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# REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

**RFQ SOLICITATION NUMBER: RFQ-NIGERIA-2019-001**

Strategic and Technical Support to the USAID/Nigeria Health  
Programming Implementation and Effectiveness Evaluation

DATE OF ISSUE: May 6, 2019

CLOSING DATE AND TIME FOR RESPONSES:

**May 22, 2019**

**5:00 PM (EDT)**

Responses must be emailed to: [heard@urc-chs.com](mailto:heard@urc-chs.com)

Deadline for Questions: **May 13, 2019, 12:00 PM (EDT)**

Questions by email ONLY to: [heard@urc-chs.com](mailto:heard@urc-chs.com)

Contact Person: Danielle Charlet, M.D., Ph.D.

Issuance of this RFQ does not constitute an award commitment on the part of URC, nor does it commit URC/HEARD or the US government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a response. URC may reject any submission that does not fully comply with requirements of the RFQ. Furthermore, funding of successful applications is contingent on the availability of funds from USAID.

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## 1. PURPOSE OF THE RFQ

The purpose of the RFQ is to identify one or more qualified Nigeria-based institutions to support implementation science and evaluation activities related to health programming in Nigeria and specifically to provide strategic guidance (methodological, contextual, and/or subject matter), lead stakeholder engagement, and contribute to implementation oversight and coordination.

## 2. SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATIONS

Successful organizations will have a highly sophisticated and specific skill set and organizational capacity expected to include:

- a. In-depth knowledge of the health sector and stakeholders in Nigeria and specific states (initially Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto);
- b. Demonstrated managerial, technical, and institutional capacities to achieve the results outlined in this RFQ;
- c. Proven track record of collaborating and engaging successfully with governments, NGOs, donors and technical partners in the health sector in Nigeria and specific states (initially Bauchi, Kebbi, and Sokoto);
- d. Established operational presence in Nigeria;
- e. Demonstrated success in management and coordination of research and evaluation activities; and,
- f. Strong institutional financial and management capacities.

## 3. BACKGROUND

Through the HEARD Project, USAID/Nigeria is investing in evaluating the implementation approaches of two major health programs in Nigeria, Integrated Health Program (IHP) and PMI for States (PMI4S), in order to understand whether these programs are improving health outcomes in the states in which they are operating and how the effectiveness of these programs can be optimized.

**INTEGRATED HEALTH PROGRAM (IHP):** The goal of IHP is to contribute to state-level reductions in child and maternal morbidity and mortality and to increase the capacity of health systems (public and private) to sustainably support quality primary health care (PHC) services. The program's approach will be tailored to the local context to strengthen key elements of the health system to support delivery of PHC services at the state-, LGA-, ward-, and health facility level. IHP will also expand efforts to identify and support the optimal service delivery points for rapid scale-up of proven interventions.

**PMI FOR STATES (PMI4S):** The program is to contribute to supporting the provision of facility and community-based malaria case management and prevention of malaria in public and private sectors in eight or more states of Nigeria. The program will contribute to the reduction of all cause under-five morbidity and mortality, and maternal mortality ratio with its associated complications, and contributes to the Mission Development Objective 2 "a healthier population in targeted states."

## 4. OVERALL OBJECTIVES

Through this effort, the HEARD Project aims to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation science activities conducted in Nigeria, and to engage in and contribute to strengthening, as needed, platforms/networks for the sharing and uptake of evidence into programs and policies.

## 5. TIME FRAME

Activities are anticipated to start in June 2019 and are projected to continue for approximately three (3) years. The initial period of performance will be from June 2019 through September 2019, with an option to extend the period of performance on annual basis. The decision to extend the period of performance will be based on the activity needs and progress, and funds availability.

## 6. EXPECTED ACTIVITIES

It is anticipated that the activities to be carried out by the successful organization(s) will include:

1. Strategic guidance:
  - a. Provide general oversight and guidance (methodological, contextual, and/or subject matter) to overall activity development and implementation
  - b. Support the process of identifying implementation partners for each of the study components
2. Stakeholder engagement:
  - a. Lead the development and execution of the stakeholder engagement strategy
  - b. Navigate relevant major stakeholder processes nationally and in states where activities are implemented
3. Implementation oversight and coordination:
  - a. Monitor study implementation and support coordination between implementation partners

The anticipated activities may be undertaken by one or more institutional partners identified through this RFQ.

