



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

April 15, 2016

Comments Due Date: Monday, April 25, 2016, 12:00 pm Washington, DC Time

Subject: Pharmaceutical Systems Strengthening

Dear Partners:

The United States Government, represented by the Agency for International Development (USAID), Global Health Bureau (GH), Office of Health Systems (OHS) is seeking feedback in the area of pharmaceutical system strengthening. Given the importance of medicines in health systems and the need to address the medicines component in order to ensure the financial sustainability of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in low- and middle-income countries, USAID is particularly interested to learn from the knowledge and experience of experts in the field.

Please note that responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to any organization or individual in any subsequently issued notice of funding opportunity, as comments are strictly for information gathering purposes. Therefore providing comments on the RFI will not preclude respondents from later being able to submit an application. Issuance of this RFI does not constitute a notice of funding opportunity, which is issued through a separate process. The RFI does not represent any award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it obligate the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any comments. Information received as part of this RFI shall become the property of USAID therefore proprietary information that cannot be shared should not be sent.

This RFI can be downloaded from <http://www.grants.gov>. Interested parties who are not able to retrieve the RFI from the Internet can request a copy by contacting the Office of Acquisition and Assistance via email only at pss@usaid.gov.

Comments should be submitted to USAID via email to Albert Asante, Agreement Specialist and Boryana Boncheva, Agreement Officer at pss@usaid.gov with a subject line "Response to RFI-

AID-OAA-16-PSS” no later than Monday, April 25, 2016, 12:00 pm Washington, DC Time.
Please use exclusively the pss@usaid.gov email address.

Thank you for your interest in our program. We look forward to receiving your comments.

Sincerely,


Boryana Boncheva
Agreement Officer

Attachment 1 – Questions

1. What do you think are the major deficiencies or constraints of pharmaceutical systems in low and middle-income countries (LMICs), particularly as they relate to access to quality-assured medicines and their appropriate use?
2. Within your area of expertise, what are the main opportunities to improve pharmaceutical management within health systems in LMICs? And why?
3. How would you prioritize investments to produce long-term, sustainable improvements in country pharmaceutical systems?
4. Given the expected growth of the pharmaceutical sector in LMICs and in particular in Africa over the next ten years, how can USAID contribute to responsible growth of pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity?
5. Experts believe that expenditures on pharmaceuticals and related products in LMICs often do not achieve their maximum benefits. What do you think are the major sources of medicines-related wastage and inefficiency and how can they be addressed?
6. Do you see an expanded role for the private sector in supply chain management (e.g., with potential government outsourcing of supply chain activities) and/or increasing engagement with private pharmacies? If yes, please elaborate.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

7. Given the importance of medicines in essential packages of services, what are the major medicines-related issues in UHC that must be addressed to assure financially sustainable UHC efforts with maximum possible coverage?
8. What are the major medicines-related contributing causes of household out-of-pocket expenditures in LMICs and what can be done to reduce/minimize them?
9. What challenges do LMICs face in creating and managing pharmacy benefit packages and in conducting health technology assessments for the selection of medicines?

Regulatory Systems Strengthening

10. Given the breadth and complexity of medicines regulatory systems, what are the major components that should be given priority attention to protect the public health and assure

the quality and safety of medicines?

11. What approaches should be promoted to strengthen resource-constrained medicines regulatory capacity in LMICs? What measures can be taken to support the sustainability of regulatory functions?
12. There are several ongoing attempts to support regional harmonization of regulatory systems for medicines, (e.g., drug registration review/approval, pharmacovigilance). What is your assessment of such approaches? What are the barriers to progress and how can USAID help?

Appropriate Medicines Use

13. What do you think are the major contributory factors to the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance in LMICs? What are the best measures to address them?
14. Assuring access to medicines is essential, but what interventions should we promote to assure appropriate medicines use and protect patient safety?

Systems Thinking & Learning Agenda

15. How would you characterize system thinking and its role/application in the strengthening (as opposed to the mere support) of pharmaceutical systems?
16. From your perspective, what are some of the unanswered research questions that would advance the thinking in this field?

Closing

17. Are there any global trends, innovations, or new thinking that are relevant to pharmaceutical system strengthening that we have not yet discussed?
18. Is there anything we haven't already touched on that you would like to add?