

**Instruction and Template for
PROPOSAL Submission**

Development of structured integrated sample referral and transport network across all levels of
health laboratories in Nepal
(International Consultant)

PR No: PR204529

Date of Proposal Submission: <Insert date>

This instruction & template for proposal development consists of the following sections:

1. **Section A:** Instruction for Proposal Development
2. **Section B:** Proposal Development Form
3. **Section C:** Essential Criteria Questions

Section A: Instruction for Proposal Development

Please **READ** and **FOLLOW** the instructions before completing the proposal form

1. A proposal will not be considered for review if:
 - It is received after the deadline
 - It is not sealed properly (NA in case of email proposals)
 - There are any missing documents mentioned in the ToR
 - Information submitted by the company is found to be false
 - It is incomplete
2. A proposal should have three (3) separate envelops (NA in case of email proposals):
 - 1st for CVs of Proposed Consultants listed in Section B, Part 2 below.
 - 2nd for technical proposal
 - 3rd for financial proposal

Each of the above envelopes should be sealed, and properly labelled respectively as “supporting documents,” “technical proposal” and “financial proposal.” Each page of the proposal should be stamped and signed. All these three (3) envelopes then should be kept in **another envelop sealed with wax** (*laha chhap*).

4. Only shortlisted bidder/s will be contacted by Save the Children at each stage of the selection process.
5. Shortlisted bidder/s will be invited to deliver a 15minute presentation to the Procurement Committee on their technical proposal.

Section B: Proposal Development Form

I. Organization Information (NA in case of individual consultant)

Name of the organization :

Address :

District/State :

Country :

Phone number :

E-mail :

Website :

II. Details of contact person / Individual

Name :
Position :
Address :
District/State :
Country :
Phone Number : (Landline) (Mobile)
E-mail :

III. Major topics and sub-topics for proposal development

1. Organization Background (NA in case of individual consultant)

- 1.1 Work experience
- 1.2 Existing and current human resource and organization organogram.

2. Signatory and Proposed Consultants Information:

SN	Full Name (Avoid abbreviations)	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy AD)	Designation	Academic Qualification

3. Proposed Methodology and work plan to conduct this assignment

Please outline your proposed approach to this assignment including an outline as to the methodology to be used.

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.....
.....
.....

You can either use tab button to expand above space or use separate sheet if required.

4. Please list out your experience in designing and strengthening integrated specimen referral system and conducting a situational assessment of sample transportation network:

Date Completed	Project details	Location / Region	Client Name	Attach evidence (Client's recommendation letter)

Note: Please add rows in above table as required.

5. Do you have experience of working in Nepal? If yes, please provide details below.

Date completed	Location in Nepal	Project details	Client Name

Note: Please add rows in above table as required.

5. Proposed Budget with clear breakdowns (specify the proposed cost is inclusive / exclusive of applicable taxes in Nepal)

Please provide your financial proposal in separate excel file with file name – “financial proposal”.

Section C: Essential Criteria Questions

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA (Exclusion if not met)

In order to qualify as a bidder you must be able to answer 'Yes' against all of the Essential Criteria. After passing the essential criteria you will be scored against Capability and Commercial criteria.

S. No.	Criteria	Please specify Yes / No
a)	Do you have a legitimate business/official address OR are you registered for trading or tax purposes with the authorities as per prevailing act of the country? If yes, have you attached a copy of legal registration documents with this proposal?	
b)	Do you agree to comply with SCI standard policies and procedures, Terms and Conditions of Purchases as stated in RFP? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save the Children's Terms and Conditions of Purchase • Save the Children's Child Safeguarding policy • Save the Children's Anti-Bribery and Corruption policy • Save the Children Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery policy • Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy • Anti-Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying Policy • IAPG Code of Conduct • Global Fund Code of Conduct for Suppliers • The Data Protection Policy 	
c)	Do you confirm that the company is not linked directly or indirectly to any terrorism related activity, and does not sell any Dual-Purpose goods / services that may be used in a terror related activity?	
d)	Do you confirm that you are not a prohibited party under applicable sanctions laws or anti-terrorism laws or provide goods under sanction by the United States of America or the European Union and accepts that SCI will undertake independent checks to validate this?	
e)	Do you confirm that you are not a prohibited party or on government blacklisting	
f)	Have you attached a copy of VAT registration certificate; Tax clearance certificate of Fiscal Year 2078/079 or extension letter from Inland Revenue Department with this proposal? (Only applicable for bidders in Nepal)	
g)	Do you have a minimum of post-graduate degree or other advanced university degree in the field of health laboratory sciences, public health or related field? If yes, have you clearly mentioned the details in your CV?	
h)	Do you have a minimum of 7 years of experience in laboratory system strengthening, disease control programs or other relevant areas of public health? If	

