

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS**

<b>Title</b> Maternal and Child Nutrition Consultant	<b>Funding Code</b>	<b>Type of engagement</b> Full time	<b>Duty Station:</b> Manila
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**Background:**

Despite significant policy advances, undernutrition remains a pressing public health challenge in the Philippines. The 2023 National Nutrition Survey indicates that 23.6% of children under five are stunted and 5.6% are wasted, with even higher prevalence in vulnerable areas such as the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Maternal nutrition is also a concern, with a substantial proportion of women of reproductive age experiencing undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, which directly affect pregnancy outcomes and child health. Both forms of malnutrition reflect persistent gaps in service delivery, access to quality nutrition interventions and multisectoral coordination particularly in the subnational level.

As a response to these pressing nutrition concerns, the government has implemented a range of initiatives to address these challenges, including the First 1,000 Days Law (RA 11148), the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) 2023–2028, and the World Bank–financed Philippine Multisectoral Nutrition Project (PMNP).

Moreover, the Department of Health (DOH) leads the national strategic planning for the implementation of nutrition interventions as mandated by the Kalusugan at Nutrisyon ng Mag Nanay Act (RA 11148). Specifically, policy and mechanisms must be established for the protection of children, pregnant, and lactating mothers covered by strategies under the First 1,000 Days. They shall set the standards for implementation of nutrition specific interventions and capacitate relative implementers with competencies that will advance nutrition services.

Consequently, the DOH - Disease Prevention and Control Bureau directs the prevention and management of the triple burden of malnutrition across maternal and early childhood to meet the national objective of reducing stunting by half from 26% to 13.5% in 2028 as part of the 8 Priority Action Agenda. Age-appropriate infant and young child feeding is one of the crucial nutrition specific interventions that contributes to the overall reduction of childhood stunting. In 2019, the Philippine Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) 2030 Strategic Plan through the DOH Department Circular No. 2019-0537 was disseminated to guide national and subnational planning, implementation and monitoring of IYCF practices.

With policies and mechanisms established at the national level to set the standards of nutrition specific interventions, consequent work at the subnational level will leverage these efforts towards better nutrition outcomes. Initiatives like strengthening community-based platforms such as Nutrition Support Groups (NSGs) is recognized as a key strategy to improve maternal, infant, and young child nutrition outcomes. Establishing standardized policies and mechanisms for NSGs is critical to ensure consistent implementation, community engagement, and alignment with national nutrition strategies.

Moreover, the Child Nutrition Fund (CNF) 2025–2029 provides US\$13.2 million in catalytic financing to complement US\$259 million in government investments, with a strategic focus on mobilizing and optimizing domestic resources to accelerate nutrition outcomes. Through CNF commitments, the Philippines seeks to scale up and strengthen nutrition-specific interventions targeting maternal and early childhood nutrition, ensuring that essential services reach the most vulnerable populations. These efforts are expected to improve maternal and child nutrition indicators, contributing directly to the country's broader national nutrition goals under the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition (PPAN) 2023–2028.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this consultancy is to provide technical and operational support to maternal and early childhood nutrition initiatives particularly focused on advocacy, policy development, and systems strengthening in collaboration with the Department of Health, ensuring effective planning, implementation, and monitoring of nutrition interventions. Moreover, to support maternal and child nutrition interventions, the consultancy aims to guide the development and finalization of an Administrative Order on the Establishment of Nutrition Support Groups. This shall entail mapping out of existing nutrition support groups in different regions, multi-sectoral consultations and facilitating the policy's alignment with existing strategies. The consultancy shall also oversee the pilot implementation and finalization of the policy in close collaboration with Disease Prevention and Control Bureau of DOH and UNICEF.

