Call for Consultant (P5) – Anaemia
14 December 2015 – 13 December 2016

Terms of Reference

Title: Consultant (P5) – Anaemia
Contract type: Consultant
Duration of contract: 12 months
Duty station: Geneva, Switzerland
Organization unit: World Health Organization/Noncommunicable Disease and Mental Health/Department of Nutrition for Health and Development/ Evidence and Programme Guidance Unit

Background

In 2014, after the Second International Conference on Nutrition organized by FAO and WHO, Representatives of Member States through the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action, committed to eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition worldwide, improve nutrition by strengthening capacities for research, development, innovation and transfer of technologies and also to empower people and create an enabling environment for making informed choices about food products.

The Department of Nutrition for Health and Development builds and implements a science-based, comprehensive, integrated and action/policy oriented ‘Nutrition Agenda’ at global, regional and country levels that addresses the whole spectrum of nutrition problems towards attaining nutrition-related international commitments. This Department coordinates nutrition efforts in WHO, emphasizing the areas of global nutrition surveillance, food and nutrition policy, and evidence and programme guidance.

The Evidence and Programme Guidance Unit coordinates research on specific knowledge gaps that can better inform programme and policy guidelines and additional evidence is being gathered in the form of literature reviews to inform guideline development at WHO.

Anaemia, defined as a low blood haemoglobin concentration, has been shown to be a public health problem that affects low, middle and high-income countries and has significant adverse health consequences, as well as adverse impacts on social and economic development. Causes of anaemia include micronutrient deficiencies (e.g. iron, folate, riboflavin, vitamins A and B₁₂), acute and chronic infections (e.g. malaria, cancer, tuberculosis and HIV), and inherited or acquired disorders that affect haemoglobin synthesis, red blood cell production or red blood cell survival.

In 2010, it was estimated that one-third of the world’s population suffered from anaemia, affecting specially women and children. More than 800 million women and children affected, including 43% of children less than five years of age (273 million), 29% of non-pregnant women (496 million) and 38% of pregnant women (32 million). Severe anaemia, which is associated with substantially worse mortality, cognitive and functional outcomes, affects between 0.8 – 1.5 % of these same population groups.
Usually anaemia is diagnosed when the concentration of haemoglobin falls below established cut-off values. Haemoglobin cut-offs were first presented in 1968 and were based on four published references and one set of unpublished observations. Due to the limitations in sample size and the difficulty to generalized use of these cut off points due to variations by ethnical origin, geographical context or psychosocial habits, there could be misclassification of anaemia at public health and at individual level.

The Consultant, Micronutrients in close collaboration with technical staff from the Evidence and Programme Guidance Unit, Department of Nutrition for Health and Development will:

- Develop a protocol to inform WHO guidelines on haemoglobin thresholds to define anaemia at clinical and public health level.
- Develop a review on haemoglobin thresholds to define anaemia at clinical and public health level.
- Provide technical advice for the organization of a WHO consultation on technical considerations for setting haemoglobin thresholds to define anaemia at clinical and public health level.
- Review the literature and prepare a narrative on markers of micronutrient status with special emphasis on iron, vitamin A and folates.
- Perform a scoping document on priority guidance needs classified by proof of concept (is it safe and does it work?); proof of implementation (how does it work in real-world settings?) and informing scale-up (health systems integration and sustainability) in the area of nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

**Qualifications**

University degree in biochemistry, medicine or nutrition and dietetics. Post-graduate training in haematology, public health, micronutrients or clinical nutrition.

Post-graduate training courses in advanced epidemiology and biostatistics. Specialty in child health, clinical nutrition is a plus.

**Experience**

1. At least 15 years' experience in health sciences, with focus on haematology and nutrition for maternal and child health, with 5 years at international level.
2. Sound knowledge and proven record of scientific publications in nutrition and haematology, development of scientific documents and policy briefs.
3. Experience in systematic reviews of diagnostic test accuracy and GRADE methods.
4. Experience in evaluating and translating science into policy making. Previous experience at country level in policy, strategy development and programme implementation would be an advantage.
5. Working experience in WHO or other UN agency is an asset.
6. Excellent knowledge of English and an additional WHO official language. Knowledge of French would be an asset.
Duration

The Consultancy will have a duration of 12 months starting 14 December 2015.

Travel

WHO will pay for travel to and return from Geneva, Switzerland in economy airfare.

Financial agreement

A monthly rate is based on Consultants Pay Band C-Senior level. This pay band is used when recruiting senior, specialized and experienced consultants.

Confidentiality of information

All the reports and the information included in the database are property of WHO and will not be made available to others.

Interested candidates must submit their CV or an updated WHO profile in PDF to nutrition@who.int not later than 7 December 2015. To fill out a WHO profile, please go to www.who.int/employment. Please include “CONSULTANT ANAEMIA” in the subject matter of your email application.