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| **Terms of Reference for Study on Student Midwives' Perspectives on the Quality of Midwifery Education at Health Science Institutes in South Sudan:**  **A case of JCONAM Health Science Institutes.** | |
| 1. **Overview** | South Sudan has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. Strengthening the midwifery workforce is essential for reducing maternal and neonatal mortality. Quality midwifery education is a cornerstone of this effort. However, anecdotal evidence suggests variability in the training quality across different institutions. Many institutions struggle with inadequate infrastructure, limited access to teaching materials, and a shortage of qualified instructors. Despite these constraints, dedicated efforts have been made to establish foundational training programs aimed at addressing the high maternal and infant mortality rates. However, disparities in the quality of education across different regions and institutes are still evident, impacting the preparedness and effectiveness of midwives entering the workforce. There is therefore, a need for systematic research to identify strengths and weaknesses in midwifery education from the students’ and graduates’ perspectives to inform policy and programmatic improvements. |
| 1. **Background** | After gaining independence in 2011, the South Sudan government prioritized healthcare and education, leading to increased investment in health science institutes. Several new institutions were established, and existing ones were expanded and upgraded. To enhance the quality of midwifery education in South Sudan, it is essential to address both systemic and immediate issues within Health Science Institutes. Strengthening the infrastructure, increasing investment in training and retaining qualified instructors, and updating curricula to reflect current best practices in midwifery are critical steps. Moreover, incorporating student feedback into the continuous improvement of educational programs can ensure that training remains relevant and effective. By focusing on these areas, South Sudan can build a more competent and confident midwifery workforce, ultimately improving maternal and child health outcomes across the country.  In recent years, there has been a renewed focus on strengthening health science education in South Sudan. The government, with support from international donors and NGOs, particularly UNFPA and Amref Health Africa, has been working to improve the quality of training, expand access to education, and ensure that curricula meet international standards. Specifically, efforts have also been made to enhance midwifery training opportunities and retain qualified clinical instructors. Since January 2012, Amref Health Africa and International Medical Corps have partnered with UNFPA during Strengthening Midwifery Services programme and the ongoing Enhanced Human Resources for SRH and GBV programme which have trained and graduated 1,232 (NAHPEB Data June 2024) midwives and Nurses in South Sudan, with JCONAM and Maridi HSI contributing 403 and 341 Midwives and Nurses respectively. Currently, UNFPA is partnering with Amref Health Africa to support 5 HSIs to provide quality training that meet international standards. One key area of training is Diploma in Midwifery in the supported health science institutes.  Student midwives at these Health Science Institutes often report a mix of positive and negative experiences regarding their education. On the one hand, they value the opportunity to gain critical skills and knowledge that can save lives and improve maternal health outcomes. On the other hand, many students face challenges such as insufficient clinical exposure, outdated or incomplete curricula, and a lack of mentorship and support. These issues are compounded by the ongoing conflict and instability in South Sudan, which further disrupts educational activities and limits access to necessary resources and facilities. Understanding student midwives' perspectives on the quality of their education can provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of current programmes and identify areas for improvement. |
| 1. **Purpose & Scope** | The primary objectives of this study are:   1. To assess the quality of midwifery education from the perspective of student midwives currently enrolled in midwifery training programmes. 2. To evaluate changes in student perspectives over time, from the start to the end of their training programme. 3. To identify key factors that influence student satisfaction and perceived educational quality. 4. To provide recommendations for enhancing the midwifery education programmes based on student feedback.   **Scope:**  The study will involve both cross-sectional and retrospective components to capture a comprehensive view of JCONAM student and graduates’ perspectives.   1. Cross-Sectional Component: This will target student midwives currently enrolled in midwifery training programmes at various health science institutes in South Sudan or could be piloted at one institution 2. Retrospective Component: This will target alumni of the midwifery training programmes who have graduated within the last five years. |
