

Evaluation of the Use of Phone Surveys for Nutrition International

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Background

Nutrition International aims to improve the health of adolescent girls and women of reproductive age; pregnant women and their new-borns; and infants and young children through reducing anaemia, birth defects, low birth weight and stunting. To achieve this, Nutrition International implements interventions with local governments and partners in selected high-burden countries in Africa and Asia.

In late 2019/early 2020, Nutrition International conducted baseline program surveys in Nigeria, Kenya, and Pakistan. The COVID19 pandemic occurred shortly after, and globally, access to services was affected, so in 2021, NI repeated the surveys to examine the effect of COVID19. However, due to the risk from COVID19, these surveys were conducted by phone rather than in person.

Nutrition International is interested in the quality of phone surveys, whether to continue with them as an optional methodology. Considerable interest has been expressed in using the method as a low-cost way to obtain interim coverage results, but more information is needed on this method before proceeding. NI requires a consultant well versed in both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess the validity of the findings of the phone surveys and advise Nutrition International on future uses of phone surveys, including any adaptations to turn the method into a monitoring technique and what survey weights to apply.

We propose contracting a consultant to conduct an evaluation of the in-home and phone surveys. The evaluation would comprise a desk review of phone surveys as a method, further analysis of the data, qualitative interviews with the survey companies conducting the surveys and Project Officers responsible for the programs, and triangulation with HMIS data where possible. The evaluation would result in a short internal report with recommendations for future use of the method for Nutrition International, with the option to collaborate on a broader an article for publication in a peer reviewed journal.

Objectives

Overall objective

Evaluate the 2021 round of phone surveys, and develop recommendations on their possible future use at Nutrition International

Specific objectives

1. Conduct a desk review on phone surveys as a methodology to identify factors which may affect the use of phone surveys at Nutrition International, including the type of quality checks that should be applied to data from these surveys
2. Conduct qualitative interviews with the survey consultancy companies who conducted the surveys and key stakeholders at Nutrition International
3. Conduct a quantitative analysis of the 2021 data to examine for systematic bias in the sample compared to the 2020 baseline and triangulation of results with HMIS data where available
4. Write a short report to set out the findings and recommendations for the future use of phone surveys at Nutrition International

5. Prepare relevant section of a manuscript for publication on the experience of using phone surveys at Nutrition International

Expectations

It is expected that this consultancy will lead to the following results:

1. Answer key questions on the validity of the phone survey approach and advise NI on the possible future use of the methodology
2. Key written outputs include a short report for internal use at Nutrition International to record key findings and recommendations, and component sections for a draft article for publication in a peer reviewed or field journal

Nutrition International is committed to gender equality. Consultant is required to indicate how s/he will ensure that gender equality considerations are included in the provision of TA.

Scope of Work

The consultant is expected to undertake the following activities and produce the listed deliverables.

Under objective 1: Conduct a desk review on phone surveys as a methodology to identify factors which may affect the use of phone surveys at Nutrition International, including the type of quality checks that should be applied to data from these surveys

Evaluation questions to be addressed under this objective may include the following, although further refinement of these questions with the selected consultant would be welcomed:

- 1.1. What are some of the documented differences between phone and in person surveys?
- 1.2. Are there any documented ways of mitigating any differences in the two approaches?
- 1.3. Are there any best practice recommendations for using phone surveys and comparing the results to in person surveys?

Deliverable 1:

- 1.1. A short summary of key findings to form the desk review section of the report

Under objective 2: Conduct qualitative interviews with the survey consultancy companies who conducted the surveys and key stakeholders at Nutrition International

Evaluation questions to be addressed under this objective may include the following, although further refinement of these questions with the selected consultant following completion of objective 1 will be expected:

- 2.1 (For survey teams) What was the experience of carrying out the phone surveys? What were the key differences and challenges compared to in person surveys?
- 2.2 (For survey teams and Nutrition International staff) What, if any, were the threats to data quality from changing the methodology this year?
- 2.3 (For Nutrition International staff) how credible are the results, given what you know about the programs and the situation with COVID19?

Deliverables 2:

- 2.1 A topic guide, approximately 5-10 key informant interviews, and a written summary of the key findings, which will form the qualitative section of the evaluation report.

Under objective 3: Conduct a quantitative analysis of the 2021 data to examine for systematic bias in the sample compared to the 2020 baseline and triangulation of results with HMIS data where available

Evaluation questions to be addressed under this objective may include the following, although further refinement of these questions with the selected consultant would be welcomed:

- 2.1 What are the differences between in person baseline and the phone survey midline samples? If there are differences, what might be the cause?
- 2.2 What is the cost difference between the in person and phone surveys, and how might we further reduce costs, particularly in terms of sample size

Deliverable 3:

3. A written summary of the key findings, which will form the quantitative section of the evaluation report

Under objective 4: Write a short report to set out the findings and recommendations for the future use of phone surveys at Nutrition International

Deliverable 4:

4. A report for internal use at Nutrition International setting out the findings of the desk review, the qualitative interviews, and quantitative analysis (approx 10-20 pages). The report will conclude with key recommendations

Under objective 5: Prepare relevant section of a manuscript for publication on the experience of using phone surveys at Nutrition International

Deliverable 5:

5. Identify with Nutrition International a suitable peer reviewed or technical journal and prepare appropriate sections of an article for publication according to the publication specifications based on the findings of the report

Duty Station/Location

Due to the current COVID situation, all meetings and interviews will be held virtually. The consultant will work from home throughout. No travel is envisaged at this time.

Timeline

The project will require virtual meetings with Nutrition International. The scope of work expected to require 20-30 days in number. We expect to be able to complete all activities and deliverables by February 28th.

Management and Reporting/Coordination mechanism

The consultant will directly report to Colin Beckworth, Nutrition Surveillance Technical Advisor, and Sara Wuehler, Nutrition Surveillance Senior Technical advisor

Profile/qualifications of consultant

The project requires one or two consultants with the following skills:

- Experience in qualitative data collection and analysis
- Experience in quantitative analysis
- Experience with surveys
- Experience of preparing articles for a variety of journals

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

Application Process

Interested firms or consultants are invited to submit the following by email to proposals@nutritionintl.org by 25th Nov. Mark your proposal “Phone Survey Evaluation”. Please include:

- Up-to-date curriculum vitae (CV)
- Technical proposal: 3 pages or less, describing the consultant’s understanding of the task, proposed methodology, and summary work plan setting out proposed timelines for activities and deliverables.
- Financial proposal: including daily fee rate in the currency of the country where living (in a table at the end of the technical proposal; and if accepted will also be required in excel)

Submissions without technical and financial proposals will not be reviewed.