



USAID/Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance

Haiti Resilience Food Security Activity (RFSA): Ayiti Pi Djanm Statement of Work (SOW): *Nutritious Food Market Opportunities Assessment*

Please note this SOW and its annexes may change before contract signature, based on USAID and other stakeholder input.

Purpose

CRS Haiti seeks a consultant to lead a Nutritious Food Market Opportunity Assessment, which will serve as formative research for the Ayiti Pi Djanm project, a USAID/BHA-funded Resilience Food Security Activity. The consultant will report to the Strategic Learning Advisor (SLA) on the Ayiti Pi Djanm team. The period of performance will fall between September and December 2022.

This SOW outlines the technical approach and responsibilities associated with the study. Instructions to submit an application can be found in the “To Apply” section below.

Background

Ayiti Pi Djanm (“A Stronger Haiti”) is a five-year project funded by USAID Office of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA) which will reach nearly 90,000 participants and more than 17,000 households across 11 communes in the Sud and Nord-Est departments of Haiti to improve food and nutrition security and resilience to shocks. Recognizing that families exist in a larger social environment and do not build resilience alone, the consortium led by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is partnering with communities to build resilience capacities at the household and community levels, as well as transformative capacity at structural levels. The project features an innovative market system approach that uses Title II commodities to catalyze private sector investments that will help develop locally produced foods and create new agricultural livelihood opportunities. The project will turn around five key interventions: Create mixed gender care groups to build knowledge and support for critical nutrition behaviors, organize Farmer Learning Communities focused on demo plots for local leadership on NRM and climate-smart innovation and adoption efforts, mobilize and support the creation of Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) groups to support savings and financial education, provide vouchers and multipurpose cash assistance to support the basic needs of households, local vendors, and youth entrepreneurs, pilot household dialogue intervention to promote shared decision-making, planning and communication for household members.

The overall goal of APD is to enable chronically food insecure households and communities to have improved food and nutrition security and enhanced resilience to shocks. The project aims to reach this goal by focusing on three purposes: enhanced sustainable management of natural resources, increased consumption and utilization of safe, nutritious foods, especially by women and children, and Households attain more profitable livelihoods.

Problem Statement / Theory of Change Information Gap Summary

Profitability and consumer acceptance are critical considerations in crop selection as well as product selection by local vendors. Findings from this study will be used to inform the strategy for increasing availability of nutritious foods through both local production of nutritious foods as well as blended foods. There is a lack of information on consumer priorities in the purchase and consumption of blended foods, with a particular focus on animal source foods, vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables, and dark green leafy vegetables as well as the sustainable income opportunities of producing these foods.

Research Justification

Economic, social, ecological, and political factors influence the vulnerability of Haiti's most food insecure households. With insufficient resilient capacities, shocks and stresses often push vulnerable households into negative coping strategies that can result in malnutrition. This is especially critical in the first 1,000 days of a child's life and yet three quarters of children 6-23 months do not meet minimum dietary diversity standards (Lesorogal et al, 2017; Kadima, 2018; UNICEF/ACF SMART Survey 2019). Linking vulnerable households to local producers of nutritious food has the potential to create sustainable and resilient local food systems by addressing both supply and demand side constraints. Developing a better understanding of nutritious food availability and marketability will help document current constraints and propose solutions, which will be critical to achieving project objectives in nutrition and livelihoods.

The RFSA plans to build on existing system diagnostics and focus specifically on opportunities for local food products that could be integrated into blended food products, pre- or post-production. Blended products have the potential to address nutrition goals while also increasing demand for local produce (Joseph et al., 2018; Dewey et al. 2021). Any new or adapted food products designed to address nutrition outcomes will need to take consumer preference into account and a better understanding of consumer priorities and marketing strategies will be critical.

The specific food products to be assessed during this pilot will be based on a consultative process integrating partners and key project stakeholders, including Ayiti Pi Djanm's academic research partner, Washington University, private sector partners, local stakeholders in agricultural and nutrition, staff from other projects, among others.

Key Research Objectives

The key research objectives to be addressed in this study relate to nutritious food availability and marketability with emphasis on information gaps around blended foods. Specifically, this research will:

1. Identify consumer priorities and barriers, particularly for vulnerable households with PLW and CU5, related to the purchase and consumption of critical food groups to be blended with Title II commodity products or added to blended products during preparation, specifically:
 - Animal Source Foods
 - Vitamin A-rich Fruits and Vegetables
 - Dark Green Leafy Vegetables
2. Assess the capacity of the market for nutritious foods specified above to generate sustainable income for Ayiti Pi Djanm's agriculture interventions.

Research Methods

- **Research Questions.**

1. What are consumer priorities related to the purchase and consumption of blended and nutritious foods, specifically animal source foods, vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables, and dark green leafy vegetables?
 - a. What are the barriers to purchasing new foods blended with these ingredients or added at point of consumption?
2. What nutritious foods have the potential to generate sustainable income for agricultural households, specifically animal source foods, vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables, and dark green leafy vegetables?

- **Data Collection and Analysis Methods.**

Data collection methods will be both qualitative and quantitative. The research lead will be recruited with specific expertise in data analysis for both quantitative and qualitative data. When applying to this consultancy, the applicant should submit a detailed proposal for the technical approach that includes the methods that will be used to respond to the research questions, detailed information on sampling and targeting for participants, and the analysis approach.

Notes from qualitative data collected will be translated into English or French and analyzed by the research lead with support and verification from the data collectors. For any focus group discussions and qualitative interviews, there will be too many to conduct simple analysis in Excel. For this reason, R's RQDA package is recommended. If the consultant has use of ATLAS.ti, MAXQDA or NVIVO, they may also use it for data analysis. Consultants should specify which software will be used for organizing responses and identifying key themes for analysis.

Any quantitative data will be collected using a recognized data collection software, such as CommCare, Kobo Collect, etc. It is expected that advanced statistical software will not be necessary given the type of quantitative data likely to be collected and that analysis in Excel should be sufficient.

- **Data Handling.**

Best practices in secure data handling will be employed for this research. FGD groups will take place in private locations and data collected will be kept confidential. Consent forms will

be clearly explained and shared with all participants to ensure they do not feel pressured to participate in FGD activities. Data will be de-identified to protect the identity of participants.

Consultants may wish to create audio recordings of focus group discussions, or interviews, for later transcription or adding detail to notes. If audio recordings are created, they should be destroyed once transcription/detailed notes are completed. Audio recordings need not be shared with CRS and participants must consent to audio recordings.

For focus group discussions, consultants may ask individual names to establish rapport with study participants, however those names should not be captured. Focus group notes should only note segment targeted (i.e., female caregivers of children aged 6-59 months in new communes, etc.) and the community where they were conducted. Interviews should follow the same protocol (i.e., KII with market vendor).

After completion of data analysis and final reporting, consultants should provide transcription/detailed notes and any script used for analysis to the Strategic Learning Advisor at CRS. Data will be stored on a secure server, and only share with other staff needed for new analysis of the data. The consultant should not retain any copies of this data, as they will not need it once this consultancy is complete.

- **Mitigating risks and handling unexpected or adverse events.**

The APD team has identified three primary risks. The three risks, and their associated mitigation strategies, are noted below. As part of their final research protocol, the selected consultants should further elaborate on their mitigation strategies and any additional risks that they could encounter.

COVID-19 - Increase in the transmission of COVID-19 and accompanying government restrictions will require the data collection team to apply safety measures to protect research participants and staff. This will include but not limited to:

- Provision of personal protective equipment (masks, sanitizers) to all research participants including respondents and staff
- Social distancing will be maintained
- Clearly communicate COVID-19 safety protocols and expectations to all research participants so that they understand what is expected of the researchers and monitor their management of the interviews
- If tentative interviewee presents potential symptoms of COVID-19, the interview will need to be re-scheduled or replaced with another interviewee; similarly potential focus group participants presenting with symptoms will not be allowed to participate. If possible, phone interviews could also be considered for some KIIs.

Security – The security environment in Haiti has been precarious for several years and continues to deteriorate. For the purposes of the study, much of the design work, tool development and analysis can be completed remotely. The consultant should include details on measures that will be undertaken to prevent the disruption of data collection by a worsening security environment.

Natural Disaster – In the case of a catastrophic weather event, such as a category 4 or 5 hurricane, the priority information needs could substantially shift. The approach of this study could require adjustment in order to account for adaptations in the approach of the overall

project in affected areas and/or a shift to focus on pilot activities in unaffected areas of the country. This will require close planning with the BHA team.

