Impact of environment on health in precarious settings in Bulgaria

Environmental changes have a significant impact on people’s health and well-being - disrupting physical, biological, and ecological systems. These disruptions can exacerbate existing health inequalities and/or create new ones.

Evidence and subsequent recognition of the environment-related impacts on human health in precarious settings has been increasingly mentioned as a factor leading to higher morbidity and mortality in these settings. These conditions negatively affect food and water quality, and have a direct negative impact on people’s health and wellbeing in the form of heat strokes, respiratory illnesses (chronic and acute), cardiovascular diseases, stress and other mental health challenges and vector borne and infectious diseases.

MdM is working in Nadejda neighborhood in Sliven (Bulgaria) with predominantly Roma population.

In the participative diagnosis done within the community identify the problems related to the living conditions in the neighborhood, the following issues have been noted:

- Unpleasant and harmful living environment
- Low water quality and frequent water cuts, especially in summer
- Dysfunction of the waste management collection, especially in the poorest areas in Nadejda
- Lack of green area or dedicated areas for children to play in the neighborhood
- Overcrowding and unsafe housing (especially in the poorest areas)
- Untraditional (and potentially harmful) heating and cooking practice (using materials such as plastic and other available waste)
- The population of Nadejda is reportedly having increased mortality rate (and at earlier age) in the last decades (community perception)
- Last, but not least, the violence, insecurity, depression and including abuses have been mentioned by some beneficiaries who have close contact with MdM team.

The overall objectives of the consultancy are to:

1. Review the environmental factors in the living environment that can lead to negative health impact in Nadejda neighborhood
2. Identify key points to design an advocacy strategy for local, national and international level aiming at improving the environment conditions in Nadejda

As a result, the services of a health and environment specialist are required for the development of the report.

Scope of Services

The selected consultant is expected to complete the following Scope of Services:

1. Preliminary groundwork on the effects of precarious environment on health and a SWOT analysis to determine available information/gaps, approaches to addressing gaps/weaknesses
and a report of findings and next steps; Develop reports’ communication plan to share findings and information with the public and other sectors.

2. Complete the health Vulnerability and Adaptation assessment (V&A) beginning with framing and scoping the health V&A and describing the risks of environmental sensitive outcome including the most vulnerable groups;

3. Conduct a sensitivity analysis on relationships of health outcomes and core environment variables and patterns, including the capacity of health sectors to manage the risks of environment sensitive outcomes;

4. Conduct health impact assessment to understand the future impacts on health using quantitative or qualitative approaches;

5. Identify the possible action to reduce the potential health risks of adaptation and mitigation policies and programmes implemented in other sectors;

6. Apply the communication plan to share findings and information with the public and other sectors.

**Technical expertise**

➢ Knowledge about health systems’ operations;
➢ Knowledge about environment and its impacts on health;
➢ Experience in data collection and analysis;
➢ Experience in impact assessment and sensitivity analyses;
➢ Experience liaising with local and national authorities;
➢ Strong professional and academic writing skills;
➢ Strong research, problem-solving and organizational skills.

**Education/Experience**

An advanced degree in environmental science or public health and previous experience on topics related to climate change and health are desired.

**Contractor’s responsibilities**

• The incumbent should visit Bulgaria and in particular the Roma neighborhood Nadejda for data collection

• Duration of consultancy is 3 months

**MdM’s responsibilities**

Review and approve deliverables and provide feedback to the Contractor in a timely manner.

**Completion Criteria**

**Deliverables**

• V&A health impact assessment report;
• Report on the potential impact of the environment in Nedejda on the health of the population residing there, including the actions that can be taken to reduce the potential health risks and mitigation policies and programmes;
• List of key points to design the advocacy plan in country to share findings and communicate process to public and other sectors;

Timeframe

This Contract is expected to be completed within a 2.5 months period, inclusive of the submission of the deliverables defined within.

Payment Schedule

Payments will be made on satisfactory submission, review and approval of deliverables. One payment per deliverable.

Other Criteria

• Tasks are to be performed accurately and within timeframes specified or nearest date.
• Standards, written policies, and procedures are to be well documented and filed for future reference.
• Good human relations skill is to be demonstrated in dealing with all internal and external customers/stakeholders.
• Flexibility is to be demonstrated in meeting the goals and objectives.
• Confidentiality and integrity are to be maintained at all times.

Special terms and conditions

All rights, including title, copyright, and patent rights of any material(s) produced under the terms of this contract shall be vested in MdM, which shall be entitled to make any changes or eliminate any part of the material(s) it deems advisable.