on the provided care have been made on the left bank of the Nistru river, outdated interventions focused mainly on in-patient medical care, multiple medication, isolation of children from mothers after birth, lack of an adequate psycho-emotional environment in maternity hospitals are still practiced in the region, which complicates recovery of women and new-borns within the postpartum period. Family members (especially fathers) do not have access to mother and child and cannot participate in postpartum care. Physicians and medium-level medical staff involved in providing health services to women and children have not benefited from adequate training in cost-effective technologies recommended by WHO and promoted by UNICEF. Medical equipment used in Transnistrian medical institutions is outdated, having been used for the last 20-25 years.

According to the de-facto local Health Authorities from the Transnistrian region, in 2010 there were 5,118 births reported in the region. In the same year, 64.3% of all pregnant women under observation have been registered before 12 weeks of pregnancy – up from 51.4% reported in 2001. Abortion is legal in Transnistria, accounting for 30.4 per 1,000 women of reproductive age. Infant mortality rate was 10.3 per 1,000 live births in 2010 – down from 18.5 per 1,000 live births in 2001. The main causes of death in the first year of life are respiratory diseases, diseases of the digestive system, infectious and parasitic diseases, and congenital malformations. There were 3 cases of maternal mortality in 2009 and 3 cases in 2010, accounting for 58.34 and 58.56 per 100,000 respectively. Bleeding was the main cause of death. There have been some limited previous efforts to beef up the perinatal care in the Transnistrian Region undertaken by UNICEF (Integrated Management of Childhood Illness) and UNDP.

UNDP together with WHO and UNICEF have been and continue to be engaged in the on-going process of improving the quality of care for mothers and children at all levels of health services and promote an integrated and comprehensive approach on both banks of the Nistru River. Despite all the efforts taken to implement a mechanism for inter-sector collaboration in the social sector, poor coverage with social services is one of the major causes of child mortality. At the same time, inequalities persist in access to and quality of services.

The latest developments in the health system have been determined by a number of external and internal drivers, such as: improving communication with health authorities in Tiraspol, increased participation of counterparts from Transnistria region in different WHO sub-regional events and workshops, resulting in improved knowledge and capacities. Yet, there are certain barriers to be overcome, such as aging workforce, increasing brain drain and brain waste, dropping motivation within the health system, economic crisis, and political instability.

SPECIFIC CONTEXT

The technical support offered to the Perinatal Center from Tiraspol during the previous phase of the SCBM Programme, by endowing it with modern equipment and professional development of physicians increased the ability to offer quality care to pregnant women and new-borns, including the premature infants, or with low birth weight. However, it is too early to draw conclusions out of the SCBM interventions in the perinatal health care system of Transnistrian region. There is still a high ratio of deaths during the neonatal period that can be influenced by the care in the perinatal period and an increased perinatal mortality indicator, in particular a high number of stillbirths, indicator strongly influenced by the prenatal care.

At the end of 2013, critical equipment was also supplied to Perinatal Intensive Therapy Unit within the Rybnitsa District Hospital. This allowed cutting new-born mortality rates by one third.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has been supporting the process of modernization and regionalization of the perinatal system in the Republic of Moldova since 2005, contributing to a significant reduction of the infant mortality and morbidity. Committed to further support in the mother and child health, SDC has joined the health component of the CBM programme, regarding it as an opportunity to expand the reforms of the perinatal system on both banks of the Nistru River.

Besides ensuring that the current SDC supported interventions are aligned with the EU-funded Support to Confidence Building Programme or other projects implemented in the region (e.g., Swedish-funded Human Rights project), UNDP was responsible for the procurement and the refurbishment 5 district perinatal institutions: Ribnita, Grigoriopol, Slobozia, as well as Tiraspol and Bender municipalities. Based on a thorough needs assessment, important medical equipment was procured and installed in above mentioned institutions in 2015 - 2016, contributing to better services to mothers and their new-borns during the antenatal, intra- and post-partum periods. Refurbishment of Slobozia and Grigoriopol perinatal institutions were also conducted.

II. SCOPE OF WORK, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The overall objective of the National Consultant is to provide specialised technical expertise and consultancy for establishing and strengthening of a Training Centre for **perinatal institutions' staff** from the Transnistrian region as well as provide support for the identification of capacity gaps and procurement of medical equipment for five perinatal institutions from the Transnistrian region.