The research team will meet regularly to discuss potential unintended consequences that may occur. Research participants will be provided information on Ayiti Pi Djanm's Feedback, Complaint and Response Mechanism (FCRM) that they can use to report any problems or concerns.

Ethical Considerations

The team will follow best practices as outlined in 22 CFR 225 as well as the American Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles for Evaluators (<https://www.eval.org/About/Guiding-Principles>). Dependent upon participants in the study, the consultant should specify steps that will be taken to ensure informed consent, confidentiality, protection of minors, and minimization of Covid-19 transmission. The consultant should specify steps taken to safeguard data collected and data management procedures to be used in this study. There will be a data rights clause in the signed contract, and the consultant should obtain permission from CRS before sharing the final study report with any external party, including posting it to their organization's website.

Please also see the Mitigating Risks section above.

Team Composition / Team Lead Competencies

The study will be conducted through a consultation with a relevant firm or team in independent consultants with expertise relevant to this research study and data collection methods. An illustrative team could include:

A **Research Study Lead** will lead research design, tool development, validation of tools, and data analysis and report writing. The Lead will have qualitative and quantitative research experience and expertise as well as practical experience implementing complex, multisectoral programming. The Lead will be responsible for coordinating and training the research team as well as preparing and presenting the actionable findings. The lead researcher should have:

- With a 5-year higher education diploma, preferably a master's or higher in nutrition, or an equivalent field.
- At least 10 years of professional experience in health and/ or nutrition behavior change, including experience as research lead in the conduct of studies and evaluations, preferably for health and nutrition projects.
- Knowledge of the study methods, as demonstrated by the completion of at least three similar studies.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and supervise a multidisciplinary team

A **Markets Technical Advisor** will support the Lead in developing the protocols and tools as well as assist with interpreting collected data. The Markets Technical Advisor should have

- Bachelor's degree, + 4 years' experience in economics, business, or equivalent field
- At least 2 years of professional experience in the field of market systems development, market research, or related fields.

- Strong knowledge of the **Haitian** socio-cultural and food & nutrition security context of the RFSA implementation zones
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills

Data processing and information management specialist will ensure that collected data is processed and analyzed in compliance with the study protocol. The Data processing and information management specialist should have:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent in social sciences, with at least 5 years of experience in mixed methods data analysis
- Have at least 5 years of professional experience in the design of data collection, management, and data cleansing methodologies for qualitative data
- Strong ability to use computer-based software analysis tools and applications for qualitative analysis such as ATLAS.ti, R (basic text mining), or other.

Field Research Assistants will be recruited during the period of data collection to supervise and support data collection. Their primary role will be ensuring data quality and coordination between the data collectors and study lead and assistant. They will be recruited based on their experience supervising data collection of similar studies.

Data Collectors or enumerators will be recruited and trained during the period of data collection to collect the primary data described above. They will be recruited based on their experience collecting qualitative and quantitative data and will be supported by Field Research Assistants.

At CRS, the Strategic Learning Advisor (SLA) will ensure the consultant fulfills the terms of the SOW and provide technical oversight. The SLA will also ensure coordination and collaboration within the Ayiti Pi Djanm team as well as with critical external stakeholders (HRASA staff, private sector partners, etc.)

CRS also has a wide pool of regional and HQ technical experts, who will also be available as needed for oversight and quality reviews.

Deliverables

The deliverables for this consultancy include the following:

1. Finalized research protocol and data collection tools
2. List of focus nutritious foods based on consultations with Washington University, Private Sector Partners, as well as nutrition and agriculture stakeholders
3. Weekly data collection reports
4. Transcriptions and detailed notes from KIIs and FGDs
5. Raw and analyzed databases
6. Final report to include:
 - Research questions
 - Methodology and limitations
 - Summary of key findings
 - Specific and actionable recommendations

The final report will be presented virtually and in person to the APD team and others and slides will be shared after the final presentation.

Period of Performance / Timeline

The below timeline is illustrative. The consultant should prepare a detailed calendar as part of their proposal that will be updated and finalized as part of the research protocol.

