

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### *Local Individual Contractor to conduct assessment of Family Planning policy implementation*

*(MDV-ToR/2015/05 Dated: 04/04/2015)*

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#### **1. Background**

The commitment to promote family planning in the Maldives has increased over the past years- all health facilities provide a range of services related to reproductive health including family planning (FP), health education and counselling on maternal and child health and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Despite achievements in extending minimal service provision to all 188 inhabited islands and rapid fertility decline, issues such as high unmet need for family planning (28%) and low contraceptive prevalence rate (27% for modern methods) (Maldives Demographic and Health Survey 2009) point to persistent challenges with regard to use and access to services.

Access to and provision of family planning services are guided by the National Reproductive Health Strategy 2014-2018 and the National Standards for Family Planning 2005. Maldives does not have an explicit policy on access to contraceptives for young people and unmarried couples/individuals. However there is a need for availability of contraceptives to those young people who exhibit unsafe sexual practices and have elevated risk of STIs, including HIV/AIDS. There have been no systematic studies on the various policies and guidelines of family planning, or any review of service providers' perspectives and practices. Given the investments in the area, more qualitative research is needed to identify and analyze the barriers to improving universal access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services especially amongst young people and excluded groups, and for the promotion of SRH rights and services in the country.

The Ministry of Health with the assistance of UNFPA is seeking a local contractor to analyze the existing policies and guidelines on family planning including STI management, and identify the gaps in delivering and accessing these services. The study shall include extensive desk review, interviews with key stakeholders, and field visit to inform (i) a mapping exercise of all policies and guidelines informing FP service delivery and STI management; (ii) an assessment of the extent to which these policies and guidelines are applied in practice, from service providers' perspective; and (iii) analysis of reasons behind the differences (if any) between written policies (i.e., findings from part i) and how they are applied and implemented (i.e., findings from part ii).

#### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of the assignment is to provide short-term technical support to the Ministry of Health in identifying issues with regard to the implementation of family planning policies. This assessment will facilitate evidence-based revisions to the National Standards for Family Planning 2005 and ensure harmonization with upcoming policies such as the Health Master Plan 2016-2025 and the National Standards for Adolescent- and Youth-friendly Health Services 2013.

##### **(a) Primary client:**

Health Protection Agency, Ministry of Health, Maldives

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(b) **Expected outcome:**

Enhanced capacity and accountability at the Ministry of Health and health facilities to monitor the family planning policy implementation and quality service delivery.

**3. Profile of contractor**

(a) **Primary expertise required:**

Qualitative research on health policy

(b) **Educational background:**

At least an advanced degree in health policy research, or other relevant discipline

(c) **Work experience:**

Minimum three years' work experience related to health policy or health research

(d) **Other competencies:**

- Excellent communication skills in English language, both oral and written
- Proficiency in MS Office software
- Good interpersonal relationship with relevant stakeholders

**4. Work setting**

(a) **Place, timing and duration of assignment:**

The assignment will involve both home- and field-based work. The primary place of assignment is the Health Protection Agency (HPA), Ministry of Health, Male', Maldives. The duration of the assignment expected to be 8 weeks between May and July 2015.

(b) **Briefing/debriefing arrangements:**

HPA and UNFPA will brief the contractor at the inception of the assignment and the contractor will debrief HPA and UNFPA at the end of the assignment.

(c) **Independent consultant or team member:**

The assignment is available to individual contractors, and not to be undertaken by a team.

(d) **Reporting relationships and identification of responsibility for assessment of the outputs:**

The contractor is expected to be in regular communication with the assigned focal points at HPA and UNFPA. HPA focal point will oversee the work of the contractor. The outputs will need to be accepted by the Ministry of Health in order to confirm completion of the assignment.

**5. Work plan:**

(a) **Scope and diversity of assignment:**

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The assignment shall be structured around three components:

- (i) A mapping exercise of all policies and guidelines informing FP service delivery and STI management. **Output:** a section (in the draft and final report) on interlinkages, overlaps and discrepancies between the various policies and guidelines
- (ii) An assessment of the extent to which these policies and guidelines are applied in practice, from service providers' perspective. **Output:** a section (in the draft and final report) on how service providers deliver FP services and manage STI cases, capturing their perspectives, actual practices, and what guides them
- (iii) Analysis of reasons behind the differences (if any) between policies and how they are implemented, and present recommendations to address these. **Output:** a section (in the draft and final report) on the discrepancies between written policies (i.e., findings from part i) and how they are applied and implemented at health facilities (i.e., findings from part ii), evidence-based explanation of what could be contributing to these differences, and recommendations on how these gaps may be addressed

The methodology of the assignment is expected to include extensive desk review, interviews with key stakeholders among government, donors/development partners and NGOs, as well as a visit to at least one regional health facility to review gaps in practice.

#### **(b) Specific role and expected contribution:**

##### Contractor

- Provide a detailed work plan within a week after signing the contract
- Provide the deliverables on time as stipulated in the contract and the ToR
- Report on the progress of work via email with the focal point at HPA and UNFPA every two weeks
- Collaborate with the relevant stakeholders in carrying out the assignment

##### Health Protection Agency (HPA)

- Assign a focal point to facilitate the work of the contractor
- Provide existing literature and detailed information
- Facilitate arrangement of meetings/interviews with key staff and health personnel
- Facilitate field visits to selected island health facilities and access to staff
- Complete relevant documents as stipulated by UNFPA
- HPA focal point to supervise the contractor and certify the deliverables

##### UNFPA Maldives

- Recruit a contractor to the project

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- Provide technical support for quality assurance
- Payments made after successful completion and acceptance of each deliverable by HPA

### (c) Specific milestones and indicative timeline for delivery of products:

Milestones and deliverable target dates will be finalized upon recruitment.

Description of activities	Week							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Briefing	x							
2. Develop detailed workplan	x							
3. Desk review	x	x						
4. Interviews with stakeholders		x	x					
5. Submit <u>Deliverable 1</u> : Section on policy mapping exercise showing interlinkages, overlaps and discrepancies between the various policies and guidelines on FP services and STI management				x				
6. Field visit(s)				x	x			
7. Submit <u>Deliverable 2</u> : Section on how service providers deliver FP services and manage STI cases, capturing their perspectives, actual practices, and what guides them						x		
8. Submit <u>Deliverable 3</u> : Draft report							x	
9. Feedback from HPA and UNFPA							x	
10. Submit <u>Deliverable 4</u> : Final report								x
11. Debriefing								x

### 6. Specific Conditions

The other conditions that may apply in the undertaking of the assignment may include the following:

- Basis of payment:** Either a lump sum for the provision of services, or progress payments based on acceptance of the deliverables can be considered
- Format of outputs:** Electronic editable documents
- Language of reports/publications and other documentation and working language in country of assignment:** English
- Ownership of output:** HPA, Ministry of Health