

TAHub15: Call for Experts to Lead in-depth assessments to identify missing elements of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Universal Health Coverage (UHC) initiatives

TERMS OF REFERENCE	
Hiring Office:	2gether 4 SRHR
Background of consultancy	The 2gether 4 SRHR is a joint United Nations Regional Programme that brings together the combined efforts of UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, and WHO to improve the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of all people in Eastern and Southern Africa. The programme is dedicated to advancing universal access to comprehensive SRHR. This encompasses nine recommended bundles of SRHR services, delivered through people-centered, gender-transformative, and life-course-based approaches that ensure no one is left behind in both development and humanitarian settings. One of the objectives of the programme is to provide timely and quality-assured technical assistance (TA) to continental and regional economic communities, parliamentary fora, participating United Nations agencies, and countries. To achieve this, the Programme developed a regional SRHR Technical Assistance Hub, which is a roster of pre-determined quality-assured technical experts, professional organizations, institutions, and partners working on SRHR in the region. This call is for technical experts to apply for consideration to be added to the Technical Assistance Hub to support work in the specified thematic area. Applicants will be assessed based on relevant qualifications, previous experience and examples of previous work. Once included in the roster you will have preferential access to consulting opportunities to improve the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all people in East and Southern Africa. Selected candidates will be contracted by one of the participating UN agencies of the 2gether 4 SRHR programme or other partners using their internal policies and procedures. Inclusion in the TA Hub does not constitute a contractual obligation by any participating party. Applications are to be submitted through the online TA Hub platform: Please share your application through the 2gether 4 SRHR Technical Assistance Hub via the on-line registration link: https://tahub.2gether4srhr.org/ Upon registering you will be asked to input the title of the Call you are applying for: TAHubXX: Call for Experts to Lead in-depth assessments to identify missing elements of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Universal Health Coverage (UHC) initiatives Context of Assessment area

In the past 25 years, noteworthy progress has been made towards the realisation of universal sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in most parts of the world, including in East and Southern Africa (ESA). The ESA region is home to more than 670 million people, with a third of its population between 10 to 24 years of age.

Despite progress, the promise of universal access to SRHR remains to be fulfilled for millions of people in the ESA region. Considering the current pace of progress, it could be concluded that the ESA region is unlikely to achieve universal access to comprehensive SRHR (Figure 1) by 2030.

Figure 1

'Universal comprehensive SRHR' in operational terms means ensuring universal access to nine bundles of SRHR services through people-centered, gender-transformative, and life-course-based approaches, which leave no one behind in development as well as in humanitarian settings.

Nine bundles of SRHR services:

- (1) Comprehensive Sexuality Education;
 - (2) Counselling and services for sexual health and well-being;
 - (3) Counselling and services for modern contraceptives;
 - (4) Safe abortion services to the full extent of the national laws, and comprehensive post-abortion care;
 - (5) Antenatal, childbirth and postnatal care;
 - (6) Counselling, diagnosis and treatment services for infertility;
 - (7) Prevention and treatment of HIV and other STIs;
 - (8) Detecting, preventing and managing reproductive cancers; and,
 - (9) Detecting, preventing and managing sexual and gender-based violence and other harmful practices.
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The good news is that the momentum around UHC (Figure 2) is growing in ESA countries. Most countries have committed to (a) progressively achieving UHC; (b) stopping the increase and reversing the increasing trend of catastrophic out-of-pocket health expenditure by providing measures to ensure financial risk protection for eliminating impoverishment due to health-related expenses by 2030; and, (c) progressively mobilise more resources for attaining UHC by following a life-course approach.

To accelerate progress towards UHC, most ESA countries are prioritizing the provision of a set or multiple sets of health services tailored to their country's needs and developing plans to progressively expand the number of services under UHC as health financing increases.

