

Request for Proposal for Consulting Services - Nutrition Advisor

NATURE OF SERVICES: To support the National Nutrition Program of the National Maternal and Child Health Center, within the Ministry of Health in developing and updating national guidelines and protocols related to the management of acute malnutrition in Cambodia.

CONTRACTING ENTITY: Helen Keller International.

Guided by the remarkable legacy of its co-founder, Helen Keller, Helen Keller Intl partners with communities striving to overcome longstanding cycles of poverty. By delivering the essential building blocks of good health, sound nutrition and clear vision, we help millions of people create lasting change in their own lives. Working in more than 20 countries – across Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States – and together with a global community of supporters, we are ensuring every person has the opportunity – as Helen did – to reach their true potential.

PLACE of PERFORMANCE: Cambodia for at least 90 working days, based in Phnom Penh, with some travels to the field.

DURATION and TIMEFRAME

Approximately 90 working days from January 1 – May 30, 2024.

SCOPE of WORK

The work will be conducted under the leadership of the Ministry of Health with technical support from a steering committee of experts in acute malnutrition, representing different development partners and organizations. UNICEF, WFP, and Helen Keller country and regional offices will provide technical support to this important work. The consultant hired for this work will sit with the National Nutrition Program and/or Helen Keller and will provide technical leadership on MAM, while also coordinating the full IMAM guideline development progress and protocol updates. Ultimately, the consultant will be responsible for drafting the national IMAM guidelines and MAM management protocol. (See Additional Background section for more information.)

Illustrative activities related to this assignment and the estimated duration of each activity are detailed below, however the final work group may propose alternative or additional activities and/or time frames as the work evolves.

1. Review and update the timeline and roadmap for IMAM guideline development process.
2. Participate in monthly meetings with the technical IMAM steering committee and facilitate additional ad-hoc meetings and sub-committee meetings as relevant (on going)
3. Conduct a comprehensive desk review of relevant materials, guidelines, evidence, etc. at national, regional and global level.
4. Facilitate several full-day, in-depth technical consultation with technical steering committee members, as needed.

5. Participate in a field visit to NGO-led MAM/SAM management programmes and consult with sub-national stakeholders (e.g., healthcare providers, village health support groups (VHSGs), operational districts for health, etc.).
6. Synthesize information from the desk review, technical consultations, and field visit, and draft initial framework for IMAM guidelines.
7. Incorporate feedback on the guideline framework from the IMAM Steering Committee and prepare full draft of the IMAM guidelines.
8. Lead a consultation workshop with key stakeholders from the national and sub-national levels to review the draft guidelines and provide feedback on the approach, feasibility, etc.
9. Update draft IMAM guidelines with feedback from the consultation workshop.
10. Develop monitoring framework for IMAM, leveraging relevant health management information systems (HMIS) indicators and national nutrition programme (NNP) reporting systems.
11. Prepare the national protocol for MAM management.
12. Incorporate feedback from steering committee members and work with relevant stakeholders to finalize and harmonize draft MAM/SAM protocols.
13. Prepare accompanying materials including handbooks for service providers and village health support groups, job aids, and other materials as needed.
14. Support national stakeholders to prepare for roll out and implementation of the guidelines and protocols (including conducting a feasibility assessment if needed).
15. Work with a local constant, which will be recruited and contracted separately.

DELIVERABLES

1. Finalized desk review report and work plan.
2. Finalized draft of national IMAM guidelines, including monitoring framework that incorporates both prevention and treatment/supplementation, building on global guidance and recommendations and local experience and best practices.
3. Finalized draft of MAM management protocol and tools that can be used to guide programs and actions led by development partners, NGOs, and CSOs in the immediate term.
4. Updated protocol on inpatient and outpatient treatment of acute malnutrition and community mobilization with integration of MAM and SAM.
5. Finalized implementation tools including handbooks, job aids, and/or other relevant materials.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS and EXPERIENCE

- Proven track record of designing and developing protocols with the Ministry of Health and other partners for similar projects.
- Specific technical expertise and training experience in an area relevant to the proposal as represented by:
 - Minimum of a master's degree in nutrition, Public Health, or a related field; and
 - 10+ years of experience in nutrition / public health programming / development of guidelines and protocols; or
 - Equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Demonstrated deep knowledge of MAM / SAM / CMAM protocols, tools, and guidelines.

- Experience working with the Ministry of Health in Cambodia and knowledge of the local context.
- Excellent verbal and written English language skills. Demonstrated experience in writing high-level English language reports and developing and delivering effective trainings.
- Excellent interpersonal, communication, and project management skills.
- Strong personal discipline and capacity to respect deadlines, even under pressure.
- The ability to work closely in a team, to be patient, adaptable, flexible and solution-oriented.
- Available to travel to the provinces to work with the technical teams.

SPECIFIC REQUESTS for INFORMATION

Please describe the nature of your education and experience and why it is well suited to the nature of the work described above. Please be sure to address the qualifications and experience listed above and comparable project work.

In addition, please provide:

- Your CV
- Sample work product including
 - Details of expertise in the integrated management of acute malnutrition and MAM management in particular.
 - Sample of previously developed protocol or guidelines that the consultant led or contributed to, ideally related to the management of acute malnutrition.
- Three references who may be contacted by Helen Keller Intl. These references should be clients or employers for whom you have provided similar services.
- Pricing/Price Sheet: a pricing list for the services that you/your company is interested and able to offer based on the activities listed above.
- Confirmation of availability including earliest possible date for starting implementation of this consultancy.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Eligible vendors may submit their proposal in one of two ways:

- Electronically: Sign, stamp, scan, and send the proposal as an attachment in PDF format to the email address: cambodia.recruitment@hki.org
- Hard Copy: Submit proposal with a cover letter signed, stamped to Helen Keller's office, addressed to Mr. Hou Kroeun, Country Director. The office is at address #40, Street 348, Sangkat Toul Svay Prey 1, Khan Boeung Keng Kang, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Submissions will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. The final deadline is November 30, 2023.

EVALUATION and AWARD PROCESS

This RFP is open to all persons or entities that are deemed capable of implementing the scope of work, with a solid record of integrity and business ethics.

The award will be made to the Seller representing the **best value** to the project and to Helen Keller. For this RFP, price, delivery, technical and past performance are of equal importance for the purposes of evaluating and selecting the “best value” awardee.

**In the spirit of our founder and namesake,
Helen Keller places diversity and partnership at the core of our work.**

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND:

Acute malnutrition – or wasting – remains one of the leading causes of child morbidity and mortality worldwide. While there is a global tendency to consider acute malnutrition an emergency issue, the vast majority of children affected with acute malnutrition live in non-emergency settings, like Cambodia. Indeed, the latest available data indicates that 10 percent of children under five in Cambodia suffer from wasting, a figure that has remained largely unchanged in the past decade. This level of acute malnutrition in Cambodia is considered to be ‘high,’ according to WHO prevalence thresholds.

However, there are also large provincial differences, and, in some provinces, the level of wasting exceeds the threshold for ‘very high’ at over 15 percent. Critically, the majority (75%) of Cambodian children suffering from wasting are moderately wasted.

While children with moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) face lesser risks than children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM), they still face a three times greater mortality rate compared to a well-nourished child. Experience and existing evidence also suggest the consequences of failure to comprehensively address those at more moderate risk include excess morbidity and mortality, risk of deterioration into SAM or development of complications (serious illness), and more anthropometric deficit (concurrently wasted and stunted, underweight), as well as unknown developmental and functional outcomes. Yet, despite this, there are not currently any national guidelines or efforts to address MAM in Cambodia. However, for the Government to meet their ambitious targets for reducing the number of children with acute malnutrition and to improve health and nutrition outcomes for all Cambodians, addressing MAM, in addition to SAM, is critical. This is currently an urgent priority for the Ministry of Health.

Over the last several years, Cambodia has played a leadership role in the development of the ASEAN Regional Guidelines on Minimum Standards for the Management of Child Wasting in National Health Systems. The regional standards were designed to support members states to accelerate progress in integration of acute malnutrition into health systems and to guide the necessary minimum actions and standards of services needed.

Moreover, in July 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) released updated normative guidelines for the management of acute malnutrition, building on the previous 2013 guidelines. These guidelines include, for the first time, guidance on the management of moderate acute malnutrition. While the WHO guidelines are hugely influential, they must be quickly and efficiently translated into contextualized guidelines and subsequently into practice to effectively contribute to the reduction of the number of children suffering from acute malnutrition in Cambodia. As such, national stakeholders have identified this as the opportune moment for Cambodia to update its protocols on SAM management, develop context-specific protocols on MAM management, and harmonize the two through National Guidelines for the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM).