

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **NATIONAL PAHO CONSULTANT (NPC) - NUTRITION**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Healthy nutrition is critical in the prevention of diet-related risk factors, such as overweight and obesity in children and throughout the life course and associated noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). In terms of child survival evidence has also demonstrated the importance of the proper practice of breastfeeding and complementary feeding, infant and young child feeding and sustainable healthy food systems. Through policies, legislation and strategies on healthy nutrition, malnutrition in all its forms can be prevented.

Consumption of foods and beverages high in critical nutrients (salt/sodium, sugar, saturated fats and trans fats) has been associated with an increased risk of diet-related risk factors and associated NCDs, as well as all wasting, stunting and deficiency diseases.

In terms of improvement of child and adolescent health, it is important through these years to maintain a healthy diet and practice good practices. Poor nutrition during the early stages of the life-course can lead to extensive and irreversible damage to physical growth and brain development. On the other hand, good nutrition has a positive effect. Breastfeeding is the optimal way of feeding babies, offering them the nutrients they need in the right balance, as well as offering protection against disease. Breastfeeding and 1000 days initiative provides benefits such as childhood leukemia, sudden infant death syndrome and babies have higher intellectual capabilities and many more benefits. In Latin and Caribbean only 32% of children under 6 months of age are exclusively breastfed in average in the Region of the Americas.

The Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative is a global strategy which ensures that every child has the best start in life by creating a health care environment that supports breastfeeding as the norm. In keeping with the international code of marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, a maternity facility can be designated 'baby-friendly' when it does not accept free or low-cost breastmilk substitutes, feeding bottles or teats, and has implemented 10 specific steps to support successful breastfeeding.

This strategy provides the means to empower women to make good use of this resource, thereby fulfilling their right to breastfeed for their own and their children's health. The returns are high; breastfeeding provides self-reliance and promotes child development at a very low cost.

Worldwide evidence clearly documents the many benefits of breastfeeding, not only for babies but also for the mother, the family, and the environment. This also leads to an improved rate of child survival and reduces infant and child morbidity and mortality.

According to the Global Strategy of Plan of action of obesity, the following interventions should be included into the Primary Health Care setting these include promotion of breastfeeding. healthy eating; improvement of school food and physical activity environments; fiscal policies and regulation of food marketing and labelling; other multisectoral actions and surveillance, research, and evaluation.

Anaemia in pregnancy is the result of several nutrition complications in the neonatal period such as low birth weight babies and prematurity. Healthy babies are a result of the good balanced nutrition to the pregnant mothers during antenatal care. In Guyana, anemia in pregnancy remains at 40% for pregnant women and there is need to have sufficient strategies to meet the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. Support the implementation of nutrition interventions across the life cycle from infancy to elderly.
2. Promote healthy lifestyles through the prevention of chronic diseases among the population thus ensuring longer survival rates

## **ACTIVITIES/SCOPE OF WORK:**

- Develop a Nutrition plan of action which include nutrition interventions across the lifecycle: neonatal, infancy, child, adolescent, pregnant women, breastfeeding, complementary feeding and also prevention of chronic diseases in the population.
- Support the implementation of the BFHI in all regions including the Baby Friendly Hospital Monitoring/Assessment Team.
- Liaise with the Food Policy Division on
  - Supervision and monitoring and assessment of National Reference and Regional Hospitals in preparation for accreditation and reassessment of the BFHI Status.
  - Conduct training and evaluation programmes to fill the gap/needs identified across the life cycle e.g Breastfeeding 1000 days, infant and young child feeding, healthy diets.
  - Conduct field visits to the regions in order to assess the progress of implementation of the nutrition interventions
- Support the revision of the anaemia protocol in pregnancy at the national and regional levels.
- Prepare appropriate health educational materials in all areas of the nutrition as specified above.
- Prepare and manage monitoring schedule and budget.
- Prepare and progress on the implementation.

- Plan and execute activities for World Breastfeeding Week 2023.
- All other activities as assigned by supervisor

## **SUPERVISION**

- The consultant will work under the leadership of the PAHO/WHO Technical Officers in Family and Community Health and Non Communicable Diseases and Mental Health. Consultation would also be done with the Director of Food Policy, Ministry of Health
- Reports would be complied as per deliverables

**Period of contract** – 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2024 with possible extension

## **QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED**

- Trained Public Health personnel and with professional experience in nutrition activities within the last 5 years . Degree in nutrition would be required.
- Previous training in implementation of nutrition programmes including Breastfeeding Counselling/BFHI/Code of Marketing of Breastmilk substitutes/Young and Infant Feeding/ Management of Anaemia in children and pregnant women etc.
- Knowledge and familiarity with the regional Hospital System and supervisory experience will be a definite asset
- Very good knowledge in computer programmes e.g word, excel, power point etc
- The availability of the person to do extensive travel around Guyana is required.