

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRACTORS

Title	Funding Code	Type of engagement	Duty Station:
Qualitative research on factors influencing nutrition choices in low-income Jamaican households		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultant <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Part-Time <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contractor Full-Time	Jamaica

Purpose of Activity/Assignment:

Background:

Jamaican children face a double burden of malnutrition. Data collected prior to COVID-19, showed that 6% of children under 5 were chronically malnourished and 8% are overweight with the prevalence increasing exponentially as they grow into the adolescent years. According to the 2010 and 2017 Global School Health Survey (GSHS), the rate of obesity doubled among adolescent boys and increased by almost 50% in adolescent girls aged 13-17 over the past decade. UNICEF’s Situation Analysis of Jamaican children, 2021 notes that children in low-income households are more likely to be overweight and under- and over-nutrition are both common among rural children under five years old. Overweight and obesity in the younger populations has the potential to negatively affect their educational attainment, physical, social and emotional health and development. The consequences extend into adulthood contributing to early onset of NCDs, high rates of NCDs later in life, with further implications for livelihoods, health systems, productivity and sustainable development. Notably, 78% of deaths annually are as a result of NCDs and the latest Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey found that one in 2 adults in Jamaica are overweight or obese.

It is well known that unhealthy eating behaviours are a major risk factor for unhealthy weight gain, specifically, the overconsumption of foods high in unhealthy fat and added sugar and low in essential micronutrients, as well as low consumption of vegetables and fruits. Pre-pandemic data from the most recent Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey highlighted concerning eating behaviours with almost 8/10 Jamaicans consuming fast foods more than once daily and 1 in 10 consuming excess salt at the table or frequently had salty sauces or high salt processed foods. In tandem with this, low rates of food label reading and fruit and vegetable consumption were also identified. Among adolescents aged 13-15, approximately 7 out of 10 boys and girls drink one or more carbonated beverage per day, on average. Poor feeding practices in Jamaica also begin very early in life with low rates of exclusive breastfeeding and inappropriate complimentary feeding practices. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these significant food and nutrition challenges. The closure of schools two years ago and resulting suspension of the school feeding programme, as well as income loss in households, may have led to increased risk of malnutrition and consumption of cheaper processed foods with higher fat and sugar content.

Food and nutrition choices are a complex issue influenced by various individual, societal and environmental factors. Recent literature outside of Jamaica indicates that economic factors, such as food price and income, access and availability of foods, behavioural factors and environmental factors such as the physical environment and food marketing strategies influence individual and household food choices. However, there is a notable absence of current in-depth qualitative research and analysis to explore how nutrition choices are made in Jamaica.

Adequate nutrition is critical to achieving the right of the child to good health. UNICEF Jamaica’s new Country Programme 2022-2026 aims to strengthen Jamaica’s policy, legal and programming environment for improved child and adolescent nutrition through evidence-based advocacy and capacity strengthening to reduce obesity and overweight in children under age 18 years. The key strategies to be undertaken include policy advocacy, systems strengthening and capacity development to ensure that child and adolescent related nutrition policies, services and programmes are adequate to foster a nurturing care environment in which healthy dietary choices can be made to prevent overweight and obesity and reduce the risk of development of non-communicable diseases. In executing these strategies, UNICEF Jamaica seeks to ensure that programmes and interventions are informed by compelling available evidence. As such, UNICEF has identified the need to capture strategic information on the factors that influence nutrition choices and is

seeking a consultant to conduct in-depth qualitative research and analysis to better understand how nutrition choices are made at the household level and how adolescents make nutrition choices.

Objective:

The overall objective of this consultancy is to conduct research to inform policy level decision making and targeted programmatic action to strengthen public knowledge and skills for making healthy food choices.

Scope of Work:

The consultant will conduct a qualitative study comprising of a series of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews to provide insight on perceptions and experiences regarding the factors influencing nutrition choices among adolescents and their families in low-income households.

