Introduction
Alive & Thrive is an initiative to save lives, prevent illness, and ensure healthy growth and development. Good nutrition in the first 1,000 days, from conception to two years of age, is critical to enable all children to lead healthier and more productive lives. Alive & Thrive is scaling up improved infant and young child feeding and maternal nutrition through large-scale programs in several countries in Asia and Africa and through strategic technical support and the dissemination of innovations, tools, and lessons worldwide. Alive & Thrive is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the governments of Canada and Ireland. The initiative is managed by FHI 360.

Background
Alive & Thrive in Bangladesh aims to incorporate maternal nutrition interventions into its behavior change strategies for improving maternal and child health and nutrition. A&T is interested in field testing a package of maternal nutrition interventions for women during pregnancy and up to 42 days postpartum. Interventions need to be developed based on current practices and perceptions. Four districts have been identified for this purpose: Mymensingh, Rangpur, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat. This RFP is concerned with identifying potential barriers and motivations at the household and community levels to improve the design of maternal nutrition interventions. The interventions are:

- Ensuring adequate quantities of home foods consumed throughout pregnancy as per recommended daily dietary practices
- Ensuring dietary diversity by consuming a variety of nutritious foods throughout pregnancy and in first 42 days postpartum
- Adherence to iron/folic acid (IFA) supplementation protocols in pregnancy
- Adherence to calcium supplementation protocols in pregnancy
- Deworming in the second trimester of pregnancy
- Ensuring early initiation of breastfeeding within one hour after delivery and exclusive breastfeeding without even a drop of water until 6 months (to be promoted up to 42 days postpartum)
Exploratory qualitative research conducted in November 2014 in Mymensingh and Rangpur has identified the following key factors involved in household decisions and practices related to the above: Past practices and perceptions, gender, chronic and seasonal poverty, and access to foods and supplements.

The proposed household and village influencers study is expected to describe patterns of the factors listed below in the next section in one study area typical of Mymensingh, and one typical of the northern districts (Rangpur/Kurigram/Lalmonirhat).

**Scope of Work:**

Under the guidance of Alive & Thrive in Washington DC, the selected vendor will design, implement and analyze two surveys: one household and one for village influencers. The vendor will prepare a report on the current situation related to the nutrition practices of pregnant women and associated factors that drive behaviors. The associated factors include beliefs and perceptions, resources and assets, access to foods and nutrient supplements, and information related to nutrition in pregnancy and breastfeeding practices.

The plan should contain survey sample sizes, locations, data collection and analysis methods and timeline. Similar to previous work conducted by A&T in Bangladesh, the total sample size should be 400 pregnant women in the 2nd & 3rd trimesters for the household survey; and one hundred and fifty of those should be selected for 24 hour dietary recalls. A total of 120 influencers should also be interviewed based on 20 selected in each of the following groups: Village doctors, MBBS doctors, religious leaders, government health workers, NGO health workers, and pharmacists.

The topics should include the following:

1. Household level (interviews with pregnant women in first or second trimesters, fathers to be, mother-in-law (MIL))

1.a. Current dietary intake of pregnant woman using quantitative 24-hour dietary recall (methodology of INFS, Dhaka University)

1.b. Gender norms and practices related to purchasing foods, decisions about food choices and intra household food allocation

1.c. Perceptions:
   - Pregnant woman’s perception that she can follow dietary recommendations (diversity and amounts) and adhere to supplementation protocols, within her current environment.
   - Household perception about when (number of days or weeks) a women is expected to return to normative activities after delivery such as care of the newborn, her own personal care, cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, feeding other child, and heavy sheets, heavy rice pots drained, tending cows, pumping water, fetching water, moving about, return to gainful employment, collecting/purchasing food etc.
• Household perception about how long (number of days or weeks) and when (trimester or month of pregnancy), a pregnant women is expected to stop normative activities due to pregnancy such as noted above.
• Household perceptions of the role of good nutrition for maintaining ‘functional well-being’ (physical and mental capacity to fulfill expected and wanted activities) by the pregnant women during pregnancy and after delivery.
• Pregnant woman and husband’s perceptions of social norms (what others in the village are doing) about desirable dietary practices (amount and diversity of foods) and use of IFA, calcium and deworming in pregnancy.
• Pregnant woman, husband, MIL’s perceptions of the risks of not maintaining dietary adequacy (diversity and amounts) and consequences of not adhering to IFA, calcium supplementation protocols, pre-coded after pre-testing.

1.d. Food attributes: consequences of consuming specific foods during each trimester and postpartum (during lactation).
1.e. Poverty /food security – chronic and seasonal
• Sources of income and level (daily/monthly, seasonally), each family member.
• Seasonal availability of recommended food varieties to prepare a calendar of nutritious foods for 12 months.
• Access to food sources: markets, household (own land/trees/animals), community (neighbors, joint family).

