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THLC/2019/074
8 February 2019

Director-General
Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA)
8th Floor, Government Complex Building B
Chaengwattana Road
Laksi, Bangkok 10210

Dear Director-General,

On behalf of UNICEF Thailand country office (TCO), I have the pleasure of proposing Joint Work Plan for 2019 between Thailand International Cooperation agency (TICA), The Thailand Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and UNICEF, based on discussion between the three Parties.

The collaboration is intended to use South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) as a modality, in order to contribute to the national and global efforts in delivering the Agenda 2030 on sustainable development. This also include the global commitment to end AIDS by 2030 especially the elimination of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV. UNICEF is committed to providing development cooperation with partner countries using South-South Cooperation as a modality.

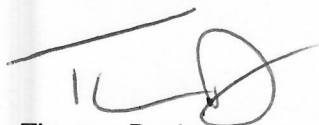
The annexed note to this letter outlines the joint work for 2019 to develop Thailand as a knowledge hub through South-South and triangular cooperation, initially over a period of one year.

This specifically refers to areas of cooperation with regards to:

- 1) Promoting health systems strengthening and universal health care using successful eMTCT as an entry point.
- 2) Facilitate systematic and sustained partner countries' access to Thailand's experience, knowledge and expertise in eMTCT through different SSTC modalities.
- 3) Strengthen Thailand's role as a knowledge hub and capacities of MOPH and other related national/local institutions in providing technical assistance and capacity building support to countries dealing with the challenge of vertical transmission of HIV and syphilis.

Once agreed on the above, a detailed workplan for action will be developed by TICA, MOPH and UNICEF with respect to the areas of collaboration as envisaged in the note, including cost-sharing in accordance with the Parties' respective regulations and procedures, which shall specify the costs or expenses relating to the activity and how they are to be borne by each Party. The Parties may agree to extend this collaboration in writing for subsequent periods.

Yours sincerely,



Thomas Davin
Representative
UNICEF Thailand

BK/nt

Joint Work Plan 2019
between UNICEF and Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA),
in collaboration with Ministry of Public Health (MOPH)
on eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis
through South-South and triangular cooperation

Introduction

The dual **elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis** is a global public health priority. No child should be born HIV positive or infected with congenital syphilis. In 2014, the World Health Organization (WHO) developed global guidelines on the processes and criteria for validation of EMTCT of HIV and syphilis. In 2016, Thailand became the second country in the world, after Cuba, and the first in Asia to be validated for successfully eliminating MTCT of HIV and syphilis. Thailand is a unique case because it has a more generalized HIV epidemic and it also received re-validation certificate in 2018.

Since the success of Thailand in 2016, many countries paid a visit to Thailand to learn from their experience and to benefit from the expertise and knowledge of the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) and relevant agencies that was accumulated as the country completed its journey to elimination. Many countries in the region and around the world could learn from the experience of Thailand and, through South-South and triangular cooperation, systematically access lessons learned and good practices, as well as, solutions that could be adapted to support their own efforts to eliminate MTCT of HIV and syphilis.

Thailand transitioned from a recipient country to a partner of development cooperation and is a strong supporter of **South-South cooperation**. The Government of Thailand, through the Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the support of relevant ministries, agencies, and institutions, has provided technical cooperation to various developing countries in forms of tailor-made projects, experts, volunteers, study visits, trainings and scholarships. In 2016, as chair of the Group of 77, the Government of Thailand announced that it is strengthening South-South partnerships to bring the SDGs into reality as a key national goal. The role of South-South and triangular cooperation have become increasingly important in pursuing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as they allow partner countries to exchange experiences from their respective stages of development and socio-cultural backgrounds with respect for national ownership and non-conditionality.

UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) in Bangkok has worked together with WHO (SEARO and WPRO) and UNAIDS Regional Support Team for Asia-Pacific as members of the Regional Validation Secretariat. EAPRO provides technical assistance to countries on EMTCT (Dual and Triple Elimination) and will work together with UNICEF Thailand Country Office to draw from Thailand's knowledge and expertise to support and build the capacity of countries towards EMTCT of HIV and Syphilis. Globally 12 countries and territories have been certified for EMTCT of HIV and/or syphilis. These countries have different contexts, experiences, knowledge and expertise to learn from. UNICEF thus seeks to work with TICA and MOPH to strengthen a global network for South-South cooperation that will address specific demands of countries that still face MTCT. At global level, UNICEF's Division of Data, Research and Policy provides guidance and support to UNICEF's engagement in South-South Cooperation (SSC), including leading the development of an organization-wide approach to SSC, global advocacy and partnership building for SSC and children, and ensuring that impact of SSC could be assessed and measured. DRP, as well as, the HIV Unit at UNICEF will continue to provide inputs and support in building the cooperation between the Government of Thailand and UNICEF on South-South Cooperation for EMTCT. The first phase of the cooperation may include a knowledge exchange programme on EMTCT and subsequently the areas could be expanded to other programmes of excellence.

Objectives

The main goal of this partnership is to contribute to the global effort to eliminate MTCT of HIV and syphilis by leveraging the power of South-South and triangular cooperation. Specifically, it seeks to:

- 1) Include EMTCT, including health systems strengthening and universal access to healthcare, in Thailand's South-South cooperation agenda;
- 2) Facilitate systematic and sustained partner countries' access to Thailand's experience, knowledge and expertise in EMTCT through different SSTC modalities;
- 3) Strengthen Thailand's role as a knowledge hub and capacities of MOPH and other related national/local institutions in providing technical assistance and capacity building support to countries dealing with the challenges of vertical transmission of HIV and syphilis.

Period of cooperation 1 January - 31 December 2019

Budget Cost-sharing

Partner countries

Thailand's neighboring countries and other strategic countries, countries gearing towards EMTCT validation, or any countries that will benefit from this partnership. UNICEF will also facilitate global access based on demand.

Possible activities

Three types of technical assistance and cooperation activities may include;

- **One-time visit:** for countries to learn from Thailand's model and to motivate them to strengthen their countries' maternal and child health service delivery systems. Next level of support depends on evaluation of the first visit.
- **Long-term support:** for countries intending to enter the journey towards EMTCT, in forms of experience sharing visit, training session (one-week), and planning workshop. Possible follow-up visits depend on each country's progress.
- **Tailored support for EMTCT validation:** for countries that already completed above-mentioned visit or training. This can include specialized training in Thailand, follow-up visit, if needed, mentoring, support on thematic areas during preparation towards validation depending on the needs of respective countries.

The first year may start with international study visit/workshop of multiple batches (20-25 participants each) and mentoring visit outside of Thailand, if necessary.

- Mapping of resource centers in Thailand that contribute to the success in EMTCT. This includes capacity building support, if needed, for Thai agencies and non-governmental institutions to be able to engage in international cooperation and for Thailand to become a knowledge hub on EMTCT. One of UNICEF's roles is to facilitate international exposure for Thai centers in the context of South-South cooperation and beyond.
- Building a global South-South cooperation partnership for EMTCT and may develop a global action plan on South-South cooperation in the area of EMTCT.
- Showcasing successful stories at a side event during the Second United Nations High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) on South-South cooperation and EMTCT to be held in March 2019 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, or any other relevant conferences and opportunities.

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