unicef | for every child

TERMS OF REFERENCE

International Health Consultant

CONTRACT MODALITY	Individual Consultancy
DUTY STATION	**Dili, Timor-Leste (remote with travel)**
DURATION OF CONTRACT	**3.5 months**

Purpose of Assignment

The purpose of this consultancy is to provide specialized technical support to the Ministry of Health (MoH), in collaboration with UNICEF to strengthen the prevention and management of health risks associated with indoor air pollution in Timor-Leste. The consultancy service required is for 40 working days within three months period, starting from 4th January 2027 to 15th March 2027.

The international consultant will conduct a desk review and field assessment of indoor air quality and related practices in the targeted municipalities and identify how indoor air pollution impacts the community's health. Coordinate closely with the Department of the Vector Control and Environmental Health and the relevant Directorate and relevant partners during the process assessment, reviewing the existing documents and policy of the air quality and indoor air pollution quality to develop the national of indoor air quality guidelines to align with the country context. Through the assessment's findings to develop a national standard operation procedure to guide health professional and community health volunteers to implement indoor air pollution procedure program aligning with standard guidelines in the community both in rural and urban setting. By having a national guideline developed for the country will support and facilitate coordination and as a strong evidence and systematic reference for national technical team both at the National Institute of Public Health (INSPTL) and at the program to develop a practical training modules for health professionals and community health volunteers to align with the country context and needs. It is therefore during the assessment process that one area to be considered is also to consult with INSPTL to get any valued recommendations for MoH to consider when developing the training modules.

Scope of Work

1. Conduct an in-depth desk review of existing national policies, strategies, reports, assessments, standards and guidelines relevant to indoor air quality, household air pollution, environmental health and associated public health risks in Timor-Leste.

2. Conduct consultations with Ministry of Health, UNICEF, WHO and other relevant government stakeholders to identify institutional, technical and implementation gaps related to indoor air quality and pollution in the country

3. Develop and conduct assessment at the national and municipality level to know how indoor air quality practices and implementation come up with a report,

4. Based on the assessment findings, existing national frameworks and relevant international standards/guidance, develop draft National Indoor Air Quality Guidelines and a practical Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) adapted to the Timor-Leste context.

5. Facilitate a national technical consultation and validation workshop to review and validate the assessment findings, guidelines, and SOP and incorporate agreed recommendations.

6. Provide inclusive of guidelines with technical recommendations to improve and strengthen indoor air quality practices in the country to minimize any public health burdens and respiratory diseases affected by indoor air pollution.

Background:

Household air pollution (HAP) is one most important global environmental health risk. Almost three billion people, mainly in low- and middle-income countries, still rely on solid fuels burnt in inefficient, highly polluting stove for cooking and heating. Air pollution, both indoors and outdoors, is a major environmental health problem. Air pollutants are substances which when present in high enough concentrations produce harmful effects onpeople and/or the environment. Of these the most obvious are particles from such sources as wood burning, motor vehicle exhausts, wind-blown dust, and industrial processes. Fine particles (<10 micrometres) are particularly damaging to health. Other pollutants, most the result of combustion, include various oxides of carbon, nitrogen and sulphur, numerous volatile organic compounds and ozone.

Air pollution is a more than acute short-term irritant. Constant exposure to fumes and airborne particles, particularly those of a carcinogenic nature, leads to chronic infections and possibly death. The greater concern is indoor air pollution from domestic cooking and heating with biomass-fuels such as wood and agricultural residues.

Indoor air pollution is rated by WHO as the number one disease risk factor in the region through its role in causing illness and deaths due to pneumonia, chronic respiratory disease, and lung cancer. There is consistent evidence that exposure to indoor air pollution increases the risk of Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) among children under five years and of chronic respiratory disease among adults over 30 years. Women exposed to indoor smoke are three times as likely to suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease than women who cook and heat with electricity, gas and other cleaner fuels.

