Request For Expressions of Interest - COVID-19 Data Quality and Use Consultant, Guyana Ministry of Health

Background:

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared a pandemic of the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) on March 11, 2020. The earliest cases in the Caribbean region were reported on March 1, 2020, and by mid-March, the region had experienced a substantial surge. As of April 26, 2022, Guyana has reported 63,420 cases of COVID-19 and 1,228 deaths, equivalent to 806 cases per 10,000 habitats. Like most countries, Guyana imposed movement and travel restrictions to mitigate the pandemic in the first half of 2020, but by mid-July 2020 re-opened its borders, leading to a peak in increased cases in October 2020 (PAHO). Approximately 46% of the population has received the recommended two doses of the vaccine, with only 7.8% also receiving a booster dose.

Within the universal healthcare system that the Ministry of Health leads in Guyana, access to remote populations faces relevant challenges to accessing services. Thus, the use of technology as telemedicine has been discussed as a solution to close the access gap. However, timely COVID-19 decision-making and the creation of targeted vaccination efforts have been difficult due to challenges in accessing quality data quickly and efficiently. Health information systems in Guyana for the collection and analysis of COVID-19 data are under-resourced and understaffed as has been documented in recent assessments from PAHO and CDC. Current surveillance systems are fragmented and paper-based, digitalized at the central level for reporting and analysis purposes in a time-consuming process.

The government of Guyana's digital agenda is promoting a transformative process to strengthen the use and effectiveness of data for effective management. For the Ministry of Health, this implies the assessment of available technology to identify solutions that better fit the needs of the country's population health. While improving in the past years, there are integration and structural challenges for HIS in the country to increase the use of data and to improve the quality of the information generated.

To address these challenges, with funding from the USAID Eastern and Southern Caribbean Mission, the Global Evaluation Network for Health (GEMNet-Health) as part the USAID-funded Country Health Information Systems and Data Use (CHISU) program consortium is assisting the Ministry of Health in Guyana to support comprehensive country readiness to administer COVID-19 vaccines, including efforts to ensure uptake and access among all eligible populations and expand equitable access and timely delivery of vaccines.

GEMNet and CHISU will support the Ministry via the recruitment of a Guyana -based consultant to identify and apply appropriate solutions to address issues in the collection, storage, and utilization of COVID-19 vaccination data. This consultant will be seconded to the Ministry of Health and will work under the technical supervision of the Chief Medical Officer, with the contract managed by GEMNet-Health.The advisor will also work closely with the COVID-19 vaccine supply chain advisor seconded by CHISU to Guyana to ensure that LMIS is included in the integrated HIS.

Specific Responsibilities

GEMNet-Health invites individual consultants based in Guyana to present a CV demonstrating their experience and capacity to provide the services described below.

- Support the Ministry of Health in assessing health information systems –where COVID-19 data is collected—and generate recommendations to strengthen it.
- Conduct rapid assessment of national COVID-19 vaccination and testing data sources outlining the data management processes, bottlenecks, and concrete recommendations for rationalizing processes based on data needs to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Guide the implementation of recommendations for an integrated health information system that meets the data needs of the Ministry of Health; develop standard operating procedures.
- Enhance data analysis using tools such as Power.BI and improve visualization and public access to COVID-19 data.
- Support the creation of an HIS working group, help ensure coordination across donors and partners.
- Support additional COVID-19 data-related tasks as requested by the Ministry.

Timelines:
The activities are anticipated to be implemented over 12 months at full-time effort. Please note that work outside of normal business hours (after 4:30pm, occasional weekend or holiday) may occasionally be required.

Consultants' qualifications

- Demonstrable experience in health information systems –in particular, data management-- and in health informatics in Guyana and/or the Caribbean region *(please describe participation in related work in CV)*
- Bachelor's degree (Master's degree preferred) in health-related areas or health information systems.
- Demonstrable knowledge of epidemiology and disease surveillance systems

To apply

Please email a CV and proposed daily rate (and/or any questions) to jpgr70@gmail.com and to XXX@gov.gy.

About GEMNet-Health

With a wealth of technical expertise and experience, Global Evaluation and Monitoring Network for Health (GEMNet-Health), established in 2012, fosters organisational growth, collaboration, and peer-to-peer support for Monitoring and Evaluation of health programs globally through ongoing institutional linkages among members. As a network with a diverse set of skills and experiences and with members located across continents, GEMNet-Health is a global resource for technical assistance, consultancy services and capacity building in the field of Monitoring and Evaluation, including work with health information systems, data dissemination and use, health informatics, and specialized M&E topics.

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GEMNet-Health Membership

●*Addis Ababa University (AAU), Ethiopia*

●*Addis Continental Institute of Public Health (ACIPH), Ethiopia*

●*Centre Africain d'Etudes Supérieures en Gestion (CESAG), Senegal*

● *Data for Impact (D4I) University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

● *Institut National De Sante Publique De Cote D'Ivoire*

● *Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública (INSP), Mexico*

●*Kenyatta University, School of Public Health*

●*Mahidol University's Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR), Thailand*

●*Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), India*

●*University of Ghana (UGSPH), Ghana*

●*University of Pretoria (UP), South Africa*