Helen Keller Intl Nepal
TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)
Consultancy to Assess the Feasibility of Local Production of Nutritional Products for the Management of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) among under 5 children in Nepal

1. Background

1.1 About Helen Keller Intl Nepal

Guided by the remarkable legacy of its co-founder, Helen Keller Intl partners with communities working to break long-standing cycles of poverty. By providing the essential building blocks of good health, sound nutrition, and clear vision, we empower millions to create lasting change in their lives. With over 35 years of experience in Nepal, we strive to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Helen Keller Intl began operations in Nepal in 1989. Over the past three decades, it has worked closely with the Government of Nepal at federal, provincial, and local levels to support national strategies in nutrition, maternal and child health, infectious disease control, food security, and agricultural development. Through technical assistance, operational research, and evidence-based programming, Helen Keller Intl Nepal has contributed significantly to the development of national nutrition policies, fortification initiatives, behavior change interventions, and community-based health programs.

The organization is currently supporting national and provincial efforts to strengthen early childhood nutrition, including prevention and management of acute malnutrition, by collaborating closely with the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP), the Family Welfare Division (FWD), and the Department of Food Technology and Quality Control (DFTQC). This consultancy aligns with Helen Keller Intl Nepal's ongoing commitment to advancing sustainable food systems, improving access to nutritious foods, and contributing to self-reliance through domestic production capacity.

1.2 Context and Rationale

Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) remains a priority public-health concern in Nepal, particularly among young children, and in economically disadvantaged populations. The Government of Nepal, development partners, and humanitarian organizations currently rely on a combination of imported and nationally sourced specialized nutritious foods, such as Super Cereal Plus, fortified blended foods (FBFs), and other nutrient-dense products—to support MAM management efforts.

However, dependence on imported specialized nutritious foods presents several challenges:

- **Supply chain vulnerabilities:** Delays, disruptions, and international procurement constraints.
- **High cost of imported products:** Affecting sustainability and coverage.
- **Limited adaptability of imported products:** Challenges in cultural acceptability, ingredient relevance, and palatability among diverse Nepali communities.
- **Limited contribution to national economic development:** Importation provides minimal benefits to domestic industries or job creation.

- **Regulatory and quality control constraints:** Ensuring compliance and maintaining quality across long supply chains.

Given these challenges and Nepal's growing private-sector food processing ecosystem, there is increasing interest in exploring the feasibility of local production of specialized nutritious products for the prevention and management of MAM. Establishing local production capacity could have multiple benefits:

- Strengthening national self-reliance
- Enhancing supply sustainability
- Reducing costs through localized sourcing
- Supporting Nepal's food and nutrition industries
- Improving the responsiveness of MAM protocols to cultural and dietary contexts
- Enhancing government oversight and quality assurance
- Stimulating economic growth and innovation within the private sector.

To support evidence-based decision-making, Helen Keller Intl Nepal intends to commission a comprehensive feasibility assessment focusing on national manufacturing capacity, regulatory readiness, MAM management protocols, and key challenges and opportunities in establishing local production.

2. Purpose and Objectives of the Consultancy

2.1 Overall Purpose

The overarching purpose of this consultancy is to assess the feasibility of producing Super Cereal Plus or other specialized nutritious products locally in Nepal to support the effective management of Moderate Acute Malnutrition. The study will generate robust evidence to inform policy decisions, guide investment priorities, and support the Government of Nepal's long-term efforts to ensure sustainable access to quality MAM-related products.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The consultancy will pursue the following specific objectives:

1. **Assess National Private-Sector Capacity:**

   Evaluate the technical, operational, infrastructural, and commercial capacity of potential private-sector manufacturers in Nepal to produce Super Cereal Plus or similar specialized nutritious foods that meet international standards for MAM management.

2. **Review National Policies and Regulatory Frameworks:**

   Analyze existing food safety laws, quality standards, fortification regulations, licensing requirements, and certification mechanisms governing the production of fortified blended foods and specialized nutritious products.

3. **Review Current National MAM Management Protocols:**

Examine national guidelines, supply chain systems, and product specifications to ensure locally produced products align with clinical and programmatic needs for MAM treatment.

4. **Identify Issues, Barriers, and Challenges for Local Production:**

   Identify technical, economic, market, institutional, and regulatory challenges that could affect the viability of local manufacturing.

