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Call for consultancy Services Terms of Reference

IHO-CN00015-Assessment on the Impact of Innovative Youth-Led Initiatives for SRH, GBV, Climate Change, Youth Peace, and Security

TITLE: Assessment on the Impact of Innovative Youth-Led Initiatives for SRH, GBV, Climate Change, Youth Peace, and Security in South Sudan

DUTY STATION: Juba South Sudan

BACKGROUND / PROJECT DESCRIPTION

South Sudan, the world's youngest nation, has been grappling with a myriad of challenges since its independence. The country is caught in a web of long-standing civil war, political instability, economic and social disruptions. These challenges have severely hampered the nation's efforts to establish a functioning democracy and build basic institutions for governance and service delivery. The health system, in particular, has been significantly affected, with limited access to essential health services, especially in the areas of sexual and reproductive health (SRH), gender-based violence (GBV), and mental health.

The high maternal and child mortality rates, the prevalence of infectious diseases, and the inadequate health infrastructure underscore the urgent need for innovative solutions. Youth-led initiatives have emerged as a promising approach to address these critical health issues and contribute to sustainable development in South Sudan. These initiatives aim to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services, reduce incidents of gender-based violence, implement effective climate change adaptation strategies, and promote peace and security among the youth.

Given the complex socio-political and economic landscape of South Sudan, there is a pressing need to assess the impact of these youth-led initiatives comprehensively. This assessment will not only provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the initiatives but also identify potential areas for improvement and guide future policy and program development. The ultimate goal is to enhance the health system and promote sustainable peace and security for the young population in South Sudan.

To this end, we seek consultancy services to thoroughly evaluate innovative youth-led initiatives focusing on SRH, GBV, climate change, and youth peace and security in South Sudan. The consultancy will involve a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, to gather comprehensive data and insights into the effectiveness of these initiatives.

OBJECTIVES

1. Assess the direct impact of youth-led initiatives on improving access to sexual and reproductive health services, reducing gender-based violence incidents, implementing effective climate change adaptation strategies, and promoting peace and youth security in South Sudan.
2. Examine the barriers and constraints that impede the successful implementation of youth-led initiatives in the targeted areas.
3. Analyze women's participation and representation in these initiatives, given the critical role of gender dynamics in the success of interventions aimed at combating SRH and GBV challenges, climate change, and promoting peace and security.

Functions and Duties to be Performed by the Principal and Co-Investigator

Principal Investigator (PI)

1. Project Oversight: The PI will have overall responsibility for the design, execution, and management of the study. This includes developing the project plan, setting timelines, and ensuring that the project objectives are met.
2. Team Leadership: Leading and coordinating the research team, including co-investigators, research assistants, and any other staff involved in the project. The PI will facilitate team meetings, assign tasks, and monitor progress to ensure effective collaboration.
3. Ethical Compliance: Ensuring that the study complies with ethical standards and obtains necessary ethical approval. The PI will oversee the informed consent process and ensure the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality.
4. Financial Management: Managing the project budget, including allocating resources, monitoring expenditures, and ensuring that the project remains within budget.
5. Data Management: Overseeing the collection, analysis, and storage of data to ensure accuracy, integrity, and confidentiality. The PI will ensure that data management practices comply with ethical guidelines and data protection laws.
6. Stakeholder Engagement: Engaging with stakeholders, including community leaders, policymakers, and funding agencies. The PI will communicate project goals, progress, and findings to relevant stakeholders to ensure the project's relevance and impact.
7. Dissemination of Findings: Responsible for the dissemination of research findings through publications, presentations, and reports. The PI will ensure that findings are communicated in a manner that is accessible to both academic and non-academic audiences.

Co-Investigator

1. Research Support: Assisting the PI in the design and implementation of the research study. This includes contributing to the development of research instruments, data collection methods, and analysis plans.
2. Data Collection and Analysis: Participating in the collection and analysis of data. The Co-Investigator may lead specific components of the data collection process and contribute to the interpretation of research findings.
3. Literature Review: Conducting a comprehensive review of relevant literature to inform the study's theoretical framework and contextualize its findings within the existing body of knowledge.
4. Team Collaboration: Working closely with the research team to facilitate communication and ensure that all team members are aligned with the project's objectives and timelines.

TARGET GROUP

The target group for this study includes participants involved in active youth-led initiatives targeting sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, climate change adaptation, and peacebuilding efforts. It encompasses individuals representing diverse demographic groups, including variations in gender, age, and geographic representation, to capture a comprehensive range of perspectives. Specifically, the study will focus on locations in

South Sudan where youth-led initiatives on these topics are funded by UNFPA. This targeted approach allows for a focused assessment of initiatives supported by a specific funding source, aiming to assess their impact and effectiveness.

