

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
between the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia (MoLHSA), National Reproductive Health Council, Medical Research Infrastructure Development and Health Services Fund by Chaim Sheba Medical Center (Israel) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

in the capacity development of neonatal service providers in Georgia

Assessment of Neonatal Services in Georgia (UNICEF, 2006) confirmed that the inadequate care and poor services provided at childbirth were a major underlining cause of early neonatal death. Out of all infant deaths 83.4% occur in the neonatal period with 82% occurring during the first week of life – the early neonatal period. Among the infants who die within the early neonatal period, a quarter is of a normal birth weight.

The underlying reasons of poor quality in the field of neonatal care were identified as the following: availability of resources, including human resources (knowledge, skills and attitudes), supplies and commodities. Although the introduction of evidence based practices through the development of evidence-based clinical care guidelines and protocols was articulated by the Government as the critical direction towards the quality improvement, the standards of care were not unified and basic knowledge concerning the evidence-based practices was the result of sporadic training courses. The situation is even worse when it comes to the skills and competencies of health providers at all levels of care. Besides, the non existence of Health Human Resource Development Policy hampers the sustainable supply of well developed new generation to the system. Early neonatal problems start at the pregnancy period, therefore strengthening monitoring of pregnant women is of a crucial importance to avoid complications during the delivery and the first week of life.

Considering the above, Georgian Government expressed “access to quality health care services through the development of relevant medical infrastructure and competent human resources” as one of the reform objectives in the policy paper “Main Directions in Health”. The articulation of the reform objectives was followed by the National response. Within the frame of large scale National response the Government of Georgia/MoLHSA is partnering with different international and local organizations.

The below document defines the roles and responsibilities of partners agreed to enhance the physical and human resource capacity of neonatal service providers in Georgia.

The partners have agreed to the following:

MoLHSA will:

1. Lead and oversee the capacity development process;
2. Advocate for the actual mainstreaming of evidence-based clinical guidelines and protocols into the neonatal field;
3. Support the process through the development of relevant frameworks or normative acts;
4. Review and provide technical inputs on the process in consultation with the working group of neonatologists;
5. Organize and conduct workshops with national medical staff and peripheral medical staff to discuss short, medium and long –term capacity development strategies;
6. Provide policy directions that fits the best the National Health Human Resource development vision; Facilitate external assessments after the commencement of the intervention;
7. Provide support to the partners in programme communication within a scope of available financial resources.

8. Ensure wide dissemination of the programme achievements and blocks on the way of implementation among the Donor community;
9. Liaise directly with the Fund, as defined below, and communicate on the needs defined

National Reproductive Health Council will:

1. Identify and voice the existed gaps related to the field of neonatal care through the working group of neonatologists;
2. Provide technical support to MoLHSA in the planning;
3. Provide technical assistance to MoLHSA in monitoring and evaluation of the re-training process by developing indicators and tools, in cooperation with other partners;
4. Participate in recruitment international/national consultant(s) to assist in particular operational activities of the above mentioned process upon request from MoLHSA/National Reproductive Health Council;

Medical Research Infrastructure Development and Health Services Fund by Chaim Sheba Medical Center (the "Fund")

The Parties hereby agree that the Fund shall provide services out of the services listed below ("**Fund's Services**"), at the specific request of the other Parties, provided however that the terms of any such Fund's Services and the consideration to be paid to the Fund therefore shall be agreed upon by all Parties in definite elaborated agreements ("**Fund's Service Agreements**"). It is hereby clarified that only detailed Fund's Service Agreements executed by the Parties shall establish legal obligations between the Fund and the other Parties hereto.

"Fund's Services":

1. Serve as the international professional consultant of the project.
2. Provide consultancy services in full cooperation with the MoLHSA, the Reproductive Health Council of Georgia, UNICEF and the Tbilisi State Medical University.
3. Perform a thorough evaluation and analysis of the existing situation of the prenatal and neonatal fields in Georgia.
4. Prepare a master-plan for the improvement and reorganization of the prenatal and neonatal fields in Georgia for 10-15 years.
5. Perform a long-term accompaniment of the implementation of the Master-plan.
6. A Biannual assessment and adaptation of the Master-plan
7. Supply Training programs to selected professionals in Georgia and/or Israel as needed.
8. Any other consultancy or training duties as will be agreed upon the parties in the future.

