



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A RESEARCH ASSISTANT – IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH FINANCING IN CAMEROON, COTE D’IVOIRE, GHANA, KENYA AND ZAMBIA

The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) is a leading pan-African research institution headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, that conducts high quality policy-relevant research on population, health, education, urbanization and related development issues across Africa. APHRC actively engages policymakers and other key stakeholders to help ensure decision-making across the continent is informed by rigorous evidence-based research.

Organizational Unit

Policy Engagement and Communications Division

Background

An estimated 1.5 million children from lower-income countries die each year from vaccine-preventable illness. Research suggests that the leading causes of these deaths are measles and diarrheal disease. Yet one in five children in Africa is not vaccinated and universal and equitable immunization coverage of children remains a faraway goal. The lack of service delivery in remote areas, limited financing and lack of information about effectiveness of vaccines are cited as the major reasons children do not gain access to life-saving vaccines.

Although adoption of new vaccines across sub-Saharan Africa is improving, their use is limited. Lower income countries face high disease burdens that strain weak health systems and this is compounded by the insufficient level of human resources for health.

To address perennial challenges faced by countries that are soon transitioning from Gavi support, APHRC and Niyel with funding support from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are implementing a 5-year project to strengthen the capacity of civil society groups across a continuum of sub-Saharan African countries to compel governments to increase their support, including financial, for immunization programs.

The consortium is carrying out a one-year scoping to deeply understand and analyze various elements relating to the political, civil society, economic and health and immunization landscape in the five countries selected for a four-year investment in civil society advocacy capacity, to trigger commitments from government to sustainable financing for immunization..

Scope of assignment

This assignment requires the consultant to carry out qualitative research primarily through desk review and interviews if required.

The final report needs to address the following components:

Health financing

- Overview of healthcare financing
- Size and extent of programs supported by development partners
- Funding trends by different partners, and gaps
- Extent to which it is possible to break down costs of routine immunization: which are sunk costs, which are shared costs, which are direct and indirect costs (i.e. related to ante/post-natal care; national health accounts)
- Prioritization in health budget of immunization as compared to other costs and donor responsibility for these costs
- Does immunization have a discrete budget line

National Strategies and Plans

- National immunization roadmap or strategy priorities. How does immunization fit into the efforts to achieving universal health care (UHC)?
- Where does immunization fit in a national primary health care strategy?
- Decision-making processes for introduction of new vaccines.
- How are immunization, or even health, policies developed? What is the policy process for reform or inauguration of new policies (legislative/executive)
- Budgeting cycle. How does the Health ministry engage in the budgeting process? How are sub-national budgets developed for health, and allocations made?
- To what extent is there public participation in the policy and budgeting process as relates to health?
- To what extent are audits conducted of health financing, in order to ensure transparency and accountability?

Timeline

This task is expected to take a total of 20 working days for all the five countries.

Reporting and Accountability

The consultant will be directly accountable to the project manager at APHRC. The consultant is expected to submit individual country reports on a weekly basis. The report will include high-level analysis of the findings above.

Qualifications and/or Experience

- To be considered for this assignment, the research assistant is expected to have a background in public health, health economics or related social science disciplines.
- Experience research and writing on health policy and health financing is essential.
- Knowledge of French is desirable.

To apply, please send the following to procurement@aphrc.org and copy gagesa@aphrc.org by June 2, 2017. Interested experts are invited to apply by submitting the following application documents;

- Curriculum Vitae or profile with evidence of similar work previously carried out. Links to previous works should be included.
- One-page cover letter outlining your qualifications and expected consultancy fees rate per day, experience and networks in each country.

All requests for clarification should be directed to Gaye Agesa, The Immunization Advocacy Project Manager by email at gagesa@aphrc.org copying procurement@aphrc.org.