



Terms of Reference for Desk Review to:

Identify existing data on maternal, infant and young child (MIYCN) practices and related factors to inform the design of a social and behavior change (SBC) strategy for the Sahel region (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger)

Published: May 7, 2021

Submission deadline: May 12, 2021

Timeframe: May 15- July 15, 2021

I. Introduction:

Alive & Thrive (A&T) is a global nutrition initiative to save lives, prevent illness, and ensure healthy growth of mothers and children. From 2009–2014, A&T demonstrated that rapid improvements in infant and young child feeding (IYCF) are possible in settings as diverse as Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Viet Nam. In 2014, A&T began working in Burkina Faso, India, Nigeria, and throughout the Southeast Asia region, expanding its scope to include maternal and adolescent nutrition, and using agriculture and social protection programs as delivery mechanisms for maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN). Currently, A&T is leveraging its robust network and knowledge base to strengthen systems and build capacity in these and other countries across Africa and Asia, and disseminate innovations, tools, and lessons worldwide.

In West Africa, A&T partners with existing regional SUN networks and organizations such as UNICEF, WHO and the West African Health Organization (WAHO) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to advocate for stronger maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN) policies and implementation.

A&T's is supporting the World Food Program (WFP) in designing an SBC strategy for its CRIALES project that is focused on food-and nutrition security by strengthening livelihoods of people affected by crises. The SBC strategy will focus on increasing changing demand for nutrient dense foods among the project beneficiaries in the fragile contexts of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The support will also strengthen SBCC linkages between public and private sector and among individuals, communities and institutions.

II. Background for the Desk Review

Maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN) practices such as diverse food consumption during pregnancy and lactation, exclusive breastfeeding within the first hour after birth, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, and consumption of diverse foods with adequate quantity and feeding

frequency between six and 23 months are associated with reduced maternal and child morbidity and mortality, and improved child growth and cognition.

The determinants, or influencing factors, for MIYCN practices are many and varied by context. Maternal related factors such as knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy often play a role, in addition to family and community support. Social norms, advice and support from health workers and other trusted advisors, as well as policy and systems-level factors, may facilitate or hinder the adoption of a certain behaviors. The food supply chain and personal and external food environment also interact and act as influencers and are also critical in understanding determinants of key maternal and child practices related to diet quality and quantity.

Changing MIYCN behaviors is complex and multifaceted. The Sahel region represents a particularly challenging context for improving nutrition.

Alive & Thrive will assist WFP to design an SBC strategy and associated interventions, messages and materials to improve key MIYCN practices in the Sahel region. The SBC strategy will have two main areas of focus:

1. The household/community level: to improve early and exclusive breastfeeding; the quantity and the quality of complementary foods provided to children 6-23 months and improve dietary diversity among women of reproductive age.
2. The food systems level: to create an enabling environment for key nutrition practices by Increasing access, availability, affordability and demand (or uptake) of nutrient-dense foods among families; and facilitate demand for nutrient dense food by supporting WFP with food production, processing, preservation and supply.

III. Desk Review Objectives and Methodology

The objective of this desk review is to present the situation of maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN) practices and their determinants in the Sahel region of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. Findings from the desk review will contribute to informing the design of effective strategies, suitable partnerships and relevant platforms/channels to improve social norms and practices for MIYCN in fragile contexts

The desk review will identify existing data on MIYCN practices and related factors, as well as identify gaps in available data needed to inform the design of the SBC strategy. The review will include project and policy documents, national surveys, published studies and grey literature from the countries of focus. Sources of data will include:

- Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS); Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS); published and unpublished quantitative and qualitative literature on nutrition behaviors and the people and factors that influence them in fragile and food insecure settings.
- National nutrition, health, and food and agriculture and communication policies from the three countries, as well as strategies and priorities related to livelihoods.
- Relevant government and non-governmental programs to identify programmatic platforms or ways to reach pregnant women and mothers of infants 0-23 months, including catalysts/influencers of change (for example, traditional, religious, other formal and informal leaders, national celebrities, associations or networks).
- Media reports, outlining information regarding coverage, access and uptake of traditional and social media.
- Available information on the food environment, including the Fill the Nutrition Gap analysis, market functionality assessments, and any other information related to the enabling food environment in order to understand food availability, prices, vendor and product properties, and marketing and regulations.