5. **Develop Recommendations and Roadmap:**

   Provide actionable, evidence-based recommendations and a practical roadmap for the Government of Nepal, development partners, and private sector stakeholders to support sustainable, high-quality local production.

3. Scope of Work

The consultant or consulting firm will undertake the following comprehensive tasks:

3.1 National Private-Sector Capacity Assessment

- Map existing food processing companies, millers, fortified food manufacturers, blended-food producers, and agribusinesses.
- Evaluate facility infrastructure, production-line capacity, equipment (e.g., extrusion technology), and maintenance systems.
- Assess compliance with food-safety management systems—HACCP, GMP, ISO certifications, quality control processes, and laboratory capacities.
- Review availability, reliability, and cost of raw materials such as grains, pulses, soy, dairy ingredients, vegetable oils, and micronutrient premixes.
- Analyze supply-chain capabilities including packaging materials, storage facilities, energy availability, transportation logistics, and distribution networks.
- Conduct SWOT analysis for each potential manufacturer.
- Estimate resource and investment requirements to meet WHO/UNICEF, Codex, and national standards.

3.2 Policy and Regulatory Review

- Review Nepal's Food Act, Food Regulation, nutrition and fortification standards, food safety regulations, licensing and certification requirements, and relevant DFTQC protocols.
- Examine regulatory bottlenecks related to product approval, importation of premixes, labeling, testing, and compliance monitoring.
- Analyze laboratory testing requirements, frequency, cost structures, and institutional capacity.

- Assess the existing harmonization (or gaps) between Nepal's regulatory frameworks and international standards for MAM-related products.

3.3 Review of National MAM Management Protocols

- Review the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) guidelines and its recommendation for MAM management.
- Review past and ongoing experiences with Super Cereal Plus and other specialized nutritional products.
- Identify areas for strengthening to align with potential locally produced products.

3.4 Assessment of Challenges, Issues, and Risks

- Technical challenges in meeting international product specifications.
- Variability in raw material supply, price volatility, and consistency concerns.
- Economic barriers including capital investment, production cost competitiveness, and market sustainability.
- Procurement uncertainties, public sector demand forecasts, and incentive structures.
- Regulatory compliance challenges and quality control limitations.
- Environmental, social, and operational risks (energy, waste, workforce skill gaps, etc.).
- Risk-mitigation strategies and enabling conditions required to support local production.

3.5 Recommendations for Roadmap Development

- Propose feasible production models (private sector–led, joint ventures, contract manufacturing).
- Recommend reforms or improvements to regulatory systems, testing mechanisms, and certification protocols.
- Recommend investment priorities and capacity-building needs.
- Recommend the development of a phased roadmap (short-, medium-, and long-term), including required actions, responsible institutions, timelines, and resource implications.

4. Approach and Methodology

The consultant will adopt a rigorous, participatory, and evidence-based methodology, including:

4.1 Desk Review

- Analysis of relevant policies, guidelines, standards, national surveys, market studies, and scientific literature.
- Review of global best practices and benchmarks from comparable countries.

4.2 Stakeholder Consultations

- Key informant interviews with:
    - DFTQC, FWD, MoHP, provincial health offices
    - Private-sector food processors and manufacturers
    - Industry associations
    - Suppliers, distributors, and agribusiness networks
    - UN agencies, development partners, NGOs
    - Academia and technical experts

4.3 Field Visits

- Site assessments of potential companies to evaluate infrastructure, processes, and capacity.

4.4 Technical and Economic Aspects

- Cost modeling and economic viability assessment.
- Review of investment requirements and cost competitiveness.
- SWOT and gap analysis for production and regulatory systems.

4.5 Validation of Findings

- Presentation of preliminary findings to government and stakeholders.
- Refinement of recommendations based on validation feedback.

