

Terms of Reference

Position	OSN Consultant
Duty Station	Rome, HQ
Type of Appointment	Consultancy
Duration	6 months, with possibility of extension
Start Date	ASAP

Fill the Nutrient Gap

I: BACKGROUND

Improved nutrition situation analysis can increase the understanding of the likely magnitude and main causes of the nutrient gap among a particular target group, e.g. children aged 6-23 months or pregnant and lactating women (PLW), for a particular context. This analysis is based on a better and more in-depth analysis of existing nutrition, dietary intake, food security, household food expenditure and socio-economic data.

During 2014, WFP, with technical input from key research institutes (University of California Davis, IFPRI, Epicentre) and UNICEF, developed a framework to strengthen nutrition situation analysis and decision-making on strategies to improve complementary feeding and nutrient intake of PLW at country level, now called “Fill the Nutrient Gap” Tool. The framework aims to improve decision-making on strategies for improving complementary feeding with an emphasis on improving the quality and access to nutrients, especially during the critical period of the first 1,000 days.

In addition to a more in-depth analysis of existing secondary data on nutrition and food security (including nutrition and health surveys, household socio-economic and expenditure surveys, consumption data, market surveys, among others) as part of the tools to be used for the improved nutrition situation analysis in country, Cost of Diet (CoD)¹ and Optifood² have also been identified as sources of very valuable information to guide decision making.

¹ The Cost of Diet (CoD) is an analytical methodology and tool using linear programming, designed and developed by Save the Children (STC) UK in 2006. The CoD is a novel tool for understanding the barriers to improving nutrition. The tool harnesses information on local food availability, prices, nutrient requirements for different age groups, and household composition and calculates the cost and composition of the least expensive theoretical diet that meets the nutritional requirements of each individual in a household. Due to growing demand for the tool, STC has recently introduced a new, more stable platform for this free software. The CoD methodology is one of the key tools featured in the strengthened nutrition situation analysis framework, because of the specific focus on assessing affordability of a diet composed of locally available foods that meets people's nutrient requirements.

² Optifood was developed by WHO in collaboration with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, FANTA, and Blue-Infinity. It is a linear programming software application that allows public health professionals to identify the nutrients people obtain from their local diets, and to formulate and test population-specific food-based recommendations to meet their nutritional needs. It requires information on what people actually eat and spend on food, by target group.

In 2015 the “Fill the Nutrient Gap” Tool began to be piloted in El Salvador, Ghana and Madagascar. The piloting phase and consolidation of lessons learnt, is anticipated to last until the end of Q1 of 2016. The initial country roll out can begin in Q2 of 2016. For this stage of the roll-out we would like to commence with one country in each of the six WFP regions. These 6 countries will be selected in close coordination with Regional Bureaux and according to specific country needs, and prioritisation will be given to COs that are in the process of developing their country strategies, as this information could be used to support their programmatic and policy decisions for nutrition. Countries that have already been identified include Pakistan and Guatemala.

II: OBJECTIVES

Support the pilot-testing and initial roll out of “Fill the Nutrient Gap”, under the supervision of Lynnda Kiess and Saskia De Pee, and in collaboration with key technical focal points within the Nutrition Division and specific country offices and respective regional bureaux.

III: ACTIVITIES

- Introduce and explain the framework and the process to key stakeholders both internal and external to WFP, including different government stakeholders, senior management, technical and programme staff within WFP
- In coordination with CO, RB and HQ Nutrition, identify, compile and analyse key data sources for the improved nutrition situation analysis, as indicated in the draft framework.
- Desk-based research to gather and review secondary data.
- Help assess the need/opportunities to conduct Cost of Diet or Optifood analysis in the selected COs, or use data from those analyses in case they’ve already been conducted.
- If CoD analysis is required, support the CO in the conduct, analysis and modelling work of different types of strategies, transfers and delivery modalities.
- Based on the results of the analysis of multi-source data at country level, contribute to the development of recommendations for strategies to improve nutrient intake of vulnerable groups, with a focus on the first 1000 days of life, in close coordination with CO, RB and HQ Nutrition Division.
- Support the COs in technical discussions with key government counterparts and other stakeholders in nutrition with regard to the analysis (including selection of what to model, interpretation of findings, etc)
- Support to the CO in the development of advocacy material with key messages derived from the nutrition situation analysis and the recommendation of specific strategies to improve nutrient intake during the first 1000 days.

IV: KEY DELIVERABLES

- Final report for each selected country for field testing of the draft framework for improved nutrition situation analysis and decision tool, reflecting the step by step process explained in the framework, key data sources used and main recommendations for strategies to improve nutrient intake of vulnerable groups during the first 1000 days.

- Draft advocacy material summarizing the key messages derived from the analysis in the field test countries, to be used by the CO for further policy discussions with their government counterparts.

V: DUTY STATION

The consultant will be based in Rome with regular travel to the countries and possibly also RBs where the tool will be field tested.

VI: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Graduate level (Masters or above) in Public Health (Epidemiology or biostatistics), Nutrition, Economics (Econometrics), Statistics or other socio-economic disciplines with a strong quantitative data analysis component.
- Proven capacity to conduct quantitative data analysis based on secondary data and to use statistical software (SPSS, Stata, SAS or other).
- Proven capacity to coordinate with a number of different stakeholders, including national governments, research institutions, private sector, NGO partners, among others.
- Professional level of written and spoken English, and aptitude to writing different types of communications. Professional knowledge of a second UN language an asset.
- 5-7 years previous experience working in a related area

Please send your CV and cover letter to Giulia Baldi (giulia.baldi@wfp.org) and Indira Bose (indira.bose@wfp.org)