



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

TERMS OF REFERENCE TRACKING OF GOVERNMENT, INGOs, DONORS AND UN AGENCIES EXPENDITURES ON NUTRITION IN LIBERIA FOR THE 2019 /2020 FISCAL YEAR

ABOUT US

Action Against Hunger is an international network with Head offices at (Paris, New York, London, Toronto, Madrid and New Delhi) committed to ending world hunger.

Action Against Hunger has been operating in Liberia since 1990 following the first Civil War, and since then has become one of the main humanitarian and development actor in the country, focusing on the links between nutrition, health (including mental health), FSL, WASH, governance to address the underlying and root causes of nutrition insecurity. Our target groups are children under 5 years, pregnant, lactating women, adolescents, and other vulnerable groups. Action Against Hunger is currently implementing on Health and Nutrition, WASH, Food Security and Livelihoods, Research and Advocacy activities in Liberia. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, AAH Liberia is supporting the efforts of the government in the pandemic response with emergency programs in 3 counties of Montserrado, Margibi and Nimba.

Context:

With support from the pooled fund, Action Against Hunger Liberia is implementing a project in line with one of our local implementing partners, SUN Civil Society Alliance of Liberia. Under this project, AAH is looking for a consultant to conduct a nutrition budget tracking exercise. The Budget Tracking exercise will track Government, Donors, INGOs, and UN agencies expenditures for nutrition-specific and sensitive programs and interventions of fiscal years 2019 and 2020 respectively.

BACKGROUND

Liberia is ranked 179/188 in the human development index and has a high rate of under-five mortality rate (120/1000)¹. At the Nutrition for Growth Summit in 2013, the Government of Liberia (GoL) committed to reducing the prevalence of stunting from 32% to 28% and wasting from 6% to 2% by 2020. While the nutritional status has considerably improved since 2010, the latest National Nutrition Survey (LNNS 2017) however shows a stagnation in the progress made, particularly in under-nutrition. The survey revealed an increase in prevalence of stunting from of 32% to 35% between 2013 and 2017². Furthermore, the 2017 NSS show increase in wasting to 5.1% and in underweight from 12.9% to 13.6%.

According to Liberia 2019 Health Report overweight is 3.2%, which has decreased slightly from 4.2% in 2007. The national prevalence of under-five stunting is 32.1%, which is greater than the developing country average of 25%. Conversely, Liberia's under-five wasting prevalence of 5.6% is less than the developing country average of 8.9%.

The overall nutrition expenditures (from Development partners, UN agencies, INGO and Government) for 2016/2017 was \$ 17.15 million which represent 0.52% of the GDP or 4.4% of the total government expenditure. In 2017/2018, it decreased to \$ 15.60 million, which represents 0.48% of the GDP or 5.2% of the total government expenditures. Of which the government spent \$US8.3 million (0.25% of GDP or 2.1% of the total government expenditure) in 2016/2017 and \$US 5.2 million (0.16% of GDP or 1.7% of the total government expenditure) in 2017/2018. Overall, nutrition expenditures for government decreased by 37% in nominal terms and by 51% in real terms.



The Development Partners, UN agencies and INGOs nutrition expenditure was \$ **8.87 million** which represent **0.27% of the country's GDP** for 2016/2017. It rose to \$ **10.36 million** in 2017/2018, which represent **0.32%** of the GDP. In nominal term, expenditure increased by **17%** from 2016/2017 to 2017/2018, while in real terms (taking care of inflation), expenditure decreased by 11%. It is also noted that government spent more on nutrition sensitive activities/programs while the Development Partners UN agencies and INGOs spent more on nutrition specific interventions.

Stunting or chronic malnutrition remains a persistent public health concern in Liberia. The Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey (CFSNS) 2018 estimate that 35.5% of children under five years are stunted similar to the 2012 prevalence of 35.0%. The prevalence is particularly high in Grand Bassa with 41%, followed by Maryland with (38.6%) and Lofa counties with 37% (on average).

