MWI-01 – LONG TERM TA TO ENHANCE MULTI-SECTORAL NUTRITION MONITORING AND EVALUATION CAPACITY

Terms of Reference (ToRs)

Background
Technical Assistance for Nutrition (TAN) is a project led by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) which seeks to improve the capacity of countries that have joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement to design, deliver, and track the progress of nutrition programs and to generate, learn from and adopt knowledge of what works. Nutrition International is contributing to TAN by coordinating the provision of Technical Assistance (TA) to help national SUN Focal Points in select countries to overcome gaps in capacity for the design and delivery of multi-sectoral national nutrition plans, tapping into its global hub to source and deploy the expertise needed.

Over the past two decades, Malawi has experienced a decline in the rates of undernutrition, an indication that investments in nutrition are paying off. The stunting rate decreased from 47% in 2010 to 37% in 2016 according to Demographic Health Survey (DHS) data. However, the rate remains high and needs continued efforts towards achieving the global target of 22.8% by 2025. In addition, Malawi Demographic Health Survey (DHS) data from 2016 showed relatively stagnant rates of underweight and wasting at 12% and 3%, respectively. Similarly the infant and young child feeding practices need to be improved as only 8% of children aged 6–23 months were given foods from three or more groups and fed the minimum number of times per day (minimum acceptable diet). Micronutrient deficiencies, particularly vitamin A, iodine, and iron, are of major concern and continue to undermine health and development across all age groups. Iron deficiency coupled with the high malaria burden contributes to very high prevalence of anaemia, especially among women (33%) and children (63%)¹.

Malawi joining SUN Movement in 2011 was a re-affirmation of the good progress in policy level multi-sectoral platform, political commitment and development partners commitments. The Government of Malawi developed its first National Nutrition Policy in 2007, whose overall goal was to have a well-nourished nation with sound human resources that effectively contributes to economic growth and prosperity. The new 2017-2021 National Multi-sector Nutrition Policy has been finalized while the National Multi-sector Nutrition Strategy 2017-2021, intended to operationalize the policy, is in the final stages of development. Despite the progress, there are some challenges in coordination, governance and data management for effective and informed decision-making.

Sustained improvement of the nutrition situation in a country would normally require a combination of actions involving a number of sectors which in turn necessitates a multi-sectoral approach. In addition to limited capacity within the sectors, there is limited implementation of harmonized multi-sectoral common result framework to monitor the coverage, progress and review of scaling up nutrition indicators across different sectors.

¹ Malawi Micronutrient Survey Key Indicators Report 2015-16

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Nutrition data, therefore, remain fragmented in sectoral silos and uncoordinated in many cases. The sectors are heavily dependent on survey data therefore there is need to strengthen the routine information system for scaling up nutrition. As different implementing partners are using different data collection tools in districts to monitor nutrition activities, it is essential for each key sector to harmonise their data collection tools so as to have one common tool used across all the districts. The data definition, type, source, aggregation level and frequency of data collection need to be identified and revised for each sector, as there is lack of standardisation of M&E tools. The Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA) is currently in the process of developing multi-sectoral M&E system to address the challenges listed above.

Given this, the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA) will be focusing on strengthening the M&E system by enhancing mechanisms to plan, collect, analyze, disseminate and adopt nutrition information. It is in this framework that the SUN Focal Point has requested Nutrition International TAN project to provide TA (M&E Specialist) to support DNHA to enhance multi-sectoral nutrition M&E. This TA support will build on previous support provided by the UN REACH initiative and will also assist in addressing the information gaps established by the Information Systems for Nutrition in SUN Countries assessment conducted by the SUN movement with support from the TAN project.

Objectives

Overall objective
The overall objective of this TA is to support DNHA to develop and operationalize a functional and comprehensive M&E system for nutrition with the aim of ensuring timely, informed and effective decision making.

Specific Objectives
1. Identify gaps in the nutrition M&E system including gaps in capacity of government staff and other partners and develop a capacity building plan.
2. Facilitate finalization of nutrition M&E system with emphasis on common result framework, harmonized data collection tools, operational guidelines, training modules, multi-sector reporting mechanisms, indicator dash board.
3. Disseminate multi-sectoral nutrition M&E framework and tools with the aim of
4. Strengthen coordination mechanisms that support consolidated results for scaling up nutrition at the national and sub-national level.

Expectations
This TA is expected to bring a significant contribution to the Malawi government’s ability to scale up nutrition by strengthening nutrition M&E systems.

Specifically, the TA support will:
Objective 1: Gap analysis
- Conduct capacity assessment.
- Develop short term and long term capacity building plan.

Objective 2: Development of the nutrition M&E system

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- Develop multi-sector nutrition dashboard
- Train, sensitize and provide ongoing mentorship to staff in line with the capacity building plan.
- Enhance alignment of M&E efforts to the National Multi-sector Nutrition Strategy 2017-2021.

Objective 3: Dissemination
- Facilitate development of simple M&E operational guidelines.
- Roll out M&E tools operational guidelines.

Objective 4: Strengthening the coordination mechanism
- Develop guidance for ensuring nutrition M&E issues are discussed in existing coordination platforms at the national and sub-national level discuss.