	Figure 2 UHC means that all individuals and communities receive the health services they need without suffering financial hardship. It includes the full spectrum of essential, quality health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care across the life course. ----- The UHC frameworks of most of these countries include not only 'what services are covered across the life-span of individuals' (also referred to as UHC benefit package), but also 'how they are financed' (i.e., many countries are trying to refine the existing health financing and financial risk protection mechanisms and/or planning to initiate new mechanisms), and 'how they are delivered' (i.e., services delivered at primary, secondary and tertiary level through the public or public-private mixed delivery systems)
Purpose of consultancy:	This call seeks to identify technical experts who can be deployed to provide quality assured technical support to countries, regional organizations and institutions, to support work in the thematic area specified below. Key Areas of Expertise: In-depth assessments to identify missing elements of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Universal Health Coverage (UHC) initiatives The current momentum around UHC in the ESA region provides an opportunity to progressively include comprehensive Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) within the country-specific 'UHC benefit packages', 'UHC Financing arrangements' and 'Financial risk protection mechanisms' by following a life-course approach. WHO has refined the UHC Compendium which provides a database of proven health services and intersectoral interventions designed to assist countries in making progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC). The UHC compendium includes proven services by intervention areas including the SRH services. Based on the UHC compendium, CARMMA Plus, SADC and ESA strategies pertaining to SRHR, UNFPA in partnership with HEARD at the University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, has developed a draft SRHR across the life-course matrix. This draft matrix outlines proven services/interventions under each of the nine bundles of SRHR services. Therefore, building on the rapid assessments, there is an urgent need to carry out an in-depth review to identify missing elements of SRHR services in country-specific UHC initiatives (i.e., UHC benefit packages, and financing and financial protection mechanisms) by using the WHO's UHC Compendium and UNFPA ESARO's draft SRHR across the life-course matrix (to be shared). Based on this in-depth review, country-specific policy briefs, to help enhance policymakers and influencers' understanding of how to integrate comprehensive

	SRHR into UHC progressively, need to be developed. This brief will include potential actions for embedding missing elements of SRHR in UHC across life-course to accelerate progress towards (a) universal SRHR; (b) sustainable financing of SRHR; and, (c) UNFPA transformative goals of ending unmet need for family planning, ending preventable maternal deaths, and, ending gender-based violence and harmful practices, and UNFPA ESA regional priority to end sexual transmission of HIV. The policy brief will also present arguments on how embedding comprehensive SRHR within UHC, by following a life-course approach, is likely to improve the integrated delivery of services, and the defragmentation of multiple health planning, financing and delivery systems.
Scope of work: <i>(Description of services, activities, or outputs)</i>	Technical experts are invited to submit applications for consideration to be included in the 2gether 4 SRHR TA Hub to provide technical assistance on in-depth assessments of SRHR inclusion within UHC benefit packages and their financial protection measures. The 2gether4SRHR Technical Assistance Hub (TAH) intends to engage a consultant to: • Undertake an in-depth country assessment, or multiple country assessments, to identify missing elements of SRHR in UHC initiatives in countries' UHC benefit packages, financing and financial risk protection arrangements by using the WHO's UHC Compendium and UNFPA ESARO's draft SRHR across the life-course matrix. If needed carry out key informant virtual and in-person interviews; • Prepare a report on the status of comprehensive SRHR within UHC; and, • Prepare a policy brief and PowerPoint presentation, in consultation with the TAH, with evidence-informed actions to progressively situate comprehensive SRHR into UHC. Consultants may be engaged to: Step 1: Conduct country-specific SRHR in UHC rapid assessment reports including identification of critical policies, and financing, delivery, and financial risk protection systems pertaining to UHC; Step 2: In-depth review of the identified policies, and financing, delivery, and financial risk protection systems pertaining to UHC to identify missing elements of SRHR services in these policies and programmes by using the 'WHO's UHC Compendium' and 'UNFPA ESARO's draft SRHR across life-course matrix'; Step 3: Preparation of a report on the status of comprehensive SRHR within UHC; Step 4: Preparation of a policy brief and PowerPoint presentation to progressively situate comprehensive SRHR into UHC (benefit packages, financing and financial risk protection mechanisms).
Duration and working schedule:	Assignments will be determined based on specific technical assignments identified by the participating UN agencies, countries and other regional partners. Those specific assignments will include information on duration and working schedule. However, a regular scale assessment should take up to 30 days

