1. Background:

Immunisation is one of the most important and efficient public health interventions for protecting individuals and the community from serious diseases. Similar to many countries worldwide, Republic of Moldova struggles with decreasing trend of immunisation rates. In accordance with MICS-2012 (Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey), the rate of children under 2 vaccinated in accordance with the national immunisation schedule is 88.7%, which is below the target of 95% recommended by UNICEF and the World Health Organization. The situation is even worse in Transnistrian region, where reported coverage rates for routine infant immunisations are low, in most cases under 80%. One of the reasons for this is due to reported delays in vaccines supply, which are purchased by the Ministry of Health in Chisinau. Another reason for low coverage rates may be due to the immunisation information system which, while paper-based, is structured largely on a similar system that was developed for Ukraine in the late 1990’s; it involves careful documentation at the point of immunisation, and is less susceptible to over-estimation.

A study conducted with UNICEF support in 2012, revealed that vaccines quality was debated in the general public. The overall perception was that the quality of vaccines administered by public institutions was rather low, and vaccine manufacturers consequently got bad reputation. Majority of parents were afraid of severe post-vaccination reactions (neurologic diseases, paralysis, death), some of them being potentially a direct consequence of administering altered vaccines as a result of inappropriate storage.

The Effective Vaccine Management (EVM) assessment conducted in Moldova in 2011 revealed mostly high performance in cold chain and vaccine management, but showed a need to improve continuous temperature monitoring at the primary store, and cold chain equipment quality and maintenance, as well as vaccine stock management at the district and health facility levels.

UNICEF supports the Government with on-going reforms in the health sector, including through provision of high level technical assistance in strengthening the immunisation
system. In this context, **UNICEF is seeking for an experienced international expert to provide support to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova and de-facto Transnistrian authorities in assessing cold chain needs in the Transnistrian region in line with UNICEF and WHO recommendations.**

2. **Purpose of Individual Consultancy:**

Assist UNICEF, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova and de-facto Transnistrian authorities in assessing cold chain needs in the Transnistrian region.

3. **Objectives of the Individual Consultancy with expected results/outcome/products/sub products/outcomes:**

The objective of the intervention is to strengthen cold chain in the Transnistrian region, so that adequate quantity of vaccines is available at all times in all health facilities, and 100% of administered vaccines maintain their full potency.

The needs assessment will be done in cooperation with local Transnistrian partners and should include:

- Desk review of the self-assessment on cold chain equipment inventory prepared by local Transnistrian partners;
- Review of the cold chain and logistics systems for vaccines in terms of functions, organization, level and role of individuals responsible for the system;
- Calculation of the cold storage and distribution volumes currently in place at different levels (regional, district, health facility);
- Estimation of the required cold volumes, as well as future needs in next 5 years based on new vaccines introduction and other local plans/policies for immunisation;
- Estimation of training needs of local Transnistrian partners to ensure a functional cold chain system;
- Development of a short and medium term strategic plans to strengthen cold chain to enable quality-assured and appropriate amounts of commodities for immunisation services;
- Costing and prioritisation of cold chain needs;
- Development of a procurement strategy and plan for UNICEF Country Office in Moldova;
- Preparation of technical specifications for cold chain equipment, based on identified needs and recommended procurement plan;
- Recommendations for a system to follow-up the cold chain performance that can generate routine data.

In order to perform those tasks, the International Consultant will closely cooperate with local de-facto Transnistrian authorities. The consultancy will include a desk review of self-assessment prepared by local Transnistrian professionals, as well as several visits to selected local vaccines stores and health facilities.

The Consultant will validate the results of the needs assessment with de-facto Transnistrian authorities and UNICEF.

4. Delivery dates based on the work plan (to be approved by the Project Officer)

The estimated duration of the assignment is 10 working days, out of which 5 days of work in Chisinau and Tiraspol, as well as 5 days home-based. In-country mission to the Republic of Moldova is planned for 26-30 May 2014. Should these dates be revised, new period for in-country mission will be agreed between UNICEF and the consultant.

5. Details of how the work should be delivered:

The deliverables timeline and deadlines will be agreed with UNICEF staff, in accordance with the request for consultancy. The consultant needs to be up-to-date with different developments in the respective area and propose interventions with concrete actions while assessing the cold chain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Nr of working days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Desk review of the self-assessment on cold chain equipment inventory prepared by local Transnistrian partners;</td>
<td>Before the in-country mission</td>
<td>1 working day, home-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold chain assessment report, which includes:</td>
<td>By 10 June 2014</td>
<td>5 working days, in-country mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Current cold storage and distribution volumes in Transnistrian region;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Required cold storage and distribution volumes in Transnistrian region;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Future needs in cold chain volumes in Transnistrian region (next 5 years);</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
- Training needs of local Transnistrian partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Description</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short and medium term strategic plans to strengthen cold chain in Transnistrian region. Procurement strategy and plan to strengthen cold chain in Transnistrian region</td>
<td>By 20 June 2014</td>
<td>2 working days, home-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical specifications for cold chain equipment. Recommendations regarding the system to follow-up cold chain performance</td>
<td>By 25 June 2014</td>
<td>2 working days, home-based</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. **Performance indicators for evaluation of results:**

