TERMS OF REFERENCE
PROJECT ENDLINE EVALUATION
THE MEASUREMENT, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY, & LEADERSHIP SUPPORT FOR NCDS PREVENTION PROJECT (MEALS4NCDS), GHANA

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Measurement, Evaluation, Accountability, and Leadership Support for NCDs prevention (MEALS4NCDs) is a Project being implemented by the School of Public Health, University of Ghana in collaboration with other institutions - University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana Health Service, African Population and Health Research Center, National Research Institute for Sustainable Development, University of Amsterdam Academic Medical Center, Sciensano Research Institute, and University of Toronto. This Project, funded by The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Food, Environment, and Health Program – IDRC, Canada, seeks to measure and support public sector actions that create healthy food marketing and food provision environments for children and adolescents to prevent obesity nutrition-related NCDs.

Like many countries in Africa, Ghana is experiencing an increase in obesity and other nutrition-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs). In 2004, a study estimated the prevalence of obesity among primary school children in Accra, Ghana to be 3.4% (2.8% in boys; 7% in girls; 1.1% in public schools and 9.6% in private schools)[1] ref. A decade later, another study estimated the prevalence of obesity among primary school children in the same area to be 10.9% (15.0% for girls and 7.2% among boys)[2]. Quite recently, overweight/obesity prevalence among children aged 9–15 years was estimated to be 17%[3]. Related data from nationally representative surveys – the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) reveal high prevalence of overweight/obesity among Ghanaian women of reproductive age[4] [5]. Also, Ghanaian households report frequent consumption of foods high in calories, sugar, saturated fat and salt[5] all of which are known to contribute to NCDs. Simultaneously, emerging evidence from local studies points to a high number of misleading marketing of such foods in both private and public-sector settings[6] [7].

It has long been recognized that the physical and social environments – in which we live, work, and eat - particularly our food environments (FEs) are critical determinants of health. Therefore, actions focused on creating healthy FEs by improving the relative availability, affordability and diversity of healthy foods; and by limiting the availability and promotion of unhealthy foods are urgently needed in Ghana. Improving FEs of children and adolescents has the greatest potential to prevent obesity and NCDs.

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[1] Aduama S. Obesity in Primary school children in Accra Metropolis: University of Ghana; 2004.

[2] Mohammed H, Vuvor F. Prevalence of childhood overweight/obesity in basic school in Accra. Ghana Medical Journal 2012; 46(3): 124.

[3] Aryeetey R, Lartey A, Marquis GS, Nti H, Colecraft E, Brown P. Prevalence and predictors of overweight and obesity among school-aged children in urban Ghana. BMC Obesity 2017; 4(1): 38.

[4] Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) GHSG and ICF International. Ghana Demographic and Health Survey. (2014). Rockville, MD: GSS. GHS, and ICF International (2015).

[5] Ghana Statistical Service Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS2017/18), Survey Findings Report GSS, Accra, Ghana

[6] Green MA, Pradeilles R, Laar A, Osei-Kwasi H, Bricas N, Coleman N, et al. Investigating foods and beverages sold and advertised in deprived urban neighbourhoods in Ghana and Kenya: a cross-sectional study. BMJ open. (2020) 10:e035680.

[7] Amevinya GS, Quarpong W, Laar A. Commercial food advertising on the campus of Ghana's largest University. World Nutr. (2020) 11:57–73. doi: 10.26596/wn.202011257-73

It is in response to these urgently needed actions - the MEALS4NCDs Project (hereinafter The Project) was started in March 2019. The objectives of the project are to:

1. describe the nature and extent of unhealthy foods and non-alcoholic beverage promotion on television, in stores, and in and around schools;
2. describe the nutrition standards or guidelines that are in place to implement specific policies or programmes within public sector basic schools in the Greater Accra region of Ghana;
3. evaluate the nutritional quality of foods and beverages sold or provided in child-serving institutions
4. assess community stakeholders' readiness to accept, and capacity to implement interventions to improve children's food environments in the Greater Accra region of Ghana

To investigate these objectives, the Project adapted approaches developed by the International Network for Food and Obesity NCDs Research Monitoring and Action Support (INFORMAS).