EXPECTED, DELIVERABLES, PAYMENT MILESTONES AND DURATION

1. Inception Report: A detailed inception report outlining the study methodology, data collection tools, and work plan. This report should be submitted within the first month of the project commencement.
2. Interim Report: An interim report presenting preliminary findings, any challenges encountered, and adjustments to the study plan if necessary. This report is expected halfway through the project timeline.
3. Final Report: A comprehensive final report detailing the study findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The report should include an executive summary, methodology, findings, discussions, conclusions, and recommendations. It should be submitted in an agreed format and language.
4. Policy Brief: A concise policy brief summarizing the key findings and recommendations of the study, targeting policymakers and stakeholders. The brief should be accessible and practical for informing policy and program development.
5. Presentation of Findings: A presentation of the study findings to the client and relevant stakeholders. This may include a webinar or a physical meeting, depending on the client's preference and the prevailing circumstances.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT / REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:

The Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Investigator will work collaboratively with the Impact Health Organization (IHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Ministry of Health (MOH), and other partners in conducting the assessment through a structured approach:

1. Project Design and Planning: The PI and Co-Investigator will engage with IHO and UNFPA to align the assessment's objectives with the strategic goals of both organizations, ensuring the study addresses critical issues such as sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and climate change adaptation. They will also consult with the MOH and other partners to ensure the project complements national health priorities and leverages existing infrastructure.
2. Ethical Approval and Compliance: Before data collection begins, the PI will lead the process of obtaining ethical approval from relevant national and local institutional review boards, ensuring the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality throughout the study.
3. Data Collection and Analysis: The Co-Investigator, supported by the PI, will oversee the data collection process, employing a mixed methods approach that includes both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews or focus groups. They will work closely with the IHO for logistical support and access to target populations, ensuring the collection of comprehensive and representative data.
4. Reporting and Dissemination: Upon completing the data analysis, the PI will compile the findings into detailed reports and policy briefs, disseminating them to UNFPA, the IHO, the MOH, and other stakeholders. This process will involve presenting the assessment's outcomes, implications, and recommendations for future interventions, ensuring that the findings are accessible and actionable.
5. Policy Advocacy and Implementation: Leveraging the assessment's findings, the PI, Co-Investigator, IHO, and UNFPA will collaborate on developing policy recommendations and

advocacy strategies. They will work closely with the MOH and other partners to translate the research findings into practical policy changes and programmatic interventions aimed at addressing the identified challenges and improving the health and well-being of the target population.

The qualifications of a successful Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Investigator for conducting an assessment of youth-led initiatives in South Sudan, particularly those focusing on sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, climate change adaptation, and peace and security, would include:

1. Expertise in Mixed Methods Research: Proficiency in both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies is essential. This includes experience in designing and conducting surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, as well as in statistical analysis and thematic coding of data.

2. Background in Public Health or Social Sciences: A strong academic and professional background in public health, social sciences, or a related field. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of the complex issues being studied, including sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and climate change.

3. Experience in Conflict or Post-Conflict Settings: Prior experience working in conflict or post-conflict settings, particularly in South Sudan or similar contexts. This is crucial for navigating the logistical and ethical challenges of conducting research in such environments.

4. Knowledge of Local Context: Familiarity with South Sudan's political, social, economic, and geographical background. Understanding the local context is vital for designing relevant research questions and for the successful implementation of the study.

5. Ethical Sensitivity and Compliance: Demonstrated commitment to ethical research practices, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring participant confidentiality, and sensitively handling distressing topics. Ethical approval from relevant boards is a prerequisite.

6. Collaborative Skills: Ability to work effectively with a range of stakeholders, including local communities, civil society organizations, government bodies, and international partners like UNFPA. Collaboration is key to the study's success and to the implementation of its findings.

7. Communication and Dissemination Skills: Proficiency in compiling and disseminating research findings to a variety of audiences, including academic, policy, and local community stakeholders. This includes the ability to translate complex research findings into actionable policy recommendations.

8. Advocacy and Policy Development: Experience in using research findings to inform policy and programmatic recommendations. The ability to advocate for evidence-based interventions is crucial for addressing the issues studied.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING THE BEST OFFER:

The criteria for selecting the best offer for conducting an assessment of youth-led initiatives in South Sudan, particularly focusing on sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, climate change adaptation, and peace and security, would include:

1. Expertise and Experience: The offer should demonstrate a strong background in conducting mixed methods research in

conflict or post-conflict settings, with specific expertise in the thematic areas of the study.

2. Local Knowledge and Engagement: The offer should show evidence of understanding the local context of South Sudan, including political, social, economic, and geographical factors that may influence the study. Proposals that include local partnerships or collaborations will be viewed favorably.

3. Ethical Considerations: The offer must outline a clear plan for obtaining ethical approval and ensuring the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality throughout the study. This includes informed consent procedures and measures to protect privacy and anonymity.

4. Methodological Rigor: The proposal should detail a robust mixed methods approach, including both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. The methodology should be appropriate for the study's objectives and designed to capture a comprehensive understanding of the impact of youth-led initiatives.