Consultant’s performance of work will be evaluated primarily based on the following indicators:

- Completion of tasks specified in the TORs;
- Compliance with deadlines;
- Required quality of performed actions, deliverables and outputs;
- Initiative, independence, due diligence, timeliness, appropriate demeanor and delivery of results;
- Highest professional standards of work with national counterparts and UNICEF CO;
- Good cooperation with national and local authorities and UNICEF;
- Organizational capacities, time-management skills demonstrated;

7. **Qualifications/specialized knowledge/experience required to complete the task:**

The above described assignment requires high technical skills as well as good knowledge of international policies and regulations related to immunisation, in particular cold chain management. Furthermore, the assignment requires good communication and cooperation skills.

Minimum (but not limited to) consultants’ qualifications are as follows:

- University degree in epidemiology, medicine, public health or supply chain management, with further training on vaccine management, cold chain and supply management. Familiarity with relevant WHO and UNICEF guidelines and tools.
- Minimum of 5 years of practical experience in managing supply chain operations involving planning, organizing, implementing and advisory support.
• Minimum of 3 years of relevant experience in cold chain and vaccine management is required.
• Previous participation in cold chain assessments will be a strong asset.
• Excellent analytical capacities; excellent ability to synthesize information and relate action to results.
• Ability to multi-task and produce quality outputs on short deadlines.
• Excellent communication, presentation, team-work and cooperation skills; ability to listen and express opinions sensitively; high work ethics.
• Excellent command of English language, both oral and written, including report-writing skills.
• Knowledge of Russian language would be an asset.
• Previous similar work experience with international organizations and/or governmental programs concerning related field is an advantage.

8. Submitting the proposal
Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. Proposal explaining a short description of methodology or approach on how to deliver the assignment as per the TORs
2. Financial proposal (inclusive of all fees and travel expenses)
3. Duly filled Personal History Form P11

Financial proposal
The financial proposal shall specify a total lump sum amount and payment terms (i.e. whether payments fall in instalments or upon completion of the entire contract). Payments are based upon output, i.e. upon delivery of the services specified in the TOR. The financial proposal should include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (including fee and number of anticipated working days, international travel costs, in-country travel costs, translation costs and per-diems).

9. Evaluation of candidates
The candidates will be assessed against the following criteria and scores:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Max score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical competences</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• University degree in epidemiology, medicine, public health or supply chain management, with further training on vaccine</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
management, cold chain and supply management. Familiarity with relevant WHO and UNICEF guidelines and tools.

- Minimum of 5 years of practical experience in managing supply chain operations involving planning, organizing, implementing and advisory support. 10

- Minimum of 3 years of relevant experience in cold chain and vaccines management is required. 10

- Previous participation in cold chain assessments will be a strong asset. 10

- Excellent analytical capacities; excellent ability to synthesize information and relate action to results. 10

- Knowledge of international policies and regulations related to immunisation, in particular cold chain management. 5

- Ability to multi-task and produce quality outputs on short deadlines. 5

- Excellent communication, presentation, team-work and cooperation skills; ability to listen and express opinions sensitively; high work ethics. 5

- Excellent command of English language, both oral and written, including report-writing skills. 5

- Knowledge of Russian language would be an asset. 5

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sub-total</th>
<th>75</th>
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Other competences

- Previous similar work experience with international organizations and/or governmental programs concerning related field is an advantage. 5

- Ability to work in a multicultural environment and establish harmonious and effective relations within and outside the organization. 5

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<tr>
<th>Sub-total</th>
<th>10</th>
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Total score (65 points required for technical qualification) 85

Contract will be awarded to a candidate who meets the technical qualification requirements and provides best value for money (based on the financial offer).
10. Definition of supervision arrangements

The selected candidates will work under the direct supervision of UNICEF Chief of Health and Education. The Chief of Health and Education will also perform the evaluation report concerning contractors’ work. UNICEF supervisor will regularly communicate with the consultant and provide feedback and guidance and necessary support so to achieve objectives of the consultancy, as well as remain aware of any upcoming issues related to consultants’ performance and quality of work.

11. Description of official travel involved

The consultancy is designed for 10 working days in the period May-June, 2014 and will involve travel to Chisinau, Tiraspol and other districts (at least 2 out of 5) in the Transisnitrian region. Prior to starting the assignment, the selected candidate shall be required to undergo the UN Basic Security in the Field training and certification (on-line).

12. UNICEF recourse in the case of unsatisfactory performance:

In case of unsatisfactory performance the contract will be terminated by notification letter sent 5 days prior to termination. In the meantime, UNICEF will initiate another selection in order to identify appropriate candidates. The consultant will submit all deliverables as specified in the TOR with a request for payment. In case evaluation of consultants’ performance is deemed unsatisfactory by UNICEF supervisor, the payment would not be rendered.