**Specific Objectives:**

1. Support the technical review, harmonization, and finalization of EON-related policies—particularly on Nutrition Support Groups (NSGs)—ensuring alignment with national frameworks, IYCF strategies, and global standards.
2. Apply comprehensive analysis of global and local evidence, conduct policy gap assessments, and support the design, pre-testing, and refinement of context-appropriate standards and operational guidelines for NSGs.
3. Provide technical inputs to advance the transition from Iron-Folic Acid (IFA) to Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation (MMS), including policy review, guideline development, and strategic advocacy for adoption and scale-up.
4. Design and support capacity-building approaches, provide technical guidance to national and subnational stakeholders, and monitor implementation fidelity to ensure effective rollout of maternal and early child nutrition interventions.
5. Facilitate cross-functional alignment among EON and maternal nutrition initiatives through technical coordination with DOH units, consultants, and partners, ensuring consistency, complementarity, and avoidance of duplication.
6. Produce high-quality technical reports, synthesize implementation insights, and generate evidence-based recommendations to inform policy refinement, program adjustments, and strategic decision-making.

**Scope of Work:**

Under the supervision of the Nutrition Specialist and in collaboration with the Department of Health, the Consultant will provide technical and operational support to advance maternal and early childhood nutrition initiatives through policy development, advocacy, and systems strengthening.

## **A. Early Child Nutrition**

Support early child nutrition initiatives through policy development and standards development:

### **a. Policy Development**

1. Support the development and finalization of policies related to the establishment of Nutrition Support Groups (NSGs), including alignment with existing IYCF strategies, facilitation of stakeholder consultations, and integration into national and subnational implementation frameworks.
2. Ensure that ECN interventions (e.g., MIYCF Strategic Plan, Milk Code Monitoring, Standards on Complementary Foods, Nutrition Support Groups) are aligned with national frameworks and operational priorities.
3. Work closely with other consultants supporting ECN policy development initiatives to coordinate efforts, avoid duplication, and ensure consistency across technical outputs and recommendations.
4. Facilitate collaboration with DOH units to support integrated planning, technical guidance, and alignment of ECN interventions.
5. Monitor operational progress at the national level, identify challenges, and recommend adjustments to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and coherence across initiatives.

### **b. Standards Development (Nutrition Support Group)**

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of global and local evidence on Nutrition Support Groups to inform policy development.
2. Perform a desk review of the current draft Administrative Order (AO) on the Establishment of Nutrition Support Groups to identify strengths, gaps, and areas for alignment with current global and national standards.
3. Map existing Nutrition Support Groups across the country to ensure the policy is context-relevant and practical.
4. Collaborate with the focal person for the IYCF Strategic Plan to align the Nutrition Support Group policy with current IYCF strategies.
5. Organize and facilitate technical consultation meetings with DOH officials, technical officers, and development partners, including presenting recommendations for review and approval.
6. Develop and refine a pre-testing questionnaire and oversee the pilot implementation of the policy in both PMNP and non-PMNP areas to assess effectiveness and feasibility.
7. Continuously refine the draft policy by consolidating and incorporating stakeholder feedback, including inputs from DOH regional counterparts, to ensure its relevance and applicability.

**B. Maternal Nutrition**

Support maternal nutrition initiatives through advocacy, policy development, and systems strengthening:

**a. Advocacy**

1. Promote the transition from Iron Folic Acid (IFA) to Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS) during pregnancy.
2. Facilitate a maternal nutrition dissemination forum for policymakers and key stakeholders.
3. Conduct follow-on advocacy activities to support MMS adoption and awareness, specifically, support the organization of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Maternal Nutrition Forum

**b. Policy Development**

1. Finalization of the maternal nutrition accelerations plan
2. Review and update Nutrition Guidelines for Women of Reproductive Age (WRA), including MMS
3. Align updated guidelines with the Philippine National Drug Formulary (PNDF) and Omnibus Health Guidelines.
4. Provide technical inputs and coordinate stakeholder consultations for finalization and approval.

**c. Systems Strengthening**

1. Support the roll-out and dissemination of updated Nutrition Guidelines for WRA at national and subnational levels.
2. Provide capacity building and mentoring for DOH staff and regional health teams to ensure proper implementation.
3. Monitor progress and identify challenges for corrective action.