This puts Liberia on the list of the 21 countries with the highest stunting levels in the world.¹ 4.8% of the children are wasted or thin for their age. Household food insecurity remains a persistent challenge in Liberia where 41% of households were food insecure in 2010, 49% in 2012, 16% in 2015 and 18% in 2018. Though the situation has gradually improved since 2015, high numbers of Liberians continue to suffer from hunger and under-nutrition. The consequences of which severely hamper social and economic development². Food insecurity is highest in Maryland (35%) followed by Bomi (29%), Nimba (25%), Rivercess (24%) and River Gee (24%), Lofa (22%), Grand Kru (20%), Bong, Grand Bassa (18%) and Grand Cape Mount (18%) counties. Food insecurity disproportionately affects rural areas (23%) than the urban setting (11%). Greater Monrovia division on the other hand recorded the lowest food insecurity prevalence (8.8%). In addition, 55% of children (0-6 months) were exclusively breastfed while 44% of children were breastfed until their second birthday (Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) et al., 2014). Poor dietary diversity and diarrheal disease caused by improper hygiene and sanitation contribute to suboptimal nutritional outcomes. Malaria is a critical public health issue, with 42 percent of children testing positive, which accounts for a significant proportion of anemia in children under five.

At the 2013 Nutrition for Growth Summit, the Government of Liberia committed to scale up universally seven cost-effective and high-impact nutrition interventions and behaviors by rolling out the Essential Nutrition Action (ENA) package by 2015. The ENA was planned to be rolled out in five counties each year to cover all 15 counties in three years. It is estimated to have benefited 810,000 pregnant women, 600,000 newborns, and 2.76 million children. An estimated USD \$15.2 million was required for the initiative, of which the Government committed USD \$3.2 million. However, the Government of Liberia has not done much in implementing its commitments since it signed up to them

PURPOSE

To generate evidence and create a tool that will empower the Liberia Civil Society advocate for increased funding for nutrition activities and document the Government of Liberia (GoL) commitments to nutrition funding (e.g. Nutrition for Growth commitment, London, 2013). According to 2019 Global nutrition report, Liberia nutrition profile as of 2013, the national prevalence of under-five overweight is 3.2%, which has decreased slightly from 4.2% in 2007. The national prevalence of under-five stunting is 32.1%, which is greater than the developing country average of 25%. Conversely, Liberia's under-five wasting prevalence of 5.6% is less than the developing country average of 8.

SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT

The scope of the project is to track the expenditure of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and UN Agencies that implement nutrition specific and sensitive programs. The

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/liberia/combating-malnutrition>

² The Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey (CFSNS) 2018- Liberia ⁶ Liberia Malaria Operational Plan 2018



Ministries of interest are: Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Public Works (MPW), Ministry of Education, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Protection (MOGCSP), WASH Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency. For the UN agencies, this study should include UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, WHO and FAO, UN Women, UN AIDS and shall also include development banks like African Development Bank and World Bank etc. For the INGOs, it should include Concern World Wide, Action Against Hunger, Samaritan Purse, MRECY Corps, Last Mile Health. The expenditure of these ministries were tracked during last year's exercise and thus the purpose of this year budget tracking is to understand trends in nutrition sensitive and specific expenditures of the above mentioned ministries, INGOs and UN agencies. The study will last for a period of one year, beginning the year of production beginning, November 2020 to November 2021.

Other objective identified in the scope of this project is to see the relation between budget expenditure, the policy priorities and national commitment (are the funding targets met by the Government at national and international levels?). In addition, we aim to track how much the nutrition sensitive and specific interventions carried out by the relevant ministries are relying on national revenues as opposed to other sources of funding. The period covered by the tracking will be 2019 and 2020 fiscal years.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the 2019 study will be new and innovative, although the tools developed for budget monitoring last year were the methodology using SUN's three-step approach, this year the methodology from the West African consultation (UNICEF-AAH) will be used and presented to the consultant if the application process is successful. This methodology based on the SUN methodology is an adaptation that better suits our contexts. The aim here will be to compile the most accurate possible budget allocations for nutrition. The analysis will need to assess the amounts of money allocated to both specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions. In conducting this budget analysis, the consultant will draw on previous data collection and literature reviews, key informant interviews and focus groups.

- Differently from previous years, the update of the Excel sheet will not apply to this methodology, as this new methodology covers all sectors of activity of the state, it should enable the consultant to go through the entire 2019 state budget in order to identify sensitive and specific nutrition lines. the consultant should collect raw data from the following sources:
 - Annual budget for payroll (public document – MoF website);
 - Expenditure Report- Accountant General Office (MoF);
 - Local Government Finance Department;
 - Local Council
 - State Agency
 - Directorate-General for the Budget
 - Different ministries involved
 - Annual budget for payroll (public document – MoFDP website);
 - Expenditure Report Accountant General Office (MoFDP);
 - Local Government Finance Department;
- COVID 19 Expenditure to Nutrition

Expected data and analysis for each Ministry and

overall:

