

Mixed Methods Study on Factors Associated with Sustained Adoption of Practices  
within Non-Emergency Food Security Programming

## INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1915, Helen Keller International works to build the technical and operational capacity of local partners to combat the causes and consequences of blindness, poor health, and malnutrition. Helen Keller International's programs extend the reach and quality of health services in 19 countries in Africa and Asia, reaching approximately 300 million people annually. Since 1988, Helen Keller Intl. has implemented its Enhanced Homestead Food Production (EHFP) program across multiple countries in Asia and Africa. Working through village model farm learning sites, EHFP builds the capacity of poor small-holder farmers and broadly includes agricultural production activities and training, as well as nutrition, sanitation and hygiene education using behaviour change communication approaches, marketing to achieve increased household income, improved dietary diversity, reduced anaemia, and reduced underweight among women and young children.

From late 2013 to 2016, Helen Keller International-Vietnam (collectively funded by Irish Aid, the Alstom Foundation, and the Janet Carrus Foundation) piloted an EHFP project in Son La province to address the nutrition and food security challenges in the area. The EHFP project aimed to increased production and consumption of micronutrient rich foods by establishing homestead food production support for over 300 beneficiaries whose children were under two years of age. Due to the success of the piloted EHFP, Irish Aid continued to support Helen Keller Vietnam between 2017 and 2021, funding the scale-up of the model in two of the poorest provinces in the north-western region of Vietnam: Hoa Binh and Lai Chau. The project is divided into two phases: April 2017-May 2019 and June 2019-May 2021, benefiting 600 households each phase.

To assess the sustainability of the project after ended and learn more the factors that facilitate spill-over effects, Helen Keller Vietnam through IDEAL project, will conduct the study "Mixed Methods Study on Factors Associated with Sustained Adoption of Practices within Non-Emergency Food Security Programming" in 5 project communes, including Yen Phu and Tan Lap communes in Lac Son district; Son Binh and Na Tam commune in Tam Duong district; and Tan Lang commune in Phu Yen district in Jan 2021. IDEAL project, following the guidance of FANTA Sustainability and Exit Strategies with Food for Peace (FFP) (1), is to provide the evidence on sustainability of the EHFP pilot project (activities and benefits) up to 3 years after ended, particularly the mechanism of and the factors associated with spillover-effects.

The study includes quantitative and qualitative methods. Collecting data for quantitative study was conducted in January 2021 and it is expected that its findings will provide valuable implications for the qualitative data collection. Helen Keller International-Vietnam will seek a qualified Research Consultant, who can implement this qualitative study and finalise the full report.

## RESEARCH STUDY

**Purpose:** The goal of this study is to articulate the factors associated with sustained adoption of practices by project beneficiaries and explore spontaneous adoption (spill-over) of non-beneficiaries, within non-emergency food security programming, at different post-intervention time points. Sustained results are defined in the FANTA framework as both managing and improving project activities and practices among original beneficiaries, as well as expanding the benefits of the project to new beneficiaries.<sup>1</sup> This evidence will then be utilized in the development of guidance, program strategies, and training webinars to disseminate the knowledge and evidence to the broader food and nutrition security development community.

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<sup>1</sup> Rogers, B.L. & Coates, J. Sustaining Development: A Synthesis of Results from a Four-Country Study of Sustainability and Exit Strategies among Development Food Assistance Projects. (2015).

This goal will be met through the following objectives:

- Improve understanding of factors associated with sustained results, and how these factors vary across project post-completion.
- Explore the likelihood of and factors associated with expanded benefits to new beneficiaries (spill-over effect); and
- Develop and disseminate guidance, strategies, and training sessions to share best practices that can be advocated by the government for policy development, and civil society for program strengthening. Lessons learned and recommendations will be shared at regional and global meetings/workshops.

## SCOPE OF WORK

### 1. Services:

The Research Consultant will be responsible for developing guidelines for In-depth interviews and Focus Group discussions, planning and conducting interviews with national, provincial, district, commune and village partners in the project sites. The consultant will work under the direct supervision of the Helen Keller International-Vietnam's Country Director and the M&E Regional Advisor.

The general tasks of Research Consultant will be to:

1. Developing guidelines for different targets of IDIs and FGDs,
2. Conducting IDIs and FGDs in the project sites in Hoa Binh, Lai Chau and Son La
3. Analyzing qualitative data
4. Writing report with quantitative and qualitative data
5. Preparing presentation and presenting in dissemination workshop

The research consultant's contract is on a need-for-work basis and is not a full-time role. The role may require frequent travel to and days to be spent in the field.