	yes, have you clearly mentioned the details in your CV?	
i)	Do you have an experience in designing and strengthening integrated specimen referral system and conducting a situational assessment of sample transportation network? If yes, have you provided experience details with this proposal?	
j)	Have you attached a copy of passport of proposed consultant? (For foreign / international bidders only)	
k)	Have you attached a copy of latest tax clearance certificate as per the country rules? (For foreign / international bidders only)	
l)	Have you attached a copy of CV of the proposed consultant?	

Date: 29th November 2022

Request for Proposal (RFP) Reference No: PR204529

Dear Sir/Madam,

Save the Children requests your submission of a proposal to provide goods/services in accordance with the conditions detailed in the attached documents. Save the Children intends to issue a contract for the following goods/services: consultancy assignment entitled "Development of structured integrated sample referral and transport network across all levels of health laboratories in Nepal" (**International Consultant**).

We include the following information for your review:

- Part 1: Proposal Information
- Part 2: Conditions of Proposal Process, Terms and Conditions of Purchase, SCI and the IAPG Policies (which will be signed by the successful Bidder)

Your proposal must be received in the following format:

- Full completion of the "Consultancy Proposal Form" document in order that your proposal may be regarded as compliant. Those proposals not completed may be treated as void.
- Proposal to be submitted via email to nepal.proposals@savethechildren.org
- The email subject should indicate "Proposal for PR204529 International Consultant".

Your proposal must be received at nepal.proposals@savethechildren.org not later than **14th December 2022, 11:45pm Nepal Time** ("the Closing Date"). Failure to meet the Closing Date may result in the proposal / proposal being void. Returned proposals must remain open for consideration for a period of not less than 60 days from the Closing Date. Save the Children is under no obligation to award the contract or to award it to the lowest bidder.

Should you require further information or clarification on the proposal requirements, please contact Mr. Asesh Baidya (Contact Person) in writing at the following address: eoiconsultant.nepal@savethechildren.org

We look forward to receiving a proposal from you and thank you for your interest in our account.

Yours faithfully,

Asesh Baidya

Procurement Coordinator - Consultancy

PART 1: PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Introduction

Save the Children is the world's leading independent organisation for children. We work in 120 countries. We save children's lives; we fight for their rights; we help them fulfil their potential. We work together, with our partners, to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

Provisional timetable

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Date</u>
Issue Request for proposal	29 th November 2022
Last day for bidders to send clarification questions to Save the Children	9 th December 2022
Last day for SCI to answer clarification questions to bidders	13 th December 2022
Return of Proposals (Closing Date)	14th December 2022
Award Contract	2 nd January 2023
"Go-Live" with Supplier	2 nd January 2023

Indicative information

Background

Laboratories are an essential building block for an appropriately functioning health system. Accurate and timely diagnosis is the cornerstone of disease management and prevention. Laboratories are crucial for early detection and control of outbreaks and epidemics. The Government of Nepal recognizes the importance of laboratory services for public health and clinical care. As today, there are more than 3100 health laboratories in Nepal¹ which include both public and private laboratories in different levels. National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) is national apex laboratory responsible for development national-level policies and guidelines for strengthening national laboratory system, ensuring quality of health laboratory services across the country and providing specialized laboratory services. Similarly, Provincial Public Health Laboratory (PPHL) has been established in each province to strengthen laboratory system at provincial level. Most of the other public health laboratories in Nepal are situated with the health facilities providing different levels of healthcare. There are other private health laboratories which have been categorized from A to E levels and are either situated within the private healthcare facilities or working as standalone laboratories.

¹ <https://nphl.gov.np/covid19/lab-mapping/> (accessed February 3, 2022)

In Nepal, there is no structured and integrated mechanism for referral and transportation of diagnostic specimens across different levels of health facilities. Some parallel sample transportation systems are being used for some specific diseases. Currently, with the support from the Global Fund, in 42 districts, sputum specimens are being transported to nearby TB diagnostic centres by outreach workers hired by NGOs. Similarly, sputum samples for TB culture and DST are being transported to TB reference laboratory through commercial couriers. Plasma samples for HIV viral load testing are also being transported to Viral load testing laboratories through commercial couriers. Other than these few examples, there is no structured and harmonized mechanism for collection and transportation of diagnostic samples to referral health facilities or laboratories. In most cases, patients need to travel to the laboratories or health facilities on their own and this may lead to delayed or sometimes absence of disease diagnosis.

