EXPERTISE FRANCE
GROUPE AFD

Funded by the European Union

TERMS OF REFERENCE

General information

Assignment name	Hiring Individual Consultant to Support in the development of a plan for the equipment of 5 clinical trials centres
Beneficiary	Rwanda Biomedical Centre and clinical trials sites
Country	Rwanda
Host Institution	Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), with frequent visits to clinical trials sites
Total estimated number of days	50 person days over a one-year period, based on approved calendar
Expected start date	15 November 2026
CTU sites (duty locations)	UGHE, King Faisal Hospital, Rwanda Military Hospital, CHUK, CHUB

1. Context and justification of the needs

Expertise France (EF) is a public inter-ministerial agency for international technical cooperation. EF provides project design, technical assistance and institutional capacity building worldwide, operating across diverse fields such as health, safety and security reform, education and skills development, crisis recovery and stabilization, human rights, governance, climate change etc. EF has extensive experience in managing complex, multi-stakeholder international programs, including strong expertise in administrative and financial management. Expertise France in Rwanda has a large portfolio of health-related projects, including the MAV+ initiative.

The MAV+ Project is supporting the establishment and operationalization of five Clinical Trials Units (CTU) to strengthen Rwanda's capacity to conduct high-quality clinical trials and health research in accordance with national regulations and international standards. As part of CTU development, participating research sites require strengthening of laboratory infrastructure, equipment, quality systems, and bio specimen management capacity to support current and future clinical trials. Within this framework, Expertise France has commissioned a study to evaluate the readiness of five clinical trials sites. Based on that study, a plan is being formulated to train the CTU staff, to equip the sites and to make them sustainable.

To ensure laboratory readiness and sustainability, MAV+ seeks to recruit a consultant who will coordinate the CTU strengthening activities related to establishment of inventories and procurement lists, liaising with Expertise France procurement unit, installation of laboratory equipment, and establishment of

biorepositories. The consultant will work closely with participating the 5 CTU, technical partners, contractors, and suppliers to support CTUs laboratories and biobank operational readiness.

The purpose of this consultancy is to provide technical and operational coordination for the planning, procurement preparation, installation, commissioning, and handover of laboratory and biorepositories infrastructure and equipment required to operationalize MAV+-supported clinical trial sites.

The consultant will ensure that laboratory systems are established in accordance with Good Clinical Laboratory Practice (GCLP), biosafety standards, and international clinical trial requirements.

2 Objectives and desired results

General and specific objectives

The general objective of the consultancy is to support RBC, Expertise France and five clinical trials sites to develop a plan to equip the sites according to the desired list of equipment provided, international standards and the existing inventory.

The specific objectives are to:

- Provide each site with an equipment list
- Establish a consolidated procurement list, with technical specifications, for Expertise France to proceed with the procurement of the equipment
- Ensure that the delivery and installation of the equipment is done according to good practices
- Ensure that the Clinical Trials site staff is properly trained by the manufacturers and/or representatives of the manufacturers.

Anticipated results

- Each site has an equipment plan
- A procurement plan with detailed technical specifications is available
- Each site is fully equipped according to international standards
- Clinical trials sites staff is trained to use and maintain the equipment
- A maintenance plan is available for each site

3 Description of the assignment

Planned activities

Procurement and Equipment Coordination

- Establish/validate the inventory of equipment at each of the five sites
- Prepare technical specifications for laboratory equipment, furniture, and supplies.
- Develop laboratory procurement lists.
- Support procurement processes in collaboration with Expertise France.
- Participate in technical evaluation of bids and equipment selection where required.
- Track procurement status, delivery schedules, and installation timelines.
- Verify delivery and functionality of procured equipment.

Equipment Installation and Commissioning

- Coordinate installation and commissioning of laboratory equipment.
- Ensure equipment qualification, calibration, and validation are completed.
- Coordinate vendor-led training for laboratory personnel.
- Establish equipment maintenance, service schedules and budget.
- Establish equipment inventories and commissioning records.

