

USAID Advancing Nutrition

Scope of Work: Consultant to Support the Development of a Breastfeeding Counseling Mentorship Program for Kenya

A. Background

USAID Advancing Nutrition is the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s flagship nutrition project, led by JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI), and a diverse group of experienced partners. Launched in September 2018, USAID Advancing Nutrition implements and provides technical support to nutrition interventions across sectors and disciplines for USAID and its partners. The project's multi-sectoral approach draws together global nutrition experience to design, implement and evaluate programs that address the root causes of malnutrition. Committed to using a systems approach, USAID Advancing Nutrition (USAID AN) strives to sustain positive outcomes by building local capacity, supporting behavior change and strengthening the enabling environment to save lives, improve health, build resilience, increase economic productivity and advance development.

Breastfeeding is globally accepted as an essential action for achieving optimal nutrition and development outcomes in children as well as health outcomes later in life. As in many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), exclusive breastfeeding and early initiation of breastfeeding rates in Kenya are far lower than needed for the health of women and children. Significant efforts have been made in Kenya to ensure that women have access to breastfeeding information, education, and counseling. However, there is a need for evidence of effective, scalable approaches to strengthen skilled breastfeeding counseling by health care providers throughout the system. To help address this challenge USAID Advancing Nutrition is collaborating with the Kenya Ministry of Health, USAID Kenya and East Africa, USAID Bureau of Global Health, and key country stakeholders to design and test a mentorship program to strengthen capacity to provide breastfeeding counseling in Kenya.

This work includes three separate but related work streams:

- Work stream 1: Intervention design process, involving the MOH, the maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN) technical working group (TWG), and other stakeholders;
- Work stream 2: Develop the breastfeeding counseling capacity strengthening intervention;
- Work stream 3: Develop a protocol to test the intervention using implementation research methods.

In workstream 1, USAID Advancing Nutrition and the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at the Ministry of Health in Kenya (through the BFHI Task Force) collaborated on a co-creating workshop. This workshop concluded with stakeholders in Kenya deciding to design, implement, and test a facility-based mentorship program to strengthen breastfeeding counseling capacity, specifically focusing on the competencies covered in the BFHI Training Course for Maternity Staff (WHO and UNICEF, 2020).

This consultancy supports work stream 2 (led by the BFHI Task Force and a USAID Advancing Nutrition consultant in Kenya) and will provide input, review and feedback to support the development of materials for the facility-based mentorship program. The mentorship program will include building competencies in lactation management and skilled breastfeeding counseling, as well as

mentorship, focusing on three priority contract points for achieving early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding. It is critical that the mentorship program be grounded in global-level guidance to strengthen the quality of breastfeeding counseling, including the WHO [Competency Verification Toolkit](#) (reference the competency verification toolkit and link). The concept note describing the plan for developing the program will be shared with the consultant.

B. Objectives

This consultant will contribute their technical expertise to the development of the mentorship program. The consultant will share global experience and perspectives on mentorship related to the generic BFHI package and the WHO Competency Verification Toolkit with the USAID Advancing Nutrition team, which includes and two other consultants; provide examples of existing mentorship-related training materials and monitoring and reporting tools; and will advise and provide periodic written feedback to the USAID Advancing Nutrition team as the components of the mentorship program are developed.

C. Activities

Drawing on breastfeeding counseling clinical experience and knowledge of global experience, the consultant will work closely with the USAID Advancing Nutrition Team, including Kenya-based consultants and Washington, DC-based technical staff to ensure that the mentorship program is grounded in breastfeeding counseling best practices, developed according to global guidelines. The consultant will support the tasks outlined below.

1. Share global experience and perspectives on mentorship related to the generic BFHI package and the WHO Competency Verification Toolkit with the USAID Advancing Nutrition team and two local consultants.
2. Provide examples of existing mentorship-related training materials and monitoring and reporting tools.
3. Advise the USAID Advancing Nutrition team and two consultants in Kenya on the components that will make up the mentorship program, which may include:
 - a. **Guidance for facility-based breastfeeding counseling mentorship:** This will result in a guide for how to set up and deliver the facility-based mentorship program, which may include identifying a health facility and county, criteria for selecting master trainers, delivering trainings, assessing competencies, and structuring the delivery of the mentorship approach within the health facility (identifying mentees, schedule of mentorship visits, linkages with other mentorship or QI systems, etc.).
 - b. **Mentorship program training package:** A module on mentorship that can be added to the BFHI Training Course for training mentors, including any tools or job aids needed during the delivery of the module.
 - c. **Tools for mentorship:** These may include measurement tools to track mentee progress, including observation checklists and other mentoring aids; and breastfeeding session observation checklist and/or other tools from the BFHI Training Course that can be used by mentees while delivering breastfeeding counseling.
4. Provide periodic written feedback on and inputs into the development of the components of the mentorship program in collaboration with USAID Advancing Nutrition team and two consultants in Kenya.

D. Deliverables and Schedule

The Contractor is responsible for the timely submission of the following deliverables, as part of the SOW:

Del. No.	Deliverable Name	Deliverable Description	(Tentative) Due Date
1	Meeting notes from discussions related to global experience and perspectives on mentorship and package content.	Meeting notes from discussions related to global experience and perspectives on mentorship related to the generic BFHI package and WHO Competency Verification Toolkit and recommended package content. Documentation of sharing examples of existing mentorship-related materials, monitoring and reporting tools and recommendations for package content.	May 6, 2022
2	Written inputs into the first draft of the mentorship program package	Inputs (which can be in the form of comments/tracked changes) on the first draft of the mentorship package components developed by the USAID Advancing Nutrition team and Kenya-based consultants.	June 10, 2022
3	Written inputs into the second draft of the mentorship program package	Inputs (which can be in the form of comments/tracked changes) on the second draft of the mentorship package components developed by the USAID Advancing Nutrition team and local consultants.	July 8, 2022

The total Level of Effort is approximately equivalent to 4 days.

E. Consultant Qualifications

1. Master's degree or higher in public health, nutrition, or a relevant field.
 2. 15-20 years of work experience in public health and nutrition, particularly in relation to breastfeeding, breastfeeding counseling, and capacity strengthening.
 3. Experience within the last 5 years leading BFHI implementation and monitoring in a clinical setting, or providing technical assistance to clinical settings that are implementing BFHI
 4. Knowledge and deep understanding of global policies, strategies, guidelines, protocols, and experiences related to BFHI and breastfeeding counseling globally.
 5. Experience providing breastfeeding counseling to caregivers, or teaching/mentoring health professionals or students in breastfeeding counseling
 6. Experience in designing and/or implementing relevant preservice or in-service breastfeeding counseling training (lactation management) for health professionals and/or peri-professional such as peer counselors or community health workers.
 7. Excellent interpersonal skills; ability to communicate effectively (strong listening, oral, and written communication skills) with people from a variety of backgrounds; ability to effectively engage with key stakeholders of different backgrounds;
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