

Terms of Reference: Research consultancy to explore and document how MSI country programmes engage community leaders to improve sexual and reproductive healthcare uptake

Background

MSI Reproductive Choices (MSI) is a non-profit, non-government organization (NGO), specialising in the delivery of high quality sexual and reproductive health and family planning services (SRH/FP). MSI globally works in 38 countries, empowering millions of women, girls and their families across the world to make informed decisions about their reproductive health so they can fulfil their economic, social and political potential. In 2021, 34.3 million women and their partners around the world were using contraception provided by MSI.

MSI currently has a project supporting seven of its programmes in West and Central Africa: **Burkina Faso, DRC, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone**. The outputs of the project are as follows:

1. Sustain last-mile service delivery for essential SRH services
2. Address gender, social barriers (including shifting social norms) and strengthen models for de-medicalised delivery (contact centre, social marketing)
3. Accelerate the transition towards equitable public sector provision

These outputs are accompanied by a learning agenda. In support of project output 2, MSI is looking to gather insights from the country programmes to understand their approaches aiming to shift social norms. **This consultancy will support on one element of this, looking into the ways that MSI country programmes work with community leaders.**

Objectives

The overall objective of the consultancy is to investigate and document the strategies used by the seven MSI country programmes (CPs) to engage community leaders.

Key research questions include:

1. **Community leader profiles; who are the community leaders MSI CPs are working with and what can we learn about their profiles?** (religious leaders, traditional leaders, other influencers...)
2. **What are the strategies and activities being used by MSI CPs to engage with community leaders?**
 - a. How were the activities generated or developed?
 - b. Who is involved in the activities, in what ways?
 - c. What are any tools or resources used during the activities?
 - d. What are any issues that have been encountered during the implementation of these strategies, and how have they been overcome?

3. **What are the outcomes of the different strategies used to engage with community leaders?**
 - a. In what ways do these strategies complement other MSI programme activities?
 - b. In what ways do these strategies address social norms and overcome different community and individual barriers to SRH service uptake?

Consultants should feel free to expand on these questions in their proposal; a final set of research questions should be agreed at the project outset.

Proposed methodology

We **suggest a qualitative approach** be taken to answer the proposed research questions. This should include (remote) in-depth interviews with key stakeholders from each of the seven MSI CPs and primary in-person data collection in 1-2 countries, again consisting of qualitative discussions and observation with both MSI personnel, community members and other stakeholders.

The consultant will be responsible for developing a protocol outlining the approach and tools to be used to deliver the qualitative research. Please note that this project will likely require both international ethics review (using the MSI Ethics Review Committee) as well as national ethics review in any country where in-person research will take place.

Deliverables

The consultant will be required to produce the following deliverables:

1. Research protocol and workplan*.
2. Completion of remote and primary in-person data collection activities.
3. Recruitment, training and supervision of any in-country research support (research assistants/translators).
4. Submission of qualitative transcripts and any qualitative analysis files.
5. Final summary report (in English) drawing together key conclusions and insights from the research as well as illustrative case studies.
6. Debrief presentation with MSI project team.

**note depending on the country selection the protocol may need to be translated into French*

We encourage consultants to include in their proposals how they will bring to life the findings from the research in the final deliverables, for example through visuals, videos etc.

Table of responsibilities

	Consultant	MSI Global Support Team	MSI Country Programme Team
Development of the research protocol (to include final research questions, methods, and tools)	Lead on the development of the protocol	Provide feedback on and sign-off on the protocol	Provide input into the protocol

International and national ethics review and approval	Lead on the preparation of the submission of the protocol and any supporting materials to the MSI ERC and relevant national ethics boards <i>*note depending on the country selection the protocol may need to be translated into French</i>	Provide support with the MSI ERC submission	Provide advice on the process of submitting to national ethics
Completion of remote interviews with MSI staff	Lead on the completion of the interviews	Connect the consultant with key MSI team members	Ensure key team members are available for interview and liaise with the consultant on interview scheduling
Recruitment, training and supervision of in-country research support	Lead on the co-ordination of primary data collection activities	Review training materials	Provide advice on local research support options
Primary data collection	Lead on the implementation of primary data collection activities		Connect the consultant with relevant MSI team members and stakeholders, support with the recruitment of other research participants (e.g. community members)
Qualitative analysis	Finalise any qualitative research data outputs (e.g. transcripts) and complete qualitative analysis	Provide input into the analysis approach, for example reviewing a thematic framework	
Draft report and presentation to the MSI team	Lead on the drafting of a report and presentation to the MSI team	Provide feedback on the report/ presentation	Provide feedback on the report/ presentation
Final report	Ensure MSI comments are reflected in the final report	Sign-off on the final report	

Consultant profile

The consultant must be pro-choice, committed to an individual's right to control their own fertility, and able to respectfully navigate differing opinions and cultures.

Qualifications:

- Postgraduate degree in relevant area, or equivalent professional experience.

Experience:

- Significant and demonstrated experience working in the project regions, including ability to draw on in-country connections to facilitate research fieldwork.
- Demonstrated skills and experience in qualitative research methods and analysis, ideally in the NGO sector.
- Knowledge of family planning, sexual and reproductive health and social norms theory.

Skills:

- Excellent oral and written communication in English and French.
- Ability to summarise findings in creative, engaging ways.
- Ability to drive project forward with collaborating teams juggling multiple other priorities.

Remuneration

The maximum budget available for this consultancy is £32,000. This should cover all costs associated with delivering the consultancy, for example, the lead consultant's time, travel costs and any costs for in-person data collection. Consultants should provide a budget breakdown in their proposal, detailing how they will deliver on this project within this budget.

Applications

Applications should include:

1. A short response (max 5-pages) to the draft research questions and approach proposed in this ToR, including details of the consultant's proposed methodology, top-level workplan with timings and budget breakdown.
2. A capacity statement outlining the candidate's fit for the consultancy, in line with the profile described above.
3. An up to date CV.

MSI invites qualified consultants to **submit applications by midnight (GMT) on Sunday 16th October.**

Completed applications should be sent by email to Georgina Page, Head of Client Experience and Digital Health, georgina.page@msichoices.org.

Any questions can be addressed to Olivia Vandeputte, Senior Advisor for Social & Behavioural Change Communications at MSI Reproductive Choices (olivia.vandeputte@msichoices.org).