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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Maternal Nutrition, Food Fortification and broader Micronutrients Agenda

CONTRACT MODALITY	Individual Consultancy
DUTY STATION	Manila-Philippines & Remote (With Travel) as Scheduled
DURATION OF CONTRACT	11.5 Months

Purpose of Assignment

The overall purpose of the consultancy is to provide continuous technical and coordination support to strengthen maternal nutrition and micronutrient interventions in the Philippines. The consultancy forms part of UNICEF's support to the Department of Health and the National Nutrition Council to strengthen maternal health and nutrition, as well as food fortification efforts, through a more coordinated, coherent, and accelerated approach. The Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan provides an important framework for accelerating priority interventions, strengthening implementation, and improving coordination across maternal health and nutrition programs. In parallel, there is a need to strengthen and update the strategic direction for food fortification as a distinct intervention area. The development of a Food Fortification Strategy will provide a dedicated framework for setting priorities, strengthening coordination, addressing implementation and regulatory gaps, improving monitoring and quality assurance, and sustaining and scaling food fortification interventions. While the two plans will remain distinct, the Food Fortification Strategy will be aligned with relevant priorities under the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan, particularly by ensuring that food fortification contributes to improving the intake of essential micronutrients, including iron, folic acid, and iodine, among populations at risk of deficiencies, including pregnant women. The consultant will primarily work with DOH-DPCB and NNC-NPPD to:

1. Support in the operationalization and implementation of the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan, including:

   Supporting the development, implementation, monitoring, and periodic refinement of a roadmap for the successful transition from IFA to MMS.

   Strengthening coordination among DOH, UNICEF, WHO, other UN agencies, development partners, and relevant stakeholders through the UNICEF-convened development partners group.

   Strengthening systems and capacities for the delivery, monitoring, adherence, and sustainability of maternal nutrition and MMS interventions.

2. Support the implementation, monitoring, coordination, and sustainability of the National Salt Iodization Program Strategic Plan.

3. Facilitate coordination and stakeholder engagement to support the operationalization and effective implementation of the Food Fortification Strategy.

4. Strengthen government ownership, institutional capacity, coordination mechanisms, and sustainability of maternal nutrition and micronutrient interventions

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Scope of Work

- The consultant will work closely with UNICEF's Nutrition Specialist and the designated focal points from both DOH and NNC and relevant national and subnational stakeholders. The assignment will involve continuous technical and coordination support throughout the 11.5- month engagement with focus on the following detailed tasks:.
- **Output 1. Operationalization and Implementation of the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan**
- • Support DOH in translating the priorities of the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan into implementable activities, milestones, responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, and resource requirements, and in tracking progress against agreed priorities.
- • Provide technical and coordination support to strengthen maternal nutrition programming within primary health care and integrate priority interventions into routine antenatal care and relevant maternal, newborn, and reproductive health platforms.
- • Support the development, implementation, monitoring, and periodic refinement of a comprehensive IFA-to-MMS transition roadmap, including addressing operational requirements related to supply, procurement, logistics, service delivery, health-worker readiness, counselling, adherence, monitoring, and demand generation.
- • Support the development and refinement of policies, operational guidance, implementation tools, monitoring mechanisms, training materials, and other resources required to strengthen maternal nutrition and MMS implementation.
- • Support DOH in identifying and addressing implementation bottlenecks, capacity gaps, policy and operational issues, resource requirements, and risks affecting the coverage, quality, continuity, equity, and sustainability of maternal nutrition and MMS interventions.
- • Strengthen mechanisms for monitoring implementation, analysing and using programme data, generating evidence, and documenting good practices, lessons learned, and recommendations to inform programme adaptation and continuous improvement.
- • Facilitate technical consultations, planning meetings, workshops, implementation reviews, learning exchanges, and other coordination platforms involving relevant DOH offices, LGUs, health facilities, professional organizations, UNICEF, WHO, other UN agencies, development partners, and other stakeholders.
  • Support UNICEF's convening role in coordinating development partner support to DOH, including mapping and tracking partner assistance, promoting complementarity and reducing duplication, mobilizing technical expertise, and aligning partner support with DOH priorities and the MMS transition roadmap.
- • Support capacity strengthening of health and nutrition workers and programme managers and facilitate the integration and institutionalization of maternal nutrition and MMS interventions within routine health systems.

Output 2. Operationalization and Implementation of the National Salt Iodization Program Strategic Plan

Provide technical and coordination support to NNC in the implementation of priority activities under the NSIP Strategic Plan.
• Support coordination among NNC, DOH, FDA, relevant national government agencies, LGUs, salt producers, industry associations, development partners, and other stakeholders.
• Support NNC in implementation monitoring and tracking of key NSIP priorities and milestones.
• Identify implementation bottlenecks and provide recommendations for strengthening the program.
• Support technical consultations, coordination meetings, workshops, and stakeholder engagements related to NSIP.
• Support strengthening of monitoring, reporting, quality assurance, regulatory coordination, and compliance-related mechanisms.
• Support documentation of NSIP implementation experience, good practices, lessons learned, and emerging challenges.
• Facilitate coordination with development partners providing technical assistance to NSIP.
• Contribute to sustainability strategies for the continued implementation of the NSIP Strategic Plan.