It is customary in Timor-Leste for women after delivery a baby, to remain indoors with a fire burn for a period of 40 days. Air contamination in Timor-Leste comes primarily from fires (burning domestic and landfill rubbish, clearing land and grass burning, domestic cooking) plus vehicles with high levels of exhaust emission, power plants, small industry, cigarette smoking. MoH's Surveillance Epidemiology data of 2025 indicated that by municipality data showed that the unclean air pollution was one of the causes contributed to the ARI disease and as one of the top highest diseases listed in the country.

To ensure systematic improvement to reduce the health burdens in community and the rural society through effective and appropriate cooking practices and clean-living standards to prevent children, mothers and community from any health disease impacted by the indoor and outdoor air pollution the Ministry of Health requests UNICEF to facilitate support for recruiting a technical consultant to assist the Vector Control and Environmental Health Department to develop national standard guidelines of indoor air quality, and standard operational procedure in response to indoor air quality and pollution in Timor-Leste.

Work Assignments Overview	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable
Inception (remotely) Desk and in-dept review of existing and adapted documents, policy, report, recommendation, stakeholders' consultations, and guidelines of the indoor air quality	**Deliverable 1** – Inception Report Summarize the activities then develop inception report to come up with national guidelines, and SOP aligning with the country context	08/01/2027 Approximately 5 days
Stakeholder consultations With Ministry of Health, National Institute of Public Health (INSPTL), Directorate of geometer ology, Civil Protection Authority, CVTL, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNEP, the World Bank and key stakeholders at national level and targeted municipalities to analyze the critical gaps, the related assignment of the indoor air quality	**Deliverable 2** – Meeting minutes with the key recommendations by stakeholders	22/01/2027 Approximately 10 days
Assessment of indoor air quality impact (national and targeted municipalities) Develop and conduct assessments at the national and municipality level to know how indoor air quality practices and implementation come up with a report, guidelines of indoor air quality and practical standard operational procedure (SOP)	**Deliverable 3** – Completed assessment in the targeted municipalities then develop inception report and national standard guidelines and standard operation procedure	12/02/2027 Approximately 15 days
Validation Workshop Coordinate with the national MoH team to conduct national consultative and validation workshop to analyze the key recommendations from National	**Deliverable 4 –** Summary of the stakeholder consultation workshop, inception report	16/02/2027 Approximately 2 days

stakeholders' consultative workshop to align the guidelines, standard SOP with the country context		
Strategic guidance Provide technical Recommendations (Remotely) Recommendations to improve and strengthen indoor air quality practices in the country to minimize any public health burdens and respiratory diseases affected by indoor air pollution	**Deliverable 5 –** Two pager strategic guidance note with key recommendations	19/02/2027 Approximately 3 days
Final package (Remotely) Final report by incorporating IRC feedback and comments	**Deliverable 6 –** Final report, Guidelines, SOP and Training modules	26/02/2027 Approximately 5 days

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.

Important Notes

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered "staff members" under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF's policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that the health insurance (and visa if applicable) required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.
- UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES (CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

- **Education:** Masters in Public health + University degree in one related field on Environmental Health and climate change
- **Work Experience:**
    - A minimum of more than 7 years of progressively responsible professional experience in environmental health, air quality, public health or a closely related field.
    - Demonstrated experience conducting air quality/environmental health assessments, including development of assessment methodologies, data collection tools, data analysis and interpretation.
    - Demonstrated experience developing technical guidelines, standards, SOPs or policies related to environmental health and/or air quality.
    - Demonstrated experience developing training packages/modules and facilitating capacity-building for health professionals or comparable audiences.
    - Strong analytical, technical writing and stakeholder consultation skills.
    - Experience working with government institutions, UN agencies or international development organizations is an asset.
    - Experience working with the UN system agency and development organization and the country of assignment is an asset
- **Language Requirements:** English
- **Knowledge/Expertise/Skills:** Knowledge of development of assessment report, guidelines, SOP and training modules on climate related to indoor air quality
- **Desirables:** Portuguese Language