- Percentage (%) of nutrition specific expenditure in GDP
- Percentage (%) of nutrition specific expenditure in GGE;-
- Percentage (%) of nutrition sensitive expenditure in GDP;
- Percentage (%) of nutrition sensitive expenditure in General Government Expenditure;



- Percentage (%) of nutrition specific expenditure per capita;
- Percentage (%) of nutrition sensitive expenditure per capita;
- Percentage (%) of the National Food Security and Nutrition Implementation Plan that was funded by Government (if any of such national plan);
- Percentage (%) of UN Agency spending on nutrition specific and sensitive
- Percentage of donors expenditure on nutrition sensitive and specific Domestic funds compare to donors/UN/INGOs expenditure
- Percentage of nutrition sensitive expenditure per region
- Other outputs discussed with the consultant and upon request;

Action Against Hunger will share the existing tools and the recent reports from sister country (Sierra Leone) with the consultant.

LOGISTICS AND PROCEDURE

All logistics related issues will be the responsibility of the consultant/consultancy Firm.

TASKS OF THE CONSULTANT

- Carry out a literature review and collect relevant information on the themes developed above;
- Use the West African consensus methodology (Action contre la Faim, UNICEF...), previously mentioned, to analyse the financial data for 2019.
- Conduct literature review of the Policies geared towards addressing nutrition and carry interviews with relevant persons that manages programmes related to nutrition (if relevant);
- Organise a meeting/workshop to announce the exercise to relevant stakeholders and to receive their approval;
- Work closely with Civil Society, the SUN Focal Point and the Commissions that will be set up to conduct the study;
- Conduct discussions with Civil Society, the SUN Focal Point, UNICEF, etc. and include amendments in the final report;
- Interview key partners for additional information;
- Organise a meeting/workshop to present the preliminary findings/inception report both at national and district level
- Analyse the data, draw conclusions and make key recommendations that can point the way forward to ensure that the budget is as responsive as possible to current needs in the nutrition sector;
- Compare the findings with the government's nutrition priorities/budgeted plan, Technical and Financial Partners' allocations.
- Compare the findings with the results of the analysis of the 2018 state budget;
- Produce two reports (national and district) level with recommendations and findings
- Organise a working group to present the findings to Civil Society and other stakeholders and discuss recommendations, formulate key recommendations indicating ways in which the budget can be made more responsive to current nutrition needs and next steps.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The contract will be managed by Action Against Hunger in Liberia, and the study supervised by Action Against Hunger Officer who is based in Liberia



Monrovia, Liberia. A number of working days may be spent at the consultant's home base, if outside Liberia, as will be agreed and authorized by Action Against Hunger Liberia.

TIMEFRAME AND SCHEDULE OF WORK

This task is expected to last for 45 working days and should ideally be completed by end of November 2020

EXPECTED OUTPUT (IN TERMS OF MATERIAL)

A PowerPoint presentation presenting preliminary results/findings to relevant stakeholders during a validation meeting (before writing of the final report);

A final report of 30 pages max (excluding annexes). This report should clearly state findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The consultant is expected to **draft a policy brief** for further dialogue and dissemination of the results of the study.

PROFILE AND EXPECTED SKILLS

- Technical training in public health, nutrition, WASH, development, public finance or political science and public policy
- Excellent knowledge of the organisation of the health system and other sectors contributing to nutrition;
- In-depth understanding of nutrition and health issues in Sierra Leone
- Good relations with NGOs, Associations (national and international), and other technical and financial partners in Sierra Leone would be an asset
- Proven experience in conducting budget analysis in nutrition or other relevant sectors (health, food security, agriculture, Livelihoods);
- Proven experience working with NGOs is beneficial;
- Proven ability to present written material in a clear, concise and engaging manner to a wide range of different audiences
- Excellent analytical skills and experience in quantitative data analysis;
- Familiarity with the Sierra Leone context and/or the West Africa region would be an asset;
- Excellent English writing skills;
- Commitment to the values, vision and mission of Action Against Hunger

Application:

Interested candidates or firms are requested to send their applications including CV, an estimated budget (including daily rate) and preliminary consultancy proposal to Action Against Hunger at the below email address: recruitment@lr-actionagainsthunger.org latest **December 28, 2020 at 5:00PM**. Qualified national applicants are strongly encouraged to apply. A financial proposition for the consultancy should include 5% of Tax. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Action Against Hunger is an equal opportunity Employer.

Women are strongly encouraged to apply