**2. Timeline:** Consultant shall perform Services and provide the Deliverables in accordance with the following schedule, tentative timing and terms:

| #  | Tasks   | Number of days | Timeline  | Deliverables  |
|----|---|----------------|---|---|
| NA | Preparation and submission of bidding documents   | None           | 24 February 2021  | - CV, Letter of Interest, proposed Agenda<br>- Proposed gross consultant fee per day  |
| NA | Successful candidate announcement; negotiation and finalization of the consultancy service procedures | None           | 26 February 2021  | - Contract signed   |
| 1  | Desk review: review results and initial findings from quantitative study                              | 1              | First week of March, 2021                                 |   |
| 2  | Developing guidelines for In-depth Interview and Focus group discussion.                              | 2              | First week of March, 2021                                 | IDI and FGD guidelines were developed.  |
| 3  | Field procedure planning  | 1              | Second week of March, 2021                                | Plan for In-depth Interviews and In-depth group discussions in Hoa Binh, Lai Chau, Son La provinces for local partners and in Hanoi for national partners |
| 4  | Conducting IDIs and FGDs  | 10             | Two last weeks of March 2021 and first week of April 2021 | Qualitative data collections were conducted in Hanoi (1 day), Hoa Binh (3 days), Lai Chau (3 days) and Son La (3 days). The recording file                |

| # | Tasks  | Number of days | Timeline       | Deliverables  |
|---|--|----------------|----------------|---|
|   |  |                |                | and written transcripts of qualitative data files will be sent to HKI   |
| 5 | Data Cleaning & Analysis   | 10             | April 2021     | Qualitative data was cleaned, coded and analysed. A qualitative database will be sent to HKI                                |
| 6 | Draft and finalise full report including quantitative and qualitative data | 10             | May-June 2021  | Finalised report in English and Vietnamese  |
| 7 | Preparation of presentation and present at dissemination workshop          | 2              | September 2021 | Presentation  |
|   | <b>Total</b>   | <b>36</b>      |                | The travel days are not entitled to consultancy fee, but to per-diem only. The days at field are also entitled to per-diem. |

### 3. Detailed Job Responsibilities

#### 3.1. Desk Reviewing (1 day) and developing guidelines for IDIs and FGDs (2 Days)

The Research Consultant will support the Helen Keller research team in the development of core research materials. These include the following:

- Reviewing findings from quantitative data to determine priority issues for qualitative interviews.
- Developing guidelines for different targets of IDIs and FGDs. It may include: national partners from NIN and MOH; provincial partners from DOH, CDC, Department of Agricultural and Rural Development; district partners from District People's Committee, Farmer's Union, Women's Union, District Health Centre, Agricultural Extension Centre, District Project Management Board; commune partners from Commune People's Committee, Commune Project Steering Board; village partners such as village model farmers, village facilitators, and households.
- Developing tools for recording during leading IDIs and FGDs

#### 3.2. Field Procedure Planning (1 Day) and conducting IDI and FGDs (10 days)

The Research Consultant will work with the Helen Keller's research team to plan and outline the field procedural plan in detail.

- Making detailed plan and schedule for IDIs and FGDs in different project sites. It is expected that there is 01 day for IDIs with national partners in Hanoi, and 3 days for each project sites in Hoa Binh, Lai Chau and Son La province. The quantity of IDIs and FGDs is expected as following. The consultant may give recommendations on the quantity and audience of interviews for increasing or reducing IDIs and FGDs.

| No.      |   | Unit          | National partners | Hoa Binh | Lai Chau | Son La |
|----------|---|---------------|-------------------|----------|----------|--------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>National partners (IDIs with national partners in Hanoi)</b> | <b>People</b> | <b>2</b>          |          |          |        |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Provincial partners</b>                                      |               |                   |          |          |        |
| 2.1      | IDI with representative from CDC                                | People        |                   | 1        | 1        | 1      |
| 2.2      | IDI with representative from DOH                                | People        |                   | 1        | 1        | 1      |
| 2.3      | IDI with representative from DARD                               | People        |                   | 1        | 1        | 1      |
| <b>3</b> | <b>District partners</b>  |               |                   |          |          |        |
| 3.1      | IDI with leader of District People's Committee                  | People        |                   | 1        | 1        | 1      |
| 3.2      | IDI with representative of District Project Management Board    | People        |                   | 1        | 1        |        |
| 3.3      | IDI with leader of Women's Union (focusing on Start-up Fund)    | People        |                   | 1        |          |        |

