

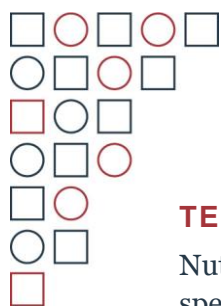


Expression of Interest No: 26th June 2026

Expert on Nutrition Sensitive Social Protection

Date of Issue: 26th June 2026





TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToRs)

Nutrition International is recruiting an individual Consultant to perform the duties specified in this ToR. Nutrition International is committed to the fundamental principles of equal employment opportunity. Women are encouraged to apply.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Cambodia has made notable progress from a low-income to a lower-middle-income country and aims to reach upper-middle-income status by 2030. Economic growth is reflected in the nutrition landscape, with the stunting prevalence among children under five reduced from 32% in 2014 to 22% in 2022. However, some challenges persist, such as a high stunting prevalence among children under five years in the poorest wealth quintile (31%). Furthermore, the wasting prevalence among children under five years has stagnated at 10%, and the proportion of women in reproductive age meeting minimum dietary diversity standards dropped from 68% to 55% in 2021. Finally, overweight and obesity among women aged 15-49 increased from 11% to 32%¹ (Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS), 2021). To reverse these trends and improve overall nutrition status, the Pentagonal Strategy – Phase 1, of the Royal Government of Cambodia has integrated nutrition in two of the five Pentagons;

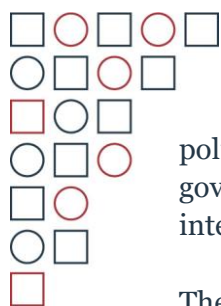
- a) Pentagon 1: Human Capital Development, Priority 4 – Strengthening Social Protection System and Food System and,
- b) Pentagon 4: Resilient, Sustainable and Inclusive Development, Priority 1 – Optimization of Demographic Dividends, Strengthening of Demographic Resilience and Promotion of Gender Equality.²

The focus on nutrition was further strengthened with the launch of the 3rd National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (NSFSN) 2024-2028 in April 2025, with Nutrition Sensitive Social Protection (NSSP) identified as one of the five joint priorities under the NSFSN. The government has also developed the National Social Protection Policy Framework (NSPPF) 2024 – 2035, to guide implementation of an effective social protection (SP) system in Cambodia. The NSPPF includes two critical nutrition sensitive interventions a) a package for children <2, pregnant and lactating women, and b) a homegrown school feeding program. Therefore, there is need to strengthen nutrition sensitivity of the two interventions as well as other interventions in the NSPPF.

The lead agency for Social Protection in Cambodia is the National Social Protection Council (NSPC). It is the policy-making and governing body responsible for social protection system, with a specific focus on policy formulation and strategic direction, coordination and harmonization, oversight, and monitoring. NSPC also has the mandate to oversee implementation of the National Social Protection Policy Framework in Cambodia 2016-2025, and the updated policy framework 2024-2035. While the updated

¹ https://uniatf.who.int/docs/librariesprovider22/default-document-library/cambodia-ncd-report.pdf?sfvrsn=12263136_

² http://cdc-crdp.gov.kh/en/strategy/documents/Pentagonal-Strategy-Phase-I_English_24.08.2023.pdf



policy framework has prioritized nutrition, there is a need for guidance to ensure that all government bodies responsible for implementing the policy framework are equipped to integrate nutrition appropriately.

The other important stakeholder is the Council of Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD). It is the lead and coordinating body for implementing, monitoring and tracking the joint priorities under the third NSFSN, at national and sub-national levels. These two agencies, as well as other relevant stakeholders, need to be aligned in their understanding of nutrition and social protection linkages and its applications for their respective sectors.

Nutrition International has been supporting the CARD since March 2023 in developing and operationalizing the NSFSN. Based on the previous phase of work and discussions with NSPC and CARD, NI was requested to provide technical assistance to develop a Nutrition-Sensitive Social Protection (NSSP) Implementation Guideline. NSPC will be the lead agency for the approval of the deliverables in consultation with the Technical Working Group.

PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTANCY

With increased focus on integrating nutrition in existing social protection programmes as well as the launch of the 2024-2028 NSFSN, there is need to provide guidance and direction to stakeholders on implementation of NSSP related interventions. The goal of the consultancy is to support the NSPC to develop implementation guidelines that will ensure joint approaches and investments towards common NSSP goals, and a harmonized and coordinated mechanism to guide implementation and progress measurement. The harmonized approach will also meet the objectives of the NSFSN related to NSSP.