The consultant will:

1. Develop a detailed workplan of activities and actions with a projected timeline required for successful completion of the assignment.
2. Conduct a literature review of similar research (Jamaica and Caribbean).
3. Conduct a minimum of eighteen (18) focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews with participants from the following target groups across urban and rural areas on factors influencing food choices (parents/caregivers, adolescent boys, adolescent girls, single mothers). Each focus group should have no more than 6 participants.
4. Submit the following to UNICEF Jamaica for approval:
 - a. research design, including methodology and conceptual framework, sample selection, ethical aspects and data analysis techniques
 - b. the assessment instruments/discussion guides to be used
5. Prepare preliminary and final reports to detail and provide an analysis of the FGDs and interviews. This report should include recommendations and critical areas to be addressed in nutrition advocacy and programme design to strengthen public knowledge and skills for making healthy food choices, as well as possible areas for further research.
6. Prepare a Power Point Presentation with the main findings of the research. Participate in at least one stakeholder review workshop and one research disseminating workshop.

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:

The researcher will engage with adolescent girls and boys in focus group discussions. This will entail at most 2 hours contact time with participants. Consent will be secured from parents of adolescents under 18 years of age for their participation prior to the FGDs. Assent will be secured from the adolescents under 18 years of age prior to the FGDs.

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):

Personal-identifiable information, including children's names, identification and address will not be recorded, manipulated or transmitted. Questionnaires will be coded to ensure confidentiality of respondents.

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

Budget Year: 2022	Requesting Section/Issuing Office: <i>Health Programme/Kingston Jamaica</i>	Reasons why consultancy cannot be done by staff: <i>Time and technical expertise to conduct a qualitative research</i>	
Included in Annual/Rolling Workplan: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, please justify:			
Consultant sourcing: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Both		Request for: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New SSA – Individual Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Extension/ Amendment	
Consultant selection method: <input type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Roster) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Competitive Selection (Advertisement/Desk Review/Interview)			
If Extension, Justification for extension:			
Supervisor: Novia Condell	Start Date: May 13, 2022	End Date: July 4, 2022	Number of Days (working)
Work Assignment Overview			
Tasks/Milestone:	Deliverables/Outputs:	Timeline	Estimate Budget
Signed Contract	-	13/5/ 2022	
Workplan and methodology	Drafts submitted and approved	20/5/2022	35%
Desk Review Report	Report submitted and approved	30/5/2022	
Research design and assessment instruments	Approved research design and assessment instruments	30/5/2022	
Preliminary Report	Preliminary Report submitted and approved	20/06/2022	30%
Final Report and Presentation	Final Report submitted and approved Powerpoint presentation	04/07/2022	35%

Estimated Consultancy fee			
Travel International (if applicable)	N/A		
Travel Local (please include travel plan)	N/A		
DSA (if applicable)	N/A		
Total estimated consultancy costs¹			
Minimum Qualifications required: <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advanced university degree in public health, nutrition, public health nutrition or similar disciplines (Masters, PhD) - At least 5 years work experience in qualitative research 	Knowledge/Expertise/Skills required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experience in conducting both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis - Knowledge of and experience in using research findings to inform nutrition advocacy and programme strategies - Strong knowledge of the food and nutrition environment and nutritional issues facing children, adolescents and adults - Previous experience in the health sector will be an advantage - Ability to produce clear, succinct reports and recommendations, excellent analytical and written communication skills 		
Administrative details: Visa assistance required: N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation arranged by the office: N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Based <input type="checkbox"/> Office Based: If office based, seating arrangement identified: <input type="checkbox"/> IT and Communication equipment required: <input type="checkbox"/> Internet access required: <input type="checkbox"/>		
Request Authorised by Section Head	Request Verified by HR:		
<i>Approval of Chief of Operations (if Operations):</i> _____ <i>Representative (in case of single sourcing/or if not listed in Annual Workplan)</i> _____		<i>Approval of Deputy Representative (if Programme)</i> _____	

ⁱ Costs indicated are estimated. Final rate shall follow the “best value for money” principle, i.e., achieving the desired outcome at the lowest possible fee. Consultants will be asked to stipulate all-inclusive fees, including lump sum travel and subsistence costs, as applicable.

Payment of professional fees will be based on submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant

Text to be added to all TORs:

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract 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 and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors 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.