More specifically, the Consultant will:

- A) *Provide specialised technical expertise and consultancy for establishing and strengthening of a **Training Centre for perinatal institutions' staff from the Transnistrian region:***

- In close coordination with WHO and UNICEF offices in Moldova, develop the Training Centre concept. During the concept development, previous recommendations of relevant experts need to be taken into consideration. The concept will include both *methodological components* (main goal, objectives, internal regulations, quality standards, specific thematic areas of coverage, required staff, follow up maintenance and sustainability costs etc.) as well as *detailed technical description* of the training centre (minimum number of premises and appropriate location, required equipment and furniture etc.). During the process of concept development, existing experience of similar centres from the right bank of the Nistru as well as from neighbouring countries will be taken into consideration;
- Develop detailed technical specifications of medical training equipment to be procured for training center;
- Provide support to the project team in organization of at least one exchange visit for potential staff of the Training Centre to existing similar Training Centres on the right bank of the Nistru river;
- In close coordination with WHO, support the project team in organization of one study tour outside the Republic of Moldova;
- Assist the project team and project counterparts during the identification of appropriate premises for the creation of the training centre;
- Assist the project team in carrying out relevant activities for procurement of medical equipment procurement activities: review of technical specifications, development of terms of references, organization of pre-bidding conferences, evaluation of supplied bids, communication with procurement offices etc;
- Assess the training needs of the involved Centre staff and provide recommendations regarding the potential training;
- Provide at least one follow up assessment field visit to assess the training centre functionality. Provide recommendations for potential improvements.

B) Carry out needs assessment in terms of capacity building and support for the procurement of medical equipment for five perinatal institutions from the Transnistrian region:

- In close coordination with WHO and UNICEF offices in Moldova, conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the Rybnitsa, Grigoriopol, Slobozia, Bender and Tiraspol perinatal centres in terms of capacity building and additional medical equipment and consumables. The assessment will be carried out taking into account the previous SCBM project support provided for the perinatal Centres in the Transnistrian region. Training needs will be designed in conjunction with relevant perinatal health organizations from the right bank.
- Draw up a list of vital equipment that is essential for effective operation of the Rybnitsa, Slobozia, Grigoriopol, Bender and Tiraspol maternities within the overall regional perinatal network. A specific focus will be on the Tiraspol Mother and Child Centre (TMCC) since the more complex cases would be referred to Tiraspol, which has functional III-level capabilities from the first phase.
- Develop detailed technical specifications of medical equipment to be procured for the five assessed perinatal centers.

- Assist the project team in carrying out relevant activities for procurement of medical equipment: review of technical specifications, development of terms of references, organization of pre-bidding conferences, evaluation of supplied bids, communication with procurement offices etc.

III. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES, TENTATIVE TIMEFRAME AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS

The results expected from the Consultant's service provision are:

| Item no. | Deliverables | Estimated work days | Tentative timeframe |
|----------|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| A. | <i>Provide specialised technical expertise and consultancy for establishing and strengthening of Training Centre for perinatal institutions' staff from TN region</i> | | |
| 1. | In close coordination with WHO and UNICEF offices in Moldova develop the Training Centre concept development. <i>Deliverable: Training Centre Concept Developed and approved by SCBM team</i> | Up to 5 working days | By April 05, 2017 |
| 2. | Assist the project team and project counterparts during the identification of appropriate premises for the creation of the training centre. <i>Deliverable: Appropriate premises for Training Centre identified.</i> | Up to 2 working day | By April 10, 2017 |
| 3. | Develop the detailed technical specifications of medical training equipment to be procured for training center. <i>Deliverable: Detailed technical specifications for medical training equipment developed.</i> | Up to 1 working day | By April 16, 2017 |
| 4. | Provide support in organization of one local exchange visit for the potential staff of the Training Centre to similar Training Centres on the right bank. <i>Deliverable: Brief concept and agenda of the local exchange visit provided and approved. Local exchange visit successfully carried out.</i> | Up to 2 days | By April 30, 2017 |
| 5. | In close collaboration with WHO provide support in organization of one study tour for potential staff of the Training Centre to similar Training Centres outside the Republic of Moldova. <i>Deliverable: Brief concept and agenda of the study tour provided and approved. External study tour successfully carried out.</i> | Up to 1 day | By June 29, 2017 |
| 6. | Assist the project team in carrying out relevant activities for procurement of medical training equipment. | Up to 1 working day | By September 3, 2017 |

