

Terms of Reference for the Development of the 2024-2027 HIV Funding Request to the Global Fund

1. Background

Nepal is experiencing a concentrated HIV epidemic, with an estimated 30,000 people living with HIV and a low adult prevalence rate of 0.13%. However, there has been a notable decline in new infections over time, with a decrease from 2,059 new infections in 2010 to 676 in 2021. The majority of people living with HIV (84%) know their status, and a significant proportion (72%) are receiving treatment. Additionally, viral suppression is high, with over 90% of those tested achieving viral suppression. Recent surveys data shows that HIV prevalence at 2.2 to 6.2% among men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people in certain parts of the country; 2.8% among people who inject drugs; up to 2.2% among female sex workers; and 0.4% among male labour migrants.

Nepal's response to the HIV epidemic is guided by the National HIV Strategic Plan (NHSP) 2021-2026, which is aligned with the priorities of the Planning Commission's 'Fifteenth Plan' and the National Health Sector Strategic Plan. The NHSP 2021-2026 prioritizes key populations, including sex workers (male and female), transgender people, men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, prisoners, and migrants. The NHSP reaffirms Nepal's commitments to end AIDS by 2030, emphasizing programs that will save the maximum number of lives, keep people healthy, and avert as many new HIV infections as possible. The NHSP sets an ambitious target of 95-95-95 by 2026 and emphasizes the implementation of innovative, evidence-informed strategies to achieve the Fast-Track goal of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund/GF) has invested over 51 million in Nepal through grants for HIV/AIDS (27 million), Tuberculosis (20 million), Malaria (4 million) and additional investment of 1.1 million to address human rights related barriers in health care setting 1.3 million in the previous funding cycle for NFM3, 2021-2024, including Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health. Nepal's HIV response is mostly funded using international resources accounting for more than three quarters of the total HIV investments. During 2021, Global Fund grants constitute approximately 42 % of Nepal's total HIV investments for HIV, making it a critical partner in the fight against the disease(s).

The Global Fund has made an allocation amounting to US\$59.6 million (of which US\$29.4 million is allocated for HIV) to CCM Nepal for the 2023-2025 funding cycle covering the period of 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2027. The allocation amount was determined after the Replenishment Conference, which took place in September 2022, based on available funds, disease burden, income level, and other qualitative adjustment factors such as absorptive capacity and past grant performance. The country is currently classified by the Global Fund as a Core Portfolio country.

The current HIV grant will end in July 2024. To avoid any disruption in program implementation, the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) initiated the funding request development process and formed disease specific task team under the leadership of Directors of HIV, TB and Malaria programmes. In line with that, National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC) is currently in the process of conducting a review of the national HIV programme, whose findings are to inform the development of the 2024-2027 Funding Request application which will prioritize the interventions for bigger impact on people lives as envisioned by the NHSP. The GF secretariat will contract out the Epi Analysis aspect centrally and it is expected that the findings will also be used in the proposal development process.

CCM Nepal, in consultation with the Global Fund Country Team, made the decision to submit the funding application in the third window (21 August 2023). This decision was made because four to five months are needed to fulfill all the prerequisites (including program reviews and country dialogues) as prescribed by the GFATM, as well as complete proposal development and related tasks. CCM Nepal is currently planning to submit a Program Continuation Funding Request application according to the Allocation Letter dated 19 December 2022.

This application will also include a Funding Request for cross-cutting Resilient and Sustainable Systems for Health (RSSH) investments, which will also include community systems strengthening (CSS). These investments will address system-wide constraints that affect the broader health system and enable a more effective response to HIV, TB, and Malaria in the country. Nepal is also eligible for Catalytic Investment Matching Funds amounting 0.55 million, which seeks to maximise impact in priority area of addressing human rights and gender related barriers and will be part of the funding request. However, to access the catalytic investment Nepal must maintain or increase its level of investment from the last allocation in programs to reduce human rights-related barriers.

The 2024-2027 HIV Funding Request will build on lessons learned during the current implementation period, adjusted to reflect the latest epidemiological trends, aligned with the Global AIDS Strategy 2022-2026 targets, the Global Fund Strategy 2023-2028, and with the overall goal of meeting the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of ending HIV as a public health threat. Building resilient and sustainable systems for health, reducing inequalities and achieving gender equity, while acting as a catalyst for domestic resource mobilization and progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) will be at the core of the proposal and importantly will take into account the findings and recommendations from the review of the HIV program.