Place where services are to be delivered:	Details will be determined based on the specific technical assignments identified by the participating UN agencies, countries and other regional partners. The assessments will use a blended mixture of meetings, with virtual and in-person meetings expected.
Delivery dates and how work will be delivered (e.g. electronic, hard copy etc.):	All deliverables completed within 12 weeks of the contract start date. Shared electronically.
Monitoring and progress control, including reporting requirements, periodicity format and deadline:	Regular check-in meetings will be arranged.
Supervisory arrangements:	Technical experts will be contracted by the relevant UN agency and/or partner using their identified procurement processes. Selected members from the UN Agencies will serve as technical quality assurors for these exercises. UNFPA ESARO's Communication Teams will support the exercise too.
Expected travel:	Travel is expected with all related expenses (Air ticket, terminals and DSA) covered by the contracting UN agency.
Required expertise, qualifications and competencies, including language requirements:	Education: - Advanced university degree (Master's minimum, PhD strongly preferred) in Public Health, Health Economics, Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Social Sciences, Public Policy, Demography, or a related research-focused field Knowledge and Experience: - Minimum 7 years of professional experience in UHC policies and financing, health system delivery, and financial risk protection mechanisms - Demonstrated expertise in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) policy development and program integration - Familiarity with international and regional SRHR/UHC tools and frameworks, including the WHO UHC Compendium, life-course matrix approaches, and CARMMA Plus/SADC strategies - Proven experience in policy analysis, desk reviews, secondary data analysis, and synthesizing complex policy environments. - Demonstrated experience in qualitative research methodologies, specifically designing and conducting virtual and in-person Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with government officials, policy makers, and health system stakeholders. - Proven track record in drafting high-impact policy briefs, analytical technical reports, and executive presentations for decision-makers - Relevant work experience within the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) region - Prior work experience with UN agencies (especially UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF, or UNAIDS) on similar assignments is highly desirable

	- The consultant should be able to provide examples of past relevant assignments Core Knowledge Requirements - Technical Integration: Deep understanding of integrating comprehensive SRHR packages into Primary Health Care (PHC) and UHC financing schemes. e - Stakeholder Engagement and Diplomacy: Strong consensus-building and communication skills, with proven ability to navigate politically sensitive policy environments. - Analytical Thinking: Capability to identify missing elements in complex policy documents and health financing frameworks. - Political Sensitivity: An ability to operate in politically sensitive environments. - Ethical and Professional Standards: Sensitivity to culture, ensuring confidentiality, and impartiality. Languages: - Fluency in one or more of the following UN languages is required: English, French, and Portuguese.
Inputs / services to be provided by UNFPA or implementing partner (e.g support services, office space, equipment), if applicable:	Specific details will be determined based on the technical assignment for which the candidate is eligible.
Other relevant information or special conditions, if any:	Specific details will be determined based on the technical assignment for which the candidate is eligible. To be registered for future assignments please submit your CV and cover letter, and three relevant examples of your previously published work, such as high-quality technical outputs (e.g., peer-reviewed research articles, Background Papers, Strategic Assessment reports, political economy/policy analyses, mixed-methods evaluation reports, or data-driven policy briefs). Please note that not submitting relevant samples may lead to your application being disqualified. Please share your application through the 2gether 4 SRHR Technical Assistance Hub via the on-line registration link: https://tahub.2gether4srhr.org/ Upon registering you will be asked to input the title of the Call you are applying for: TAHub15: Call for Experts to Lead in-depth assessments to identify missing elements of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Universal Health Coverage (UHC) initiatives