1.f. Access to free IFA, calcium supplements and adequate quantities as per protocols; who gets it and does he get it in time to avoid gaps or when the women needs it.
1.g. Sources of information received in the past about dietary adequacy (diversity and amounts per day) and use of IFA and calcium supplements,
• Content and frequency of information received in the past.
• Potential contact points in future from where respondents would like to receive information and support about these topics.
• Household perceptions of who are the influential persons in the community who can support others to follow desirable practices.

2. Village influentials (village doctors, MBBS doctors- government and private, religious leaders, government health workers such as HA and FWA at community clinics, NGO health workers including BRAC SK/SS, pharmacists)
• Knowledge about food needs (diversity and amounts) in pregnancy.
• Knowledge about supplements (iron/folic acid, calcium).
• Perceptions of social norms (what others in the village are doing) about desirable dietary practices (amount and diversity of foods) and use of IFA, calcium and deworming in pregnancy.
• Perceptions of the risks of not maintaining dietary adequacy (diversity and amounts) and consequences of not adhering to IFA, calcium supplementation protocols.
• Perception about functional abilities and well-being in pregnancy and after delivery – what factors influence a pregnant woman to function well.
• Their own role in supporting improved diversity, food amounts, IFA and calcium supplements; and ensuring early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding.
• Food attributes: consequences of consuming specific foods during pregnancy and lactation.
• Perceptions of benefits/risks related to breastfeeding initiation and exclusive breastfeeding.
• Perceptions of current norms, barriers and how to improve initiation and exclusive breastfeeding.
• Sources of information received in the past about dietary adequacy (diversity and amounts per day) and use of IFA and calcium supplements; and breastfeeding.
• Content and frequency of information received in the past.
• Potential contact points in future from where respondents would like to receive information, about these topics.

Major activities are:

Under the guidance of Alive & Thrive, Washington DC:

1. Obtain local IRB or ethical review approval
2. Draft methods and tools for the 2 surveys.
3. Develop a timeline to complete the tasks in 2 months (at least the first draft report).
4. Field test the draft questionnaire and finalize it after field testing with feedback from A&T.
5. Plan, implement and collect data from the household survey.
6. Plan, implement and collect data from the Influentials study.
7. Conduct double entry of data.
8. Deliver clean data set as per Alive and Thrive guidelines.
9. Prepare a draft of methodology used and limitations if any.
10. Finalize the report after reviews by Alive & Thrive.

Interested bidders are requested to submit a proposal to conduct this assessment as a rapid study so that implementing partners can help identify how to strengthen current efforts to reduce maternal under nutrition. Provide a data set and details of methodology within two months of the start of the assessment, and a final report after 3 months.

Deliverables:

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Technical direction: Dr. Tina G. Sanghvi

Proposal Instructions and Deadline:
Responses to this RFP should be submitted by email to the FHI 360 Bangladesh office to the attention of smb Abdullah@fhi360.org and tsanghvi@fhi360.org no later than December 30, 2014 at 5p.m. (Dhaka time). Offers received after this date and time will not be accepted for consideration. FHI 360 will acknowledge receipt of your proposal by email. Proposals must be submitted in electronic format.

Any questions or requests for clarification need to be submitted in writing to the same email addresses by December 25, 2014 at 5p.m. (Dhaka time). Answers will be shared with all firms. No telephone inquiries will be answered.

The resources are limited for this project and credit will be given for reflecting efficient and cost saving measures.

In order to be considered, Proposals must include the following:

I. Capability Statement – not to exceed three pages, indicating size of the agency, staff strength, past experience in similar work with donor organizations and/or the Government of Bangladesh etc.

II. Client list

III. References – names, company or organization, contact information – of three recent (within the past 2 years) groups that you have worked for in this capacity

IV. Proposed plan and approach: not to exceed five pages, indicating the approach the organization will utilize to conduct each step of the activity

V. Staffing – names, brief (1/2 page) bio sketch of principal staff including in sampling, data collection and data entry management and data analysis.

VI. Cost proposal – Please provide a budget that reflects costs (including unit cost and number of units) for the above scope(s) of work and a budget narrative that describes and justifies the cost assumptions for each category and line item in the budget spreadsheet. The budget must be submitted using the FHI 360 template that is provided. The budget should be broken down by labor costs (please identify personnel who will perform the work) and fringe benefit costs in accordance with the offeror’s compensation policies, travel costs, supplies, any other direct costs

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<td>1.</td>
<td>Local IRB or ethical review approval</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Detailed methodology, sampling plan and data collection tools for both the household survey and influential study</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Revised data collection tools after pretesting for both the household survey and influential study</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Clean data set and methodology for both the household survey and influential study</td>
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<td>Final report</td>
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necessary to perform a category of work, and indirect costs. Indirect costs must be clearly stated including the basis on which they will be applied. These costs are administrative expenses related to overall general operations and are shared among projects and/or functions. Examples include executive oversight, accounting, grants management, legal expenses, utilities, and facility maintenance. In so far as possible, identifiable (allocable) costs should be requested and justified in the proposal as direct costs, including those for dedicated ongoing project management, facilities and support. To the extent that indirect costs are applicable, they are subject to the following limits:

- 0% for government agencies, other private foundations and for-profit organizations
- up to 10% for U.S. universities and other academic institutions
- up to 15% for non-U.S. academic institutions and all private voluntary and non-government organizations, regardless of location.