## 7. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

### 7.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Organizations with established operational presence in Nigeria are invited to apply. Organizations must be one of the following types:

- Institutions of higher education;
- Non-profit organizations; or
- For-profit organizations (no fee or profit will be allowed)

Responses from organizations that do not meet the above eligibility criteria will not be reviewed and evaluated.

## 7.2 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

### Key Information

- Due date for questions about RFQ: May 13, 2019
- Due date for responses: May 22, 2019
- Number of award(s) expected: one to three
- Maximum page length of technical response: 6 pages maximum (not including Cover Page, Annexes)
- Language for technical response: English only

All responses received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in Section. Responses may be judged as nonresponsive if they do not follow the instructions in the RFQ. Section 4 addresses the technical evaluation procedures and criteria for the responses. Organizations are advised to carefully read the instructions.

Questions about the RFQ must be written in English and emailed [heard@urc-chs.com](mailto:heard@urc-chs.com) by **May 13, 2019, 5:00 PM (EDT)**.

Responses to the RFQ must be submitted in English and emailed to [heard@urc-chs.com](mailto:heard@urc-chs.com) by **May 22, 2018, 5:00 PM (EDT)**.

## 7.3 CONTENT OF TECHNICAL SUBMISSION

The technical submission must be specific, complete, and presented concisely, demonstrating the organization's **Organizational Capabilities and Technical Expertise** with respect to achieving **one or more** of the activities described in the RFQ. The organization's statement of Organizational Capabilities and Technical Expertise must include the following areas:

- Section 1. Experience and current expertise related to collaborating and engaging with governments, NGOs, donors and technical partners in the health sector in Nigeria and specific states (Bauchi, Kebbi, Sokoto) (**limit 1 page**);
- Section 2. (If interested in Activity 1) Experience and current methodological, contextual, and/or subject matter expertise related to health service delivery and health system strengthening evaluations and implementation research (**limit 1 page**);
- Section 3. (If interested in Activity 2) Experience and current expertise leading and/or engaging in policy and advocacy-related activities that advance the utilization of evidence in health programs and policies (**limit 1 page**);
- Section 4. (If interested in Activity 3) Experience and current expertise managing and coordinating research and evaluation activities in Nigeria (**limit 1 page**);
- Section 5. Proposed Project Lead summarizing his/her specific experience with the activities described (**limit 1 page**); and
- Section 6. Institutional capacity to coordinate and implement the above-mentioned activities; including technical, financial, and administrative management capacity (**limit 1 page**).

## 7.4 FORMAT REQUIREMENTS FOR TECHNICAL RESPONSES

- a. The technical response should be:
  - Written in English
  - Typed in a Microsoft Word compatible program, single-spaced with a 12-point font and one- inch margins
  - Saved and submitted as one document in pdf or Word format, with all sections and appendices put together
  - Labeled with page numbers, the RFQ number (RFQ-NIGERIA-2019-001) and the name of the organization on every page
  - Limited to up to six (6) pages (depending on Sections completed) not including cover page and annexes
- b. The technical response should have **Cover Page** (not included in the page limit) with the following information:
  - Program/Project title;
  - RFQ reference number;
  - Name of organization applying to the RFQ;
  - Contact person, telephone number, fax number, address, and types name(s) and title(s) of person(s), who prepared the response, and corresponding signatures.
- c. **Curricula Vitae (CVs)** of proposed Project Director and other personnel will be included in Annex.

## 8. REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

### 8.1 TECHNICAL REVIEW

A Technical Review Committee will evaluate the organizations' Organizational Capacity and Technical Expertise Statement taking into account the eligibility criteria (Section 7.1) and the technical review criteria (Section 8.2) found in this RFQ.