| 1. **Research Questions** | 1. What are the current student midwives' perceptions of the quality of midwifery education at their institute? 2. How do students' perceptions of educational quality change from the beginning to the end of their training programmes? 3. What are the key factors that influence student satisfaction with their midwifery education? 4. How do alumni reflect on their midwifery education, and what impact has it had on their professional practice? 5. What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the midwifery training programmes according to current students and alumni? 6. How do students and alumni perceive the adequacy of theoretical versus practical training in their programmes? 7. What suggestions do students and alumni have for improving midwifery education in South Sudan? |
| 1. **Deliverables** | 1. Inception Report. 2. Comprehensive report detailing the findings from the study. 3. Summary of key insights and recommendations for improving midwifery education programmes. 4. Presentation of findings to relevant stakeholders, including health science institutes, policymakers, and international organizations involved in maternal health. |
| 1. **Stakeholders and Coordination** | This assignment will involve coordination with various stakeholders, including:   * Ministry of Health, South Sudan. * UNFPA South Sudan * Amref Health Africa. * JCONAM Health Science Institute Faculty |
| 1. **Budget and Timeline** | The study is expected to be conducted over a period of One month. The budget will cover costs related to survey administration, interviews, data analysis, and dissemination of findings |
| 1. **Reporting** | The study team will report to the Country MEL Manager and designated project manager at Amref Health Africa in South Sudan. Regular updates will be provided through bi-weekly meetings and progress reports |
| 1. **Qualifications and Requirements** | The qualifications and requirements listed below are meant to ensure the selection of a highly skilled and experienced consultant who can deliver a comprehensive and impactful research on Unpaid Care work among female health workers in South Sudan.   1. **Educational Background**  * Advanced Degree: A minimum of a Master’s degree in Public Health, Health Economics, Social Sciences, Human Resource Management, or a related field.  1. **Professional Experience**  * Relevant Work Experience: At least 10 years of professional experience in public health research, with a specific focus on human resources for health (HRH). * Research Expertise: Proven experience in designing, conducting, and managing health-related research projects, particularly those focused on HRH. * Experience in Sub-Saharan Africa: Demonstrated experience working in the health sector within Sub-Saharan Africa, preferably in conflict or post-conflict settings like South Sudan.  1. **Technical Skills**  * Research Design and Methodology: Strong skills in qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation. * Data Analysis: Proficiency in statistical software (e.g., SPSS, STATA, R) and qualitative data analysis tools (e.g., NVivo, ATLAS.ti). * Report Writing: Excellent writing skills with a track record of producing high-quality research reports, publications, and policy briefs.  1. **Knowledge and Understanding**  * Health Systems Strengthening: Deep understanding of health systems strengthening and the role of HRH in improving health outcomes. * HRH Policies and Practices: Knowledge of international HRH policies, frameworks, and best practices. * Contextual Knowledge: Familiarity with the health sector landscape in South Sudan, including challenges and opportunities in HRH.  1. **Communication and Interpersonal Skills**  * Stakeholder Engagement: Ability to engage and collaborate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, health professionals, community leaders, and international partners. * Presentation Skills: Strong presentation skills to convey research findings to diverse audiences clearly and effectively. * Language Proficiency: Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of local languages in South Sudan (Juba Arabic) is an asset.  1. **Additional Competencies**  * Project Management: Proven ability to manage research projects within budget and timelines. * Ethical Standards: Strong commitment to ethical research practices, including obtaining necessary approvals and ensuring confidentiality and informed consent. * Adaptability and Problem-Solving: Ability to adapt to challenging environments and solve complex problems related to HRH research.  1. **References**   Professional References: At least three references from previous employers or clients who can attest to the consultant’s qualifications and experience in conducting HRH research |
| 1. **Submission Requirements** | Interested consultants should submit the following:   1. A detailed CV highlighting relevant experience and qualifications. 2. A cover letter outlining their approach to the HRH research and how their skills and experience align with the study needs. 3. Examples of previous HRH research reports or publications. 4. Contact information for at least three professional references |
| 1. **Timeframe** | The study will be conducted over a period of Four weeks (30 Days), with the following key milestones:   * Week 1: Inception phase; desk review and Study Protocol Submission and approval. * Week 2: Field visits, surveys, and interviews. * Weeks 3 & 4: Data analysis, report writing, and presentation of findings. |
| 1. **Submission Email:** | Interested Candidates/ Firms should submit Expression of Interest to the email address below: [Jobs.Southsudan@amref.org](mailto:Jobs.Southsudan@amref.org) |