Deploying multiple methods, the project conducted policy analysis, quantitative, and qualitative data collection approaches.

As at December 2021, the Project had successfully completed its data collection phases and has started presenting some of its findings at national, regional, and international meetings. An array of audiences -the scientific community, the general public, civil society, and policymakers are being engaged.

1.1. ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project official title	Measuring the healthiness of Ghanaian children's food environments to prevent obesity and Non-Communicable Diseases
Lead institution	School of Public Health, University of Ghana
Funding agency	The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Food, Environment, and Health Program – IDRC, Canada.
Project duration	1st March 2019 - 1st March 2022
Current Project implementation status	The Project has been implemented for 34 out of the total, 36 months
Project objectives	1. To describe the nature and extent of unhealthy foods and non-alcoholic beverage promotion on television, in stores, and in and around schools; 2. To describe the nutrition standards or guidelines that are in place to implement specific policies or programmes within public sector basic schools in the Greater Accra region of Ghana; 3. To evaluate the nutritional quality of foods and beverages sold or provided in child-serving institutions 4. To assess community stakeholders' readiness to accept, and capacity to implement interventions to improve children's food environments in the Greater Accra region of Ghana

Implementation country and geographical areas	Ghana - Geographic communities: mainly in six selected districts of the Greater Accra Region. Some components (e.g. TV monitoring). Interest communities include stakeholders outside of the Greater Accra Region
Project work packages	Three- Food promotion work package, Food provision work package, and the Community readiness work package: **Food promotion** The food promotion work package of aimed to obtain a nationally representative estimate (in the case of TV monitoring), and a regionally representative estimate of the rate of unhealthy food advertising within schools and the area surrounding it. Overall, the work package assessed the frequency of marketing of unhealthy foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, the persuasive power of techniques used in promotional communications and the healthiness of promoted food products. Healthiness was assessed using INFORMAS' core/noncore/miscellaneous categorization, the WHO Nutrient Profiling Model for Africa, and the NOVA classification – as appropriate. **Food provision**: The goals of the food provision work package were two-fold. First, to describe the nutrition policies or programmes within public basic schools in the Greater Accra region of Ghana, and the standards or guidelines that are in place to implement them; second, to evaluate the nutritional quality of the foods and beverages sold (sold by vendors in school cafeterias, canteens or stores within the immediate school compound) or provided (e.g. foods provided by school feeding programmes) in these settings. **Community Readiness Model (CRM)**: This work package aimed to answer the question of how ready "the community" is to accept and implement interventions to improve children's food environment in in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The community is operationally defined both over geographic space (geographic community), and over stakeholder of interest (interest community). Geographically, the focus was the Greater Accra region, which is divided into six sub-communities (of districts). The interest community comprised key informants both within, and outside of the geographic community, adjudged to be "knowledgeable" on the issues understudy; or to wield influence and/ or to play a leadership role on actions that aim to improve children's food environment. The assessment focused primarily on aspects of the FE related to food marketing and the availability of unhealthy foods in and around child-setting institutions.
Expected Project outcomes	**Academic impacts** • Generation of policy-influencing and policy-impacting food environment research evidence

- Dissemination of project findings and outputs (including publications, project briefs, policy briefs, advocacy briefs) to stakeholders - locally, regionally, and internationally.
- Contribute to mentoring, and training, and capacity building of young or early career researchers
- Formation of an African Food Environment Research Network (FERN), encompassing a critical mass of experts to continue with healthy food environment research and advocacy work beyond the life of the Project.

