

TERMS OF REFERENCE

SHORT TITLE OF ASSIGNMENT

Consultant to undertake a comprehensive dietary intake assessment in Solomon

BACKGROUND

Solomon Islands is grappling with the triple burden of malnutrition which are undernutrition (chronic and acute); micronutrient deficiencies (such as anaemia) and overnutrition (overweight and obesity). Undernutrition and iron deficiency anaemia are high among under 5 children with 32 per cent of them stunted; 8 per cent wasted, and 39 per cent anaemic. Overweight and obesity affect a significant portion of children (23 per cent) and adults (57 per cent) compounded by unhealthy dietary habits such as consumption of insufficient fruits (33 per cent) and vegetables (21 per cent) and high daily intake of carbonated soft drinks among school-aged children (45 per cent).

Children spend a significant portion of their day at schools, and healthy meals and snacks are therefore essential not only for their overall health and wellbeing but also for improved learning outcomes - including school enrolment, attendance, and overall school performance. There is evidence across the globe on the positive impact of meal provision in schools on education outcomes. In Solomon Islands, there is a wide diversity of locally produced nutritious foods such as sweet potato, cassava, yam, taro, banana, pumpkin, green leafy vegetables, and a wide range of high value nutritious food crops including slippery cabbage, tomato, pineapple, peanut, ngali-nut, watermelon, and others. These foods hold significant potential to support the provision of low-cost, nutritious school meals.

With funding support from the Government of Japan, UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (NAL), and Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS), has launched a three-year school meal project in 9 schools in Western and Isabel Provinces. In addition, support from Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) enables UNICEF to assist additional schools in Guadalcanal Province to strengthen foster healthy food school environments that are adaptive and responsive to climate change.

To ensure that locally available foods in Western, Isabel and Guadalcanal provinces are effectively utilized in school meal provision, a comprehensive dietary intake assessment in schools is required. In addition, a mapping of the locally available foods and recipes that incorporate these foods is also needed. The dietary intakes data will be used to establish nutrient intake gaps in the current school meals. When combined with data on local foods mapping and low-cost recipes of locally available foods, this information will support the development of healthy, climate-resilient school meal model plans and menus which address existing nutrient deficiencies using climate resilient locally sourced nutritious foods.

Therefore, UNICEF in collaboration with the MEHRD, MAL, and MHMS is seeking a consultant to conduct comprehensive dietary intake assessments in 9 schools in Western and Isabel provinces and 7-9 schools in Guadalcanal province. The consultant will closely work with the provincial government teams from the above three ministries and coordinate with other consultants and partners working to strengthen school nutrition. This work will directly contribute to (and will benefit from) a related consultancy on development of teaching aids for curriculum review for nutrition.

OBJECTIVE / SCOPE OF WORK

The objective of this consultancy is to conduct a comprehensive dietary intake assessment, in schools and their surrounding communities in Isabel, Western, and Guadalcanal provinces, with emphasis on selected schools which are part of the school meal provision and climate resilience projects. The findings of the assessment are expected to contribute to revising and updating the following:

- School Nutrition Guidelines including: 1) Meal plans for the school kitchen 2) Recipes for healthy snacks for use by food vendors in the schools
- Nutrition Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) materials for use in schools

The assignment includes:

1- Quantified dietary intake assessment

- a) Mapping of locally available food (Local food basket)

- Undertake a thorough mapping of locally available food (local food basket) in the selected areas Western, Isabel, and Guadalcanal provinces. Establish the foods consumed in relation to cultural diversity, indigenous dietary patterns; the variations in food availability, and also foods acquired through purchase vis a vis those directly by school gardens.
- Document the foods commonly consumed across different seasons, locations in each province, and sources (purchase or direct farm produce).
- Document pricing/costing of all the mapped foods
- b) Data collection for quantified dietary assessment**
 - Undertake required preparations to enable data collection of quantified dietary intake assessment of school learners within the schools (in the study) and immediate surrounding communities. This should include:
 - Collecting quantified 24-hour recall data in the selected schools and provide all the daily quality assurance required for the data collection
 - Collect data on the food prices for all the list of foods reported in the survey
 - Mapping of proportion of meals supplied by school gardens
 - Organize and clean all collected data into formats fitting for analyses and modelling, and also ensure that the data is entered into relevant data entry software
- c) Provide ad-hoc support towards data analyses**
 - Liaise with the data analysis team (recruited separately by UNICEF) and provide ad hoc support as required, including clarifying questions related to data, to facilitate the analysis and modelling of the collected quantified dietary intake data and the development of food-based recommendations for optimal dietary intakes in the schools.
 - Support engagement with stakeholders to obtain feedback and validate the study findings with the schools and relevant stakeholders.

2- Local recipe modifications

- In coordination with relevant local stakeholders, collect data on common food preparations methods, and compile a comprehensive list of local recipes based on locally produced foods.
- Collect data on common dietary practices/habits, food culture norms in the pilot schools and their surrounding communities
- Review the nutritional value of recipes in consideration of the results which will come from the analysis of the dietary intakes data and modeling; recommend recipes for further modeling for optimal dietary intakes
- Pre-test and draft modified recipes and meals plans, incorporating stakeholder feedback into revisions
- Further adapt modified recipes for large population food preparation
- Finalize a proposed set of one week's full-day meal and snack plans, incorporating the modified recipes and tailored for different groups (Boarding students and day scholars)
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3- Mapping of socio-cultural barriers and enablers to consumption of local nutritious foods among learners

- Undertake a mapping of socio-cultural barriers and enablers which would hinder or facilitate learners in the schools from consuming nutritious/healthy locally available foods
- Investigate any other influencers on food-related preferences, and food cultural norms for the school-aged learners to understand what is being sold in shops/canteens near schools
- Identify social media or any other influencers in the lives of students influencing their dietary patterns.

