International Charitable Foundation "Alliance for Public Health" announces
an open Call for Proposals for continuation of work on the ART reference
prices portal

Kyiv   **07.05.2024**

1. Introduction

International Charitable Organization 'Alliance for Public Health' (hereinafter – The Alliance) is a leading professional organization that, in cooperation with key public organizations, the Ministry of Health and other government institutions, fights a number of epidemics, including HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis in Ukraine, implements prevention programs and provides high-quality technical support and financial resources to local organizations.

The mission of the Alliance is to reduce the spread of infections and deaths, as well as to reduce the negative impact of epidemics by supporting the public response to them in Ukraine and spreading effective approaches to prevention and treatment in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The Alliance is the primary recipient of the regional grant from the Global Fund, the Sustainability of Services for Key Populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) (SoS_project 2.0). Grant implementation period: 01.01.2022 - 31.12.2024.

Project goals:

-        Institutionalizing effective HIV response models and processes in the CECA region to influence the improvement of the HIV care cascade in the region

-        Removing barriers to services for key population groups to ensure quality medical interventions based on human rights principles; overcoming gender barriers to services

-        Budget advocacy for sustainable services for key population groups in the EECA region

Geographic focus of the project: 14 countries – Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

2. Background information

Countries should significantly improve their value for money indicators to cover patients with the required medicines and services. According to the World Health Organization, 4 out of 10 leading sources of inefficiency in health care are related to procurement. Apart from many complex institutional reasons, such as outdated legislation, low competence and corruption-related risks, there are also relatively simple reasons, such as high information asymmetry and lack of online access to data on the prices for medicines in different countries. Those are some of the reasons why countries get excessive

prices for medicines from producers and distributors, while countries with low and middle income sometimes [pay more than high-income countries for the same medicines](#).

There are some services, which try to resolve this issue, but the approaches they use are not systematic or sustainable. They include [MSH International Medical Products Price Guide](#), [Pharmaceutical Pricing and Reimbursement Information](#), and the [Global Fund database that collects and displays data on procurement transactions](#). All the approaches face challenges, such as non-automated data collection from different countries, only partial coverage of procurement transactions (in particular, donor-funded or pharmacy-based), and delayed data updates.

Recently, more countries have been developing their own e-procurement systems and publishing structured data obtained through such systems, in particular in accordance with the unified global standard – [Open Contracting Data Standard](#) (OCDS), which is a data scheme allowing to collect and process large volumes of machine-readable data and significantly simplify the analysis of such data. Some Eastern European and Central Asian countries already publish data in line with the OCDS (Moldova, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan), others (namely, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan) are at the final stages of introducing the standard. Availability of such data, especially if countries start implementing the [extension of the standard for medicines](#) in their procurement systems, opens possibilities for piloting approaches to collecting, processing and referencing prices for medicines in the region in real-time online format.

In 2021 within the EECA regional GF grant an ART reference prices portal was developed and initial data from Moldova and Ukraine was collected and presented on the portal. Due to various technical reasons, the portal hadn't been updated or further developed since.

3. **Purpose and subject of the competition:** update the technical aspects and the content of the ART reference prices portal that allows automatic collection, processing and referencing of prices for HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis medicines in real-time online format in selected countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Project objectives:

The key objective of this work is to ensure re-launch, update and smooth running of the portal.

The other objectives include:

1. Facilitating data collection, processing, and expanding analytic IT resources

2. Building a User Community

3. Adaptation/update of the Automated Analytical Tools:

4. Advocating for Policy Integration

5. Country Expert Teams Formation and Methodological Support

6. Expert Community Engagement and Training

7. Enhancement of Collaboration Mechanisms

8. Outreach to Information End-users

9. Country Profile Integration and Data Management

10. Data Structure and Quality Improvement Recommendations

11. Analytical Drug Price Reporting

12. Technical Advocacy and Business Process Revision Support:

13. Automated Data Analysis Tools Adaptation/Update and Testing

4. Target groups of the project:

Patient organizations, institutions responsible for health procurement within the state budget, central executive authorities responsible for policy-making in the area of public procurement and health care in Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia.

5. **Period of performance of works/provision of services:** May – December 2024.
6. **Geographic coverage:** Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia.
7. **Key activities and expected outcomes of the project:**

The work under this Call is anticipated to be carried out in stages. <u>The proposal submitted in response to this call should propose and reflect the stages.</u> An outcome of each stage should be a particular measurable indicator/milestone.

The **first stage** is to be:

1. Update and actualisation of ART reference prices data in Ukraine and Moldova.

The **next stage** -

1. Analysis of the existing portal and update of its functionality based on the recommendations provided and agreed upon with APH.
2. Collection and upload of data from new countries - Kyrgyzstan, Georgia.

