

CONSULTANT VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Job Title:	National Consultant - Development of the National Condom Strategy for Sierra Leone 2022-2026
Location:	Freetown, Sierra Leone
Contract Type:	Individual Consultant
Duty Location:	UNFPA Country Office and National AIDS Secretariat Office Freetown, Sierra Leone
Duration:	50 working days

Background:

About 1.7% of the population of women and men aged 15-49 in Sierra Leone live with HIV. The HIV prevalence is higher among women at 2.2%, compared to men at 1.1%, and 1.0% among young women and men aged 15-24. The prevalence is higher among young women 1.5 % than 0.5% among young men. Young people who initiate sex at an early age are naturally at higher risk of becoming pregnant or acquiring an STI than young people who initiate sex later. Young women in rural areas (25%) are more likely to have sex before age 15 than their urban counterparts (14%). Equally, young women and men in rural areas, (82% and 51%, respectively) are more likely than those in urban areas (62% and 43%, respectively) to have sex before age 18.

In Sierra Leone, HIV infections are acquired mostly through unprotected sexual intercourse. Despite knowledge on the role of multiple sexual partners in driving HIV infection, condom use among men and women aged 15 to 49 years is quite low in Sierra Leone. According to the 2019 SLDHS, 69% of women and 81% of men know that both consistent condom use, and limiting sexual intercourse to one uninfected partner can reduce the risk of HIV. However, percentage of women and men aged 15 to 49 years who used a condom during last sexual intercourse, in the past 12 months, with a person who neither was their spouse nor lived with them was only 6.6% among women and 22.5% among men. The same indicator was only 6% and 20.1% among young women and men, respectively, aged 15 to 24 years. Only 29 % of young women and 28% of young men aged 15-24 have wide-ranging knowledge of HIV/AIDS.

With low comprehensive knowledge of HIV among young people, there is fear that HIV is slowly becoming a silent epidemic in the face of COVID-19 and other newer epidemics. The shift of focus to COVID-19 and other global challenges has made the repurposing of resources meant for other programs (including HIV programming) to the new epidemic and other global issues. Sensitization on HIV prevention has recently been overtaken by messages on COVID-19.

The country's high teenage pregnancy and HIV/STI infection rates could be attributable to the high rates of unprotected sex. The median age at first birth in Sierra Leone among women 25-49 is 19.5 years and 21% of women age 15-19 have begun child bearing. The proportion of teenagers who have begun child bearing increases rapidly with age from 4% at 15 years to 45% at 19 years with rural (29%) teenagers more likely to start child bearing earlier than urban teenagers (14%). The risk of dying from pregnancy-related complications is much higher for adolescents than for older women. Youth fertility is important for both health and social reasons. Teenage mothers are more likely to experience adverse pregnancy outcomes and they are constrained in their ability to pursue educational opportunities after child bearing at an early

age. Many efforts are ongoing to address the above-mentioned issues, including the advancement of in and out-of-school comprehensive sexuality education.

In response to the above, the National AIDS Secretariat in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, has embarked on reinvigorating community response to HIV prevention and demand creation for SRHR services. This program intends to reduce HIV transmission among adolescents and young people, key populations, and the general population through a comprehensive HIV prevention programme, which complements other efforts by the Government and partners. The reinvigorated HIV prevention program will be implemented by adopting two main strategies, namely, a national comprehensive condom program and SRHR education and service packages targeting adolescents, young people, key population, and the general population through innovative communication and social media platforms for real-time information sharing. Comprehensive condom programming will rejuvenate HIV prevention efforts and enhance triple protection; thereby preventing HIV, other STIs, and pregnancy among sexually active young people. One of the key steps of effective condom programming is the development of a comprehensive and integrated national strategy for male and female condoms in Sierra Leone.

In this regard, and in support of the National Aids Secretariat and other stakeholders, UNFPA is seeking the services of a national consultant to support the development of the National Condom Strategy 2022-2026.

The objective of the consultancy:

The consultant will be expected to develop a national condom strategy for Sierra Leone. The strategy is intended to provide guidance on comprehensive national condom programming with regards to partnership and coordination, demand creation, advocacy, communication, information and education, resource mobilization, commodity security, institutional capacity building, and program monitoring and evaluation.

Scope of work

Guided by the 10 steps of condom programming, the consultant is expected to;

- (1) Conduct a desk review of the current national condom programme across the ten (10) steps of condom programming, including a critical review of existing data on behavioural risk factors, including the prevalence and frequency of unprotected sexual activities
- (2) Conduct stakeholder consultations and key informant interviews to determine key policies, supply systems including private suppliers, and Social marketing.
- (3) Document critical enablers and potential risks that impact comprehensive national condom programming and make appropriate recommendations to enhance access and use of condoms for the targeted population including young people in and out of school, key populations, and persons with disabilities
- (4) Design a coordination mechanism and partnership arrangement for the full implementation of the NCCP at the national and sub-national levels for the different actors.
- (5) Propose recommendations for integrating the existing logistics system for essential drugs and reproductive health and HIV-related commodities, including systems for forecasting, procurement, distribution, and warehousing.
- (6) Analyse the human resource capacity and determine the human resource needs to implement the NCCP

- (7) Develop a three-year operational plan and budget as an annex to the strategy across each component of the national condom strategy. The operational plan should specify activities, division of labour among stakeholders, timeframe, cost and process indicators.
- (8) Map key partners that are likely to fund the NCCP and propose resource mobilization approaches
- (9) Identify relevant communication strategies to increase the uptake of condoms among target population and identify the various communication channels including mainstream media and social media
- (10) Design a monitoring/results and evaluation framework that aligns with RMNCAH and DHIS II reporting platform

In response to the TOR, the consultant will submit the proposed methodology, tools and timelines for undertaking this assessment. He/she will provide regular updates to the NAS, MoHS, UNFPA, and other key stakeholders through platforms recommended by NAS and the partners.

Qualifications and Experience:

- At least seven (7) years relevant experience in developing strategic documents for health programmes in Sierra Leone or any other country
- Master's Degree in Public Health, health-related field, or relevant social sciences
- Must have demonstrable previous experience in SRHR including HIV Prevention programmes
- Experience in the development of practical relevant strategy documents including effective messages to promote SRHR services and uptake
- Possess Data Management and data analysis skills
- Ability to collaborate with and guide a multi-disciplinary Team
- Be familiar with government health policies, systems and structures.
- Have excellent interpersonal and communication skills

COMPETENCIES

Professionalism:

- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision and to maintain flexibility in working hours

Planning and Organizing:

- Demonstrated effective organizational skills and ability to handle work in an efficient and timely manner
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate tasks to meet deadlines

Teamwork:

- Good interpersonal skills; ability to work in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain effective work relationships with counterparts

Communication:

- Ability to write in a clear and concise manner and to communicate effectively orally

Education:

- Master's degree in public health or related field plus a minimum of seven years of professional experience.

Experience:

- Experience in consulting and delivering time-bound results in global/public health and particularly in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Family Planning.
- Experience in working in African countries; experience working with Ministries of Health is preferred.
- Knowledge of the family planning service delivery environment in Sierra Leone or a similar context is preferred.
- Demonstrated ability to produce clear written materials, track the progress of activities, and communicate information strategically to a national and global audience.
- Ability to work in a highly collaborative environment and as part of a cross-disciplinary team operating in multiple locations.
- Experience in stakeholder engagement and management approaches.
- Strong analytical orientation and sound judgment; initiative, culturally sensitive, and resourceful.
- Excellent facilitation, verbal communication skills required, and ability to conduct consultative meetings.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to interact with national and global partners and provide creative solutions in a professional manner.
- Proficiency in current office software applications.
- Fluency in spoken English and excellent writing skills in English required.

Required Competencies:

Values: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exemplifying integrity,• Demonstrating commitment to UNFPA and the UN system,• Embracing cultural diversity,• Embracing change	Functional Competencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategically positioning UNFPA programme• Providing conceptual innovation to support programme effectiveness• Generating, managing and promoting the use of knowledge and information• Facilitating quality programmatic results
Core Competencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achieving results,• Being accountable,• Developing and applying professional expertise/business acumen,• Thinking analytically and strategically,• Working in teams/managing ourselves and our relationships,• Communicating for impact	

Compensation:

The compensation for this position is based on acceptance of deliverables in line with the prevailing UN Consultancy scale upon satisfactory performance

Mode of application:

Interested candidates are invited to apply to the email address sierra-leone.office@unfpa.org not later than 08 September 2022 including:

- Motivational letter
- CV (including working experience and references)
- Copy of certificate(s)
- Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted

UNFPA Work Environment

UNFPA provides a work environment that reflects the values of gender equality, teamwork, Embracing diversity in all its forms, integrity, and a healthy balance of work and life. We are committed to maintaining our balanced gender distribution and promoting equal opportunities for all. We, therefore, encourage women and persons with disabilities to apply.

Disclaimer:

UNFPA does not charge any application, processing, training, interviewing, testing, or other fees in connection with the application or recruitment process. Fraudulent notices, letters, or offers may be submitted to the UNFPA