



***Terms of Reference for Establishing A Project Research & Learning Working Group, Ethiopia***



## **1) Background**

Feed the Future Ethiopia Growth through Nutrition Activity is USAID's flagship 5-year, multi-sectoral nutrition and WASH project, which aims to improve the nutritional status of women and young children in the four productive regions of Ethiopia. Led by Save the Children, the project will achieve its objective by delivering nutrition sensitive livelihoods and agriculture activities; social and behavior change communication (SBCC) on nutrition, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and agriculture-related behaviors; improved utilization of quality nutrition services; utilization of WASH products and services; and, strengthened multi-sector coordination and capacity to implement the National Nutrition Program and One WASH National Program. The project has a strong emphasis on a learning agenda component to encourage ongoing generation, dissemination, and use of evidence within the project and beyond, and to contribute to improvements in programs and policy in Nutrition, Agriculture and WASH sectors. Thus, the project seeks ways in which project research and learning can collaborate and integrate with the ongoing efforts of existing research and learning platforms (i.e. FMOH RAC, EPHI – RAC etc).

Integration of research, learning and knowledge management components in development projects is a current and growing trend, which can be seen in the design of many of the new and continuing projects in Ethiopia. Through the recent research and learning landscape assessment conducted by Tufts University, several organizations that have recently begun incorporating learning and knowledge management components into their nutrition, WASH and agriculture programs were identified. This common theme in program design presents an opportunity for collaboration among projects, to share challenges, best practices, leverage resources and benefit from collective learning and practice.

In order to promote collaboration, Tufts is proposing the creation of a working group comprised of project Learning Advisors/Research Advisors/Project Heads from organizations engaged in research and learning related to nutrition, to meet regularly and discuss findings and experience from their different projects. The working group would serve to identify potential areas of collaboration, minimizing duplication of efforts and discussing implementation challenges and solutions in knowledge management and learning. Some of the potential participating organizations include SCI, Growth through Nutrition project implementing partners, ECSC-SUN, Academic Institutions, WaterAid, IRC, CARE, IFPRI etc.

## **2) Purpose**

To establish a project learning working group for sharing and dissemination of learning and knowledge findings and implementation among nutrition, WASH and agriculture projects in Ethiopia.

## **3) Specific Objectives of ToR**

1. To identify key and relevant institutions to participate in project learning working group
2. To create accountability by clarifying the role and responsibilities of the working group members
3. To identify and communicate membership criteria for serving in the working group
4. To identify and define working methods and communications platforms for the working group

#### **4) Roles and Responsibilities of Research & Learning working group**

- Actively attend and participate in scheduled meetings and online knowledge management (KM) platform
- Present and discuss approaches for implementation of project research and learning i.e. challenges, best practices and methods for integrating learnings back into program design.
- Give feedback to other members/projects on key strategies, research priorities, challenges, and research findings.
- Review and provide feedback on some of the key learning and research materials developed by member institutions i.e. policy briefs, manuscripts etc.
- Identify and test solutions for challenges in disseminating learning and application of findings for program and policy improvement
- Collaborate around research and learning activities as appropriate, including dissemination events and promotion
- Participate/ contribute to learning and knowledge management platforms as appropriate i.e. presentation of research, sharing of relevant learning documents, etc.
- Work toward ensuring lessons shared at national level reach project staff at sub-national levels and contextualizing of the findings for implementation at lower level.
- Identify ways in which research and learning feed into the interests and layer of the ongoing efforts of the existing research and learning platforms i.e. FMOH RAC, EPHI – RAC etc.

#### **5) Qualifications of Research and Learning Working Group Members**

- Project Directors, Senior/Learning Advisors, Research Manager, and/or Knowledge Managers from nutrition, WASH or agriculture projects in Ethiopia
- 5+ experience in gathering, documenting and disseminating learning/ findings in nutrition, WASH and/or agriculture sectors
- Demonstrated understanding of the current national policies (nutrition, WASH and agriculture)
- Demonstrated understanding of research environment in nutrition, WASH and agriculture
- Ability to communicate well and provide constructive feedback
- Ability to respect team members and work collaboratively as a team
- Motivated by non-financial gains and social impact
- Abide by requirement to respect the confidentiality agreements of the group

#### **6) Working methods**

The working group will meet quarterly for a maximum of half a day. The meeting date will be fixed in advance in consultation with the members and shall be coordinated by the working group chair. In the early stages, the Tufts Senior Learning Advisor will serve as Chair, and the group will nominate a Co-chair from among the members. After a year or as needed, another Chair may be nominated. The Chair and Co-chair may choose a delegate from their team to carry out responsibilities if desired. The Chair convenes and facilitates all meetings and may delegate responsibility to the Co-Chair for this function. The meeting will be hosted on a rotating basis at the institutions of working group members. Meeting agenda items will be developed in consultation with the group members and will be shared to the

working groups members at least two days before the meeting date. The chair will assign a secretary for each meeting. The secretary will record and circulate the minutes of the meeting and of the feedback received to the members within two business days following the meeting. All members are expected to be present at all the meetings, in situation where a member could not attend, he/she should assign a relevant person to participate on her/his behalf.

## **7) Time commitment**

Learning working group members are expected to commit at least 3-5 hours/month on average to review documents, participate online discussion platforms, participate quarterly learning meetings and learning activities etc. Please note members are not compensated financially for the time they spend on the various working group related activities.

## **8) Code of Conduct**

Confidentiality: all material provided for discussion and are considered confidential should not be shared or discussed outside the working group, unless instructed otherwise.