6. Deliverables

#	Deliverable	Description / Key Contents	Timeline	Format
1	**Inception Report**	• Detailed methodology and analytical framework • Data-collection tools and instruments • Work plan with timelines and milestones • Stakeholder mapping and consultation plan.	Within **12 days** of contract signing	PDF and editable format (Word)
2	**Draft Feasibility Assessment Report**	Comprehensive draft report covering: • National private-sector capacity assessment • Policy and regulatory review • Review of national MAM management protocols • Assessment of challenges, risks, and opportunities	As per agreed work plan (mid-point of assignment)	PDF and editable format (Word)

		• Preliminary recommendations.		
3	**Validation Workshop Presentation**	PowerPoint presentation summarizing: • Key findings and analysis • Identified challenges and opportunities • Proposed recommendations and roadmap elements	Prior to or during validation workshop	PowerPoint (PPT/PPTX)
4	**Final Feasibility Assessment Report**	• Revised report incorporating stakeholder feedback • Executive summary • Actionable, evidence-based recommendations • Practical phased roadmap (short-, medium-, long-term) including actions, responsible institutions, timelines, and resource implications.	End of consultancy (10–12 weeks)	PDF and editable format (Word)

The consultant shall deliver the following:

1. **Inception Report**
    - Detailed methodology
    - Data-collection tools
    - Work plan and timelines
    - Stakeholder list
    - Submitted within 12 days of contract signing
2. **Draft Feasibility Assessment Report**

    Comprehensive report covering all areas outlined in the scope of work, with supporting data and analysis.
3. **Validation Workshop Presentation**

    A detailed PowerPoint presentation summarizing key findings and recommendations.
4. **Final Report**
    - Revised based on stakeholder feedback
    - Executive summary
    - Provide actionable recommendations
    - Practical recommendation for roadmap for implementation submitted in both PDF and editable formats.

6. Duration and Time Frame

The consultancy is expected to require approximately **10-12 weeks**, including inception, field work, analysis, validation, and final reporting.

7. Scope of Contract and Responsibilities

7.1 Consultant Responsibilities

- Lead and execute all components of the feasibility study.
- Ensure methodological rigor, data integrity, and ethical data collection.
- Coordinate interviews, visits, and meetings with stakeholders.
- Submit high-quality deliverables within agreed timelines.
- Maintain confidentiality and adhere to data-protection protocols.

7.2 Helen Keller Intl Responsibilities

- Provide required background documents and introduce the consultant to relevant government agencies.
- Facilitate coordination with stakeholders as appropriate.
- Review deliverables and provide timely feedback.
- Oversee progress and ensure contractual compliance.
- Organize and support the validation workshop.

8. Education and Eligibility Criteria

Essential Qualifications

- Master's degree or higher in Food Technology, Nutrition, Food Science, Public Health, Food Processing Engineering, or related discipline.

Experience

- Minimum **8–10 years** of experience in food processing, fortification, nutrition programming, or product development.
- Proven experience conducting feasibility studies, regulatory reviews, or private-sector capacity assessments.
- Strong familiarity with WHO/UNICEF specifications for MAM products and fortified foods.
- Experience working with government agencies and private sector in Nepal or comparable countries.

Skills

- Excellent analytical, writing, and communication skills.
- Strong understanding of food safety regulations and quality assurance systems.

- Ability to interact effectively with high-level government and private-sector stakeholders.
- Demonstrated capacity to deliver high-quality reports on tight timelines.

9. Technical Monitoring and Oversight

The consultancy will be technically supervised by Helen Keller Intl Nepal's relevant program leadership. Monitoring mechanisms include:

- Biweekly progress meetings
- Review and approval of deliverables
- On-demand consultations with technical leads
- Final evaluation of deliverables against TOR requirements

Failure to meet agreed-upon standards may result in corrective actions or contract adjustments.

10. Criteria for Contract Award

10.1 Technical Proposal

- Quality and clarity of the methodological approach
- Understanding of assignment and context
- Relevant experience of consultant/team
- Strength of work plan and feasibility
- Demonstrated expertise in food processing and nutrition

10.2 Financial Proposal

- Cost-effectiveness and value for money
- Alignment with industry standards and deliverables

Click "here" [https://helenkellerintl.org.np/consultants/] for the detailed Terms of reference.

To Apply

Application must be submitted with all supporting documents along with detailed CV, five-page technical and a concise financial proposal. **The deadline for application is December 31, 2025, by 5:00 PM Nepal Time (NST) at Nepal.procurement@hki.org**

In the spirit of the extraordinary ability and vision of our founder, Helen Keller International fosters an environment of fairness and belonging for our workforce.

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