Policy and practice, health and social economic impacts
- Introducing/integrating of food environment monitoring system into public health delivery systems in ways that regularly collects/monitors, and disseminates FE data/information to key actors (such as policymakers, government, and programme implementers), to impact on public health
- Use of evidence generated from the Project by advocacy groups to advocate for the review of the policies and guidelines, and by local governments, and practices among nutrition and health stakeholders
- Improve local Fes especially in an around schools so as to reduce intake of unhealthy food

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation activities are an integral part of the project cycle. This endline evaluation is intended to assess the progress, outputs, outcomes, and impacts of the MEALS4NCDs Project in Ghana. The endline evaluation shall take into account, the following evaluation criteria:

- **Inclusiveness and gender responsiveness:** did the program adhere to diversity in all its implementation phases?
- **Relevance**: are the Project outcomes consistent with national food environment priorities, and or with other international priorities (e.g. the World Health Assembly Resolutions such as WHA63.14; or the World Health Organization Best-buys for combating NCDs?)
- **Efficiency:** to what extent was value-for-money considerations taken into account
- **Effectiveness:** to what extent were the objectives achieved? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- **Impact:** What are the positive and negative contributions of the Project findings to the populace or the country's food environment agenda? (direct and indirect)? What has happened - programmatically- as a result of the Project? What difference has the Project made to beneficiaries? Have outcomes been achieved? And if so, to what extent have outcomes been achieved? What was the contribution (positive or negative) of the COVID-19 situation to the attainment of the Project objective? Or to what extent did the Project manage the difficulties of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 situation.
- **Sustainability:** national ownership of the results and the potential for Project-supported interventions to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period after completion. Assess the Project's role in influencing wider policy at national and international levels.

- **Lessons learned:** the evaluation will also document the innovations and lessons learned from the Project. This includes analysis of what has worked and what has not as well as observations related to the Project design, management and operations.
- **Recommendations:** Considering the progress made thus far, what could be future steps for government and development partners to promote effective development cooperation? What could be further improved if the University of Ghana, the collaborators, or other interested stakeholders wish to implement a similar Project in the near future?
- **Accountability:** To what extent was accountability towards the donor and the beneficiaries of the program taken into account?

This evaluation will cover the entire Project duration. The evaluation must cover the progress and activities done in the six districts of the study but also the global engagements and capacity building.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this evaluation are:
- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Project, the sustainability of the results, and the degree of satisfaction of the beneficiaries.
- To assess the extent to which the Project outputs have been achieved, taking into account the indicators given in the Project document.
- To evaluate the level of contribution of the outputs towards the achievement of the expected Project objectives, goal and impact.
- To examine what (also how, and why) has contributed to the achievement of the Project outcomes or otherwise
- Identify what the key factors of success were and how these be replicated or scaled up elsewhere
- To evaluate the appropriateness of the strategies and approaches used for implementing the Project
- To identify major external factors that influenced (positively or negatively) the implementation of the Project and evaluate their implication on future interventions.
- To highlight lessons learned from the Project and make recommendations for future strategies.

4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The consultant (or team of consultants) will be in charge of developing the methodology as well as all relevant tools for the evaluation process. The methodology, methods and approaches proposed should be fit-for-purpose – in relation to the evaluation objectives mentioned in section 3.

The following elements (not an exhaustive list) should be included in bids that are submitted for consideration.
- **Technical proposal:** a step-by-step detailed plan of work that specifies the methods the evaluation will use to collect the information needed to answer the evaluation objectives, analyze data, interpret the findings, and report the results.
- **Evaluation Matrix:** should include at least analysis dimension, evaluation question, indicators, means of verification, source, and methodology.
- **Data sources:** The data collection should include the use of a number of approaches to gain a deeper understanding of the outcomes of the Project.
    - *Primary Data:* These data consist of the reported or observed values, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, behaviours and motivations, and knowledge of stakeholders that should be

obtained through questionnaires, surveys, semi-structured and/or in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, key informants interviews (e.g. with Project staff members, i.e. Project lead, co-investigators, field coordinators and key community members/beneficiaries, school children, etc.) Such data will permit to gather substantial evidence on the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and timeliness of the Project activities implementation and delivery.

- o *Secondary Data:* These data should be collected from documentary evidence that has direct relevance for the evaluation. The documentary information may be obtained from the MEALS4NCDs monitoring and evaluation database or Secretariat. This will include, when available, Project surveys and assessments, Project reports. The consultant is expected to review the above background documentation as part of the desk review phase of the study.
- **Detailed timeframe**: the proposed methods should feature a detailed timetable of the whole process based on the general time frame included in this TOR.