**C. Documentation and Reporting**

1. Prepare technical reports and summaries on policy development, advocacy activities, capacity building, and dissemination.
2. Consolidate lessons learned and recommendations to inform ongoing maternal and early childhood nutrition initiatives.
3. Prepare analytical reports to inform on program progress and evidence-based recommendations.

**Child Safeguarding**

Is this project/assignment considered as "[Elevated Risk Role](#)" from a child safeguarding perspective?

YES  NO    If YES, check all that apply:

**Direct contact role**     YES  NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/ months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

**Child data role**       YES     NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/ months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

<b>Budget Year:</b> 2026	<b>Requesting Section/ Issuing Office:</b> Health and Nutrition	<b>Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff:</b> The consultancy will require close coordination with the DOH and other technical consultants, providing expert technical guidance to ensure that policies and guidelines are developed, aligned, and operationalized consistently and effectively across all initiatives.	
<b>Included in Annual/ Rolling Workplan:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, please justify:			
<b>Consultant sourcing:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Both		<b>Request for:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New SSA – Individual Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment	
<b>Consultant selection method:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Roster) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Advertisement/ Desk Review/ Interview)			
<b>If Extension, justification for extension</b> (please attach approved Note for the Record):			
<b>Supervisor:</b> Retz Pol Pacalioga (Nutrition Specialist)	<b>Start Date:</b> May 1, 2026	<b>End Date:</b> April 15, 2027	<b>Number of Days (working):</b>
<b>Work Assignment Overview</b>			
<b>Tasks/ Milestone:</b>	<b>Deliverables/ Outputs:</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Estimate Budget (for HR Reference Only)</b>
<b>INCEPTION PHASE</b>  <b>Task 1 – (Maternal Nutrition) Review and Update the</b>	<b>Inception Workplan</b> based on the tasks identified.  and <b>Accomplishment report</b> documenting review outcomes,	May 2026	

<p><b>Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan</b></p> <p>Technical Support in reviewing and updating the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan</p>	<p>updates made, and actions taken by DOH and consultants.</p>		
<p><b>Task 2 – (ECN) Policy Alignment</b></p> <p>Ensure that Nutrition Support Group interventions, along with other ECN initiatives (e.g., MIYCF Strategic Plan, Milk Code Monitoring, Standards on Complementary Foods), are aligned with national frameworks, technical standards, and operational priorities to support consistent and effective implementation.</p>	<p><b>Accomplishment Report:</b>          Documenting the status of alignment, technical guidance, and actions taken to operationalize Nutrition Support Group interventions. The report shall cover the following activities:          Conduct a comprehensive review of global and local evidence on Nutrition Support Groups to guide policy development.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perform a desk review of the current draft Administrative Order on the Establishment of Nutrition Support Groups to identify strengths, gaps, and alignment with global and national standards.</li> <li>2. Map existing Nutrition Support Groups across the country to ensure the policy is contextually relevant and operationally feasible.</li> <li>3. Collaborate with the IYCF Strategic Plan focal person to align the Nutrition Support Group policy with current IYCF strategies.</li> </ol>	<p>June 2026</p>	
<p><b>Task 3 – (Maternal Nutrition) Stakeholder Consultation and Finalization of the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan</b></p> <p>Coordinate consultations with DOH and other stakeholders</p>	<p><b>Accomplishment Report:</b>          Documenting consultation outcomes, agreements reached, and finalization steps.</p>	<p>July 2026</p>	