National Tuberculosis Program can be taken as an example to explain the need for a structured sample transportation system within the country. National TB prevalence Survey (2018-19) has estimated that around 69,000 people develop new TB cases annually. However, in 2021, only 28,677 TB cases were notified to the National Tuberculosis Program. Clearly, a large proportion of annual TB cases in Nepal remains undiagnosed and untreated each year. National Tuberculosis Management Guideline 2019 has recommended GeneXpert testing as the primary diagnostic tool for diagnosis of tuberculosis for all presumptive TB cases. Currently, there are more than 100 GeneXpert sites under the NTP for diagnosis of tuberculosis. However, in 2021, only about half of the Pulmonary Bacteriological Confirmed TB cases were diagnosed by GeneXpert testing. Many healthcare facilities in Nepal still rely on sputum smear microscopy for diagnosis of TB but not all microscopy centres are quality assured. In this context, with the sputum smear microscopy, there are clear possibilities of missing TB cases as the sensitivity of microscopy in detecting tuberculosis is poorer compared to GeneXpert testing. On one hand, not all healthcare facilities have access to GeneXpert testing. On the other hand, the utilization of existing GeneXpert machines is quite low.² Similarly, previous reviews have also estimated that about 70% of the TB patients first access private sector which have varying capacity and quality of TB diagnostics.³ There is a strong need for strengthening collection of good quality sputum samples and transportation to the quality assured diagnostic centres including GeneXpert sites.

There is a need for a comprehensive situational assessment of existing diagnostic and sample referral networks, quality of samples being collected, existing sample collection and storage procedures, sample packaging procedures, transportation mechanisms and reporting of test results. Based on the findings of such assessment, a system for specimen referral should be designed and recommended for piloting in some geographical areas. Based on the results of the piloting, the system can be scaled up for strengthening structured sample transportation system throughout the country. Having a structured sample referral and transportation system ultimately help increase access to diagnostic services and improve case finding and treatment.

An international firm or individual having substantial experience of carrying out assessment and developing structured sample referral and transportation network in similar countries is required for conducting this important assignment.

^{2,3} National Tuberculosis Control Center (2019). Report of the joint monitoring mission for tuberculosis.

Award criteria

Award of the contract will be based on the following criteria:

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA (Exclusion if not met)

Bidders must meet the following criteria:

- That the bidder has legitimate business /official premises, or that they are registered for trading and tax as appropriate.
- That they are not any prohibited parties or on government blacklisting
- Bidder's confirmation of compliance with the attached Conditions of proposal, Terms and Conditions of Purchase, SCI and the IAPG's policies listed below:
 - 1- Save the Children's Child Safeguarding Policy
 - 2- Save the Children's Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy
 - 3- Save the Children's Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Policy
 - 4- Save the Children's protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) policy
 - 5- The IAPG Code of Conduct

For National bidders

- Registered with relevant Government Authority.
- Have a VAT registration certificate; Tax clearance certificate (for FY 2078/079) or extension letter from IRD.
- A minimum of post-graduate degree or other advanced university degree in the field of health laboratory sciences, public health or related field
- At least 7 years of experience in laboratory system strengthening, disease control programs or other relevant areas of public health.
- Experience in designing and strengthening integrated specimen referral system and conducting a situational assessment of sample transportation network.

For International bidders:

- For Company/Institution/Organization: The proposing expert should be registered as per the prevailing act of the country.
- For Individuals: Above is not applicable for international individual expert.
- For both Organization and Individual:
 - A minimum of post-graduate degree or other advanced university degree in the field of health laboratory sciences, public health or related field
 - At least 7 years of experience in laboratory system strengthening, disease control programs or other relevant areas of public health.
 - Experience in designing and strengthening integrated specimen referral system and conducting a situational assessment of sample transportation network.
- Copy of latest tax clearance certificate as per country rules.



CAPABILITY CRITERIA – 50%

The following criteria are considered very important in the evaluation of this proposal.