5. KEY DELIVERABLES

The following will be expected during the evaluation process:
- **Evaluation Inception report**: the inception report provides the Project team and consultant(s) with an opportunity to verify that they share the same understanding about the consultancy and clarify any misunderstanding at the outset. The inception report must be prepared by the consultant before going into the technical mission and full data collection stage. It must detail the consultant's understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each process will be developed and how each evaluation question will be answered by way of proposed methods, proposed sources of data, and data collection/analysis procedures. The inception report must include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities, and deliverables, designating the person with the lead responsibility for each task or product.
- **Presentation of preliminary findings:** Consultant(s) must develop and deliver a presentation to the Project team. That presentation must include the preliminary findings as a debriefing of the data collection process. Hence, the presentation must be done at the end of the data collection.
- **Draft evaluation report:** Consultant(s) must submit a draft report for review and comments by the Project team and advisory board and possibly all related parties. The report needs to meet the minimum requirements specified in the entirety of this TOR. The Project team and its key stakeholders will review the draft evaluation report to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria.
- **Final evaluation report:** Relevant comments from the Project team and its key stakeholders must be well integrated in the final version, and the final report must meet the minimum requirements specified in this TOR. Consultant(s) must present the final report in any appropriate format (PDF or Word file) for dissemination among various levels of stakeholders.
- **Evaluation briefs:** Following the approval of the final evaluation reports, the evaluation team will produce two 2-pages briefs containing key messages, main findings, conclusions, implications or recommendations. The briefs will be distributed to a wider internal and external audience using the available corporate channels.

Note that each deliverable will be expected promptly as specified in the TOR timeline section, and written in English language ONLY. Also, note that the consultant/lead consultant will be accountable for leading the desk review, writing the inception report, the evaluation report draft, and the final report.

6. COMPONENTS OF THE FINAL REPORT

The following are key elements/sections required in the final report. Additional section(s) if deemed necessary can be featured:

- Executive Summary -1 page
- Introduction
- Methodology, including sampling and limitations
- Analysis and findings of the evaluation. The analysis may be done according to the state project objectives
- Conclusions
- Recommendations and lessons learnt for future projects
- Annexes (if the elements below are available):
  - Relevant maps and photographs of the evaluation areas where necessary
  - Bibliography of consulted secondary sources
  - Finalized data collection tools
  - List of interviewees with accompanying informed consent forms
  - PowerPoint presentation of preliminary findings
  - Addressed concerns and comments from MEALS4NCDs Project team

7. SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR AN EVALUATION MANAGER

The consultant is expected to demonstrate the following skills or provide evidence of their qualification as specified below:

- At least 5 years of experience in conducting external evaluations -preferably for nutrition projects. Have expertise and experience in designing and implementing mixed methods research, and ability to use non-traditional and innovative evaluation methods.
- At least a master's degree in evaluation or relevant disciplines. Demonstrated knowledge in nutrition will be a positive addition
- Ability to select and apply high-quality, credible analytical approaches, and qualitative and quantitative methods appropriately
- Knowledge of a range of evaluation data collection methods and ability to define key methodological requirements and critically review the evaluation design proposed
- Ability and availability to participation in validation of the data and draft reports
- Ability to communicate key evidence from evaluations effectively to a range of stakeholders and create clear, influential messages to different audiences
- Ability to act ethically in the design and implementation of the evaluation
- Strong interpersonal skills with demonstrated ability to manage diverse teams and solve problems effectively and sensitively
- Strong organizational skills and proven ability to produce results – respecting set timelines/ deadlines
- In-depth knowledge of international norms and standards for evaluation and the ability to apply them appropriately

- Strong report writing skills (in English language) and a track record of producing high-quality publications (at least one of them should be shared with the MEAS4NCDs research team to verify the quality of her/his work)

8. TIMELINE OF THE CONSULTANCY PROCESS

The execution period for this consultancy is expected to **span the period of 1st March 2022** and **to 29th April 2022**. The timeline for the evaluation is outlined below:

Phase	Deliverables and details	Payment	Working day
Inception	**Draft** the **inception report** and submit it for comment/review by the Project team		5
Tool development	**Final inception report** including **budget**, **methodology** and **research tools**. To be approved by the Project team	40% paid to the consultant after approval of the final inception report by the Project team	3
Data collection	Desk review and interviews with all relevant Project stakeholders or community		10
Data analysis	Cleaning and **presentation of preliminary findings** to the Project team	30% paid to the consultant after approval of the presentation by the Project team	5
Evaluation report phase	**Draft evaluation report**. To be commented on by the Project team. **Final evaluation report**	30% paid to the consultant after approval of the final report by the Project team	7
Total		Payment complete (100%)	30

Possible extension of the timeline, if needed, will be discussed with the Project team.

9. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The following principle/features of quality evaluation will be expected throughout the evaluation process:

- **Independence**: The independent evaluator(s) selected must not have had prior involvement with the Project to be evaluated, and must have no vested interest in the Project
- **Impartiality**: The evaluator must prepare the evaluation method such that it ensures the absence of bias in terms of scope and design. Similarly, The TOR has been prepared such that it ensures the absence of bias in terms of scope and design. A steering committee may be constituted by the

Client (the MEALS4NCDs Project) to steer the evaluation The Evaluator must demonstrate his/her ability to maintain impartiality towards the evaluated Project. A signed statement by the evaluator may be produced to warrant the conditions thereof.

- **Credibility**: The overall evaluation design, plan and process are reflected in the TOR which serves as the master document for guiding the evaluation and the drafting of the evaluation approach. All available data must be consolidated and made accessible to the evaluator at the start of the inception phase. The selected evaluation team must have a proven track record(s) of producing high-quality evaluations and evolution reports. A copy of any previous evaluation report may be submitted to the Project team
- **Utility**: An explicit discussion on the intended use of the evaluation must take place with internal and external stakeholders. The evaluation questions should be focused, appropriate and relevant to users' needs and linked to the evaluation's objective(s). The TOR sets out the evaluation's purpose, scope and intended use(s) by various stakeholders. The evaluator must effectively steer the evaluation process to ensure adherence to planned timelines and the timely completion of the evaluation.
- **Ethics**: A pledge of ethical conduct in the evaluation process will be expected from the evaluator. Consultancy on possible ethical issues/principles may be discussed with the Project team if requested by the evaluator.

10. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE REPORT

The quality of the final report will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Report summary
- Context and overview of the evaluation projection
- Rationale, objectives and scope of the report
- Methodology
- Findings
- Conclusions and lessons learned
- Recommendations

11. SELECTION PROCESS

The Project will use its internal guidance, shortlisting, and an interview process to select the successful consultant. The guidelines require the consultant to submit a proposal explaining their comprehension of the TOR, and how they will approach this assignment, with a summary of their methodology, especially in terms of how they plan to meet the objectives.

Application Submission Requirements
- Name, address and telephone number of the consultant/ Team leader.
- CV of Consultant(s)
- A list of the previous studies/researches developed by her/him, including the link(s) to be able to review them (if this is already included in the CV, do not attach it separately).
- Expression of Interest and Technical proposal describing how evaluation will be carried out.

The candidate with the best technical proposal shall be considered for financial negotiations.
Financial Proposal

a) The consultant shall provide a financial proposal indicating the daily rate, proposed number of days for the assignment, applicable taxes and total cost of the assignment.
b) The financial proposal shall be inclusive of the applicable withholding taxes. If the financial proposal is silent on taxes, the Client shall assume that these are inclusive;
c) Prices must be quoted in Ghana Cedis (and if needed with corresponding values in USD).
d) The financial proposal shall be submitted separately from the technical proposal and **should be password protected**. The password shall be requested from the best technically qualified consultant

12. **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

- The proposal SHALL be submitted to info@meals4ncds.org
- The proposal and ALL Attachments submitted via email **SHALL NOT exceed 10MB.**
- VALIDITY of the proposal shall be for a period of 60 days from the date of bid closure.
- Financial proposal shall be sent as a separate attachment and **MUST be password protected. The password shall be requested from the best technically qualified individual.**
- **The DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS IS FEBURARY 15 2022 AT 11.59 GMT.**