The activities listed in the technical specifications below should be included into these stages accordingly or additional stages should be proposed to cover all of the below.

The winning implementer will be contracted to carry out the work in accordance to these stages and depending on the availability of donor funding.

Technical Specification for the Update/Further Development of a Reference Pricing Portal

1. Portal Operations and Technical Support:

The sub-recipient will ensure ongoing support for the reference pricing portal, including the analytics module, by facilitating data collection, processing, and expanding analytic IT resources. Regular updates and system maintenance to guarantee uninterrupted service are mandatory.

2. Building a User Community:

The sub-recipient must create a dedicated community for the reference price analytics module within the ECA region's four countries (Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia), aiming to enhance procurement frameworks and HIV treatment accessibility. This includes organizing outreach programs, conducting training sessions, and providing local user support.

3. Development of Automated Analytical Tools:

The sub-recipient is tasked with creating and deploying automated data analysis tools for the portal. They must also aid in forming a data-driven, evidence-based analytical infrastructure to remove HIV treatment access barriers.

4. Advocacy for Policy Integration:

The sub-recipient is charged with advocating for the integration of data-driven recommendations from the analytics module into the procurement and supply management cycles of the ECA region's four countries

(Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia), crafting advocacy materials, engaging stakeholders, and presenting evidence-based arguments for national PSM adaptation.

Deliverables for each task should be specified with clear timelines. The sub-recipient is to provide frequent progress reports. Adherence to regional regulations and standards is crucial, and the sub-recipient must exhibit comprehensive knowledge of the regional HIV treatment procurement and access landscape.

Technical Specification for Implementation Activities of the Reference Pricing Portal

1. Country Expert Teams Formation and Methodological Support:

The sub-recipient shall form and guide country expert teams in the ECA region's four countries (Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia), improving their capabilities and providing training in drug pricing, demand gathering, and procurement monitoring.

2. Expert Community Engagement and Training:

The sub-recipient is responsible for the active involvement of and interaction with the expert community, including organizing targeted training on utilizing the portal and its data for various stakeholders in each participating country.

3. Enhancement of Collaboration Mechanisms:

The sub-recipient must reinforce and augment existing collaboration and partnership frameworks between NGOs, key population group representatives, and government entities, including liaisons through the Global Fund.

4. Outreach to Information End-users:

The sub-recipient will target potential information end-users of the portal, creating informative materials to increase portal user base among patient groups, procurement professionals, and government authorities in the EECA region.

5. Country Profile Integration and Data Management:

Create additional country profiles on the portal and integrate them technically. Accumulate and document procurement data from 2020 to 2024 as specified by the project.

6. Data Structure and Quality Improvement Recommendations:

Prepare and advocate for recommendations to enhance the data quality and structure concerning medical procurements for EECA countries, and technically implement the necessary modifications.

7. Analytical Drug Price Reporting:

Compile an extensive analytical report on drug pricing in selected EECA countries to advocate for procurement efficiency and initiate discussions on standardizing drug prices within electronic procurement systems.

8. Technical Advocacy and Business Process Revision Support:

Provide technical support in formulating and promoting recommendations for refining procurement and supply management business processes in the focus countries, using insights from the analytics module.

9. Automated Data Analysis Tools Adaptation/Update and Testing:

The sub-recipient must technically develop and evaluate new automated data analysis tools.

The sub-recipient is expected to document all actions comprehensively, report systematically, and set measurable objectives that correspond with the primary goals of reinforcing procurement systems and improving HIV treatment accessibility in the region. Cooperation with local and international entities to ensure coordinated efforts is essential.

Budget of the Call for Proposals: The budget of proposals to be submitted should not exceed 100 thousand US dollars. The progress of the implementation of the work will be evaluated based on the proposed and agreed upon stages and milestones and will depend on the availability of funds from the donor.

9.   Organizational requirements:

9.1.   Organizations submitting their proposals should be duly registered non-profit legal entities. Candidates should submit documents confirming their legal status with a project proposal. Successful candidates can be asked for additional documents to prove their ability to implement project activities.

9.2.   Candidates should be exempt from VAT and should be able to receive grants (charitable donations) from Ukraine. A separate bank account for receipt and use of grant funds is a must.

9.3.   Candidates should be able to meet the objectives and implement activities in line with provisions of this Call for Proposals.

9.4.   Candidates should have at least 5 years of experience in developing similar programs and online tools in the EECA region.

To take part in this Call for Proposals, organizations should submit their proposals in accordance with the templates attached hereto (Application Template, Work Plan Template, Budget Template) together with the documents confirming their legal status.

Deadline for submitting proposals – 28 May 2024, 18.00 Kyiv time.

Proposals should be submitted in electronic form to sheiko@aph.org.ua.

Wishing you good luck and hope for fruitful cooperation!