

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR INSTITUTIONAL CONTRACTORS**International / National Institutional Consultancy for behaviour insights research on drivers influencing immunization-related behaviours among frontline healthcare workers in Montenegro****1. Background and Context**

Immunizations are an essential health service that protect susceptible individuals, mainly healthy children, from different vaccine-preventable communicable diseases (VPD). Preventing a VPD outbreak not only saves lives but also has more profound community and developmental impact such as protecting health systems from overburdening and thus securing their normal functioning and delivery of other essential health and medical services.

Despite a considerable investment in vaccine supply and delivery across the Globe, children in many countries still miss out on basic childhood vaccines. Alongside with supply and availability of immunization services, caregivers' demand for vaccination, trust in vaccines as well as trust in recommendations, attitudes and behaviours of frontline healthcare workers implementing immunizations programme, directly impact immunization system performance and uptake of vaccines. Some scientific data indicate that parents and caregivers have many reasons for delaying, refusing, or not fully completing childhood vaccination. One of the reasons for these undesirable behaviours often mentioned in Europe and Central Asia region is the quality of interaction between health care providers and caregivers.

As part of the regional efforts to better understand and tackle vaccine hesitancy, in 2021 & 2022 UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (UNICEF ECARO) has hired an international company that has developed a methodology and conducted the analysis of immunizations related behavioral insights for both routine and COVID-19 vaccines among healthcare workers, general population and parents / caregivers. Several countries in the region, including Montenegro have been included in the research. To track potential changes of behavioral determinants following two years of implementation of various activities in the field as well as to better understand the factors (drivers) influencing key frontline healthcare workers (FHCWs), namely pediatricians and pediatric nurses working on the primary healthcare level in Montenegro who were underrepresented in initial study, their immunization-related attitudes, recommendations, practices and behaviors, UNICEF Montenegro is seeking for an institution / company that will conceptualize, implement behavioral insights data collection and perform analysis of the data, this time with focus on key influencers among pediatricians and pediatric nurses.

Based on the findings and data analysis, contractor is also expected to develop and formulate actionable country specific recommendations that national health authorities will consider when tackling vaccine hesitancy among FHCWs, developing programme of continuous medical education, and when trying to increase vaccine related recommendations and vaccine advocacy among HCWs, and thus, consequently increase demand for childhood vaccines among caregivers.

This activity is part of the ongoing EU UNICEF partnership "Strengthening health system resilience and response to the COVID-19 pandemic and epidemiological risks".

2. Objectives, Purpose & Expected Results

The purpose of the consultancy is to recruit a national or international company/institution, with ample amount of experience in behavioural insights research, that will develop methodology, collect, and analyse data on behavioural insights related to immunizations.

Conceptualization and implementation of behavioral insights research and data gathering shall be among frontline healthcare workers (mainly pediatricians, pediatric nurses, and public health specialists) working on the primary level of health care. Following the gathering of data selected company is expected to provide data analysis together with formulation of actionable country-specific recommendations on immunizations that national health authorities will take into account when tackling vaccine hesitancy among FHCWs and developing programme of continuous medical education.

3. Description of the Assignment

Under the supervision of SBC officer, the contractor is expected to:

1. **Review available and existing evidence** and reports on knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, practices related to childhood immunization, including among health workers in Montenegro and WB region. The desk review will inform development of the inception report. Interviews with UNICEF officers and selected national stakeholders will be conducted to get additional insights to define research questions and approaches.
2. **Develop the research methodology** to identify behavioural insights, drivers/factors influencing the development of vaccine recommendations and vaccine advocacy among key healthcare workers on the primary level of healthcare (paediatricians, paediatric nurses and public health specialists – epidemiologists and other) that are resulting in uptake of vaccines by the parents and caregivers. The vendor will develop an inception report presenting a detailed research methodology, the theoretical frameworks/behavioural models to identify the behavioural drivers at individual, community, society and system/service delivery levels, data collection tools for targeted audience, and a proposed sampling / data collection methodology. The research methodology will be consulted with UNICEF country office and national stakeholders and finalized based on the received feedback. The vendor will support inclusion of additional research questions, should it be necessary, to help country track key immunization-related indicators. With the support of the UNICEF country office and national partners, the vendor will acquire all necessary approvals, before initiating data collection. The vendor will also describe the process of engaging with in-country research companies if needed for data collection. The vendor will also present data analysis approaches and propose a structure for country reports.
3. **Online workshop/meeting to present the research** objectives and methodology and type of findings expected will be organized with country team. UNICEF country will convene the meeting, ensuring the research is aligned with in country activities.
4. **Programming and pilot testing of questionnaire:** The vendor will test the questionnaire with at least of 10 HCWs, including both doctors and nurses, and interviews shall be reviewed in detail by the survey team. The research tools will be finalized based on the results of the testing, in coordination with UNICEF CO and national counterparts.
5. **Support in-country data collection.** The vendor will train, if necessary, and guide country research teams during the data collection process. Quality checks will be conducted, and periodical calls will be organized with country teams to assess the progress, identify challenges, and explore solutions.