	Aug 22	Sept 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Recruitment of Consultant Firm							
Protocol development (detailed methodology and data collection tools)							
Research Team training							
Data collection							
Data management and analysis							
Report preparation							
Report dissemination and presentation							
Presentation of key findings and recommendations at Culmination Workshop							

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of CRS and partners include:

- Verification and validation of consultant's proposed research protocol
- Monitoring and supervision of implementation throughout the study process and provision of regular feedback if necessary
- Access to CRS CommCare license (as needed). CRS will not provide access to any other proprietary software (Excel, ATLAS.ti, NVIVO, SPSS, etc.)
- Evaluation of draft and provision of feedback to Team Lead based on following criteria:
 - Conformity of output with SOW, and the proposed research protocol
 - Concordance of analysis with evidence
 - Writing and presentation
 - Soundness of conclusions and pertinence of recommendations
 - Validation of final report following proposed revisions from CRS and BHA

Roles and Responsibilities of the consultant:

- Provision of research protocol, to include:
 - Data collection tools

- Data collection plan, including
 - Detailed outline of sampling frame and procedure
 - Covid-19 mitigation strategy for primary data collection/ in-person enumerator training
- Roles and responsibilities of different team members
- Risk management strategy for changing security context and Covid restrictions
- Logical framework or map linking general research questions to detailed research questions
- Data analysis plan, including statistical management and data analysis strategy
- Lead Researcher-CRS communication plan
- Timeline/flowchart of key phases, including the deliverables
- Collecting and analyzing information in the field according to the proposed methodology
- Collaboration and communication with RFSA team during the study
- All deliverables described in the preceding section
- Consideration of feedback and recommendations from CRS and USAID throughout the study
- Finalization and submission of the final report, including the validation workshop

To Apply

Interested firms or independent consultant teams should submit Expressions of Interest noting experiences leading similar studies in the past. In addition to the EOI, applicants should submit a proposal that includes:

- Technical narrative proposal, including:
 - Methodological approach
 - Detailed information on data collection (including sampling approach) and analysis methods
 - Study team staffing overview (including estimated LOE) and CVs;
 - Informed Consent and Data Protection processes
 - Strategy for Risk Mitigation
- Detailed Financial Proposal

All application documents should be submitted in English to haiti.recruitment@crs.org by September 7th, 2022.

Annex I - References

Dewey KG, Wessells KR, Arnold CD, Prado EL, Abbeddou S, Adu-Afarwuah S, Ali H, Arnold BF, Ashorn P, Ashorn U, Ashraf S, Becquey E, Bendabenda J, Brown KH, Christian P, Colford JM, Duliencia SJL, Fernald LCH, Galasso E, Hallamaa L, Hess SY, Humphrey JH, Huybregts L, Iannotti LL, Jannat K, Lartey A, Le Port A, Leroy JL, Luby SP, Maleta K, Matias SL, Mbuya MNN, Mridha MK, Nkhoma M, Null C, Paul RR, Okronipa H, Ouédraogo JB, Pickering AJ, Prendergast AJ, Ruel M, Shaikh S, Weber AM, Wolff P, Zongrone A, Stewart CP. Characteristics that modify the effect of small-quantity lipid-based nutrient supplementation on child growth: an individual participant data meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *Am J Clin Nutr.* 2021 Nov 2;114(Suppl 1):15S-42S. doi: 10.1093/ajcn/nqab278. PMID: 34590672; PMCID: PMC8560308.

Feed the Future Haiti Resilience and Agriculture Sector Advancement (HRASA) Activity Commodity Selection and Baseline Study, 2022

Joseph, Michael; Alavi, Sajid; Johnson, Quentin; Mohamedshah, Farida; Walton, Shelley; and Webb, Patrick. 2018. Improving the nutritional value of foods in the USAID food aid basket: Optimization of macro and micronutrients, food matrices, novel ingredients and food processing technologies. Report to USAID: Tufts University, Boston, MA.

Kadima (2018) Impact of a formal antenatal breastfeeding education program on the acceptance and attitudes towards exclusive breastfeeding among mothers and grandmothers in rural Haiti.

Lesorogol et al. (2017) Economic determinants of breastfeeding in Haiti.