The Consultant will use a mix of methods including secondary analysis of national data sets, and summarize peer-reviewed and grey literature on the determinant of MIYCN practices, formative research, market functionality analysis, Fill the Nutrient Gap findings etc. The Consultant may also interview key informants, including stakeholders and experts, by phone or through Zoom/Skype to better understand the grey literature, national policies and other existing research of the context etc.

IV. Findings: Report Structure and Content (Illustrative- the final report structure will be finalized once the contract is awarded)

4.1: Summarize data on MIYCN practices for the three countries in the region in graphs:

- IYCF practices: breastfeeding practices (early initiation, exclusive breastfeeding, continued breastfeeding up to 2 years of age); use of breastmilk substitutes; complementary feeding practices for children between 6 to 23 months old with a special focus on dietary diversity, minimum meal frequency.
- Maternal nutrition practices: pre- and postnatal nutrition practices of women, specifically, IFA consumption, nutrition counseling during pregnancy, and dietary diversity and quantity.
- Highlight trends and conduct bivariate analysis by wealth quintiles and other criteria as needed

4.2 Determinants of the IYCF and maternal nutrition practices: this is focused on extracting and summarizing information on what drives mothers to practice the following: early initiation, exclusive breastfeeding, dietary diversity in complementary feeding, dietary diversity in pregnancy and lactation, consumption of IFA supplements. Summarize information from a health and food system perspective- food availability and physical access, economic access, household behaviors related to the role of markets, retailers etc. Also summarize who are the most important key influencers within the family, and in communities of the above listed practices and food safety and quality issues.

Findings will be presented for each of the three countries separately, based on six maternal and nutrition result areas listed as a-e in the table below. (This table is illustrative and will be changed depending on the findings)

Current Status: Key Indicators of MIYCN interventions	Key Determinants of MIYCN Practices				Platforms / Channels to improve MIYCN behaviors: - Programmatic - Communications Platforms / Channels to improve MIYCN behaviors: - Programmatic (health, other) - Communications
	Enabling Factors		Barriers		
Prevalence of practice in country	Personal and external food environment	Health system and other factors	Personal and external food environment	Health system and other factors	
a. IFA supplementation for pregnant women					
b. Dietary diversity for pregnant women					
	-				
c. Early initiation of breastfeeding					
d. Exclusive breastfeeding					
e. Minimum meal frequency of children 6-23 months (complementary feeding)					
f. Minimum dietary diversity of children 6-23 months (complementary feeding)					

4.3 Stakeholder mapping: Key influentials at each level (based on grey literature)

- Policy
- Program –
 - o Health system- region and district staff level, health facility level, community level
 - o Food system-retail and commercial markets, formal and informal vendors, schools
 - o Household
 - o Community level

4.4 What specific policies or guidelines of the government can enable women to improve the above listed practices?

- Comprehensive nutrition programs with clear targets and operational (budgeted) plans to include MIYCN interventions in each country
- An overview of national strategies for breastfeeding or IYCF, or MIYCN, or maternal nutrition giving dates and main components.
- Policies and programs such as cash transfers and household vouchers, public works, nutrition sensitive policies to address dietary diversity, for complementary feeding and women's diets
- Summarize social protection programs, the availability, access and impact of (un)conditional Cash Transfer programs and social health insurance schemes, voucher programs etc.

4.5 Discussion section based on findings (this section will also identify the gaps that need to be addressed through formative research)

4.6 Conclusions

Annexes: References, acronyms, persons interviewed

V. Qualifications:

- Master's degree in Nutrition, Agriculture, Public Health, or related fields.
- 8+ years of experience research literature reviews, secondary analysis of DHS data sets and other primary qualitative and quantitative research, trend analysis etc
- Experience in fragile/humanitarian context preferred.
- Demonstrated experience in reading and analyzing data, understanding the strength of the literature, organizing the data, able to conduct secondary analysis, understand trends etc.
- Familiarity with nutrition health and agriculture systems and conceptual frameworks, particularly around the food environment, the socio-ecological model etc a plus
- French native language. Ability to read, write and speak fluent English a plus.
- Prior work experience in a non-governmental organization (NGO) preferred.