Output 3. Operationalization, Monitoring, and Strengthening of the Food Fortification Strategy

Support NNC in establishing appropriate coordination and consultation mechanisms and facilitate engagement with relevant national government agencies, including DOH and FDA, industry, development partners, technical institutions, civil society, and other stakeholders.
• Support the review of the existing food fortification policy, programme, regulatory, monitoring, and implementation landscape to identify key gaps, emerging issues, opportunities, and strategic priorities.
• Support the translation of the Food Fortification Strategy into clear implementation priorities, institutional roles, implementation arrangements, monitoring mechanisms, and sustainability measures, ensuring alignment with PPAN 2023–2028 and relevant national nutrition, health, food, and regulatory policies.
• Facilitate stakeholder consultation, validation, consensus-building, and consolidation of technical inputs to support the finalization and initial operationalization of the Food Fortification Strategy.
• Support NNC and relevant agencies in strengthening systems for monitoring food fortification coverage, compliance, and quality, including monitoring tools, reporting mechanisms, data use, and coordination arrangements

Output 4. Coordination, Partnership Development and Knowledge Management The consultant will:

• Maintain regular coordination with DOH, NNC, UNICEF, WHO, other UN agencies, development partners, and relevant stakeholders.
• Participate in relevant technical working groups, consultations, workshops, policy dialogues, and coordination meetings.
• Support coordination between the maternal nutrition/MMS and food fortification workstreams where appropriate.
• Facilitate technical exchanges and joint planning among government agencies and development partners.
• Support identification of opportunities for complementary technical assistance, research, resource mobilization, and partnership development.
• Prepare technical briefs, presentations, meeting documentation, action trackers, and other knowledge products.

• Document good practices, lessons learned, implementation challenges, and recommendations. • Support knowledge-sharing and learning activities to promote replication and institutionalization of effective approaches

Work Assignments Overview	**Deliverables/Outputs**	**Delivery deadline to complete the deliverable**
Establish a clear implementation framework for the consultancy, including priorities, activities, deliverables, timelines, coordination arrangements, and milestones across the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan, IFA-to-MMS transition, National Salt Iodization Program (NSIP) Strategic Plan, and Food Fortification Strategy	**Deliverable 1** An approved inception report and detailed workplan that clearly define the scope of work, priority activities, expected results, key stakeholders, coordination mechanisms, risks and mitigation measures, and milestones for all workstreams	December 31st, 2026
Provide continuous technical and coordination support to DOH to translate priorities under the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan into implementable actions and strengthen implementation, monitoring, coordination, and learning Support DOH in developing a comprehensive and implementable roadmap for the transition from IFA to MMS, aligned with national policies, programme priorities, health-system capacity, and implementation realities.	**Deliverable 2** A progress report which includes an implementation tracking mechanism with documented technical inputs, coordination actions, implementation updates, identified bottlenecks and risks, and actionable recommendations to accelerate progress againstagreed priorities and milestone	January 31st, 2027
Support DOH in developing a comprehensive and implementable roadmap for the transition from IFA to MMS, aligned with national policies, programme priorities, health-	**Deliverable 3** A progress report which includes a validated IFA-toMMS Transition Roadmap that defines strategic priorities, implementation	February 28th, 2027

system capacity, and implementation realities	milestones, institutional responsibilities, resource and operational requirements, partner contributions, monitoring mechanisms, key risks and mitigation measures, and sustainability actions.	
Provide ongoing technical and coordination support to DOH during implementation of the IFA-to-MMS transition, with emphasis on identifying and addressing operational bottlenecks and strengthening monitoring and learning	**Deliverable 4** A progress report which includes an implementation tracking mechanism with documented technical inputs, coordination actions, implementation updates, identified bottlenecks and risks, and actionable recommendations to accelerate progress against agreed priorities and milestone	March 31st, 2027
Support UNICEF's convening role in strengthening coordination and alignmentamong development partners supporting DOH on maternal nutrition and MMS.	**Deliverable 5** A progress report that elaborates the technical assistance provided supported through regular meetings and technical discussions, with an updated partner mapping/tracking mechanism, documented commitments and action points, and evidence of improved alignment and complementarity of partner support with DOH priorities	April 30th, 2027
Support NNC and relevant stakeholders in implementing and monitoring priorities under the NSIP Strategic Plan and strengthening coordination, implementation, and sustainability.	**Deliverable 6** A progress report that documents implementation and coordination support, including progress tracking against agreed priorities, technical assistance, stakeholder engagement, monitoring findings, identified implementation gaps, and	May 31st, 2027

