**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANCY**

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| Hiring Office: | UNFPA Mongolia Country Office |
| Purpose of consultancy: | The overall objective of this consultancy is to conduct a rapid  assessment of the impact of the Russia/Ukraine war on the nutritional status of pregnant and breastfeeding women, particularly vulnerable women, including women with disabilities in Mongolia. |
| Scope of work:  *(Description of services, activities, or outputs)* | **Background**:  Russia’s war in Ukraine is having direct and indirect impacts on Mongolia’s economic, social, and political situation by imposing challenges to the supply of fuel, food, essentials, and other items. The negative impact of the war may also hamper the implementation of “New Recovery Plan”, approved by the Mongolian Government in December 2021, which aims at stimulating the economy during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.  Financial sanctions on Russia are increasing challenges of global logistics resulting in higher fuel prices and subsequent increases in transportation costs which have triggered 24% inflation by March 2022 in Mongolia (NSO, March 2022). Inflation is adding to the pandemic-related impact and affecting vulnerable Mongolians, including pregnant women, children, youth, the elderly, the unemployed and persons with disabilities. The prices of non-essential items are also increasing. Furthermore, the Zero-COVID policy of China has slowed down cross-border trade with Mongolia and has a significant impact on the supply of food, essentials, and medicines.  The recent data from National Statistical Office showed that the consumer price index at the national level increased by 7.9% compared to the end of the previous year, and by 15.1% compared to the same period of the previous year. The increase was mainly contributed by an 18.0% increase in prices of meat and meat products, and 10.7% increase in prices of housing, water, electricity, and fuel, a 16.1% increase in prices of medicine and medical services, and 25.6% increase in prices of transportation.  However, it is not clear whether and to what extent the increased prices and shortages are having an effect on the nutritional status of pregnant and breastfeeding women. The health and well-being of pregnant and breastfeeding women have a direct impact on growing fetuses and newborns. Daily iron and folic acid supplementation are currently recommended by WHO as part of antenatal care interventions to reduce the risk of low birth weight, small for gestational age, and maternal iron-deficiency anemia (Annex 1).  According to the Fifth National Nutrition Survey, the percentage distribution of anemia among reproductive-age women in Mongolia differs by region and ranges between 19.7% (urban) to 22.3% (rural). The current ANC guideline recommends iron-folic acid supplements and multiple micronutrients during the first and second trimesters of pregnancy to ensure safe motherhood (Annex 2) and the wellbeing of newborn. However, the recent UNFPA monitoring missions and preliminary findings of the survey on the availability of contraceptives and micronutrients conducted by the NCMCH showed a shortage of micronutrient supply in the country and their lack at primary healthcare facilities.  Therefore, UNFPA CO seeks individual consultancy service to conduct a rapid assessment to get a clear understanding of the extent and impact of war in Ukraine, and consequent increased costs and the nutritional status of pregnant and breastfeeding women from the vulnerable group of community, including their ability and use of essential micronutrients and vitamins recommended by the national ANC guidelines.  Based on the result of the assessment, the IC will provide a policy brief which will be used for advocacy to persuade the Government to develop an evidence-based response to the evolving situation in regard to protecting health and wellbeing of mothers and newborn in Mongolia.  **The specific tasks to be carried out by the consultant would be as follows:**   * Conducting a desk review of similar studies and findings of the abovementioned survey on the availability of contraceptives and micronutrients * Developing a rapid assessment protocol and tools: The consultant is expected to closely work with the national experts at National Center for Public health and other Government agencies and UNFPA programme team to develop a comprehensive rapid assessment methodology to evaluate the availability, accessibility, affordability, and consumption of essential micronutrients and vitamins. pregnant and breastfeeding women from a vulnerable group of population. The methodology should aim to compare the indicators of nutritional status of pregnant women before the war in Ukraine with the current situation based on the available information in the ANC records (e.g. weight, birthweight, estimated daily calories, blood hemoglobin levels, use of iron and folic acid, etc.).   + A qualitative analysis will be done by the consultant through interviews with women, service providers as well as policy/decision makers.   + Availability and cost analysis will be carried out by the consultant by interviewing pharmacists and suppliers. A sub-group of women with low income, single headed households, and women with disabilities will be a separate focus. * Presenting at the stakeholders’ workshop to validate the results of the study * Developing a policy brief based on the study findings and specific recommendations from the validation workshop for the national ANC guidelines, health insurance system, social welfare, newborn care, families, and communities. * Presenting at the final dissemination meeting: The consultant will present at final wrap up and dissemination meeting for UN agencies’ staff and Government officials * Leading the development of factsheets with support of UNFPA’s communications staff for awareness raising and advocacy purposes based on policy brief   **Location of Assessment:**  In Ulaanbaatar, the consultant will conduct the desk review, develop the assessment tools, and interview the relevant policy makers and stakeholders, including NGOs such as World Vision, which have provided multivitamins for children and women in the past. The consultant will be required to visit health facilities, pharmaceutical wholesalers and individual pharmacies at selected sites in Ulaanbaatar and in nearby provinces. The stakeholder validation workshop and the result dissemination meeting will take place in UB.  