**Terms of Reference**

**REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION**

**Frontline service readiness assessments:**

**Strengthening real-time health services tracking and monitoring in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic**

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of this contract is to support countries to implement the frontline service readiness assessments to track health system and services performance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. **Background**

Over the past 10 months, the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged public health systems and health services globally, revealing that even robust health systems can be rapidly overwhelmed and compromised by an outbreak. Countries are confronting a multitude of questions that must be addressed to prepare for and respond directly to the COVID-19 pandemic, while simultaneously maintaining the delivery of other health services. Key decisions and actions to mitigate the risk of potential health system collapse must be informed by accurate and real-time data. In response to this challenge, the WHO has developed a suite of innovative facility and community assessment tools and approaches to detect and monitor health systems bottlenecks and health facility capacity and readiness gaps throughout the course of the pandemic, including:

* COVID-19 case management capacities: Diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccine readiness module: This facility assessment aims to assess *hospital and COVID-19 treatment facility capacities* in COVID-19 case management, including the availability of diagnostics, therapeutics and other essential health products such as oxygen and PPE, as well as cold chain capacities.
* Continuity of essential health services module: This facility assessment aims to assess *capacities of primary care and hospital facilities* to deliver essential health services (including health worker availability and infections, isolation and triage capacities, adherence to IPC standards, and availability of essential medicines and supplies) and helps to track changes in service utilisation and service delivery modifications.
* Community needs, perceptions and demand module: This *community assessment* aims to collect information on unmet health needs, changes in care-seeking behaviours, and barriers to care affecting service demand.

The recommended survey approach is through rapid and regular phone interviews (using electronic tool) in a sample of sentinel facilities, with data feeding into automated analysis chartbooks/dashboards for real-time decision making and use. Through documentation, adaptation and learning, the aim is to integrate and scale to sustainable real-time monitoring and early warning systems for health services in the event of future crises. See enclosed concept note for further information on the tools, approach, and methodology.

This contract is to provide coordination support and technical assistance to support country implementation of these tools in the African region.

1. **Planned timelines** (subject to confirmation)

Start date: [DD/MM/2021] End date: [DD/MM/2021]

Total duration: [#] days (over the contract period)

1. **Requirements - Work to be performed**
2. Collaborate with WHO HQ, regional and country offices to support implementation of facility and community assessments.
3. Lead country orientation sessions to introduce the survey tools and approach to countries interested in implementation.
4. Organize and lead country-specific and/or multi-country training webinars to build country capacities to implement the survey.
5. Provide ongoing technical assistance to the survey implementation teams throughout steps of survey implementation, including:
   1. Defining the sampling approach and frame
   2. Survey planning and preparation
   3. Data collection
   4. Analysis of findings
6. Facilitate documentation of cross-country learning for adaptation/improvement of survey processes as well as for cross-country learning on mitigation approaches, actions and solutions.
7. Identify recommendations to integrate tools and dashboards into routine data systems that support countries to scale to sustainable real-time monitoring and early warning systems for health services in the event of future crises.

1. **Inputs**

The WHO team will provide inputs and supporting materials to facilitate the completion of required work.

1. **Characteristics of the Provider**

The institution employees who will engage in this work should have the following characteristics:

Qualifications

* Advanced academic qualification in public health, statistics, epidemiological research, monitoring and evaluation, health system evaluation, at the master degree level (minimum) or doctoral degree (desirable).

Experience

* At least 10 years of relevant and demonstrated professional experience in the development and implementation of methods and tools to strengthen assessment and monitoring of health services and systems through facility and community surveys.
* Experience in low and middle-income settings desired.

Skills / Competencies

* Demonstrated technical knowledge of health systems and health systems performance methods and related survey methods and tools.
* Technical knowledge of statistical methods to synthesize health system and programme performance.
* Excellent verbal and written communication skills
* Ability to work independently in multicultural environment
* Ability to produce results under pressure
* English (Read - Write - Speak / Expert), other UN languages desirable

1. **Place of assignment**

Work is to be completed off-site.