The deadline for Funding Request submission is 21 August 2023. To achieve this, the CCM Nepal has requested technical support from UNAIDS' Technical Support Mechanism (TSM) for the development of a technically sound and strategically focused Funding Request. The country is requesting for a team of three consultants composed of: one Team Leader/Programming Expert-International, one HIV Programmatic Expert-National, and one Costing/Budgeting Expert.

2. Objectives of the assignment

The overall objective of this consultancy is to support CCM Nepal to develop the 2024-2027 HIV Funding Request to be submitted to the Global Fund during the third window.

The team of consultants, in close collaboration with the CCM Nepal and the HIV Task Team, will also facilitate the contribution process and consolidate the outputs from communities of people living with HIV (PLHIV) and key populations (KPs) as well as other civil society partners in the process of the development of the Funding Request to be submitted to the Global Fund.

3. Approach and methodology for implementing the assignment

a. Desk Review

i. Lead Consultant-International:

- The Lead Consultant will work closely with other consultants in reviewing specific national strategic and technical documents, Global Fund grant data and reports and other program data to guide and support the Funding Request application.
- S/he will also thoroughly familiarize herself/himself with the Global Fund documentation, templates and guidance relating to Funding Request applications, such as the Modular Framework Handbook, the Applicants Handbook and others.

- Lead consultant along with HIV programmatic consultant will also undertake a thorough review of specified technical documents related to RSSH including Global Fund's HIV, TB, malaria and HSS program documents, and country strategic plans of key partners such as WHO, PEPFAR, GAVI, World Bank, DFID, and USAID. Additionally, evaluation reports of the GF grants, reviews reports, and other pertinent materials such as key policy documents, evaluation reports, and grey literatures.

ii. HIV Programmatic Consultant-National

- The HIV Programmatic Consultant will work closely with other consultants and the Lead Consultants in reviewing specific technical documents, the Modular Framework Handbook, Global Fund programmatic data and performance reports (e.g. Progress Updates/Disbursement Requests (PU/DR), the Allocation Letter, the 'Essential Data Table' that contains pre-filled information by the Global Fund Secretariat, and other relevant program data (including latest epidemiological data and reports) to guide and support the FR application.
- The HIV programmatic consultant will also work closely with lead consultant in reviewing human rights and gender guidance documents (e.g. Global Fund Technical Briefs on human rights and gender); country reference documents on stigma, discrimination and legal, human rights and gender-related barriers to HIV and TB (e.g. legal environment assessments, gender assessments, baseline assessments, Stigma Index Studies, Social Protection Assessments); programmatic gaps for PLHIV and key populations; grant data and reports and other program data to guide and support the FR application.

iii. Costing/Budgeting Consultant

- The Costing/Budgeting Consultant will work closely with other consultants and the Lead Consultant/s in reviewing specific technical documents, costing guidelines, the Allocation Letter, HIV Standard Services Package and other relevant program data (including latest financial reports) to guide and support the Funding Request application.

b. Inception Report

In close collaboration with the CCM Nepal and the HIV Task Team, the Lead Consultant and the other consultants will develop an Inception Report and a roadmap, with detailed tasks, clear milestones, responsibilities and timelines, to be endorsed by the CCM Nepal.

c. Development of the Funding Request

i. Lead Consultant-International:

- The Lead Consultant will coordinate and participate in the development of the FR documents, while following the Global Fund guidelines for the 2023-2025 funding cycle. S/he will ensure that the selected modules and interventions included in the FR are aligned with the national strategy/strategies, are supported by data and evidence, and aim to maximize efficiency and impact of funds. The Lead Consultant is also expected to take the lead in writing and reviewing the narrative sections in the FR form and related supporting documents as required.
- To achieve this goal, the Lead Consultant will work with the CCM Nepal, local consultants and the HIV Task Team to help synthesize key results and recommendations from country dialogues, latest reviews, epi analysis and assessments and assist in prioritizing key modules and interventions, based on lessons learned and latest policies.

- The Lead Consultant shall also participate in stakeholder consultations (i.e. Country Dialogue) convened by the CCM Nepal and compile inputs from these meetings and/or workshops. S/he will discuss these inputs with the HIV Task Team and other consultants for consolidation in the FR.
- Help ensure coordination with other donors and ensure that synergies with PEPFAR and other funding are reflected in the FR.
- Throughout the duration of the assignment, the Lead Consultant shall assist the CCM Nepal in ensuring respect for the rights of and full and meaningful engagement of key country partners, all constituencies, especially representatives of key and vulnerable populations and people living with HIV or affected by the disease(s). S/he shall also work closely with the CCM Secretariat to systematically prepare and compile all needed annexes and supporting documents, as per Global Fund requirements. Engagement between the Lead Consultant and the Global Fund Country Team and other Global Fund Secretariat Staff may also be required, at the discretion of the CCM Nepal.

ii. HIV Programmatic Consultant

- The HIV Programmatic Consultant will assist in the development and/or gathering and review of all other HIV programmatic/epidemiologic data and related documents to be submitted with the 2023-2025 FR (e.g. Programmatic Gap Table(s), supporting documents and reports), update, if needed, the 'Essential Data Table' that contains pre-filled information by the Global Fund Secretariat, and support the Lead Consultant, other consultants and HIV Task Team to develop, review and improve all sections of the FR Form pertaining to HIV and HIV-related matters and the PAAR.
- The HIV Programmatic Consultant will support HIV Task Team, and the Lead and other consultants in the development of the Performance Framework in close collaboration with national HIV experts and technical partners. Specifically, s/he will assist in identifying and/or updating baseline figures for all selected indicators and ensuring that the Performance Framework remains compliant with the Global Fund Modular Framework Handbook (August 2022) and considers the 'Essential Data Table' that contains pre-filled information by the Global Fund Secretariat.
- The Programmatic consultant shall participate in the country dialogue convened by the CCM Nepal and support in compiling inputs from these consultative meetings and/or workshops. S/he will support lead consultant in discussing these inputs with the HIV Task Team and other consultants for consolidation for consolidation in the FR.
- The Programmatic consultant in collaboration with the lead consultant is also expected to support the writing and reviewing of relevant sections of the FR form.
- The Programmatic consultant shall assist CCM Nepal and HIV task team in Organizing consultations with country networks of PLHIV, KPs and other civil society partners as needed in order to: i) review the results, achievements and bottlenecks of previous Global Fund funded programmes; ii) review results, achievements and bottlenecks of the NHSP 2021-26 and related action plans; and iii) agree among communities on strategic priorities and priority activities for advocacy, policy reform, community-led research and monitoring and community-led service delivery.
- In addition, the HIV Programmatic Consultant shall also provide inputs for HIV-related activities including M&E priorities to be included in the Workplan and Budget. Engagement between the HIV Programmatic Consultant and the Global Fund Country Team may also be required, at the discretion of the CCM Nepal and the Lead Consultant.

- HIV Programmatic consultant will also work closely with the Lead Consultant and HIV Task Team to help synthesise and compile inputs from meetings and/or workshops in relation to human rights and gender-related concerns. S/he will discuss these inputs with the HIV Task Team and other consultants for consolidation in the FR key results and recommendations from latest reviews and assessments and assist in prioritizing key modules and interventions, based on lessons learned from recent implementation and the latest policies. S/he will also support to systematically prepare/gather all needed human rights / gender-related annexes and supporting documents, as per Global Fund requirements.

iii. Costing/Budgeting Consultant

- The Costing Consultant will coordinate and support the development of the FR budget (including a separate budget for the PAAR) in close collaboration with national budget experts, while following the Global Fund guidelines for the 2023-2025 funding cycle. Specifically, s/he will assist in identifying and/or updating unit costs for all selected activities and ensure that the approach remains compliant with the Global Fund Guidelines for Grant Budgeting.
- The Budget Consultant will also assist in the development and/or gathering of all other finance/budget related documents to be submitted for the 2023-2025 FR (e.g. Funding Landscape table(s), Supporting documented related to co-financing) and support the Lead Consultant, HIV Programmatic Consultant, HIV Task Team and Principle Recipient (once selected) to develop, review and improve all sections of the FR Form pertaining to the budget application and/or finance related matters. Engagement between the Costing Consultant and the Global Fund Country Team may also be required, at the discretion of the CCM Nepal and the Lead Consultant.

d. Submission of the Funding Request and support with TRP clarifications process

i. Lead Consultant

- The Lead Consultant shall coordinate, review and ensure that the consultants in collaboration with the HIV Task Team address all recommendations as endorsed by the CCM Nepal, while ensuring full alignment of all Funding Request documents. S/he will verify that a complete package (as per 2023-2025 requirements) is submitted to the Global Fund by 4 August 2023.
- Finally, the Lead Consultant will support the CCM Nepal in the TRP clarification process by assisting in reviewing comments and recommendations and preparing the response and amending the FR as needed.

ii. HIV Programmatic Consultant

- The HIV Programmatic Consultant will closely monitor changes affecting the FR application (e.g. after peer reviews), assist in adjusting and finalizing the Performance Framework, while ensuring compliance with the Modular Framework Handbook and full alignment with the Funding Request narrative, Workplan and Budget and other Funding Request documents.
- The HIV Programmatic Consultant shall support and review initiatives to address all human rights and gender-related recommendations as endorsed by the CCM Nepal, while ensuring full alignment of all Funding Request documents with human rights and gender-related priorities.