6. **Data analysis and recommendations development.** The vendor will analyse all data collected.
7. **Research reports development.** A summary report will be developed, presenting the research methodology, the data collection tools, the processes for data collection and quality assurance, and the findings and actionable recommendations that national health authorities will take into account when tackling vaccine hesitancy among FHCWs and developing programme of continuous medical education. A PowerPoint Presentation followed by country meeting or webinar for presenting the research, findings, and recommendations to UNICEF and key national stakeholders is also expected.

A representative sample of pediatricians and pediatric nurses from public as well as from private institutions on primary health care level, as well as public health specialists – epidemiologists and other, involved in implementation of routine immunizations program will be surveyed. Proposed sample size includes 80 pediatricians (at least 65 from public sector), 100 pediatric nurses, 80 other nurses working with children and/or at pediatric wards on primary level of health care, 10 epidemiologists, 20 nurses working on public health services – epidemiology, hygiene, other. Disaggregation of data regarding the specialization, education and profile / work place of healthcare worker must be secured.

It is expected that the survey will employ a structured face-to-face survey method for data collection. Survey is expected to last around 20 minutes. All data should be collected and recorded electronically. The Company will be expected to provide a secure electronic platform for data collection and responsible for programming the electronic version of the questionnaires, including all skip logic, constraints, data validation, etc. The Company is expected to use tablets, lap-top computers, power sources, and any other logistics deemed necessary for electronic data collection. Pilot testing of the survey is expected to be conducted ahead of the data collection. In addition, the Company will ensure quality control (e.g., recording of interviews or a sample of interviews to be contacted at a later point to verify survey execution).

Bidder can propose qualitative methods of research, such as focus groups among key respondents, to augment and supplement original research design if the qualitative approach can assist in answering behavior analytic questions .

The Consultancy institution will ensure that all phases of the research are in line with the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, and Data Collection and Analysis.

Bidders should indicate as part of their technical proposal how they intend to incorporate ethical standards in the survey planning, implementation and reports writing.

Informed consent must be requested in writing from all participants of the evaluation. Participants must be informed before giving consent that in case a specific breach of human right is raised during the interviews (for example: violence against children or adults), that this will need to be shared with relevant authorities, in accordance with UNICEF's standards and existing legislation in Montenegro. All other information given during the data collection will be kept confidential.

Venues for FGDs/interviews should be in line with the rules of privacy protection and respectful, comfortable setting, where participants cannot be overheard.

Particular care will be taken to ensure that questions are asked sensitively. Clear language will be used which avoids victimisation, blame and judgement. Where it is clear that the interview is having a negative effect on a participant, the interview will be stopped.

Physical safety and well-being of researchers and participants must be ensured at all times including with respect to COVID-19 measures in effect at the time of data collection.

All data will be securely stored during the research. Study protocol will define the duration, ownership and purposes of data keeping.

4. Deliverables, timelines, and payment schedule

A detailed work plan with time frame will be developed by the consultant institution and agreed with UNICEF Country office. Deliverables are expected to be delivered in either Montenegrin or English, while data collection (interview) shall be done in local language.

Expected Deliverables include:

- **Inception report** containing a proposed timeline, detailed methodology, draft data collection tools, approaches for tools adaptation and finalization, ways of data collection, accountabilities of the vendor and quality assurance mechanisms, approaches for data collection and a proposed structure of reports.
- **Final research methodology and research tool - questionnaire and focus group protocol** (if needed). It is expected that questionnaire is developed and implemented in official language used in Montenegro
- **Reports on country meetings/workshops** to present the research objectives and methodology.
- **Short bi-weekly reports on progress**, engagement with national partners, support provided, and data collection.
- **Research reports and a PowerPoint presentation.**
- **Country meeting or webinar** for presenting the research, findings, and recommendations.

The contractor may be asked to submit several drafts of expected documents, for UNICEF CO and national partners reference group review and inputs. The received feedback will be reflected as changes in the proposed documents, before submitting the next draft.

	Deliverables	Timeline	Schedule of payment
1	Development and submission of the workplan/timeline and inception report.	November 3 rd 2023	70%
2	Finalization of research methodology and data collection tools, in close consultation with country office and national stakeholders	November 13 th , 2023	
3	Country workshops/meetings with national partners to present the research objectives and methodology.	November 20 th , 2023	
4	Data collection	By December 15 th , 2023	
5	Data cleaning and analysis.	December 30 th , 2023	30%

6	Development and submission of the final reports and PPT presentation	January 3 rd , 2024	
7	Country specific meeting / webinar for presenting the research, findings, and recommendations	January 5 th , 2024	

5. Travel

If applicable, the bidder shall include the estimate cost of travel both international and national in the financial proposal.

Travel cost shall be calculated based on i) economy class travel, regardless of the length of travel and ii) costs for accommodation, meals and incidentals shall not exceed applicable daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates, as promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC).

6. Management and Organisation

Selected contractor shall be supervised by UNICEF SBC Officer in collaboration with UNICEF ECD officer and Health Officer.

UNICEF County Office in Montenegro shall ensure overall coordination of project activities, financial management arrangements and disbursements. UNICEF Country Office will support the Company in obtaining MOH permissions and ethical clearance for the survey.