| Item no. | Deliverables | Estimated work days | Tentative timeframe |
|----------|--|----------------------|-----------------------|
| | <i>Deliverable: Evaluation of medical training equipment successfully carried out</i> | | |
| 7. | Provide at least one follow up assessment field visit to assess the training centre functionality. Provide recommendations for potential improvements. <i>Deliverable: Assessment field visit successfully carried out. Assessment report with relevant recommendations provided.</i> | Up to 1 working day | By January 31, 2018 |
| B. | <i>Carry out needs assessment in terms of capacity building and support for procurement of medical equipment for five perinatal institutions from TN region:</i> | | |
| 1. | In close coordination with WHO and UNICEF offices in Moldova, conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the Rybnitsa, Grigoriopol, Slobozia, Bender and Tiraspol perinatal centres in terms of capacity building and additional medical equipment and consumables. Draw up a list of vital equipment that is essential for effective operation of 5 institutions. <i>Deliverable: Needs assessment report successfully done. Assessment report approved by the SCBM team. The list of vital equipment provided.</i> | Up to 3 working days | By August 30 2017 |
| 2. | Develop the detailed technical specifications of medical equipment to be procured for assessed five perinatal centers. <i>Deliverable: Detailed technical specifications of medical equipment elaborated.</i> | Up to 2 working days | By September 17, 2017 |
| 3. | Assist the project team in carrying out relevant activities for procurement of medical equipment. <i>Deliverable: Support for the procurement of medical equipment provided. Evaluation report provided and approved.</i> | Up to 3 working days | By October 30, 2017 |
| | Up to a TOTAL of 21 working days | 21 days | |

The assignment is expected to start in March 2017 and will last until February 2018 for not more than 21 working days.

All activities under this assignment shall be performed in a gender-sensitive manner and applying human rights based approach.

Language of the deliverables

Deliverables shall be submitted in English.

IV. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The National Consultant will carry out his/her tasks under the supervision of the SCBM/Community Empowerment Project Manager.

Performance evaluation

The **Consultant's performance will be evaluated** against such criteria as: timeliness, responsibility, initiative, communication, accuracy, and quality of the services delivered.

Travel and other logistic arrangements

Travel outside duty station (Chisinau), other administrative costs, and logistical aspects will be arranged with the support of the SCBM team.

Financial arrangements

Payments will be disbursed in instalments, upon submission and approval of deliverables, and certification by SCBM/Community Empowerment Project Manager that the services have been satisfactorily performed.

V. PAYMENT FOR PROVIDED SERVICES:

The payment for the services provided by the National Consultant under the SCBM Programme will be made based on deliverables completed according to the contract, upon acceptance by the SCBM/Community Empowerment Project Manager of the submitted reports.

VI. QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS REQUIRED

The following qualification criteria shall be applied for the selection of the National Consultant:

Education:

- University degree (or equivalent), preferably in health care management, medical engineering, or other relevant field;

Experience:

- At least 5 years of experience in the field of perinatal health care, health care management, medical engineering, or another relevant field;
- At least 2 years of experience in assessing the medical technical needs and design of technical specifications.
- Experience in assessing the medical technical needs in Transnistrian region is a strong advantage;
- Proven experience in and familiarity with the perinatology domain;
- Previous experience with UN implemented projects or other development interventions related to procurement of specialized equipment for public health institutions.

Competences and skills:

- Demonstrated capacity of team-orientation work, excellent planning /organizational skills;

- Ability to achieve results and deadlines in a timely manner, maintaining a high standard throughout;
- Good analytical and evaluation skills;
- Sensitivity and respect for human rights and gender equality;
- Knowledge and skills of MS Office, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint;
- Fluency in Romanian, and Russian (written and spoken), and good command of English.

VII. SUBMISSION PROCESS

The following documents are to be submitted:

1. Cover letter, explaining why they are the most suitable for this position;
2. Financial proposal in USD, specifying the daily fee;
3. Updated P11 form (found at the UNDP Moldova website), including past experience in similar projects and 3 references.