UNICEF/ACF SMART Survey 2019; Haiti EMMUS-VI

Annex II. Key Research Questions and Proposed Methods

#	Research Question	Data Analysis Method	Research Justification / How findings will be used
1	<p>1. What are consumer priorities related to the purchase and consumption of blended and nutritious foods, specifically animal source foods, vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables, and dark green leafy vegetables?</p> <p>a. What are the barriers to purchasing new foods blended with these ingredients or added at point of consumption?</p>	Qualitative and quantitative	<p>The findings will be used to inform the prioritization of different recipes for blended foods as well as point of consumption methods that are accessible for vulnerable households.</p> <p>A particular emphasis will be placed on understanding the dynamics between preference and cost with the recognition that affordability is a critical constraint on vulnerable households.</p>
2	<p>What nutritious foods have the potential to generate sustainable income for FLC group members, specifically animal source foods, vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables, and dark green leafy vegetables?</p>	Quantitative	<p>The findings will be used to support FLC Groups to better produce new, more nutritious crops that can be utilized in blended foods.</p>

Annex III. Helpful Resources

This annex includes resources that may be helpful for implementing partners, their sub-awardees, and/or research partners who may be conducting primary or secondary research.

1. **Assessment Capacities (Acaps) Project Library**, available: <https://www.acaps.org/library>. Includes technical briefs relevant to implementing partners:
 - **Direct Observation and Key Informant Interview Techniques for primary data collection (2011):**
https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/resources/files/key_informant_and_direct_observation_pocket_version.pdf and
https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/resources/files/direct_observation_and_key_informant_interview_techniques_for_primary_data_collection_during_rapid_assessments_october_2011.pdf
 - **Data Cleaning (2016):**
https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/resources/files/acaps_technical_brief_data_cleaning_april_2016_0.pdf
2. **The Compass & Breakthrough Action. (2015). How to Guide: How to Conduct Qualitative Formative Research**, available: <https://www.thecompassforsbc.org/how-to-guides/how-conduct-qualitative-formative-research>

Summary: A how-to guide for formative research that is focused on social and behavior change (SBC) that provides step-by-step instructions on the process and key elements for executing focus group discussions (FGD) and In-depth interviews (IDI).
3. **FHI360 (2005). Qualitative Research Methods: A data collector's field guide**, available: <https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/Qualitative%20Research%20Methods%20-%20A%20Data%20Collector's%20Field%20Guide.pdf>.

Summary: A 'how to' field guide and training, particularly for data collection staff, on public health projects that provides the basics of qualitative data collection and management. The document includes five modules on: qualitative methods overview; participant observation; in-depth interviews; focus groups, and data documentation and management.
4. **USAID Developer Resources**, available: <https://www.usaid.gov/developer>.

Summary: USAID webpage with links to a number of data resources of relevance to partners (e.g., the DEC, AIDData).
5. **USAID LEARN Contract and the USAID Learning Lab website (2014-2019)**. Available: <https://usaidearninglab.org>.

Summary: Project website for the USAID LEARN contract that supports strategic learning and knowledge management for USAID partners and staff. The Learning Lab website provides substantial guidance on topics of relevance to partners engaging in the R&I process—planning for CLA, Learning Agendas, and Adaptive Management. Some key resources include:

- How to Establish a Learning Agenda:
https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/establishing_a_learning_agenda_guidance_and_template_201702.pdf
 - Learning Questions Checklist:
https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/learning_questions_checklist_december_2018.pdf
 - Pivot Log Template: <https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/pivot-log-template>
 - Tips for Developing Good Evaluation Questions:
https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/tips_for_developing_good_evaluation_questions_2016.pdf
6. **USAID (2017). Research Questions & Methodologies for Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda**, available:
<https://rportal.net/biodiversityconservation-gateway/resources/projects/measuring-impact/mi-project-resources/research-questions-methodologies-bio-development-research-agenda>.
- Summary:** Concise, high-level technical guidance on how to develop research questions and research methods (systematic reviews, secondary data analyses, impact evaluations, and primary data collection) (6 pp).
7. **USAID (2018). WASH Formative Research Landscape Review**, available:
https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/PRESENTATION_GREGOIRE.pdf
- Summary:** Brief technical presentation on the goals of formative research as they relate to WASH within FFP programming, and ideas on how partners can develop and design an approach to WASH FR, as well as a brief comparison of methods and illustrative research questions.