**Cold Chain Procurement Reference Guide**

**Overview:**
The Cold Chain Procurement Reference Guide provides general guidance and useful references for UNICEF Country Offices (CO) and Procurement Service (PS) partners to assist with ordering a range of Cold Chain equipment. More detailed information is available in *Product Specific Reference Guides*.

A fully functional cold chain system for receiving and safely storing vaccines must be in place before ordering vaccines. The importance of a functional cold chain system is essential, particularly with competing health priorities, constrained budgets, and in light of the introduction of new vaccines in country programmes which will stretch cold chain systems.

Cold Chain is an important component in the Expanded Programme on Immunization to ensure that safe and potent vaccines are administered to the children. Unfortunately, the cold chain is sometimes an afterthought in CO planning for immunization campaigns and new vaccine introduction, resulting in late orders for cold chain equipment.

UNICEF Supply Division (SD) provides technical guidance to COs and PS partners on cold chain equipment to support efforts related to:

- Ensuring safe and potent vaccines are delivered and administered to children and mothers.
- Reducing vaccine wastage.
- Reducing country cost for the procurement of vaccines for the EPI programmes by minimising vaccine wastage.
- Ensuring adequate spare components are procured for existing cold chain products for timely repairs of cold chain equipment.
- Sensitizing countries on the necessity for cold chain equipment inventory from primary to health facility levels.

Cold Chain items available for order can be located under the Cold Chain Equipment section of the UNICEF Supply Catalogue.

UNICEF COs can procure a number of cold chain items directly from the suppliers through Direct Order Arrangements (DOA), which include:

- Refrigerators, excluding solar (further items available on Long-Term Arrangement - LTA)
- Freezers (further items available on LTA)
- Spare Parts for Refrigerators and Freezers (further items available on LTA)
- Temperature Monitoring Devices
- Cold Boxes (also available on LTA)
- Vaccine Carriers (also available on LTA)
- Ice Packs (also available on LTA)

Additional products available on LTA, but not on DOA, include:

- Walk-In Cold and Freezer Rooms
- Complete Solar Powered PV Refrigeration Systems
- Voltage Regulators

For *non-standard items*, [UN item codes](http://www.unicef.org/supply) applicable for cold chain should be used.

**Local procurement authorisation** is usually not granted for cold chain equipment.
Eligible partners can use the **Procurement Services** mechanism to procure cold chain equipment through UNICEF. For more details on this mechanism please refer to the [Procurement Services website](#).

In case of an **emergency**, please contact the [Supply Division Cold Chain Unit](#). The cold chain LTAs include emergency stocks for certain compression type refrigerators and freezers, in addition to temperature monitoring devices. These are available for immediate shipment from the relevant suppliers.

For specific item **lead and transit time estimation**, particularly for critical demand, please contact the [Supply Division Cold Chain Unit](#).

For Walk-In Cold Rooms (WICs) and Walk-In Freezer Rooms (WIFs) a substantial amount of time is required to complete **installation** works.

The Supply Division Cold Chain Unit is currently in collaboration with Tanzania Country Office working on a WIC installation training video that will be made available as part of the Cold Chain Country Support Package as soon as it is finalised.

Please refer to the product specific Checklists and Reference Guides for WICs / WIFs, Solar Refrigeration Systems (with Battery Power Storage – BPS – and Solar Direct Drive – SDD -), Compression and Absorption type Refrigerators and Freezers for guidance on technical and commercial aspects to be considered when procuring these products.

In order to maintain an uninterrupted cold chain coverage at all times, it is essential to maintain a stock of **essential spare parts**. For details about these please contact the [Supply Division Cold Chain Unit](#).