Biorepository Establishment

- Coordinate the establishment of biorepositories at CTUs
- Assess infrastructure, equipment, and operational requirements for bio specimen storage and management.
- Develop implementation plans for biobank establishment and operationalization.
- Coordinate procurement and installation of biobanking equipment including:
    - Ultra-low temperature freezers
    - Refrigerators and cold-chain systems
    - Backup power systems
    - Temperature monitoring systems
    - Sample tracking systems
    - Bio specimen processing equipment
    - Support software procurement, installation and training of the staff
    - Transportation and shipment
    - Inventory management
    - Sample retrieval and distribution
    - Quality assurance and quality control
    - Biosafety and biosecurity
    - Emergency response and disaster recovery
- Support implementation of Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS) and specimen tracking systems.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

- Develop and maintain implementation trackers for procurement, electronics systems and biorepositories activities.
- Monitor progress against work plans and timelines.
- Identify implementation challenges and propose mitigation measures.
- Prepare monthly and quarterly progress reports.
- Document achievements, lessons learned, and recommendations.

Anticipated deliverables

The consultant shall provide:

- Inception report and detailed work plan. A detailed delivery schedule, with indicative due dates for each item below, shall be proposed by the consultant in the Inception Report and validated by the MAV+ Project Lead.

- Laboratories inventories and needs.
- Laboratory procurement and equipment tracking matrix.
- Technical specifications for laboratory and biobanking equipment.
- Biorepository Establishment Plan.
- Synthesis of equipment installation and commissioning reports.
- Synthesis of Training reports and participant records.
- Final consultancy report documenting achievements, remaining gaps, and sustainability recommendations.

Description of the deliverable	**Estimative timeline**	**Estimated person days (Max 50 days)**
Inception report and detailed work plan	15 days after contract signing	5
Inventories, technical specifications for laboratory and biorepositories	30 days after contract signing	20
Support to procurement	60 days after deliverable 2 is shared	10
Equipment installation and commissioning reports	30 days after installation	5
Training reports	10 days after training	5
Final report	Once all activities are completed, and not later than one year after contract signing	5

Coordination

The consultant will:

- Report to the MAV+ Project Lead and designated RBC focal person.
- Work closely with laboratory managers, CTU focal persons, procurement teams, contractors, and technical partners.
- Provide regular updates, as it will be agreed during the inception phase, to the MAV+ Project Lead and designated RBC focal person on implementation progress and key risks
- Deliverables will be reviewed and formally validated by the MAV+ Project Lead, in coordination with the designated RBC focal person, prior to final acceptance and related payment.
- Reports will be Prepared and submitted and deliverables in English.

4 Place, duration and terms of performance

Implementation period/contract period:

one Year

Start date:

December 2026

End date:

Approximatively end of November 2027

5 Required expertise and profile

Education

- Minimum Master's degree in Medical Laboratory Sciences, Laboratory Management, Biomedical Sciences, Clinical Research, Public Health, Biomedical Engineering, or equivalent field.

Experience

- At least seven (7) years of experience in laboratory systems strengthening, laboratory management, clinical research laboratories, or related fields.
- Demonstrated experience coordinating laboratory infrastructure and equipment projects, with at least two (2) similar projects/ assignments successfully completed in the past 7 years.
- Proven experience in procurement and installation of laboratory equipment (provide any relevant document proving those experience)
- Proven experience supporting partner institutions in an international cooperation framework, with proof of at least 1 similar project / assignment successfully completed,
- Proven Experience supporting establishment or management of biorepositories and biobanks (provide any relevant document proving those experience).
- Knowledge of Good Clinical Laboratory Practice (GCLP) and laboratory quality management systems.
- Experience working with donor-funded health or research programs is desirable.
- Fluency in English is required; working knowledge of French is a strong asset.

6. Application Requirements

Interested consultants are invited to submit:

- A technical proposal outlining their understanding of the assignment, methodology, and detailed work plan.
- A financial proposal with professional fees including any related costs.
- A curriculum vitae (CV) highlighting relevant experience.
- At least two references or examples of similar work conducted in the past seven years.

7. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Relevant academic qualifications (CVs, degree, certificates)	10%
Experience in similar assignments (and proof of previous experience)	30%
Technical approach and methodology and clear work plan	30%
Financial proposal	30%

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Performance will be assessed based on:

- Timely implementation of laboratory rehabilitation activities.
- Progress in procurement and installation of laboratory equipment.
- Establishment and operational readiness of biorepositories
- Number of laboratory personnel trained.
- Timely submission of reports and deliverables.
- Achievement of laboratory readiness milestones for CTU operations.

9. Assignment reports

An interim report must be forwarded by e-mail to the project Lead, upon completion of each related deliverable and a final and comprehensive report will be submitted on conclusion of the assignment: it must correspond with the deliverable summary analytical report.