- The HIV Programmatic Consultant will support the CCM Nepal in the TRP clarification process by assisting in reviewing comments and recommendations and preparing the response and amending the FR narrative, human rights and gender sections, Performance Framework, Gap Programmatic Analysis and other HIV-related documents/sections as needed.

iii. Costing/Budgeting Consultant

- The Costing Consultant will closely monitor changes affecting the FR application (e.g. after peer reviews), assist in adjusting and finalizing the Work Plan and Budget, while ensuring that the overall budget does not exceed the total allocated amount. After incorporating of all comments received from the Lead Consultant and the CCM Nepal, s/he will submit the final version of the Budget and other finance related documents to the CCM Nepal according to the agreed timeline.
- Finally, the Costing Consultant will support the CCM Nepal in the TRP clarification process (if material changes are requested) by assisting in reviewing comments and recommendations and preparing the response and amending the Budget and other finance related documents/sections as needed.

4. Deliverables

- Joint inception Report and road map that describes the specific tasks, deliverables and timelines for the consultants supporting the CCM Nepal and HIV task team in developing the Funding Request;
- Produce first drafts of narrative and selected FR supporting documents;
- Revised drafts of FR documents (as described above), addressing HIV task team, CCM Nepal and peer review recommendations;
- The final version of complete Funding Request submission package for endorsement by the CCM;
- Consolidation of the response to the Technical Review Panel (TRP) Recommendations /Comments, and amended version of selected Funding Request documents as needed; and
- Brief and highly readable consultancy close-out report.

5. Working Arrangement/ Institutional Arrangement

The consultant(s) will work under the guidance of HIV Task Team, chaired by Director, NCASC and in close coordination with CCM Secretariat.

6. Consultant Criteria

The consultant must have the following qualifications, experience and possess the following attributes:

i. Lead Consultant	ii. HIV Programmatic Consultant	iii. Costing/Budgeting Consultant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced degree in medicine, public health, health economics, health policy, or any other relevant field ; • At least 5 years of working experience in HIV or any infectious diseases; • Specific technical expertise in planning, M&E, finance and PSM ; • Understanding of health systems, their components and delivery structures in low and middle income countries; • Experience of working with and supporting the inclusion of the views of diverse key and vulnerable populations; • Demonstrated experience in developing donor proposals, concept notes or FRs; • Previous experience of successfully managing and leading multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural team; • Previous experience facilitating complex decision-making conversations at country level, gathering different views and feedback, and follow up on group decisions; • Experience collaborating with several multi-lateral and bilateral donors, international health partners, and Government and civil society representatives; • Excellent analytical skills related to projects and programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced degree in medicine, public health, health policy, development, social sciences or any other relevant field; • At least 5 years of working experience in HIV or any infectious diseases; • Specific technical expertise in health programme management, coordination, M&E, gap analysis is essential; • Experience of working with and supporting the inclusion of the views of diverse key and vulnerable populations; • Demonstrated experience in participating in the development of donor proposals, concept notes or FRs; • Previous experience of successfully working with a multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural team; • Experience with coordination of the community involvement in consultation processes on policy and technical matters • Previous experience with complex decision-making conversations at country level, gathering different views and feedback, and follow up on group decisions; • Experience collaborating with several multi-lateral and bilateral donors, international health partners, and Government and civil society representatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced degree in health economics, or financial management or business administration of academic/professional qualifications and experience • At least 5 years of experience in costing health interventions and programs in low- and middle-income countries • Demonstrated proficiency and experience in costing Strategies and/or Plans (national, sub-national, sectoral and for specific vulnerable or at-risk populations) • Excellent understanding of donor policies and template (including budget guidelines) • Familiarity with existing costing tools and methods for costing health programs • Experience in working with governments or international organizations or UN agencies, donors • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, especially with regard to working in multinational teams of diverse stakeholders • Ability to work independently, with tight deadlines, prioritize and deliver under pressure.

7. Timeframe

The contractual work will start from 1st May 2023 for a maximum of 25-30 working days including travel

8. Location of Work

The consultant (s) will work from Nepal as well as remotely.