The guideline will provide clear, practical, step-by-step guidance for policymakers, program managers, and frontline implementers on integrating and operationalizing nutrition-sensitive interventions within social protection systems. The guideline will also support improved coordination between social protection and key sectors such as health, agriculture, and education, contributing to Cambodia's commitments to reduce malnutrition and improve human capital outcomes.

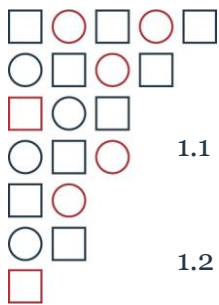
OBJECTIVES

To develop a practical, user-friendly Nutrition Sensitive Social Protection (NSSP) Implementation Guideline that provides step-by-step guidance on designing and implementing nutrition-sensitive actions within existing and future social protection systems in Cambodia, also taking into account program interventions during periods of shock.

SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will:

1. **Conduct a situational review**



- 1.1 Review existing national and sub national social protection and nutrition policies, operational manuals, program implementation, delivery systems and financing mechanisms.
- 1.2 Review global, Asia-specific and country evidence (e.g., FAO, UNICEF, World Bank guidelines, research institutions) on approaches to integrate nutrition in social protection systems including social assistance programs and social security schemes.
- 1.3 Conduct a mapping exercise of key social protection programs and schemes that have the potential to integrate/ are already integrating nutrition actions to identify gaps and opportunities for strengthening and scaling up nutrition integration.

2. Develop a draft implementation guideline

The consultant will lead the creation of a comprehensive and actionable guideline for stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. The methodology will include interviews with key ministries at national and sub national levels (Social Protection, Labour, Gender, Health, Agriculture, Finance), development partners, and beneficiaries where feasible.

The guideline will specifically include the following:

2.1 Nutrition sensitive interventions integrated within the social protection operational cycle – this will include integrating nutrition education/Social and Behaviour Change (SBC), screening and referral mechanisms to and from health services, and improving access to micronutrients -providing fortified foods or micronutrient supplements alongside social protection transfers

2.2 Define strategies to strengthen NSSP Coordination and Governance. This will include;

- a) Defining mechanisms for multisectoral coordination as well as communication structures and strategies for NSSP with other relevant sectors including education, health, and agriculture, and define the roles of NSPC, GS-NSPC, CARD & line ministries
- b) Defining roles and responsibilities of line ministries and stakeholders and implementation arrangements

2.3 Develop capacity building materials on the use of the guideline: These will include training materials and toolkits for community workers, social protection, and nutrition stakeholders at national and sub national levels.

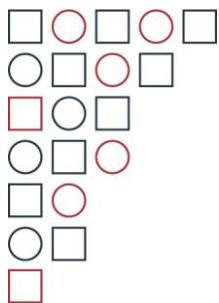
2.4 Define entry points for shock-responsive nutrition sensitive social protection as part of emergency preparedness & response strategies.

3. Support NSPC and NI in other activities that is related to successful completion of the project.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE GUIDELINE

The guideline should include, but is not limited to:

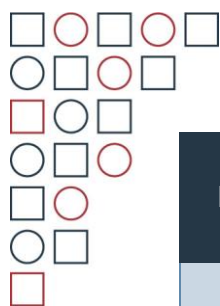
- Adherence to the following guiding principles;



- a) Lifecycle approach - NSSP interventions should be designed to provide continuous support across the lifecycle, with particular focus on the first 1,000 days, school age, adolescence, and pregnancy.
 - b) Intervention coverage - The guideline will advocate for NSSP intervention to be implemented in collaboration with interventions from other key sectors – health, agriculture, and WASH to address multiple nutrition determinants together. This may include interventions that promote income generation and linkages to community or homestead gardening and savings and loans groups among social protection beneficiaries to improve income and food access.
 - c) Human rights and equity focus - Needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized populations are prioritized during the design and implementation of NSSP interventions, ensuring no one is left behind.
 - d) Gender-responsive approach - The guideline should address gender inequities affecting the most vulnerable populations, improve access to nutrition services, prioritise women as primary recipients of transfers, and engage men and women in household decision making.
 - e) Nutrition sensitive targeting and registration - The guideline should outline procedures to identify and prioritize households/individuals with high nutritional risk.
- Define nutrition entry points into SP programs for all categories of nutritionally vulnerable populations.
 - Provide guidelines for tailoring cash/food/voucher transfers to maximize dietary diversity.
 - Include Social and Behavior Change (SBC) content development and delivery mechanisms for nutrition-focused messaging.
 - Develop operational protocols for linking beneficiaries to nutrition-specific services (e.g., screenings, vaccinations, antenatal care).
 - Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E): A set of nutrition-sensitive indicators (e.g., dietary diversity score, stunting rates, uptake of services) aligned to national M&E systems.

