

Terms of Reference

National Consultant to support the Mercury in Skin Lightening Products Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded Project

1. BACKGROUND

Mercury (Hg) is a toxic substance and a global pollutant that poses adverse effects to human health and the environment. Mercury pollution exposes populations, regardless of proximity to source, to the harmful effects of the chemical.

Inorganic mercury (mercury salts = mercurous chloride) is a common ingredient found in skin lightening products (SLPs). It is highly effective in blocking melanin-producing functions in the human skin leading to a lighter skin tone (more melanin in the body, darker the skin). SLPs come in different forms, including creams and soaps. Mercury-containing skin lightening products are manufactured in many countries and areas including Jamaica. Despite having been banned in many countries, mercury-containing SLPs are often easily obtainable, and consumers may be unaware of the harmful effects of the chemicals in these products.

PAHO/WHO is supporting the implementation of a project on mercury in SLPs, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). PAHO/WHO is seeking two part-time consultants to provide support to national implementation of the project in Jamaica.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE CONSULTANCY

The objective of the consultancy is to support the implementation of the Mercury in Skin Lightening Products GEF-funded Project in Jamaica through coordination with national, regional and international stakeholders, organization of project meetings and trainings, development of communication messages and support for national assessments, with the ultimate goal to protect the public from negative health effects of mercury in SLPs.

3. SPECIFIC TASKS

a. **Organize and provide logistical support for project meetings and training workshops and carry-out assigned follow-up tasks. Meetings will include:**

- i) Inception workshop
- ii) Mid-project workshop
- iii) Validation workshop

b. **Provide technical support to assist project implementation, including**

- i) Support the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) in developing model regulations or improving existing legislation; provide guidance on developing compliance and enforcement strategies for legislation in place.

- ii) Provide technical support and advice to Ministries of Health for national level advocacy campaigns.
- iii) Facilitate the provision of small grants for country-level activities e.g. for awareness-raising, MOHW -led advocacy work.
- iv) Support as necessary other ministries engaged in the project e.g. ministries of environment, education, culture, customs) and in carrying out tailored national activities.
- v) Assist with the monitoring and reporting on development of compliance and enforcement strategies for legislation in place to ban mercury in skin lightening products.

c. Assist in the monitoring and implementation of the project at the national level

- i) Prepare quarterly narrative and financial reports as per project requirements
- ii) Participate in monthly project planning and progress meetings, held virtually each month, undertaking assigned follow-up tasks as appropriate.
- iii) Prepare a comprehensive report of country-level activities for the quarterly and final narrative reports.
- iv) Maintain regular communication with project personnel including through regional calls with the PAHO/WHO Country Office Advisor and Regional Advisor, UN project executing partners at regional level and the project team at WHO HQ about activities at country level.

d. Lead work on developing tailored health-related communications materials on mercury in skin lightening product including:

- i) Adapting advocacy and information materials prepared under the project to the regional or national context, including in appropriate languages, and targeted to relevant national audiences, such as policymakers, consumers, health practitioners and tailored to the products found in the national marketplace
- ii) Promoting the use of technical materials on mercury skin lightening products developed by WHO and other executing partners; ensure the country plays an active role in dissemination of materials.

e. Maintain regular communication with local authorities, national stakeholders and WHO country and regional advisors, UN project executing partners at regional level and the project team about activities at country level.

f. Support the undertaking of national assessments of the availability of mercury-containing cosmetics by:

- i) Assisting with the identification of products commonly used in the community for skin lightening; and, as appropriate, assisting with the development of sampling designs to assist with the identification of cosmetic products suspected of using mercury above the

1ppm threshold.

- ii) Assisting with the collection of targeted cosmetic products for laboratory analyses of mercury concentrations.

g. Contribute to the analysis and identification of global, regional, and local patterns of production, distribution, and use of mercury-containing cosmetics.

- i) Assist with awareness-raising strategy among suppliers, distributors, and sellers of mercury-containing cosmetics by visiting local distributors and market owners including informal manufacturers as feasible
- ii) Assist with the conduct of the analysis of availability of mercury-added skin lightening products in selected markets/regions.

h. Assist the Biodiversity Research Institute with identifying and developing approaches/techniques to be used by Customs Agents for rapidly identifying non-conforming products.

- i) Assist with training of Custom Agents including about how to use mercury analyser
- ii) Assist with the identification and location of in-country manufacturers of often illegal skin lightening production
- iii) Assist with outreach campaigns to local internet marketers to enlist their cooperation in voluntary self-regulation to assure that illegal products listed on government detention lists are not offered for sale.
- iv) Promote the development and application of an illegal products list for use in country.

4. REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONSULTANT

Qualifications and Experience

Education

Essential: Bachelor's degree in public health, environmental health, social sciences, health promotion or other health-related field from a recognised university

Desirable: Postgraduate university degree in public health, environmental health, social sciences from a recognized university preferably from international or internationally recognized university

Experience

Essential: At least five years of experience in developing, supporting, or managing environmental health, health promotion or product safety-related projects. Experiences and insights on projects involving multiple stakeholders.

Desirable: Established strong track record and experience in public health or environmental health. Frequent contacts inside and outside government agencies and international organizations involved in environmental health and/or product safety. Experience in collaborative programmes supported by bilateral or multi-lateral international agencies would be an advantage.

Skills

- Knowledge and understanding of the policies and procedures on environmental health and/or product safety.
- Proven ability to think strategically, manage projects and processes to deliver results.
- Experience and proficiency in working with government and other partners in an effective and culturally competent manner.
- Well- developed verbal
- Excellent written communication skills.
- Ability to work harmoniously as a member of a team, adapt to diverse educational and cultural backgrounds and maintain a high standard of personal conduct.
- Advanced computer skills including ability to utilize the standard Microsoft Office programs.

Languages

Very good knowledge of English

5. DELIVERABLES

- **Deliverable 1** – National inception workshop planned and executed and monthly meetings with stakeholders conducted
- **Deliverable 2** – National-level advocacy campaigns planned in coordination with stakeholders, including development and adaptation of health-communication messages
- **Deliverable 3** – Assessment plan developed on availability of mercury-containing cosmetics in collaboration with stakeholders
- **Deliverable 4**- Quarterly narrative and financial reports, including country-level activities

Deliverables	Due Date	Amount Due (JMD)
Monthly progress report including status of national and global inception workshops	February 26, 2022	
Quarterly narrative and financial reports including country-level activities	March 26, 2022	
Monthly progress report including status of advocacy campaigns and awareness-raising strategies	April 26, 2023	
Monthly progress report including status of advocacy campaigns and awareness-raising strategies	May 26, 2023	
Quarterly narrative and financial reports including country-level activities	June 26, 2023	

Monthly progress report and submission of plan for advocacy campaigns and awareness-raising strategies	July 26, 2023	
Monthly progress report including status of assessment plan on availability of mercury-containing cosmetics	August 26, 2023	
Quarterly narrative and financial reports including country-level activities	September 26, 2023	
Monthly progress report including status of assessment plan on availability of mercury-containing cosmetics	October 26, 2023	
Monthly progress report including submission of assessment plan on availability of mercury-containing cosmetics	November 26, 2023	
Quarterly narrative and financial reports including country-level activities and plan for year two implementation	December 26, 2023	
TOTAL		

6. TIMELINE OF THE CONSULTANCY

The two part-time consultancies are from 1 February 2023 to 30 January 2024, with a second and third year renewable subject to satisfactory performance, up to a total of 26 months.

7. REMUNERATION

The consultant will be paid based on PAHO salary scale. The consultant is required to submit each deliverable and an invoice for payment as per the schedule set out in Deliverable Schedule (Section 6). The deliverable will be reviewed by the supervising officer and once it is approved, the consultant will be paid the agreed amount. The payment will be on the last workday of each month.

8. SUPERVISION AND COORDINATION

The consultant will be supervised by the Advisor, Health Surveillance, Disease Prevention and Control in PAHO/Jamaica in coordination with the GEF-focal point at MOHW.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criteria	Maximum Score
Qualifications as evidenced by the CV presented	30
Proven experience on policies and procedures on environmental health and/or product safety	30

Demonstrated ability to meet timelines and deliverables as evidenced by development and submission of proposed project workplan and timelines	10
Suitability and acceptance of Work Plan submitted for project deliverables	20
Experience working with public health and/or environment sector in government and international organizations	10
	100

10. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Timely delivery of monthly and quarterly reports. These are to be submitted for review within 5 business days of due date for review by technical advisor.
- Excellent written and oral communication. Communication is free from error and is written in professional style
- Works proactively in planning, organizing and compiling work for submission.
- Conscientious and alert in the establishment and meeting project-related timelines.
- Completeness and accuracy of work compiled.
- Understands the power of teamwork and demonstrate strong interpersonal skills in collaborating with colleagues to provide service.