In the selected sites, the consultant will assess health facilities, and pharmacies, and interview health officials at health departments, and pregnant and breastfeeding women, and other relevant stakeholders including NGOs. All administrative units such soum, bag, and provincial centers need to be covered.  Focus group discussions with the target populations need to be done in UB and countryside. Social protection and welfare facilities also need to be covered by the assessment.  **Key deliverables from the consultancy will be as follows:**   * Develop a rapid assessment protocol with data collection tools such as interview questionnaire and checklists * Rapid assessment report with recommended key response actions at policy and operational levels in English and Mongolian * Presenting the key findings at the stakeholders’ workshop * Developing Factsheets for advocacy and awareness raising with support of UNFPA communication staff * Presentation of the assessment results at the dissemination meeting facilitated by UNFPA |
| Duration and working schedule | The duration of this consultancy is expected to be five months on full time working schedule of following UNFPA Mongolia CO’s working schedule. The consultant’s work is planned to be started from August 15, 2022. |
| Place where services are to be delivered: | UNFPA CO, UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia |
| Delivery dates and how work will be delivered (*e.g.* electronic, hard copy etc.): | All deliverables need to be submitted in electronic and hard copies.  Consultancy service timesheet will be developed in consultation with a selected consultant.   * Rapid assessment protocol with data collection tools by September 15, 2022 * Interviews and data collection by September 30, 2022 * Data analysis and draft report by November 10, 2022 * Conduct of the stakeholder validation workshop by November 15, 2022 * Final report of the assessment by November 30, 2022 * Development of Factsheets by December 15, 2022 * Organizing the dissemination meeting by December 30, 2022 * Submission of the final consultancy report by January 30, 2023 |
| Monitoring and progress control, including reporting requirements, periodicity format and deadline: | Monthly update on the progress made in the deliverables, as per schedule jointly agreed upon start of the consultancy.  The consultant will report on the progress of the deliverables to UNFPA on regular basis by email. The reporting requirements, formats and deadlines will be confirmed during the first briefing session. |
| Supervisory arrangements: | Under the overall guidance of the Head of Office and Assistant Representative, UNFPA Mongolia CO, the consultant will report to Programme Specialist for SRHR and AY, and closely work with the SRHR team. |
| Expected travel: | In-country field work (travel) is expected during the consultancy service. |
| Required expertise, qualifications and competencies, including language requirements: | The minimum requirement of education, experience and competency will be as follows:  **Education**  Advanced university degree in public health, medicine or social science is required  **Experience**   * The consultant must have at least 10 years of cumulative experience worked in the field of MCH/SRH, nutrition or public health sector * At least 5 years of an experience as a principle researcher in social science research, qualitative research design and rapid assessment is required * Experience in policy analysis, guidelines development, and delivering timely results under pressure is an advantage, * Proven experience in report writing in Mongolian and English   **Language requirement:**   * Mongolian native speaker * Advanced level of English (both in reading and writing), including the ability to review professional resource materials   **Competencies:**   * Excellent skills in teamwork and facilitation of workshops * Adequate level of communication skills * Ability to work under pressure with strict timeline * Knowledge of human rights, sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, population, and statistics and research in general |
| Inputs/services to be provided by UNFPA or implementing partner (e.g support services, office space, equipment), if applicable: | It is anticipated that the consultancy will be governed by an Individual consultancy contract under standard UNFPA General terms and conditions for Individual consultant. (Annex III)  **Logistical arrangements:**  The UNFPA will provide office space (6th floor) including an office table and a chair. She/he will need to use his/her own computer/ laptop. Common printer will be available at 4th floor.  UNFPA will be responsible for arranging logistical arrangements for the consultant to work in a field mission in countryside. Transportation cost and Daily Subsistence Allowance will be covered by UNFPA according to its travel policy.  The CO will provide required support in organizing meetings with beneficiaries and stakeholders when necessary.  **Schedule of Payments:**  The payment will be paid on monthly basis upon satisfactory completion of scheduled deliverables based on the verification of UNFPA.  UNFPA reserves the right to withhold up to 30% of the total fee in the case that the deliverables are not submitted on schedule or do not meet the required standard.  Copyright and ownership of all documents produced by the consultant will remain with UNFPA**.**  The contract payment will be all inclusive and UNFPA will not cover any other fee, insurance, or tax if it is not specified in this ToR.  **COA:** fund code UDD77 |
| Other relevant information or special conditions, if any: | N/A |

Annexes:

1. WHO recommendations for ANC, 2018
2. ANC guideline, MOH order A/338 of year 2014
3. UNFPA General condition of Individual consultant’s contract