If the organization has lower indirect rates, the lower rates should be used. Please include VAT in the cost proposal as FHI 360 is not VAT exempt.

Offerors will submit with their proposals a proposed budget with sufficient detail to allow evaluation of elements of costs proposed.

Please find attached the budget format for reference.

**Criteria for evaluation:**
Alive & Thrive anticipates issuing a fixed-price purchase order to the offeror(s) whose proposal is most advantageous, cost and other factors considered. A fixed price contract calls for one firm price, not subject to any adjustment based on the contractor’s cost experience in performance of the contract. This fixed-price is established at the outset, when the contract is negotiated and signed.

Proposals will first be evaluated from a technical standpoint. Those proposals that are considered to be technically acceptable shall then be evaluated in terms of cost.

**Technical Scores – 60 points max, including:**
1. Understanding and experience of rapid surveys/assessments on the same or related topic– 20 points
2. Institutional experience in Bangladesh in carrying out rapid assessment, studies, documentations, publications of international standard– 20 points
3. Staffing plan and qualifications of key personnel – 20 points

**Financial Scores – 40 points max for cost reasonableness and clarity**
Following completion of the technical review, the Selection Committee will evaluate relevant cost proposals. Committee will take into consideration clarity and accuracy of budget presentation, details of the budget and budget notes, price, and cost effectiveness.
Following completion of the technical review, the Selection Committee will evaluate relevant cost proposals. Committee will take into consideration past performance and reference recommendations.

**Withdrawal of Proposals**

Proposals may be withdrawn by written notice, email or facsimile received at any time before award.

**Termination of contract**

Alive and Thrive has the right to terminate the contract at any time during the contract period with 30 days notice period.

**False Statements in Offer**

Offerors must provide full, accurate and complete information as required by this solicitation and its attachments.

Proposals become the property of FHI360.

**Award and Notification of Selected Proposals**

FHI 360 will not compensate offerors for preparation of their response to this RFP. Issuing this RFP is not a guarantee that FHI360 will award a contract.

FHI 360 reserves the right to issue a contract based on the initial evaluation of offers without discussion.

FHI 360 may choose to award a contract for part of the activities in the RFP.

FHI 360 may choose to award a contract to more than one offeror for specific parts of the activities in the RFP.

Negotiations will commence with a discussion of the proposal, schedule of activities, and staffing. Agreement must then be reached on the final proposal, staffing, logistics and reporting. Special attention will be paid to clearly define the inputs required from FHI 360 to ensure satisfactory implementation of the assignment. Changes agreed upon will then be reflected in the budget and budget narrative, using proposed unit rates. Having selected the agency on the basis of an evaluation of proposed key professional staff among other things, FHI 360 expects to negotiate a contract on the basis of the staff named in the proposal and, prior to contract negotiations, will require assurance that these staff will be actually available. FHI 360 will not consider substitutions during contract negotiations except in cases of unexpected delays in the starting date or incapacity of key professional staff for reasons of health. FHI 360 may request from short-listed offerors a second or third round of either oral presentation or written response to a more specific and detailed scope of work that is based on
the general scope of work in the original RFP.

FHI 360 has the right to rescind this RFP, or rescind an award prior to the signing of a contract due to any unforeseen changes in the direction of FHI 360's client, be it funding or programmatic.

FHI 360 reserves the right to waive any deviations by offerors from the requirements of this solicitation that in FHI 360’s opinion are considered not to be material defects requiring rejection or disqualification; or where such a waiver will promote increased competition and if such action is considered to be in the best interest of FHI 360’s client organization.

Please do not include examples of your work although you may include a website(s) for us to review that reflects your work. If FHI 360 requires additional materials we will request those materials during the review process.

Should FHI 360 choose to make an award, all deliverables produced under said award shall be considered the property of FHI 360.

Please note that if you consider that your firm does not have all the expertise for the assignment, there is no objection to your firm associating with another firm to enable a full range of expertise to be presented. However, joint ventures between firms on the shortlist are not permitted without the prior approval of FHI 360. The request for a joint venture should be accompanied with full details of the proposed association and confirming joint and several liability.

Should FHI 360 choose to make an award, assignment from award of contract will be subject you to normal tax liability in Bangladesh. Kindly contact the concerned tax authorities for further information in this regard if required.