UNICEF will:

1. Support the MoLHSA in coordinating and monitoring the implementation of initiatives within the framework of the Government of Georgia/UNICEF Country Programme 2006-2010 aiming at improving child survival, health and development in Georgia;
2. Enhance the support to the National Reproductive Health Council in operations through technical, human and financial assistance;
3. Recruit international/national consultant(s) to assist in particular operational activities of the above mentioned process upon request from MoLHSA/National Reproductive Health Council;
4. Provide technical advice to MoLHSA in dealing with public/media on all issues related to the programme communication;
5. Through mobilization of technical expertise review the different aspects of the programme and discuss the feasibility of the expansion of the model throughout the country;

6. Support the Government in their efforts aimed at introducing innovative approaches for strengthening governmental commitments in Health Human Resources development;
7. Ensure technical support for the development of supportive supervision mechanism;
8. Allocate financial resources covering the programme needs

Through the period of collaboration all parties will exchange all information/data relevant to the process in a transparent and collaborative manner and will fully cooperate in preparing reports for the public and other partners.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLAIMS

MoLHSA, National Reproductive Health Council, the Fund (Israel) and UNICEF, are each responsible for their own acts or omissions, and those of their employees, contractors or any other personnel engaged by them in the execution of the Project. Each Party is responsible for its own grossly neglectful or intentionally harmful actions.

TERMS AND TERMINATION

This Agreement will become effective once all parties (MoLHSA, NRHC, the Fund and UNICEF) sign it and will commence upon the submission of the master plan.

The implementation of this MoU will be in compliance with the respective administrative and financial rules and procedures of the parties. In case of the conflict of such rules and procedures, those adopted by the MoLHSA will prevail.

If any Party cannot meet its obligations and in the view of the other Party this would seriously endanger the achievement of the Programme objectives, such other Party will have the right to terminate this Agreement. Unless consultations have resolved the problem, this Agreement will terminate thirty (30) days after such other Party sends a written notice of termination.

RESOLUTION OF DIFFERENCES

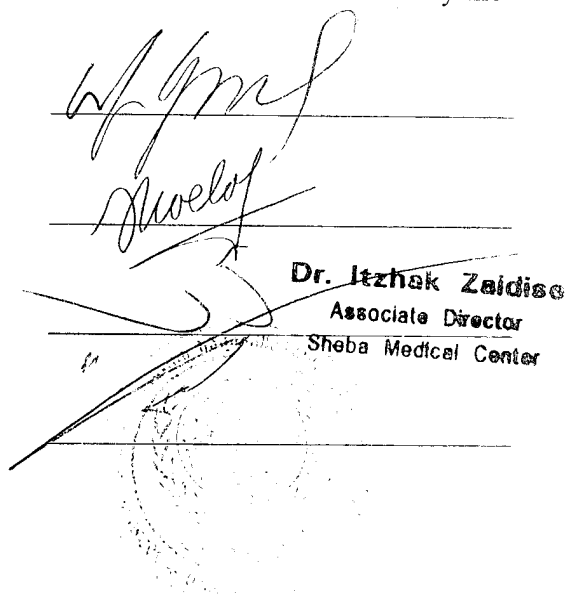
In the case of any dispute, controversy or claim, the Parties will attempt to reach agreement amicably by direct negotiations. If no agreement can be reached within thirty (30) days, the dispute will be referred to arbitration under the relevant rules in force. The Parties will be bound by the arbitration award rendered.

For the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs
Alexander Kvitashvili

For the National Reproductive Health Council
of Georgia, Sandra Elisabeth Roelofs

For Fund (Israel), Itzhak Zaidise

For the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Giovanna Barberis



The right side of the page contains handwritten signatures and official stamps. From top to bottom, there is a signature over a horizontal line, another signature over a horizontal line, and a signature over a horizontal line. Below the third signature is a circular official stamp. To the right of the stamp, the text reads: "Dr. Itzhak Zaidise", "Associate Director", and "Sheba Medical Center".