VI. Applied Knowledge & Skills

- Ability to use various search engines for peer-reviewed and grey literature
- Experience with conducting in-depth and key informant interviews
- Attention to detail, dependable and conscientious.
- Strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to take initiative and focus on results.
- Ability to influence, motivate, negotiate and collaborate well with others.

Application Instructions and Deadline

Qualified candidates are encouraged to apply for the consultancy. Please submit a cover letter, biodata form and resume to Francis Koffi fkoffi@fhi360.org with copy to Kevin Iredell kiredell@fhi360.org by May 12, 2021. All questions and clarifications should be submitted by email to Francis Koffi fkoffi@fhi360.org with copy to Kevin Iredell kiredell@fhi360.org by May 10, 2021. The responses will be shared with all parties who expressed interest and published on the website. Propositions received after this date will not be accepted.

Any questions or requests for clarification need to be submitted in writing to the same email addresses by **May 05, 2021 at 5:00PM (West Africa time)**. Answers will be clarified with the RFA in the location/link. No telephone inquiries will be answered.

To be considered, **Applications** must include the following:

1. Cover letter –indicating educational qualification and relevant past experiences as per RFA.
2. CV
3. A technical writing sample (research/ data analyst / reports)
4. Completed Biodata Sheet with cost proposal (daily rate)
5. Three references with contact information

VII. Evaluation criteria:

- a. Relevant subject matter experience (25 points)
- b. Relevant research expertise (25 points)
- c. Fluent in French and English (10 points)
- d. Daily rate and references (20 points)
- e. Past Publications (20 points)

Anticipated Contractual Mechanism:

It is anticipated that Alive & Thrive will issue a Fixed price Consultant Agreement, contingent on mutual agreement on a scope of work and cost. Payments will be linked to submission of certified invoices and timely completion and approval of deliverables, as detailed in the payment schedule incorporated in the Consultant Agreement.

Withdrawal of Applications

- Applications may be withdrawn by written notice, email or facsimile received at any time before award.

False Statements in Offer

- Offerors must provide full, accurate and complete information as required by this solicitation and its attachments.
- Applications become the property of FHI 360.

Award and Notification of Selected Applications

- FHI 360 will not compensate offerors for preparation of their response to this RFA. Issuing this RFA is not a guarantee that FHI 360 will award a contract.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to issue a contract based on the initial evaluation of offers without discussion.
- FHI 360 may choose to award a contract for part of the activities in the RFA.
- FHI 360 may choose to award a contract to more than one offeror for specific parts of the activities in the RFA.
- Special attention will be paid to clearly define the inputs required from FHI 360 to ensure satisfactory implementation of the assignment. FHI 360 may request from short-listed offerors a second or third round of either oral presentation or written response to a more specific and detailed scope of work that is based on the general scope of work in the original RFA.
- FHI 360 has the right to rescind this RFA or rescind an award prior to the signing of a contract due to any unforeseen changes in the direction of FHI 360' client, be it funding or programmatic.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to waive any deviations by offerors from the requirements of this solicitation that in FHI 360's opinion are considered not to be material defects requiring rejection or disqualification; or where such a waiver will promote increased competition and if such action is considered to be in the best interest of FHI 360's client organization, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- Please do not include examples of your work although you may include a website(s) for us to review that reflects your work. If FHI 360 requires additional materials, we will request those materials during the review process.
- Should FHI 360 choose to make an award, all deliverables produced under said award shall be considered the property of FHI 360.
- Should FHI 360 choose to make an award, assignment from award of contract will be subject you to normal tax liability in Bangladesh. Kindly contact the concerned tax authorities for further information in this regard if required.