S. No.	Major Topic	Scoring guidelines	Score weightage
1	Qualification and Experience	<p><u>Relevant Working experience (10%)</u> 10% for more than 15 years' experience 6% for 11 to 15 years' experience 3% for 7 to 10 years' experience</p> <p><u>Experience in designing and strengthening integrated specimen referral system and conducting a situational assessment of sample transportation network (10%).</u> More than 5 assignments: 10% 3 to 4 assignments: 6% 1 to 2 assignments: 3%</p> <p><u>Experience in designing and strengthening integrated specimen referral system and conducting a situational assessment of sample transportation network in low- and middle-income countries (5%).</u> Yes = 5%, No= 0</p> <p><u>Academic Qualification (5%)</u> PhD in the field of health laboratory sciences, public health or related field. Yes= 5%, No= 0</p>	30%
	Quality of Proposal	Excellent: 7 to 10, Good: 4 to 6, Fair: 1 to 3, Poor: 0	10%
	Interview / Presentation	<p>(Applicable for Shortlisted bidders only). Shortlist decision will be based on the overall capability, sustainability, and commercial evaluation scores of the bidders.</p>	10%

SUSTAINABILITY – 10%

2	Experience working in Nepal	Yes = 10%, No = 0%	10%
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COMMERCIAL CRITERIA – 40%

3	Budget (Total cost for the assignment).	Score in inverse proportionate basis (which means lowest total cost will get highest score).	40%
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PART 2

CONDITIONS OF PROPOSAL

1. Definitions

In addition to the terms defined in the Cover Letter, in these Conditions, the following definitions apply:

- (a) **Award Criteria** - the award criteria set out in the Request for Proposal.
- (b) **Bidder** - a person or organisation who submits a proposal.
- (c) **Conditions** - the conditions set out in this 'Conditions of Proposal' document.
- (d) **Cover Letter** - the cover letter attached to the Proposal Information Pack.
- (e) **Goods and/or Services** - everything purchased by SCI under the contract.
- (f) **Request for Proposal** - the Proposal Information, these Conditions, SCI's Terms and Conditions of Purchase, SCI and the IAPG's policies.
- (g) **SCI** - Save the Children International (formerly known as The International Save the Children Alliance Charity), a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 03732267; charity number 1076822) whose registered office is at St Vincent House, 30 Orange Street, London, WC2H 7HH.
- (h) **Specification** - any specification for the Goods and/or Services, including any related plans and drawings, supplied by SCI to the Supplier, or specifically produced by the Supplier for SCI, in connection with the proposal.
- (i) **Supplier** - the party which provides Goods and/or Services to SCI.

2. The Contract

The contract awarded shall be for the supply of goods and/or services, subject to SCI's Terms and Conditions of Purchase (attached to these Conditions). SCI reserves the right to undertake a formal review of the contract after twelve (12) months.

3. Late Proposal submissions

Proposals received after the Closing Date will not be considered, unless there are in SCI's sole discretion exceptional circumstances which have caused the delay.

4. Correspondence

All communications from Bidders to SCI relating to the proposal must be in writing and addressed to the person identified in the Cover Letter. Any request for information should be received at least 5 days before the Closing Date, as defined in the Request for proposal. Responses to questions submitted by any Bidder will be circulated by SCI to all Bidders to ensure fairness in the process.

5. Acceptance of Proposals

SCI may, unless the Bidder expressly stipulates to the contrary in the proposal, accept whatever part of a proposal that SCI so wishes. SCI is under no obligation to accept the lowest or any proposal.

6. Alternative offer

If the Bidder wishes to propose modifications to the proposal (which may provide a better way to achieve SCI's Specification) these may, at SCI's discretion, be considered as an Alternative Offer. The Bidder must make any Alternative Offer in a separate letter to accompany the proposal. SCI is under no obligation to accept Alternative Offers.

7. Prices

Quoted prices must be shown as both inclusive of and exclusive of any Value Added Tax chargeable or any similar tax (if applicable).

8. No reimbursement of proposal expenses

Expenses incurred in the preparation and dispatch of the proposal will not be reimbursed.

9. Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality

Bidders must treat the Request for Proposal, contract and all associated documentation (including the Specification) and any other information relating to SCI's employees, servants, officers, partners or its business or affairs (the "**Confidential Information**") as confidential. All Bidders shall:

- recognise the confidential nature of the Confidential Information;
- respect the confidence placed in the Bidder by SCI by maintaining the secrecy of the Confidential Information;
- not employ any part of the Confidential Information without SCI's prior written consent, for any purpose except that of quoting for business from SCI;
- not disclose the Confidential Information to third parties without SCI's prior written consent;
- not employ their knowledge of the Confidential Information in any way that would be detrimental or harmful to SCI;
- use all reasonable efforts to prevent the disclosure of the Confidential Information to third parties;
- notify SCI immediately of any possible breach of the provisions of this Condition 9 and acknowledge that damages may not be an adequate remedy for such a breach.

10. Award Procedure

SCI's Procurement Committee will review the Bidders and their proposals to determine, in accordance with the Award Criteria, whether they will award the contract to any one of them.

11. Information and Record Keeping

SCI shall consider any reasonable request from any unsuccessful Bidder for feedback on its proposal and, where it is appropriate and proportionate to do so, provide the unsuccessful Bidder with reasons why its proposal was rejected. Where applicable, this information shall be provided within 30 business days from (but not including) the date on which SCI receives the request.

12. Anti-Bribery and Corruption

All Bidders are required to comply fully with SCI's Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy (attached to these Conditions).

13. Child Protection

All Bidders are required to comply fully with SCI's Child Safeguarding Policy (attached to these Conditions).

14. Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

All Bidders are required to comply fully with SCI's Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Policy (attached to these Conditions).

15. Exclusion Criteria

Any Bidder is required to confirm in writing that:

- Neither it nor any related company to which it regularly subcontracts is insolvent or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into an arrangement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- Neither it nor a company to which it regularly subcontracts has been convicted of fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, any money laundering offence, any offence concerning professional conduct, breaches of applicable labour law or labour tax legislation or any other illegal activity by a judgment in any court of law whether national or international;
- Neither it nor a company to which it regularly subcontracts has failed to comply with its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the relevant country in which it the Bidder operates.

Any Bidder will automatically be excluded from the proposal process if it is found that they are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the required information within their proposal bid or fail to supply the required information.

16. Conflict of Interest / Non Collusion

Any Bidder is required to confirm in writing:

- That it is not aware of any connection between it or any of its directors or senior managers and the directors and staff of SCI which may affect the outcome of the selection process. If there are such connections the Bidder is required to disclose them.
- Whether or not there are any existing contacts between SCI, and any other Save the Children entity, and it and if there are any arrangements which have been put in place over the last twenty four (24) months.
- That it has not communicated to anyone other than SCI the amount or approximate amount of the proposal.
- That it has not and will not offer pay or give any sum of money commission, gift, inducement or other financial benefit directly or indirectly to any person for doing or omitting to do any act in relation to the proposal process.

17. Assignment and novation

All Bidders are required to confirm that they will if required be willing to enter into a contract on similar terms with either SCI or any other Save the Children entity if so required.

Terms and Conditions of Purchase, SCI and the IAPG's policies



SC-PR-13-Purchase-
OrderTCs-v2.0.pdf

<https://www.savethechildren.net/sites/www.savethechildren.net/files/SC-PR-13-Purchase-OrderTCs-v2.0.pdf>

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANT

Development of structured integrated sample referral and transport network across all levels of health laboratories in Nepal

PR204529

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Background on Save the Children

Save the Children is the leading global independent organisation for children. Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

Our vision: A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

Our mission: To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

Our values: Accountability, ambition, collaboration, creativity and integrity.

We are committed to ensuring our resources are used as efficiently as possible, in order to focus them on achieving maximum impact for children.

Background information/context

Laboratories are an essential building block for an appropriately functioning health system. Accurate and timely diagnosis is the cornerstone of disease management and prevention. Laboratories are crucial for early detection and control of outbreaks and epidemics. The Government of Nepal recognizes the importance of laboratory services for public health and clinical care. As today, there are more than 3100 health laboratories in Nepal¹ which include both public and private laboratories in different levels. National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) is national apex laboratory responsible for development national-level policies and guidelines for strengthening national laboratory system, ensuring quality of health laboratory services across the country and providing specialized laboratory services. Similarly, Provincial Public Health Laboratory (PPHL) has been established in each province to strengthen laboratory system at provincial level. Most of the other public health laboratories in Nepal are situated with the health facilities providing different levels of healthcare. There are other private health laboratories which have been categorized from A to E levels and are either situated within the private healthcare facilities or working as standalone laboratories.