DELIVERABLE AND TIMELINE

The work will be completed in two phases. Phase 1 activities will be related to the development of the implementation guideline and Phase 2 will focus on the training package and roadmap. The Phase 2 will start only after the formal approval of the implementation guideline. The phase-wise breakdown of the activities is as follows:



Item	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date
Phase 1		
1.	Inception Report: Detailed work plan and methodology	August 31, 2026
2	Mapping/Situation Analysis Report: Summary of existing gaps and opportunities.	October 30, 2026
3	Draft Nutrition-Sensitive Social Protection Implementation guideline in Khmer and English	November 30, 2026
4	Final Implementation guideline (incorporating feedback from stakeholder validation)	December 31, 2026
Phase 2		
1	Develop training package/modules for implementers.	March 31, 2027
2	Develop draft action plan of the NSSP guideline which includes plan for orientation of the guidelines, pilot, institutionalization and scale-up phases	April 30, 2027
3	Final action plan for NSSP guidelines	May 31, 2027

GENDER

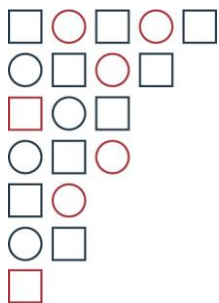
Nutrition International is committed to gender equality. Consultants are required to indicate how they will ensure that gender equality considerations are included in the provision of TA, including how they are incorporated into deliverables. Examples of gender equality integration could include but are not limited to; ensuring government departments responsible for women are included wherever possible, gender sensitive indicators are included, emerging data is sex disaggregated, and relevant documentation related to gender is reviewed. Nutrition International's gender equality strategy as well as tools to support gender mainstreaming can be accessed here: [Program Gender Equality Strategy](#).

TIMELINE

The assignment will be for a maximum 10 months, starting from August 2026 - May 2027, based on the above timelines.

STATION / LOCATION

- The consultant will be based Phnom Penh, Cambodia working with NSPC team.



- There will be some travel to the provinces within Cambodia as and when required. Local travel under this consultancy will be supported by Nutrition International based on prior approval by NI team and NSPC focal point for the government.

MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING/COORDINATION MECHANISM

- The Consultant will work under the direct, day-to-day supervision of Nutrition International's Senior Technical Advisor, Nutrition Governance with frequent coordination with Asia Regional Manager to ensure the timely progress.
- The NSPC Secretariat will monitor progress of the assignment on a regular basis.
- NI will provide the funding for the assignment, and payments will be subject to satisfactory performance by the Consultant and the reaching of the deliverables agreed upon at the time of contract signing.

PROFILE/ QUALIFICATIONS OF CONSULTANT

The Consultant should have the following profile:

Education:

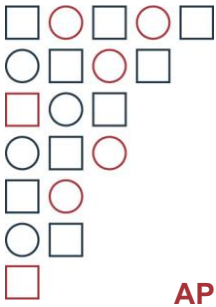
- Post-graduate qualification in health, nutrition, social development, public policy, or related fields.

Language Skills:

- High written and oral capability in English.
- Proficiency in Khmer is essential.

Experience:

- 10 or more years' experience in designing or implementing social protection programs and/or nutrition-sensitive programming, including design of operational frameworks, guidelines, or program models.
- Experience working in Cambodia or similar Southeast Asian contexts, with strong understanding of national systems, institutional arrangements and operations of social protection, education, agricultural, and health systems.
- Good understanding of nutrition-sensitive social protection (NSSP), including key pathways linking social protection to nutrition outcomes (e.g., cash transfers, SBC, service linkages, livelihoods).
- Excellent stakeholder engagement and facilitation skills, with the ability to navigate complex, multi-sectoral environments and build consensus across institutions.



- Strong analytical and synthesis skills, including ability to conduct policy reviews, mapping exercises, and translate findings into actionable recommendations.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested Consultants are invited to submit the following by email to TechnicalAssistance@NutritionIntl.org, copying sroy@nutritionintl.org

Up-to-date curriculum vitae or resume.

1. Cover Letter/ Suitability statement for the consultancy.

Additionally, applicants are expected to complete the [Technical Assistance Provider Recruitment Form - Nutrition International \(nutritionintl.org\)](#).

* The award of this Consultancy contract will be contingent on project funding availability.