| No.      |   | Unit   | National partners | Hoa Binh | Lai Chau | Son La |
|----------|---|--------|-------------------|----------|----------|--------|
| 3.4      | IDI with leader of Farmers Union (focusing on Start-up Fund)  | People |                   |          | 1        |        |
| 3.5      | IDI with leader of District Health Centre   | People |                   | 1        | 1        | 1      |
| 3.6      | IDI with leader of Agricultural Extension Centre  | People |                   | 1        | 1        | 1      |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Commune and village partners</b>   |        |                   |          |          |        |
| 4.1      | IDI with leader of Commune Project Steering Board/Commune People's Committee (2 communes/province)  | People |                   | 2        | 2        | 2      |
| 4.2      | FGD with village model farmers, nutritional and agricultural facilitators, village heads and households :<br>- 1 FGD with VMFs and nutritional and agricultural facilitators and village heads<br>- 1 FGD with successful households<br>- 1 FGD with non-successful households<br><br>(03 FGDs/ commune * 2 communes/province. Only 1 commune in Son La province) | Group  |                   | 6        | 6        | 3      |

- Working with Research Assistant and Project Field Assistants to arrange IDIs and FGDs
- Recording data using recorders and writing notes
- Ensure the quality and security of data

The Helen Keller research team will provide inputs to the field procedure plan. The Research Consultant must provide leadership during field activities, ensuring adherence to the field plan. If field conditions dictate significant changes to these plans, the Research Consultant is required to inform the Helen Keller Vietnam team for appropriate and timely solutions.

### 3.3. Data Cleaning & Analysis (10 Days)

The consultant will work under the supervision of Helen Keller's research team to:

- Transcribe all qualitative data files into full written records
- Clean data
- Identify main points, categorize and coding them
- Analyse data

### 3.4. Writing report (10 days)

- Produce a full report in English by analysing the qualitative data and findings from the quantitative study.
- Report with recommendations to be shared with Helen Keller for review and finalization.

### 3.5. Dissemination (2 days)

- Prepare a presentation in both Vietnamese and English with findings and recommendations from quantitative and qualitative data
- Present in the final dissemination workshop

## 4. Required Skills and Experiences:

- Master's degree in a pertinent field (for example: medicine, public health, agricultural economics, or another related field).
- At least three-year experience in qualitative research in the public health field, including study design, data collection, analysis and write up, and knowledge of a range of qualitative research methods

- Significant facilitation and interviewing skills
- Capacity to understand and analyze information and communication flows within communities in rural areas.
- Experience in coordination with village administrators, community leaders and local healthcare providers during field research work.
- Willingness to travel to rural areas and stay overnight
- Experience in qualitative data collection.
- Experience or knowledge of the nutrition and agricultural sector would be advantage.
- Be willing and able to travel to the study areas .
- Ability to work in team spirit and have good communication skills.
- Excellent English communication skills, both oral and written.

**5. Specifications:** The Services and Deliverables shall be provided in accordance with the following requirements:

- ❖ The duties must be carried out with due diligence and efforts so as to protect at the highest possible level the legitimate rights and interests of Helen Keller International-Vietnam
- ❖ The Consultant must take legal responsibility for the quality as well as legality of the consultancy services to be provided according to the laws of Vietnam
- ❖ The Consultant must be responsible for the professional quality, technicality, accuracy, and timely completion of his/her work.

**6. Logistics:**

- ❖ Helen Keller International will be responsible for arranging logistics for the consultants to travel from and to the project sites including transportation and accommodation if applicable.

**7. Management:**

- ❖ The consultant will work under the supervision of the Program Manager and the M&E Regional Advisor.

**8. Notice and payment:**

- ❖ The consultants will be informed in written for the acceptance of the scheduled or changed activities at least 3 days in advance before carrying out the activities.

**9. Budget:** The fee for consultant will be negotiated and applied in accordance with Helen Keller International's Vietnam regulations.

The consultants who are interested in providing the services, please submit cover letter with proposed gross rate and CV, and other documents as afore mentioned.

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The deadline for application submission is **24 February 2021**.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.