<p>for guideline finalization and approval of the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan.</p>			
<p><b>Task 4 – (ECN) Coordination and Validation with DOH and Stakeholders– Nutrition Support Group</b></p> <p>Collaborate with DOH units, technical officers, development partners, and other consultants to coordinate efforts, avoid duplication, and ensure consistency and alignment across all technical outputs and implementation activities.</p>	<p><b>Accomplishment Report:</b> Documenting coordination meetings, key agreements, and joint actions undertaken with DOH and other stakeholders. The report shall cover the following activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organize and facilitate technical consultation meetings with DOH officials, technical officers, and development partners to present recommendations, gather feedback, and guide the refinement of the Nutrition Support Group policy.</li> </ol>	<p>August 2026</p>	
<p><b>Task 5 – (Maternal Nutrition) Follow-on Advocacy Activities</b></p> <p>Conduct follow-up advocacy activities to promote MMS adoption and awareness.</p>	<p><b>Accomplishment Report:</b> Documenting follow-on advocacy actions and adoption progress.</p>	<p>September 2026</p>	
<p><b>Task 6 – (ECN) DOH Collaboration and Technical Guidance – Pre-testing of NSG Policy</b></p> <p>Facilitate collaboration with DOH units and provide technical guidance in developing the pre-testing questionnaire for the Nutrition Support Group policy, including oversight of the policy's pilot implementation, support for integrated planning, and alignment of ECN interventions.</p>	<p><b>Accomplishment Report:</b> Documenting progress in operationalizing the Nutrition Support Group policy, including technical guidance provided, consultant-led actions, and implementation of aligned interventions. The report shall cover the following activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and refine a pre-testing questionnaire and oversee the pilot implementation of the policy in PMNP and non-PMNP areas to assess feasibility,</li> </ol>	<p>October 2026</p>	

	effectiveness, and operational relevance.		
<b>Task 7 – (Maternal Nutrition) Maternal Nutrition Forum</b>  Facilitate a maternal nutrition forum to promote the transition from IFA to MMS.	<b>Accomplishment Report:</b>  Summarizing forum outcomes, decisions made, and actions taken by DOH and stakeholders.	November 2026	
<b>Task 8 – (ECN) Monitoring and Operational Recommendations and Finalization of the Policy</b>  Tracking operational progress of the Nutrition Support Group policy, synthesizing findings from pilot implementation and stakeholder feedback, and supporting the finalization of the policy for national and subnational adoption.	<b>Accomplishment Report:</b> Captures progress in the operationalization of the Nutrition Support Group policy, including challenges identified, corrective actions implemented by the consultant, and recommendations applied. The report shall cover the following activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continuously update the draft Nutrition Support Group policy by synthesizing and integrating stakeholder feedback, including inputs from DOH regional offices, to ensure relevance, feasibility, and alignment with operational realities.</li> <li>2. Finalize the policy based on pilot testing outcomes, ensuring it reflects evidence from implementation and stakeholder validation.</li> </ol>	December 2026	
<b>Task 9 – (Maternal Nutrition) Alignment with PNDF and Omnibus Health Guidelines</b>  Ensure updated guidelines are aligned with PNDF and Omnibus Health Guidelines.	<b>Accomplishment Report:</b> Documenting alignment process, consultations, and decisions taken.	January 2026	
<b>Task 10 – (Maternal Nutrition) Roll-out,</b>	<b>Accomplishment Report:</b>	February 2027	

<p><b>Dissemination, and Capacity Building</b></p> <p>Support dissemination and capacity building for WRA guidelines at national level.</p>	<p>Highlighting DOH-led implementation actions, training sessions, and follow-up measures.</p>		
<p><b>Task 11 – (Maternal Nutrition) Follow-on Advocacy Activities</b></p> <p>Conduct follow-up advocacy activities to promote MMS adoption and awareness.</p>	<p><b>Accomplishment Report:</b> Documenting follow-on advocacy actions and adoption progress.</p>	<p>March 2027</p>	
<p><b>END OF CONSULTANCY PHASE</b></p> <p><b>Task 12 – Consolidated Documentation and Lessons Learned</b></p> <p>Consolidate technical outputs, lessons learned, and recommendations across ECN and maternal nutrition initiatives.</p>	<p><b>Final Report</b> integrating ECN and maternal nutrition actions, contributions from DOH and consultants, and recommendations for ongoing initiatives.</p>	<p>April 2027</p>	
<p><b>Assumptions and Risks between activities and outputs:</b></p>	<p><b>Assumptions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National level DOH units and technical staff will be available and responsive to participate in consultations, provide technical inputs, and implement agreed actions.</li> <li>2. Consultants working on ECN and maternal nutrition policy initiatives will actively coordinate, share information, and contribute to harmonized outputs.</li> <li>3. Relevant policy frameworks, guidelines, and reference documents (e.g., MIYCF Strategic Plan, Nutrition Guidelines for WRA, PNDF, Omnibus Health Guidelines) will be accessible in a timely manner to inform technical guidance.</li> <li>4. Planned activities, consultations, advocacy forums, and roll-out initiatives can proceed according to the agreed consultancy schedule without major delays.</li> </ol> <p><b>Risks:</b></p>		

