Technical Assistance for Nutrition (TAN)

PHL-02 - Support the National Nutrition Council in Scaling up of Rice Fortification and Distribution within the Social Safety Net Programme in the Philippines

Terms of Reference (ToRs)

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

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 SUN countries 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 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.

Under-nutrition in the Philippines remains a serious problem. 30.3% of children under five years of age are stunted, 7.9% are wasted and 19.9% are underweight. The status of micronutrient malnutrition is likewise an important concern in the country. Prevalence of anemia among infants 6 months to 1 year of age is 39.4%, highest among the population groups in the country, and among pregnant and lactating women is 25.2% and 16.6% respectively. Also, poverty incidence among Filipinos is estimated at 21.6 percent, with 3.8 million families being poor.

Philippines joined the SUN Movement in March 2014 with the commitment of ending hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and ensuring that each Filipino enjoys his/her right to good food and good nutrition. In response to the micronutrient deficiencies prevalence in the country, the government has placed a priority on fortification of food products. The enactment of Republic Act No. 8976, also known as “The Philippines Food Fortification Act of 2000”, mandates fortification of wheat flour with vitamin A and iron, cooking oil and refined sugar with vitamin A, and rice with iron. This was decreed as mandatory in November 2000 and full implementation was called for in November 2004. Under this Act, the Department of Health (DoH), through the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), is the lead agency for implementation of the fortification program.

Currently, implementation of the law is done to varying degrees: most of the wheat flour and many of the labeled cooking oil is fortified; sugar is not fortified, due to the industry structure that makes it difficult to identify responsibility for fortification; and the fortification of rice with iron is limited. It is estimated that at certain times, only 2-4% of national rice consumed has been fortified; until late

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1 8th National Nutrition Survey (NNS) 2013
2 Poverty Statistics Authority: 2015 Poverty in the Philippines
3 Republic Act No. 8976 “The Philippine Food Fortification Act of 2000”
4 Rice Supply Chain Diagnostic - Towards Scaling Up Rice Fortification in the Philippines. Hector Maglalang, Consultant, UNICEF and NNC, in collaboration with Karen Codling and Jeff Gwirtz, FFI, Christine Ymata, Researcher - September 2014

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2013 about 15% of Philippine rice was being fortified by the National Food Authority (NFA) with coated premix kernels imported from the United States. Currently, the fortification of rice, a staple food in all regions of the country and consumed by all income groups, is limited and mainly done through private sector initiatives.

With the objective of scaling up rice fortification, the National Nutrition Council (NNC), the highest policy making body for nutrition in the country, implemented a project entitled “Moving Forward towards Mandatory Rice Fortification in the Philippines” with technical assistance from UNICEF. As a part of the project, a work plan for scaling up rice fortification was developed, which recommended initial focus on distribution of iron fortified rice (IFR) within the Social Safety Net Programme (SSNP), to reinforce the use of fortified rice by the program parties so it may reach the four million families registered under it.

The Government’s commitment to scale up rice fortification is also reflected in the Philippines Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) 2017-2022, wherein Mandated Food Fortification (MFF) covering nationwide implementation targeting the general population, has been listed among the 11 target programs.

Fortification of rice for SSNP will require multi-agency coordination. The National Food Authority (NFA), under the Department of Agriculture (DoA), has the mandate to: procure unfortified rice, both imported and local; fortify it for use under social programs in Philippines; and supply the fortified rice to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Department of Education (DepED) for use at their day care centers and schools respectively under the SSNP. The technology to fortify the rice is available with both the NFA and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI), under the Dept. of Science and Technology (DOST). The NNC is tasked with coordinating implementation of the food fortification legislation in the Philippines.

In this context, the NNC has sought TA from Nutrition International under the TAN project to support the scale up of the rice fortification program through the SSNP across the country by strengthening arrangements for rice fortification and distribution to partners within the programme.

Objectives

Overall objective
Support the NNC in scaling up of rice fortification programme under the SSNP in the Philippines.

Specific objectives
1. Analyse the rice fortification policy and programme landscape in the country, including the following, and identify gaps:
   b. Previous rice fortification programme documents and guidance/ studies/ evaluations supported by UNICEF and other partners.

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5 NCP. Review of the Mandatory Food Fortification Component of the Philippine Food Fortification Program. December 2012
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c. Supply chain management mechanism adopted previously for production and distribution of fortified rice within the SSNP.

2. Study and document best practice sub-national level programme model(s) for rice fortification and ascertain success factors.

3. Develop national policy guidance for fortification of rice and the coordination of distribution of IFR within the SSNP, taking into consideration inputs from the Technical Working Group on Rice Fortification and other relevant in-country stakeholders.

4. Recommend mechanisms for engagement of the line departments for production, supply and distribution of IFR within the SSNP.

Expectations

This TA is expected to bring a significant contribution to the Philippines government’s ability to design the national level policy and programme guidance for scale up of rice fortification intervention to cover nearly four million families with supply of IFR under the SSNP. It will:

- Support gathering evidence on existing rice fortification standards and initiatives, and assessment of potential barriers and opportunities for scale up of the programme.
- Guide the formulation of national policy guidance detailing the mechanism for production, supply and distribution of IFR within the SSNP.
- Progress efforts on consensus building, and collaboration of efforts between the line departments for effective and coordinated implementation of the programme.

The successful implementation of the TA will support the NNC to scale up rice fortification and distribution within the SSNP, with well-defined policy guidance detailing the roles and responsibilities of the line departments for implementing the programme.