The measures to assess success of the TA have been listed below:
1. Nutrition M& E system - Validation and institutionalization of nutrition M&E system including frameworks and tools.
2. Tools for routine collection of key indicators developed as part of the M & E system in use - Improved collection, analysis and use of nutrition information by relevant sectors.
3. Platform that reports on key indicators and data collected via the M & E system - Availability of accurate and reliable nutrition information at the national and sub-national level.
4. Training modules developed and on job refresher training planned - Strengthened capacity of DNHA and partners in multi-sectoral nutrition M&E.
5. Key stakeholders meetings scheduled to discuss routine data collected via M & E system - Enhanced use of data and knowledge to improve service delivery and influence nutrition policies.

Scope of Work
Taking a consultative and participatory approach with leadership from the SUN Focal Point and relevant stakeholders, the Consultant will support DNHA to undertake the following tasks:

i. Facilitate finalization of a nutrition M&E system with emphasis on common result framework, harmonized data collection tools, multi-sector nutrition information system and dash board.
   - Support development of operational guidelines, training modules for nutrition programmes.
   - Review and harmonise data collection tools in collaboration with key sectors.
   - Develop dash board and build capacity of its utilisation and maintenance at all levels.
   - Support development and dissemination of nutrition data bank.

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2 GOM line ministries, donors, UN, civil society, private sector, academia and research among others.
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ii. Roll out multi-sectoral nutrition M&E framework and tools with the aim of strengthening data collection, analysis dissemination and decision making processes.
   - Support development of multi-sector nutrition information framework and web portal for information sharing with stakeholders.
   - Support DNHA to conduct rapid assessments.
   - Support dissemination of research and best practices for knowledge at international, national and district level and sharing network.
   - Support finalisation and population of DNHA website with nutrition information.

iii. Conduct M&E capacity assessment, develop capacity building plan and strengthen the capacity of Government staff and other partners.
   - Support rolling out of national M&E system and tools at all levels
   - Conduct review meetings and supportive supervision targeting government and partner staff on a regular basis.
   - Support joint annual reviews/assessments and learning forums.
   - Support multi-sectoral reviews and coordination meetings

iv. Facilitate strengthening of coordination mechanisms that support consolidated results for scaling up nutrition at the national and sub-national level.
   - Support coordination of Government sectors, Donor, CSO, UN and other stakeholders.
   - Strengthen coordination of stakeholders for learning and sharing of best practices for SUN
   - Provide ongoing support to coordination committees both at national and district level.
   - Support DNHA in implementation of national nutrition policy and strategy.
   - Coordinate M&E related Technical Working Groups meetings.
   - Organise technical consultations for realigning the M&E related protocols and standards.

v. Other relevant tasks needed by the SUN Focal Point, as agreed to by NI.

Duty Station/Location
The Consultant will be based at the DNHA in Lilongwe, Malawi. The DNHA will provide official work space to the Consultant to fulfil individual tasks and hold joint discussions, meetings and reviews.

Travel
The Consultant is expected to travel within Lilongwe to meet with the relevant sector partners and stakeholders, and participate in meetings and workshops. In addition, the Consultant would be expected to undertake travel to district level twice in a quarter. Costs related to travel under this consultancy will be covered by Nutrition International and/or DNHA according to Standard Operating Procedures.

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Timeline
This TA support to the DNHA would be for a period of 18 months starting 1st December 2017 – 31st May 2019 subject to satisfactory performance. The Consultant providing this TA will be working full time for the duration of the assignment.

Management and Reporting
1. The Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Director of DNHA, Government of Malawi who is the SUN FP.
2. The consultant will work hand in hand with DNHA Planning Section, Technical Working Groups (TWGs) and task forces.
3. The SUN Focal Point will facilitate the operational linkages with line ministries, sectoral technical working groups and other stakeholders under this TA both at the national and sub-national level.
4. Nutrition International will provide funding for the assignment, and payment will be subject to performance and reaching deliverables as agreed upon and outlined in the contract.
5. Nutrition International will provide technical input into the assignment and will ensure the quality of the work being delivered by the consultant.
6. Nutrition International, in consultation with the SUN Focal Point will review deliverables prepared by the Consultant as needed prior to sharing externally.

Profile/qualifications of consultant
The Consultant will be selected following a competitive recruitment process. The profile of the consultant has been presented below:

Education:
- Post-graduate level qualification in Nutrition, Public Health or any other related field(s).

Experience:
- At least 6 years professional experience in Nutrition Information Management at international and national levels
- Excellent knowledge of Malawi nutrition landscape and programmes and related sectors.
- Proven experience (from previous similar assignments) in development of M&E systems, tools and frameworks.
- Advanced experience in research methodologies, statistics, data collection and documentation
- Demonstrated ability to develop data collection tools, conduct assessments and analyze data and write reports.
- Strong analytical thinking and excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to work confidently across a variety of stakeholders and levels
- Strong communication, facilitation and negotiation skills
- Experience with working in team-based environment that require a grasp of cross-functional subject matters.
Language Skills
- Fluency in written and spoken English is mandatory.

Nutrition International is committed to gender equality. Consultants are requested to indicate how they will ensure that gender equality considerations are included in the TA outputs.

Application Process
Interested candidates are invited to submit their Up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV) and cover letter by email to TechnicalAssistance@nutritionintl.org on or before 26th October 2017.

Applicants should clearly indicate “MLW-01 – Application to for long term TA to enhance multi-sectoral nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation capacity in Malawi” in the subject line of the email.

Nutrition International is committed to the fundamental principles of equal employment opportunity. Women are encouraged to apply.