4. Contribution to developing school-based nutrition IEC materials and guidelines, including content on nutrition for curriculum and extracurricular revisions

- Contribute to reviewing existing school-based IEC materials and nutrition-related guidelines
- Based on the data from the assessment, support the development of nutrition content appropriate for integration into school curricular and extracurricular guidelines
- In liaison with stakeholders, contribute to developing relevant content for potential school nutrition guidelines, in line with findings emerging from the assessments

ACTIVITIES, DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINES, PLUS BUDGET PER DELIVERABLE			
ACTIVITY	DELIVERABLES	ESTIMATED TIME TO COMPLETE (Cooks & Niue)	PAYMENT
<p>Inception Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a concise and brief inception report, summarizing the methodology. • Review any existing formal and informal reports of assessments on any related • Consult with the Provincial Ministries of Education, Health, and Agriculture teams, UNICEF and other relevant stakeholders, and finalize methodology and work plan. • In addition, prepare a detailed research protocol explaining in detail the methodology for quantified dietary intakes through the 24-hr recalls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception report summarizing approved methodology and workplan for the assignment 	5 days	25%
<p>Quantified dietary intake assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a food basket mapping including collecting data on food costs, as outlined in the “Objective/Scope of Work” section • Conduct data collection (followed by entry) of quantified dietary intakes as outlined in the “Objective/Scope of Work” section. • Provide ad-hoc support to the team who will undertake the data analysis and modelling of quantified intakes and develop food-based recommendations for optimal intakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief report on the Local Food basket mapping detailing the locally available foods in the selected provinces • Food Lists of all locally available foods including prices, use (typical portions) • Cleaned data sets of 24-hr recalls 	55 days	40%
<p>Recipe modification and menu development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map out locally available foods and local recipes which could be modified • Undertake recipe modification in consultation with schools and communities to inform menu development <p>Mapping of socio-cultural barriers and enablers to consumption of local nutritious foods among learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map out and synthesize barriers and enablers to consumption of local nutritious foods among the learners as outlined in the “Objective/Scope of Work” section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation of all local recipes and foods • A brief report on dietary practices/food culture norms • Finalized set of full-day meal plans for a week for each school • Recommended foods list which the schools should produce within their farms; and recommended list for food purchases including required quantities per week/term for meal planning • Brief on preservation methods for foods which would be produced within the schools 	10 days	25%

School-specific final reports emanating from this assignment including findings from analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final merged report • Power point slide deck, Final cleaned data files, 	5 days	10%
Total		75 days	100%

QUALIFICATIONS, SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE, AND ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES

Bachelors Masters PhD Other

Education:

A Master’s degree in Nutrition, Food Science, Dietetics, Public Health, or other relevant disciplines required. PhD will be an added advantage.

Experience:

- A minimum of 5 years of professional experience in nutrition related work
- Experience in conceptualizing, designing and implementing dietary intake assessments and linear programming-based analyses for developing food-based recommendations.
- Work experience serving in a developing country is required. Work experience in the Pacific Islands region is an asset.
- Experience working in UNICEF or a UN system agency is an asset.

Skills:

- Able to work effectively with people internal and external parties
- Communicates clearly and concisely
- Excellent analytical and conceptual skills
- Demonstrated ability to produce high-quality analytical reports
- Proficiency in various analytical applications for Nutrition, OptiFood, or any Linear Programming software.
- Proven ability to work independently under difficult conditions

Language:

- Fluency in English is required, and knowledge of a local language would be an asset.

CONDITIONS OF WORK AND CLARIFICATION ON SUPERVISION

Management, Organization, and Timeframe:

The consultant is expected to work in Solomon Islands for a total period of 70 days with three trips to each of the provinces, i.e, Western, Isabel, Guadalcanal, within the contract period, while additional 5 days of work can be performed remotely. All costs related to the work will be included in the financial proposal and subsequent contract. Contract management will be undertaken by UNICEF Solomon Field Office Maternal and Child Health Specialist in liaison with Nutrition Officer while technical supervision will be provided by the Nutrition Manager, UNICEF Pacific Multi-Country Office.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- Individuals engaged under a consultancy will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants. Consultants are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.
- The selected candidate is solely responsible for ensuring that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, program delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts. UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions, or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterward in your assignment.
- No contract may commence unless the contract is signed by both UNICEF and the consultant.
- Consultant will be required to complete mandatory online courses (e.g. Ethics, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Security) upon receipt of the offer and before the signature of the contract.
- Deliverables that require payment within less than 30 days should be lumped together for ease of transaction.

The below is to be included in the advert.

NOTE FOR CONSULTANTS:

Please submit a **separate financial offer** along with your application and **technical proposal**. The financial proposal should be a **lump sum amount for all the deliverables** but should show a break down for the following:

- Daily fees– based on the deliverables in the Terms of Reference
- Travel (economy air ticket where applicable to take up assignment as required, as well as any in country travel within Solomon Islands - minimum 2 trips per each of the following three provinces (Isabelle, Western, Guadalcanal) for data collection are expected)
- Living allowance for international consultant that will need to relocate to Solomon Islands, for the duration of in-country assignment
- Miscellaneous- to cover visa, health insurance (including medical evacuation for international consultants), communications, and other costs.