### 8.2 REVIEW CRITERIA FOR TECHNICAL RESPONSES

Technical responses will be reviewed and evaluated against the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated experience and expertise related to collaborating and engaging with governments, NGOs, donors and technical partners in the health sector in Nigeria;
2. Demonstrated experience and methodological, contextual, and/or subject matter expertise related to health service delivery and health system strengthening evaluations and implementation research;
3. Demonstrated experience and expertise related to leading and/or engaging in policy and advocacy-related activities that advance the utilization of evidence in health programs and policies;
4. Demonstrated experience and expertise related to managing and coordinating research and evaluation activities in Nigeria;
5. Proposed Project Director and team that possess demonstrated leadership, expertise, and experience in the areas of the described activities; and

6. Demonstrated programmatic experience, and financial and administrative management capacity required to manage USG-funded projects.

### 8.3 NOTIFICATION PROCESS

URC will review and select qualified respondents submitted their response in accordance with the guidelines and criteria set forth in this RFQ. Qualified short-listed organizations will be contacted to answer further questions and will be invited to submit full application to undertake the work referenced in this RFQ.

URC reserves the right to disregard any responses that do not meet the requirements. URC is not obligated to issue a financial instrument or award as a result of this RFQ.

If URC's review of the organization's response will result in a decision to request a full application, URC will provide specific requirements and instructions for the full application.

### 8.4 CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN AWARD

To be eligible to receive U.S. Government funding, organizations must meet certain requirements. While these requirements do not have to be met in order to submit a response under the RFQ, they will need to be met if the organization is requested to submit a full application. Among those requirements are:

- A. All first-time applicants for USAID funding are subject to a pre-award assessment to verify that the applicant has proper procedures in place to receive USAID funding (ADS 303.3.8)
- B. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:
  - i. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application (**Please allow several weeks for processing through SAM.GOV**);
  - ii. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. To obtain information regarding the preceding, see the respective links: <http://www.dnb.com> and <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>
  - iii. Provide a valid DUNS number in its application (**Note: the DUNS number must be submitted with the application**).
- C. Submission of a Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative
- D. Submission of additional documentation and certifications including:
  - i. Negotiated Indirect Costs Rate Agreement (NICRA) or audited financial statements to support indirect rates.
  - ii. A signed copy of ADS 303mav, Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions.
  - iii. Complete Pre-Award Assessment Questionnaire.
  - iv. Organization's registration (e.g., certificate of incorporation, business license, certificate of registration with government).
  - v. Organization chart or list of company officers.
  - vi. Audited financial statements for the last two fiscal years.

## ANNEX I: HEALTH, EVALUATION AND APPLIED RESEARCH (HEARD) PROJECT

The purpose of the HEARD Project is to undertake research and evaluation efforts to accelerate progress towards achieving USAID’s global health and development goals, including Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Death, achieving an AIDS Free Generation, and Protecting Communities from Infectious Diseases Initiatives, including the Global Health Security Agenda. The HEARD Project will focus on evaluative and targeted research that accelerates research-to-use processes.

The HEARD Project is engaged with building a partnership around IS through the creation the Implementation Science Collaborative (ISC). The ISC is comprised of organizations that work to advance global health goals as implementation support organizations, regional health bodies, policy advocacy groups, civil society-based evidence advocates, research organizations, and academic institutions. This strategic mix of partners will help to inform which research questions are prioritized in different contexts, to generate and analyze evidence, and to better package and move evidence through channels which render it more accessible to inform policy and practice.

The HEARD Project and the ISC will seek to:

- Effectively respond to evaluation and research-to-use global health priorities: developing the study designs and issue-specific partnerships required to navigate a complex effort along a strategic research-to-use pathway;
- Actively engage national, regional, and global-level stakeholders for the development of those priorities: engaging and supporting a growing community of interested implementers, policy makers, and investigators in shaping and promoting a more relevant research-to-use agenda and capacity; and by
- Strengthening and connecting the institutional applied research capacities required to sustain a vigorous implementation science agenda in support of global health goals, emerging threats and new opportunities.

Our approach is illustrated in Figure 1, below. Emphasizing effective stakeholder engagement and knowledge management throughout, the four main strategies of the HEARD Project are: (1) partnership and agenda development; (2) data liberation and evidence strengthening; (3) research and evaluation study design and implementation; and (4) the acceleration of evidence-to-use processes.

Figure 1. Key strategies for accelerating research-to-use