The performance of work will be evaluated based on the following indicators:

- Completion of tasks specified in ToR.
- Compliance with the established deadlines for submission of deliverables.
- Quality of deliverables.
- Demonstration of high standards of work.
- Compliance with ethical UNICEF standards related to reporting on children
- Responsibility and communication

UNICEF reserves the right to withhold all or a portion of payment if performance is unsatisfactory, if work/outputs is incomplete, not delivered or for failure to meet deadlines.

Duration: 2 months (November 3rd 2023 – January 5th, 2024).

7. Qualification Requirements

The assignment is expected to be undertaken by an experienced institution/company to produce the expected results. The potential contractors are expected to submit a proposal/expression of interests based on these Terms of Reference.

The institution must have full capacity to carry out all data gathering activities in Montenegro, and extensive experience in behavioural research, reports and recommendation development.

Specific requirements are:

- Demonstrated expertise and previous experience in designing and implementing population wide surveys and research. Experience in designing and implementing behavioural research is required .
- Proven experience in conducting research, developing, and testing data collection tools.
- Previous experience in implementing similar activities in ECA region is an asset.
- Demonstrated ability to produce high quality results in a timely manner.
- Previous work with UNICEF or other UN agencies in a similar area is desirable

8. Application procedure

The potential contractors are expected to submit a proposal (Technical and Financial) based on these Terms of Reference.

The proposal should consist of:

a) **Technical Proposal including:**

- a. Portfolio of the organization/institution/agency with examples of previous work on similar projects and clients in the last 5 years, which should include:
 - i. Title/Designation of each team member on the project and their CVs
 - ii. Experience in working on similar project and assignment – List all similar projects they worked on and their roles on those projects
 - iii. Project implementation and work plan showing the detailed sequence and timeline for each activity and days necessary for each proposed team member
 - iv. Quality assurance mechanism and risk mitigation measures put in place
- b. Detailed description of the methodology and technical approach
- c. Tentative work plan with number of days, timeframe, and deadlines for deliverables
- d. Evidence about the two to three similar assignments containing the following information:
 - i. Name of Client
 - ii. Title of the Project
 - iii. Year and duration of the project
 - iv. Scope of the Projects/Requirements
 - v. Proposed Solutions and Outcome – include visuals, web-links, etc.
 - vi. Team members on each of the project and their specific roles
 - vii. Project timelines (start and end date year, and any other information necessary)
 - viii. Reference /Contact person details
- e. LRPS form signed

b) **Financial Proposal (Budget) including:**

- a. Daily fee rate for each team member based on the number of working days included in the Technical Proposal.
- b. Estimated travel costs both international and in country travel. Daily subsistence allowance (DSA) will, where applicable, be paid up to a maximum of the official UN rate. (Reimbursement of travel costs / accommodation expenses will be based on actual expenses).
- c. Other costs including simultaneous translation, translation services of final version of materials, accommodation and refreshments during trainings should also be included as well as other costs if applicable.

The financial proposal shall indicate budget estimated in EUR.

8. Evaluation

Each proposal will be evaluated against a weight allocation of 70 for the technical proposal and 30 for the financial proposal. The total maximum obtainable points is 100.

a 1) Technical components (total of 70 points)

ITEM	TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA	MAX OBTAINABLE POINTS
1	Overall Response	
1.1	• <i>Completeness of response</i>	3
1.2	• <i>Overall concord between TOR/needs and proposal</i>	5
2	Company and Key Personnel	
2.1	• <i>Range and depth of organizational experience with similar projects</i>	8
2.2	• <i>Samples of previous work, number of customers, size of projects</i>	5
2.3	• <i>Key personnel: relevant experience and qualifications of the proposed team for the assignment</i>	12
2.4	• <i>Company policy on Child labor, Safeguarding and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (articulate policies for the protection & safeguarding of children and prevention of PSEA)</i>	3
2.5	• <i>Gender component: At least 1 female in the management structure or ownership of the company</i>	2
2.6	• <i>Workplace policies on disabilities</i>	2
3	Proposed Methodology and Approach	
3.1	• <i>Workplan</i>	5
3.2	• <i>Methodology</i>	20
3.3	• <i>Project management, monitoring and quality assurance process</i>	5
TOTAL TECHNICAL SCORE		70

Minimum technical score: 70% of 70 points = 49 points

2) Financial component (total of 30 points)¹

- Technical proposal evaluation. Proposals passing the minimum technical pass score (49 points-70% of the maximum points obtainable for technical proposal) will continue into the Financial proposal evaluation.
- Financial proposal evaluation. The lowest price proposal will be awarded the full score assigned to the commercial proposal.

¹ Financial offer will be reviewed only if Technical proposal meets minimum required quality standards.

- Recommendation. The recommendation for award of contract will be based on best combination of technical and financial score.
- Final award and contracts. Based on verified nominations and final scores, contract negotiations could be initiated with one or more successful Proposers.
- The UNICEF evaluation team will select the Proposal which is of high quality, clear and meets the stated requirements and offers the best combination of technical and financial score.