Following are the success measures that will ensure effective accomplishment of the TA to the NNC:

- National standards for fortified kernels and fortified rice revised and finalized.
- Recommended mechanism for collaborative engagement agreed to by the line departments for supply and distribution of IFR within the SSNP.
- National policy guidance on adopting the recommended mechanism finalized in the form of NNC Governing Board resolution.

Nutrition International is committed gender equality. Consultants are required to indicate how they will ensure that gender equality considerations are included in the provision of technical assistance.

Scope of Work

The purpose of the TA is to support the NNC in scaling up their rice fortification and distribution programme within the SSNP by facilitating collaboration between the line departments in the country. The TA would provide the required thrust on the production and distribution of IFR within the SSNP, to enable partner agencies to reach the 4 million families registered under the programme. Expected duration of the assignment is six months.
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The applicants are requested to present specific objective-based activities along with proposed level of effort required, in terms of number of days, as part of their technical proposal.

**Deliverables**

1. Desk review of relevant rice fortification documents completed and report, including impeding and enabling factors for scale up of IFR and distribution within SSNP, prepared.
2. Case Study on Compostela Valley Province initiative of implementing the rice fortification mandate completed – with success factors identified for inclusion in national policy document.
3. Multi-stakeholder consultation held with Technical Working Group (TWG) for Rice and other relevant stakeholders to gain inputs to the policy guidance for rice fortification and report prepared.
4. Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) developed to build and formalize collaboration between NFA and DSWD & DepEd respectively for supply of IFR by NFA to the latter.
5. Policy guidance developed for scale up of rice fortification and distribution program within SSNP in the Philippines.
6. Policy guidance disseminated amongst relevant sectors and stakeholders and report prepared.

**Duty Station/Location**

The Consultant(s) will be based out of Philippines for this assignment. The NNC would provide official work space to the Consultant(s) to hold joint discussions, meetings and reviews. The Consultant(s) can otherwise work from home.

**Travel**

The Consultant(s) is expected to undertake up to two visits to select Local Government Units (LGUs) - provincial/ city/ municipality level, for a maximum of 15 days. One of these visits would be for a period of 5-7 working days to the Compostela Valley Province, to document the success of promoting use of IFR.

In addition, the consultant(s) would be expected to travel within Manila to meet with the relevant sector partners and stakeholders, and participate in meetings and workshops.

All travels required under this consultancy will be provided for. Perdiems are based on standard rates of the organization.
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Timeline
This TA support to the NNC will be for a period of six months from August 15, 2017 to February 15, 2018. The Consultant(s) providing this TA will be working full-time for the duration of the assignment.

Management and Reporting/Coordination mechanism
1. The Consultant(s) will liaise directly with and report to the Deputy Director, NNC. S/he will also work closely with the National SUN Focal Point for the Philippines and Nutrition International team members.
2. The NNC will facilitate the operational linkages with all the relevant stakeholders for this assignment.
3. Nutrition International will provide the funding for the assignment, and payment will be subject to performance and reaching deliverables as agreed upon at the moment of contract signing.
4. Nutrition International will provide technical input into the assignment and is responsible for assuring the quality of the work being delivered by the Consultant(s).
5. Nutrition International will review the Consultant’s work and review with the Deputy Director, NNC for feedback prior to sharing externally (as needed).

Profile/qualifications of consultant(s)
A national consultant with the requisite knowledge and skill set or a team of consultants with specific skill sets, led by a national consultant would be preferred for this TA.

The Consultant(s) will be selected following a competitive recruitment process. The profile of the Consultant(s) has been presented below.

Education:
- Doctoral or Post-graduate level qualifications in Nutrition/ Food and Nutrition/ Food Science/ Food Technology/ Community Nutrition/ Public Health Nutrition/ Public Policy/ Public Health/ any other related field(s).
- Qualification in Nutrition is mandatory.

Language Skills:
- Fluency in written and spoken English is mandatory.
- Fluency in written and spoken Tagalog would be preferred.

Experience:
- At least 15 years of technical experience in the fields of nutrition/ food fortification and/or public health policy and/or programme review, planning, designing and implementation/ monitoring.
- Excellent knowledge of Government of Philippines nutrition, food fortification and health portfolio and programmes.
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- Advanced technical skills and experience in food fortification policy review and development, including aligning national regulation and legislation with international recommendations.
- Proven leadership in all steps in programme cycle (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) of large-scale food fortification programmes with public health objectives.
- Experience of building capacities of government sectors and/or other partners on areas broadly related to nutrition and health.
- Experience of providing strategic policy advice to national government(s).
- Involvement in advocacy with the national government(s) and other relevant stakeholders.
- Proven experience in managing multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral working groups and negotiations in national and/or international settings, particularly in the field of food fortification and/or nutrition.
- Experience in planning, organizing and managing national or international workshops/conferences.

Application Process

Interested consultants are invited to submit the following by email to TechnicalAssistance@NutritionIntl.org before 30th June 2017.

- Up-to-date curriculum vitae(s)
- Technical proposal: not exceeding five pages, describing the consultant(s) understanding of the task, proposed methodology, responsibilities of key stakeholders and detailed work plan that breaks down activities and outputs.
- Financial proposal: including monthly fee rate, suggested number of trips and any other expenses required to fulfill the terms of the consultancy (meetings, materials, etc.).

Kindly mention ‘Application for PHL-02 - Support to rice fortification scale-up under SSNP, Philippines’ in the subject line of the email.