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delays in receiving technical feedback or approvals from DOH units could affect the completion of ECN and maternal nutrition deliverables.</li> <li>2. Misalignment or lack of engagement between multiple consultants could result in overlapping or inconsistent policy outputs.</li> <li>3. Incomplete or outdated reference materials, technical data, or reports could reduce the accuracy and relevance of recommendations.</li> <li>4. Updates in national health or nutrition priorities, policies, or guidelines could require revisions to planned activities or deliverables.</li> <li>5. Insufficient availability of DOH technical staff to participate in consultations, advocacy forums, or capacity-building sessions could limit effective implementation of recommendations.</li> <li>6. Events such as public health emergencies, natural disasters, or political changes may affect scheduling, coordination, or implementation of national-level initiatives.</li> </ol>
<b>Estimated Consultancy fee</b>	
Travel International (if applicable)	
Travel Local (please include travel plan)	
DSA (if applicable)	
<b>Total estimated consultancy costs<sup>i</sup></b>	
<p><b>Minimum Qualifications required:</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bachelors   <input type="checkbox"/> Masters   <input type="checkbox"/> PhD   <input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bachelor's degree in Nutrition, Public Health, Development Studies, Social Sciences, or a related field.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>2. Professional Experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At least 7 years of relevant professional experience in nutrition program planning, policy development, or technical assistance at the national level.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p><b>Knowledge/ Expertise/ Skills required:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In-depth knowledge of national nutrition policies, guidelines, and interventions, including MIYCF, WRA nutrition, and complementary feeding standards.</li> <li>2. Experience in policy formulation, review, operationalization, and national-level advocacy, including coordinating multi-stakeholder consultations.</li> <li>3. Skilled in planning, coordinating, and monitoring nutrition initiatives and providing technical guidance to government units to ensure effective implementation.</li> </ol>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstrated experience in maternal and early childhood nutrition interventions, including familiarity with national guidelines, strategic plans, or nutrition frameworks.</li> <li>- Proven experience in working with government health agencies, preferably the Department of Health (DOH) or equivalent institutions.</li> <li>- Experience in policy coordination, technical guidance, and advocacy at the national level, including facilitating stakeholder consultations and multi-stakeholder coordination.</li> <li>-</li> <li><b>3. Additional Requirements (optional but advantageous)</b></li> <li>- Prior experience in developing or supporting the implementation of nutrition guidelines (e.g., MIYCF and WRA guidelines).</li> <li>- Experience in capacity building and mentoring for government staff or technical teams.</li> <li>- Familiarity with health systems strengthening approaches and national nutrition policy frameworks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Ability to analyze technical and operational data, identify gaps, and prepare clear, actionable accomplishment and technical reports.</li> <li>5. Strong interpersonal and communication skills to facilitate coordination among DOH units, consultants, and stakeholders, and to translate technical guidance into actionable recommendations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Administrative details:</b>                  Visa assistance required: <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office Based:                  * Consultants are not provided desk space, and ICT equipment.</p>
Will any of the deliverables contribute to Research, Studies, Evaluations, or Government M&E Capacity Development? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, please seek additional endorsement from the Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Section	
Where deliverables contribute to Research, Studies, Evaluations, or Government M&E Capacity Development	
Endorsed by PME (Name)	
Signature	Date