¹ <https://nphl.gov.np/covid19/lab-mapping/> (accessed February 3, 2022)

In Nepal, there is no structured and integrated mechanism for referral and transportation of diagnostic specimens across different levels of health facilities. Some parallel sample transportation systems are being used for some specific diseases. Currently, with the support from the Global Fund, in 42 districts, sputum specimens are being transported to nearby TB diagnostic centres by outreach workers hired by NGOs. Similarly, sputum samples for TB culture and DST are being transported to TB reference laboratory through commercial couriers. Plasma samples for HIV viral load testing are also being transported to Viral load testing laboratories through commercial couriers. Other than these few examples, there is no structured and harmonized mechanism for collection and transportation of diagnostic samples to referral health facilities or laboratories. In most cases, patients need to travel to the laboratories or health facilities on their own and this may lead to delayed or sometimes absence of disease diagnosis.

National Tuberculosis Program can be taken as an example to explain the need for a structured sample transportation system within the country. National TB prevalence Survey (2018-19) has estimated that around 69,000 people develop new TB cases annually. However, in 2021, only 28,677 TB cases were notified to the National Tuberculosis Program. Clearly, a large proportion of annual TB cases in Nepal remains undiagnosed and untreated each year. National Tuberculosis Management Guideline 2019 has recommended GeneXpert testing as the primary diagnostic tool for diagnosis of tuberculosis for all presumptive TB cases. Currently, there are more than 100 GeneXpert sites under the NTP for diagnosis of tuberculosis. However, in 2021, only about half of the Pulmonary Bacteriological Confirmed TB cases were diagnosed by GeneXpert testing. Many healthcare facilities in Nepal still rely on sputum smear microscopy for diagnosis of TB but not all microscopy centres are quality assured. In this context, with the sputum smear microscopy, there are clear possibilities of missing TB cases as the sensitivity of microscopy in detecting tuberculosis is poorer compared to GeneXpert testing. On one hand, not all healthcare facilities have access to GeneXpert testing. On the other hand, the utilization of existing GeneXpert machines is quite low.² Similarly, previous reviews have also estimated that about 70% of the TB patients first access private sector which have varying capacity and quality of TB diagnostics.³ There is a strong need for strengthening collection of good quality sputum samples and transportation to the quality assured diagnostic centres including GeneXpert sites.

There is a need for a comprehensive situational assessment of existing diagnostic and sample referral networks, quality of samples being collected, existing sample collection and storage procedures, sample packaging procedures, transportation mechanisms and reporting of test results. Based on the findings of such assessment, a system for specimen referral should be designed and recommended for piloting in some geographical areas. Based on the results of the piloting, the system can be scaled up for strengthening structured sample transportation system throughout the country. Having a structured sample referral and transportation system ultimately help increase access to diagnostic services and improve case finding and treatment.

An international firm or individual having substantial experience of carrying out assessment and developing structured sample referral and transportation network in similar countries is required for conducting this important assignment.

^{2,3} National Tuberculosis Control Center (2019). Report of the joint monitoring mission for tuberculosis.

Objective

The objective of assignment is to support National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) and national disease control programs for TB, HIV and other infectious diseases in developing structured and integrated sample referral and transport network across all levels of health laboratories.

Specific objectives:

1. Conduct a comprehensive situational assessment of existing diagnostic and sample referral networks, sample collection and storage procedures, sample packaging procedures and transportation mechanisms.
2. Design a structured and harmonized sample referral and transportation system and guidelines for its implementation.

Location and official travel involved

The supplier will be required to travel to Nepal. In addition, the supplier will also need to travel to various geographical locations within the country. Any required travel will need pre-approval by SCI in accordance with SCI's Travel Policy.

Services the supplier will provide

The consultant will closely work with the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL), Epidemiology and Disease Control Division (EDCD) and relevant national disease control programs including National Tuberculosis Program (NTP), National HIV Program and other relevant disease control programs.

The consultant will

1. Develop a protocol for carrying out a comprehensive assessment of existing diagnostic and sample transportation networks. The protocol should also include a stepwise timebound plan for conducting the assessment.
2. Conduct a comprehensive situational assessment of existing diagnostic and samples transportation networks. The evaluation will assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the following system components:
 - Management, policies, and governance
 - Financing, budgets and costing
 - Data availability, flow and use, information systems, monitoring and evaluation (M&E)
 - Results return
 - Human resources, training and sensitization
 - Transportation, safe packaging, and cold chain
 - Network design, logistics, mode of transportation
 - Disease integration, specimen-types referred
 - Confidentiality of patient information
 - Sustainability

The assessment will comprise but not limited to the following.

- Landscape analysis (involves government entities, stakeholders, disease programs, relevant policies, strategic plans, guidelines and standard operating procedures)
 - Laboratory network and infrastructure
 - Laboratory network organization
 - Services provided by private health facilities or laboratories
 - Mapping or database of health laboratories
 - Communications and information
 - Existing referral systems
 - Cost considerations
 - Multi-sector engagement
3. Design an integrated specimen referral system and guidelines for its implementation based on the gaps, overlaps, duplications and opportunities for improvement identified by the situational assessment (more than one system may need to be designed based on differences in geographic regions).
 4. Conduct workshops and meetings at national and subnational levels to develop and finalize the specimen referral system and implementation guidelines.
 5. Develop all required forms, formats and standard operating procedures required for implementation of the specimen referral system.
 6. Closely work with a local consultant which will be recruited to provide support to the international consultant to carry out activities listed above.

Experience and skill set required

Essential

- At least 7 years of experience in laboratory system strengthening, disease control programs or other relevant areas of public health.
- Experience in designing and strengthening integrated specimen referral system and conducting a situational assessment of sample transportation network.

Preferred

- Strong knowledge on disease control programs and public health laboratory issues in low- and middle-income countries, preferably national TB programs.
- Skills in other relevant areas such as cost analysis and GIS.
- Experience in designing and strengthening integrated specimen referral system and conducting a situational assessment of sample transportation network in low- and middle-income countries.
- Demonstrated ability of planning, reviewing, analyzing and report writing.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English.
- Working knowledge of Nepali language will be an added advantage.

Education

- A minimum of post-graduate degree or other advanced university degree in the field of health laboratory sciences, public health or related field. PhD in related field preferred. A consulting firm can propose a group of two or more individuals with different expertise required for the assignment.

Expected Deliverables

The consultant will be responsible to provide the following documents to the Director of National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) and SCI

1. A protocol for conducting the comprehensive situational assessment of existing diagnostic and sample transportation network.
2. A detailed report on the situational assessment of existing diagnostic and sample transportation network.
3. A guideline for national integrated specimen referral and transportation system
4. All forms, formats and standard operating procedures required for implementation of integrated specimen referral and transportation system.

Timeline

Estimated Commencement Date: 2nd January 2023

Estimated End Date: 30th April 2023

Acceptance

All deliverables to be accepted by SCI Project Lead and NPHL director within a month of delivery date.

Payment information

20% of the total cost payable after satisfactory completion of deliverable 1

30% of the total cost payable after satisfactory completion of deliverable 2

50% of the total cost payable after satisfactory completion of deliverable 3 and 4

The Fees are inclusive of all costs, overheads, and expenses, including travel, subsistence, and accommodation to and from Nepal. The travel costs in country (e.g., vehicle hire, domestic airfare, accommodation will be managed and paid by SCI)

Note for foreign bidders: The consultancy fees are subject to withholding tax of 15% as per Nepal tax rules.

Other

Bidder can propose for local (Nepalese) consultant to be included in its team if it wishes to do so. A separate Terms of Reference for local consultant can be referred to.

How to apply for the services

Proposal Submission Guideline/Required Documents

- Proposal Submission Deadline- **14th December 2022, 11:45pm Nepal Time**
- Required Documents-
 - Filled out Consultancy Proposal Form (enclosed with this ToR)
 - CV(s) of the proposed consultant(s) with full date of birth in dd/mm/yyyy format.

- For firms (National): Copies of- Firm registration certificate, VAT registration certificate, Tax clearance certificate (for FY 2078/079) or extension letter from IRD.
- For firms (International): Copies of Firm registration certificate as per the prevailing act of the country, latest tax clearance certificate as per country rules.
- For Individuals (Foreign Nationals): Copies of passport and a valid visa/permit to work in Nepal.

If an individual is a full-time staff member of another organization, a no objection/consent letter signed by the organization head must be submitted along with the proposal. This is not applicable for proposals sent through a firm.

Proposals should be submitted via email to nepal.proposals@savethechildren.org

The email subject should indicate “Proposal for PR204529 International Consultant”.

Proposals submitted in another email addresses will not be considered in the process. (Please note that, bidder must not cc / bcc / forward proposals to any other email addresses).