

TERMS OF REFERENCE

International individual Consultant to Support the Research on Drivers of Low Fertility

MDV-ToR/2023/022 Dated: 23 July 2023

TERMS OF REFERENCE (to be completed by Hiring Office)	
Hiring Office:	UNFPA Maldives Country Office
Purpose of consultancy:	<p>The national reproductive health programme has contributed to impressive achievements that the Maldivians are enjoying at present. The population growth rate has reduced to 1.65 with the total fertility rate just at replacement levels. At the same time, unmet need for family planning is high when compared to the health achievements made recently. Emerging health issues such as increasing reproductive health and non-communicable conditions such as Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS), endometriosis and infertility are common among the reproductive age groups. On the other hand, unwanted pregnancies are prevalent especially among drug users.</p> <p>The Maldives demographic situation is at an interesting crossroad where the young people still dominate the bulk of the population and the country is projecting an ageing population in the near future. Other demographic indicators such as high international migration, especially men, to cater to the economic sectors including tourism, construction and fishing places the society at a unique position with the sex ratio of the labourforce at 208.</p> <p>Against this backdrop, UNFPA is keen to have a deeper understanding on the drivers of low fertility to have a better understanding of the dilemma around low fertility, low CPR and low growth rate in the Maldives. The emanating suggestions attribute to current lifestyles and morbidities as well as the arrangement of the economic sector in Maldives.</p> <p>Hence, UNFPA is seeking an international consultant to assist the country team in carrying out a qualitative and or mixed method research that will systematically examine the drivers of low fertility in Maldives.</p> <p>.</p>
Scope of work: <i>(Description of services, activities, or outputs)</i>	<p>Scope and diversity of assignment:</p> <p>The Consultant is expected to work closely with the Maldives National University to carry out the</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Desk review of relevant national policies and regulations related to low fertility and other available documents, including survey and research reports, guidelines on family planning programme of Maldives; 2. Review existing methodologies and consult with stakeholders across different sectors and levels to develop a suitable methodology to capture the ideation, determinants, drivers, postponement of childbearing, accessibility of services, economic and other constraints 3. 4. With support from the Maldives National University, develop tools and train the field work team to conduct the data collection 5. Support the Maldives National University to transcribe and analyze the findings 6. Develop the report to capturing findings and recommendations to guide relevant policy changes <p>Specific milestones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An initial proposal outlining the methodology to be adopted and key activities to be carried out. Gantt chart has to be provided with the submission of the proposal, and it will be used as a monitoring tool;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An interim report with the tools and outlining the training required to carry out the research - An interim report on the initial findings - The final report outlining the drivers
Duration and working schedule:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible working arrangement between the period July - November 2023 and continued in 2024 based on the methodology and timeframe. This includes working closely with the team and providing remote support as well.
Place where services are to be delivered:	The assignment will be undertaken in close coordination with the Maldives National University
Delivery dates and how work will be delivered (e.g. electronic, hard copy etc.):	Milestones, outputs and deliverable target dates will be finalized upon recruitment.
Monitoring and progress control, including reporting requirements, periodicity format and deadline:	The Consultant will be briefed and debriefed by UNFPA and the Maldives National University and is expected to keep in close contact with both agencies via email
Supervisory arrangements:	The assignment will be managed by UNFPA Country Office/ MNU
Expected travel:	Based on inception report
Required expertise, qualifications and competencies, including language requirements:	<p>Primary expertise required: Demography or other social science research</p> <p>Educational background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The consultant should have proven work experience and exposure required for the task. References to recently completed and published surveys are required. ● Expertise in qualitative research and behavioural change communication/ health promotion will be considered advantageous. ● Academic background, master's degree (PhD desirable) in a relevant field for all the members of the team ● 5 years of research experience in the area of sociological research (references to recent completed and published surveys are required) ● Previous experience of collaboration with a UN agency is advantageous
Inputs / services to be provided by UNFPA or implementing partner (e.g support services, office space, equipment), if applicable:	<p>Maldives National University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assign a focal point to work with the consultant ● Provide support to facilitate existing literature ● Provide support to develop the methodology and execute the data collection and analysis ● Review and provide comments to the deliverables in a timely manner <p>UNFPA Maldives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitor and facilitate the progress of the assignment ● Review and provide comments to the deliverables in a timely manner ● Facilitate necessary contacts ● Make payments upon completion and acceptance of each deliverable
Other relevant information or special conditions, if any:	<p>The other conditions that may apply in the undertaking of the assignment include:</p> <p>Basis of payment: Payments based on acceptance of the deliverables as below First payment upon submission of the methodology (20%) Second payment upon submission of the initial report with interim findings (40%) Final payment upon submission of the final report (40%)</p>

Format of outputs:

Editable electronic form

Language of reports/publications and other documentation and working language in country of assignment:

English

Ownership of output:

Maldives National University/UNFPA

Signature of Requesting Officer in Hiring Office:

Date: