

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Regional Research Consultant

Human resources for sexual and reproductive health and sexual and gender-based violence
in South Sudan

Technical Activity: The Canadian Association of Midwives (CAM) wishes to recruit **one (1) Regional Research Consultant or consultant team** to lead the design and implementation of a research activity in South Sudan. The study will assess the feasibility, acceptability, sustainability and potential use cases of an SRH in-service mobile application for midwives and nurses. The Consultant will create a research proposal, develop data collection tools, recruit and manage a local data collection team, support the data collection process, perform a data analysis, and produce a research report with actionable findings. This process will entail close collaboration with CAM staff and local stakeholders.

Timeframe: April 2023 – September 2023

Location: Remote or in-person, in collaboration with CAM staff and local stakeholders

Remuneration: A maximum of \$6000.00 USD (including all expenses relating to data collection)

A. Introduction: Project Summary

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) South Sudan Country Office is collaborating with the Ministry of Health and other partners to implement the “Human resources for sexual and reproductive health and sexual and gender-based violence in South Sudan” (HR4SRH&SGBV) project with funding from Global Affairs Canada (GAC). The Canadian Association of Midwives (CAM) is an Implementing Partner in this project. HR4SRH&SGBV aims to increase the realization of the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls in South Sudan through various approaches, including technology-enabled continuous professional development for essential health providers on SRH, family planning, and gender-based violence; the training of health providers on rights-based family planning using job aids and gender-sensitive training materials; and networking, advocacy and capacity-building exchanges with the South Sudan Nurses and Midwives Association (SSNAMA).

B. South Sudan Background and Rationale for Assignment

South Sudan gained its independence from Sudan in July 2011, following a 2005 peace agreement that ended one of Africa’s longest-running civil wars. The country is made up of 10 states and over 60 different major ethnic groups, making it one of the most diverse countries on the continent. While it was hoped that independence would usher in a new period of peace to the region and to the world’s newest country, escalating internal tensions led to the 2013-2015 civil war and contributed to the displacement of 2.2 million people.

Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, and Newborn Health Context

South Sudan is one of the most fragile and underdeveloped countries in the world, with extremely high rates of maternal and neonatal mortality. Inadequate skilled attendance at birth and suboptimal quality of care create unsafe birthing conditions and restrict women’s capacity to assert their rights in pregnancy. In conflict-afflicted regions throughout the country, limited health system capacity and numerous barriers to access have exacerbated poor sexual and reproductive

health outcomes for women and girls, including unmet need for family planning, child marriage, and gender-based violence.

Midwifery Context

Midwives play a pivotal role in South Sudan, providing a myriad of sexual and reproductive services including but not limited to prenatal, childbirth, and postnatal care. South Sudan reports impressive progress in strengthening its midwifery workforce, having increased the number of practicing midwives from 8 to over 1,165 (of which 544 registered midwives) since 2011. Today, 28 institutes, including the Juba College of Nursing and Midwifery, provide nursing and midwifery education to a growing cohort of midwife-trainees. The promotion of rights-based, context-adapted services by a well-trained and supported midwifery force enhances the SRHR enabling environment and contributes to enhanced reproductive, maternal and neonatal outcomes in South Sudan.

Continuing professional development (CPD) is key to promoting ongoing learning and skill retention among trained providers, including midwives and nurses. Context-appropriate digital tools can contribute to CPD efforts by facilitating remote technical assistance and knowledge exchanges with enhanced reach and accessibility.

C. Goal and Objectives of the Assignment

Goal: The goal of this consultancy is to conduct a study examining the feasibility, acceptability, sustainability and potential use cases of an SRH in-service mobile application for midwives and nurses in South Sudan. The results of this study will inform the development and roll-out of technology-enabled tools for the continuous professional development of health providers throughout the country.

The study will address the following research questions:

- 1) The degree to which an SRH in-service mobile application could be utilized by midwives and nurses in targeted health facilities in South Sudan (*theoretical feasibility*)
- 2) The perception among health providers and facility administrators that such an application is agreeable (*acceptability*)
- 3) The potential to maintain, institutionalize and expand such an application (*sustainability/scalability*)
- 4) Potential use cases, functional modalities and user preferences which could inform the design of the application

Note: *Research questions may be refined or adapted by the Consultant at the study design stage.*

Objectives:

In order to achieve the goal of the consultancy described above, the Consultant will:

- Lead the design of the research study, including the development and validation of the research protocol, sampling frame and tools and templates to be utilized during data collection
- Submit the application for ethics approval with the South Sudan Ministry of Health
- Recruit, manage, train and deploy a local data collection team, including the coordination of in-country study logistics
- Oversee the collection of qualitative and quantitative data from targeted health facilities by the local data collection team

- Lead the analysis of data collected to produce a report summarizing key findings and recommendations
- Facilitate meetings and workshops for the validation and dissemination of findings with UNFPA South Sudan Country Office staff and Implementing Partners, the Ministry of Health, and other relevant stakeholders

The Consultant will collaborate closely with CAM staff throughout the research inception, implementation, analysis and validation, and seek context-specific inputs from local stakeholders as necessary.

D. Methodology / Approach to the Assignment

Study design: This study will consist of a cross-sectional feasibility assessment. Qualitative and/or quantitative data will be collected from nurses, midwives, administrators and implementing partners from targeted health facilities in two locations (Juba and Wau). A total of 1-2 health facilities will be sampled from each location. Qualitative data may be gathered through focus group discussions, key informant interviews and observational analyses, while quantitative data may be gathered through administered questionnaires and surveys.

Parties involved: During the assignment, work and collaboration will occur between the following actors:

- a. Regional Research Consultant
- b. Local data collection team
- c. CAM Global Project Officer
- d. CAM Global Communications Lead
- e. CAM Global Operations Manager
- f. CAM Midwifery Technical Expert
- g. UNFPA South Sudan Country Office staff and Implementing Partners (for validation of findings)
- h. South Sudan Ministry of Health (for ethics approval and validation of findings)

Methods: The Consultant will engage actively with the abovementioned CAM staff members toward the development of all tools, reports, and resources. The Consultant will work from a remote office or on site in order to develop all deliverables, with specific methodology at the Consultant's discretion.

E. Process

Phase I: Research Proposal & Ethics Application (April – May 2023)

The first phase of the consultancy will include the preparation of the full research proposal, including a basic research protocol and data collection plan, sampling frame, and tools/templates to be utilized during the data collection phase (i.e., focus group discussion guide, interview guide, open and close-ended questionnaires), with inputs from CAM staff. The Consultant will work to obtain ethics approval by the Ministry of Health in South Sudan. CAM and UNFPA will assist with the ethics application by providing official letters of introduction and other supporting documentation, as required.

Phase II: Data Collection & Data Entry (May – June 2023)

The data collection and data entry phase will be managed by the Consultant, who will arrange in-country logistics and deploy a local team of data collectors. During this phase, the Consultant will

also provide oversight and guidance to the local team as they conduct data collection and data entry activities.

Phase III: Data Analysis & Report Writing (June 2023 – July 2023)

The third phase of the consultancy consists of analyzing the data collected and writing a draft research report summarizing key results and recommendations. The report should address the research questions by presenting actionable findings in a clear and concise manner, and should not exceed 5 pages in length (excluding annexes).

Phase IV: Results Validation & Dissemination (August – September 2023)

The report will subsequently be shared and validated through meetings and workshops facilitated by the Consultant, as required and directed by UNFPA. These meetings may implicate a number of project stakeholders, including UNFPA South Sudan Country Office staff, Implementing Partners and the Ministry of Health. CAM and UNFPA will provide support for convening these meetings. The Consultant will then incorporate stakeholder feedback into the final version of the research report.

F. Proposed Timeline

The proposed activities will be conducted between April and September of 2023, with the final research report being delivered by the 8th of September 2023 (see Deliverable Schedule below).

G. Remuneration and Deliverable Schedule

The Consultant will be remunerated for their services based on payable amounts for the activity according to the deliverables schedule. Payment is dependent on the satisfactory completion of deliverables as assessed by CAM. Per this contract, the Consultant will execute all activities within the contractual amount outlined below.

As full compensation for the services rendered according to this Agreement, CAM shall pay the Consultant or consultant team a maximum amount of **\$6000.00 USD**. This amount should include all expenses relating to the development of the research report, including supporting the local data collection team and covering field expenses, if applicable. This amount should also include all relevant taxes and expenses incurred in the preparation of milestones and deliverables.

Deliverable Schedule

Deliverables	Responsible	Documents to submit	Due Date	Amount (\$USD)
Research Proposal (including research protocol, sampling frame and data collection tools) Ethics Application	Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research protocol • Proof of ethics submission • Invoice #1 	April 28, 2023	2,000
Data Collection	Consultant & Local data collection team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean dataset • Invoice #2 	June 16, 2023	2,000
Research Report and Validation	Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft research report • Handouts, PPT presentation and/or 	September 8, 2023	2,000

Deliverables	Responsible	Documents to submit	Due Date	Amount (\$USD)
		other supports used for validation of results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final research report • Invoice #3 		
TOTAL				6,000

All deliverables will be subject to review and validation by the CAM Global Project Officer. The final deliverables should be submitted by September 30, 2023.

H. Qualifications

The candidate must demonstrate in their application the following educational and professional experience:

- Background in research in the domain of health care in the Global South;
- Experience in conducting/implementing, analyzing and reporting on qualitative and quantitative research;
- Proven ability to work remotely using online communications tools, i.e., Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp, etc.;
- Self-directed and good sense of initiative;
- Interest in mutually beneficial capacity building;
- Experience with cross-cultural communication and facilitation skills in English;
- Strong analytical and writing skills;
- Demonstration of a strong understanding of SRHR and the midwifery profession.

The following educational and professional experience will be considered an asset:

- Experience working or conducting research in international and/or humanitarian settings;
- Experience working or conducting research in eastern Africa;
- Experience in health care, in particular maternal health services, midwifery and/or SRHR;
- Familiarity with the South Sudan health care system.

I. Application Instructions

Follow these instructions:

- Send your CV, cover letter including research approach/methodology, names and CVs of all team members, and budget for data collection, ensuring that your name and the title "HR2100_Regional-Research-Consultant" are included in the file name.
- Send your PDF by email with the subject "HR4SRH&SGBV Regional Research Consultant" to admin@canadianmidwives.org.
- Deadline for applications is **March 29, 2023**.