	recommendations to strengthen programme performance and sustainability**.**	
Support NNC in developing a coherent and evidenceinformed Food Fortification Strategic Plan through stakeholder consultation, situation analysis, strategic prioritization, technical coordination, validation, and finalization.	**Deliverable 7** A progress report which includes an implementation tracking mechanism with documented technical inputs, coordination actions, implementation updates, identified bottlenecks and risks, and actionable recommendations to accelerate progress against agreed priorities and milestone	June 30th, 2027
Support NNC, FDA, and relevant stakeholders in strengthening systems for monitoring food fortification coverage and compliance, regulatory coordination, quality assurance, and use of data for programme improvement.	**Deliverable 8** A progress report that documents the assessment and recommendations for strengthening food fortification monitoring and regulatory systems, including agreed technical inputs, coordination mechanisms with FDA and relevant agencies, review of monitoring tools and reporting arrangements, and actionable recommendations to improve compliance, quality assurance, and data use.	July 31st, 2027
Provide periodic updates on implementation progress across all consultancy workstreams, highlighting achievements, technical assistance, coordination activities, emerging issues, risks, and required actions.	**Deliverable 9** A progress report which includes an implementation tracking mechanism with documented technical inputs, coordination actions, implementation updates, identified bottlenecks and risks, and actionable recommendations to accelerate progress against	August 31st, 2027

	agreed priorities and milestone	
Provide periodic updates on implementation progress across all consultancy workstreams, highlighting achievements, technical assistance, coordination activities, emerging issues, risks, and required actions.	**Deliverable 10** A progress report which includes an implementation tracking mechanism with documented technical inputs, coordination actions, implementation updates, identified bottlenecks and risks, and actionable recommendations to accelerate progress against agreed priorities and milestone	September 30, 2027
Document and disseminate key evidence, implementation experiences, coordination outcomes, good practices, and lessons learned generated through the consultancy	**Deliverable 11** A progress report which includes an implementation tracking mechanism with documented technical inputs, coordination actions, implementation updates, identified bottlenecks and risks, and actionable recommendations to accelerate progress against agreed priorities and milestone	October 31, 2027
Consolidate the results and learning from the consultancy and provide recommendations to support continued implementation, institutionalization, and sustainability of maternal nutrition and micronutrient interventions.	**Deliverable 12** A final consultancy report documenting achievements against agreed deliverables and milestones, key technical and coordination contributions, implementation challenges and responses, institutional strengthening results, lessons learned, sustainability considerations, and prioritized recommendations and actions for continued support to NNC and	November 15, 2027

	DOH	

Travel When required by UNICEF

Payment Schedule:

Payment will be made on submission and acceptance of 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.

Important Notes

- 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.
- Contracts are conditional upon the selected candidate's willingness to comply with any current or future vaccination requirements that may be established by UNICEF, where applicable. Failure to comply with applicable vaccination requirements, where required and without an approved medical exemption by UNICEF, may result in the withdrawal of the consultancy offer or termination of the contract in accordance with the General Terms and Conditions of Contract.
- 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 afterwards in your assignment.

QUALIFICATIONS / SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE / EXPERIENCE/ COMPETENCIES (CORE/TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL) / LANGUAGE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

Minimum requirements:

- **Education:** Master Degree in Nutrition, Public Health, Allied Health Sciences, Development Studies
- **Work Experience:** At least 10 years of experience in nutrition, public health, governance, institutional strengthening, programme management, or related fields, including policy coordination and capacity development

  Experience working with national government institutions in the Philippines on health and nutrition programme implementation, policy development, and inter-agency coordination. Experience working with the Department of Health (DOH) and/or the National Nutrition Council (NNC) is an advantage.

  Experience in supporting the implementation, monitoring, and coordination of health and nutrition programmes at subnational levels, including engagement with LGUs and other implementing partners.

- **Skills:** Ability to build effective relationships and coordinate with national government, development partners, and other stakeholders.

  Strong facilitation, interpersonal, and written and verbal communication skills.

Strong analytical, writing, documentation, and presentation skills, with the ability to synthesize and communicate complex information clearly.

Ability to work independently, manage competing priorities, and deliver high-quality outputs within agreed timelines.

- **Language Requirements:** Fluency in written and spoken English is required. Proficiency in another official United Nations language is an asset.
- **Desirables** Knowledge of the Philippine nutrition policy and programme landscape, particularly the PPAN 2023–2028.

  Knowledge of the Maternal Health and Nutrition Acceleration Plan and its priorities for maternal nutrition and micronutrient interventions.

  Knowledge of food fortification policies, programmes, and implementation in the Philippines.

  Knowledge of the Philippine Salt Iodization Program, including its policy, regulatory, monitoring, and implementation mechanisms.