5. Inclusivity and Diversity: The offer should demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity, with a sampling strategy that ensures diverse representation across gender, age, and geographic locations within South Sudan. This is crucial for capturing a wide range of perspectives and experiences.

6. Capacity Building and Sustainability: Proposals that include plans for capacity building among local stakeholders and sustainability of the project's impacts will be highly regarded. This could involve training sessions for local partners or strategies for integrating findings into policy and programming.

7. Dissemination and Advocacy: The offer should outline a clear plan for reporting and disseminating research findings to a variety of audiences, including academic, policy, and local community stakeholders. Proposals should also detail how the findings will be used to advocate for policy changes or programmatic interventions.

8. Budget and Value for Money: The financial proposal should provide a detailed budget that offers good value for money, with costs that are reasonable and justified in relation to the scope and expected outcomes of the study.

GUIDELINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL:

To ensure a comprehensive and competitive proposal for conducting an assessment of youth-led initiatives in South Sudan, focusing on areas such as sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, climate change adaptation, and peace and security, follow these guidelines:

1. Executive Summary: Begin with a concise overview of your proposal, highlighting the key objectives, methodology, and expected outcomes of the assessment. This section should capture the essence of your project and its significance.

2. Background and Rationale: Provide a detailed background of the issues being addressed. Include a literature review that demonstrates your understanding of the context in South Sudan, the challenges related to youth-led initiatives, and the gaps your study aims to fill.

3. Objectives: Clearly outline the specific objectives of your study, detailing what you aim to achieve through your assessment. This

should align with the broader goals of improving access to sexual and reproductive health services, reducing gender-based violence, and promoting peace and security.

4. Methodology: Describe your mixed methods approach, including both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. Specify your sampling strategy, data collection tools (e.g., surveys, interviews), and data analysis methods. Ensure to mention how ethical considerations, including informed consent and confidentiality, will be handled.

5. Team Qualifications: Detail the qualifications of the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator, including their expertise in mixed methods research, background in public health or social sciences, and experience working in conflict or post-conflict settings. Highlight any previous work in South Sudan or similar contexts.

6. Work Plan and Timeline: Provide a detailed work plan that outlines the phases of the project, from inception to dissemination of findings. Include a realistic timeline that allocates sufficient time for each stage of the project.

7. Budget and Justification: Present a comprehensive budget that covers all aspects of the project, including personnel costs, data collection expenses, and dissemination activities. Provide a justification for each budget item, ensuring that costs are reasonable and necessary for the successful completion of the assessment.

8. Ethical Considerations: Elaborate on the ethical considerations of your study, including how you will obtain ethical approval, ensure participant confidentiality, and handle sensitive information. This section should reassure reviewers of your commitment to ethical research practices.

9. Dissemination Plan: Describe how you plan to disseminate the findings of the assessment to ensure they reach a broad audience and have a tangible impact on policy and practice.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROPRIETARY INTERESTS:

These criteria ensure that the selected offer is capable of conducting a comprehensive, ethical, and impactful assessment of youth-led initiatives in South Sudan.

In the context of conducting an assessment with the Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Investigator working alongside Impact Health Organization, UNFPA, MOH, and partners, confidentiality and proprietary interests are paramount to ensure the protection of participants' rights, the integrity of the data, and the trustworthiness of the research process. The following outlines the approach to confidentiality and proprietary interests:

1. Confidentiality of Participants: The PI and Co-Investigator are responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of all research participants. This involves obtaining informed consent, where participants are made aware of the study's purpose and their rights including the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Persona identifiers are removed or masked in datasets to prevent the identification of individual participants. Data storage and transmission will be secured to protect against unauthorized access.

2. Ethical Approval and Compliance: Ethical approval from relevant national and local institutional review boards will be obtained

before data collection begins. This process includes a review of how confidentiality will be maintained and how sensitive information, particularly related to gender-based violence and other distressing issues, will be handled. The ethical approval process ensures that the study adheres to international standards for research ethics, including confidentiality and participant protection.

3. Data Use and Ownership: The PI and Co-Investigator, along with the partnering organizations (Impact Health Organization, UNFPA, MOH), will establish agreements regarding data use, ownership, and access. These agreements will detail how data can be used for future research, publications, and policy development, ensuring that proprietary interests are clearly defined and respected. The agreements will also outline the conditions under which data may be shared with other researchers or institutions, including the requirement for maintaining confidentiality.

4. Publication and Dissemination: When disseminating research findings through publications, presentations, journal, or policy briefs, the PI and Co-Investigator will ensure that no confidential or proprietary information is disclosed. This includes anonymizing data and obtaining consent for the use of direct quotes or case studies. The agreements with partnering organizations will specify how findings can be shared and any restrictions on the publication of proprietary data.

HOW TO APPLY:

Interested consultants should submit their applications to:
jolem@ihosavinglives.org, cc: pm@ihosavinglives.org,
procure@ihosavinglives.org, tenders@ihosavinglives.org

The closing date for applications is 5/07/2024 at 5:00 PM and application will be selected on rolling basis.

