



TERMS OF REFERENCE

FINAL EVALUATION OF MOVING MATERNAL NEWBORN AND CHILD EVIDENCE INTO POLICY IN WEST AFRICA (MEP) PROJECT

June 2020

I- BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

I.1. Introduction

Maternal and child mortality is a major public health concern in West Africa. One of the most effective ways to reduce this mortality is the production and use of evidence to guide governments towards decision-making. Hence, to promote this vision, three Canadian institutions namely the Department of Global Affairs, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the International Development Research Center (IDRC) joined forces to launch “The Innovating for Maternal and Child Health in Africa (IMCHA)” To this end, a call was launched at two levels: The first level involved Research and Implementation Teams (RITs) composed of researchers including submission of research projects to generate evidence for improving Maternal and Child Health in Africa. The second level involved Health Policy and Research Organizations (HPROs), which were to submit projects to support the ownership of research projects to be funded by the authorities of various countries, support to research teams in producing quality research taking into account gender and equity issues, and knowledge transfer/translation strengthening so that results produced by research teams can be used in countries during policy review or development. One HPRO should be recruited to work in West Africa and another one in East Africa. The West African Health Organisation (WAHO), which is the Economic Community of West African States’ (ECOWAS) Institution in charge of health issues, and whose mission is to promote health research, submitted "*Moving Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Evidence into Policy in West Africa*" (*MEP*) *Project*. The project was selected as HPRO in West Africa for the implementation of the MEP project. The Agreement between WAHO and IDRC was signed in November 2014. The five-year MEP project aims to improve mother and child Health in Africa through the use of evidence and research results and its estimated total cost is CAD \$ 2,600,000 jointly financed by IDRC and WAHO. Through this project, WAHO intends to introduce the use of evidence in the definition of maternal and child health policies in the ECOWAS region.

The overall objective of the MEP project is to improve the demand for, production, dissemination and use of research results in the decision-making process in maternal and child health within the ECOWAS region. Specifically, this involves: (i) To review the situation of the production and use of national and regional research results on mother, newborn, and child health in ECOWAS, (ii) To strengthen WAHO’s capacity to promote health research in the ECOWAS region, (iii) To promote the use of evidence in MNCH decision-making in the ECOWAS region and (iv) to strengthen collaboration between researchers in MNCH and policy makers within ECOWAS.

The implementation of the MEP project started on 1st November 2014 and covers six countries in West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal). The Project is managed by WAHO. The implementation team is composed of professional officers from the different Departments of WAHO led by the Principal Professional Officer in charge of Research and Grants. Two Professional Officers were recruited to support the implementation of the project. These are the Professional Assistant in charge of implementation and the Professional Assistant in charge of monitoring, evaluation and learning. The MEP Team works in collaboration with six RITs (Research and Implementation Teams) which were funded through the Innovating for Maternal and Child Health in Africa (IMCHA). Three of these Research teams are based in Nigeria, in the cities of Bauchi, Benin City and Ibadan respectively. A team is based in Dakar, Senegal and two other teams work both in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and Bamako, Mali.

The implementation of the project follows WAHO's activity planning and implementation cycle. Project planning involves conducting a final evaluation to ensure that interventions contribute to the attainment of project objectives. After a situation analysis, WAHO team developed a regional platform that was validated by IDRC and implemented according to the process of doing by learning. The regional platform works in three levels: Ministry of Health, WAHO and Implementation research team and three domain areas: individual, organization and institutional. To succeed in the implementation of the platform activities, WAHO collaborated with IRT, the MOH team, some consultants and partners. A mechanism of monitoring and evaluation was developed to collect information in each activity (report of evaluation). This document outlines the terms of reference for this evaluation.

II- SCOPE OF THE WORK

II.1 Research questions

The main question of the final evaluation of the MEP project is: through the MEP project is WAHO fulfilling its role as HPRO as defined by the IDRC call?

More specifically, the questions are

- Has WAHO through the implementation of the MEP project facilitated the ownership of IMCHA funded projects and their results by the authorities of the implementing countries?
- What capacity building and mutual learning has WAHO provided to the research teams and what are their inputs in the implementation and dissemination of project results?
- To what extent has WAHO contributed to facilitating knowledge transfer to improve the use of research results to influence policy in the countries?

II.2. Evaluation Objectives

The main objective of this evaluation is to study the achievement of the role of the Health Policy and Research organisation of WAHO as defined in the IMCHA initiative.

The specific objectives are to:

- Study the realization of the role of the Health Policy and Research organization of WAHO as defined in the IMCHA initiative.
- Analyse the contribution of WAHO to the ownership of ISMEA funded projects and their results by the authorities of the implementing countries.
- Identify the capacity building and mutual learning that WAHO has provided to the research teams and document their contributions to the implementation and dissemination of project results.

III- METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The proposals expected in this evaluation should clearly state the plan of the following items:

- a detailed methodology;
- the composition of the evaluation team, the profile of each member;
- the description of experiences relevant to the mission;
- a detailed timeline of activities and expected results;
- value-building plan for evaluation outcomes.

The final evaluation of the MEP project will be conducted in a participatory manner involving all stakeholders and at all levels: WAHO, country of intervention, including implementing partners and direct beneficiaries as well as the IDRC. The evaluation will be carried out through several methods, including desk review, scientific literature review, individual interviews, quantitative data collection and analysis etc. The evaluation team will ensure the triangulation of data sources, collection tools and methods to ensure quality of data collected.

The evaluation should take into account the « Performance Measurement Framework » of The Innovating for Maternal and Child Health in Africa (IMCHA) and indicators for HPROs and also WAHO Monitoring and Evaluation indicators.

Ethical considerations for data collection should be clearly outlined in the methodology.

IV- EVALUATION STAGES

The evaluation will be structured in three phases: the preparatory phase, the evaluation phase per se and the final report drafting and validation phase.

Preparatory Phase

This phase will include a literature review on the basis of relevant project documents during its implementation and a scientific literature review. This phase will also allow the evaluation team to discuss the methodology with WAHO team, define the focus and strategy for data collection and analysis, finalize the list of stakeholders of the evaluation, the list of evaluation questions and propose a clear evaluation schedule. This phase will be supplemented with a report.

Evaluation Phase per se

During this phase, the evaluation team will visit countries to collect needed data and analyze them to answer the evaluation questions.

Data will be collected at three levels:

- At WAHO ;
- In the implementation of research teams (IRTs);
- At the level of stakeholders (policymakers, others stakeholders) in the region and at the country level.

Following data collection, a reporting-back meeting will enable the evaluation team to provide WAHO with the first findings and the interim recommendations of the evaluation, and collect additional data.

Final Report Drafting Phase

The evaluation team will prepare a first interim evaluation report, taking into account the initial findings and draft recommendations made by WAHO. The final interim report shall be presented by the Lead of the evaluation team at a regional deliberative workshop to be attended by WAHO officials, the implementation team, the technical and financial partner and other stakeholders of the project.

The evaluation team shall take into account the various comments made during the workshop to improve and make available the final evaluation report.

Lastly, the team will propose three scientific articles for publications in these identified areas: contribution of the capacity building and dialogue between decisions makers and researchers in the potential use of evidence, and WAHO's role as an HPRO.

V- EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Each consultant is expected to produce the following:

- The evaluation matrix (including the evaluation questions); the description of the methodological approach adopted, the data collection plan;
- A presentation (PowerPoint) of the main findings and draft recommendations of the evaluation at the end of the collection phase;
- A first interim report followed by a second report taking into account the comments of the WAHO team;
- A PowerPoint presentation of the evaluation findings for the dissemination workshop;
- Provide WAHO with the evaluation database.

The two consultants will partner to:

- prepare a final consolidated evaluation report in English and French sharing the findings on the two zones (all the countries in the study), taking into account the comments of all the participants in the dissemination workshop.
- Develop three draft papers on capacity building in the use of evidence in Burkina Faso, improving collaboration between policy makers and researchers in Nigeria, and realizing WAHO's role as a health research and policy organisation in West Africa. The final evaluation report will be written in English and French.

VI- DURATION OF MISSION

This evaluation will be carried out over a period of two (2) months with a maximum intervention time of 22 working day for each of the consultants.

VII- REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The following documents will be made available to the evaluation team. This list is not exhaustive. They are inter alia:

- **The project document**
- **2009-2013 Strategic Plan of WAHO**
- **The Research Strategic Plan**
- **Reports of the situation analysis of each beneficiary country.**
- **Activity reports**
- **Project progress reports submitted to IDRC**

VIII- REQUIRED PROFILE FOR THE EVALUATION TEAM

WAHO is looking for:

- Two individual researchers, one Anglophone and one francophone (Public health or social sciences background) with Post-graduate degree (Masters or Doctorate). Each of them will intervene in one of the two zones of coverage of the study:
 - Francophone zone (consultant with a very good knowledge of French)
 - Anglophone zone (consultant with a very good knowledge of English)
- Experience in knowledge translation and evidence use evaluation
- Good knowledge of the West African countries
- At least 10 year-experience in Public Health issues, MNCH in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Strong experience in the design and implementation of health research projects and evaluations of health projects or programmes.
- Good knowledge of French and English
- Strong communication skills
- Strong capacities in article writing

IX- TERMS OF PAYMENT

Funding will be provided by WAHO budget and WAHO's financial rules for consultancy services will be applied. Consultant fees will be paid as well as per diems during trips to countries. Payments to the selected evaluation team will be made as follows:

- Upon signing of the contract: 10%
- After validation of the interim or start-up report : 10%
- After validation of the first draft of the final report : 50%
- After validation and approval of the final report : 30%