

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

MARKET INFORMATION, BEST PRACTICES, & INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR USG Frontier Health Markets (FHM)

Reference Number: RFI-20-GH-FHM-01
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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to gather market information, best practices and innovative ideas and to determine the level of interest and capability of organizations to implement the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Frontier Health Markets (FHM) program. FHM is a proposed suite of multiple activities with the objective of increasing private health sector contributions to advancing voluntary family planning and other health outcomes, including maternal, newborn and child health, malaria, TB, and HIV/AIDS. USAID is the U.S. Government's (USG's) principal implementing organization for international development assistance. FHM's potential future activities will work to strengthen local health markets leading to systematic and effective engagement with the private sector.

This is a Request for Information (RFI) issued by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Global Health (GH), Office of Population and Reproductive Health (PRH). This is not a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a Request for Application (RFA) and is not to be construed as a commitment by the U.S. Government to issue any solicitation or Notice of Funding Opportunities, ultimately award a contract or assistance agreement on the basis of this RFI, or pay for any information voluntarily submitted as a result of this request. Responses to this RFI must not be portrayed as proposals and will not be accepted by the U.S. Government (USG) to form a binding agreement. Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI. It should be noted that responding to or providing comment on this RFI will not give any advantage to any organization in any subsequent procurement(s), if such a procurement(s) is released. No proprietary, confidential, or sensitive information should be included in your response. USAID reserves the right to use any non-proprietary information in any resulting solicitation.

USAID will not provide answers to anything submitted in response to this request. USAID posts its competitive business opportunities on **beta.sam.gov** or www.grants.gov. It is the potential offeror's/applicant's responsibility to monitor these sites for announcements of new opportunities. Responses to this RFI may be used by USAID without restriction or limitation.

This RFI provides an opportunity to review, comment on, and contribute to the enhancement of USAID's future private sector health programming. USAID is seeking information and feedback

around the following main content areas:

1. Feedback on the results framework;
2. Strategies for improving the market environment and private sector participation in the health sector, including delivery of high quality voluntary family planning, maternal, newborn and child health, malaria, TB, and HIV/AIDS information, products, and services;
3. Interest and capabilities of prospective applicants/offerors.

II. BACKGROUND

The public sector faces many constraints and cannot meet the growing market demand in family planning, maternal, newborn and child health, malaria, TB, and HIV/AIDS services in LMICs alone. People are increasingly accessing healthcare through the private sector, and challenges remain in ensuring that health markets are resilient, robust, and capacitated to deliver appropriate and quality health products, services, and information to address the growing need. The objective of FHM is to improve the market environment and increase private sector contributions to advancing voluntary family planning and other health outcomes, including maternal, newborn and child health, malaria, TB, and HIV/AIDS through targeted technical assistance, local capacity-building, and program implementation at scale. For purposes of this RFI, the private health sector is defined as the market actors performing direct, supporting, or enabling functions that increase access, availability and use of health products, services, and information. These include a wide range of actors: commercial for-profit, faith-based, and non-profit; US-based, local, regional and international; formal and informal sectors, including traditional and community health providers.

The private health sector faces numerous challenges in engaging effectively in the health system and delivering high-quality health products and services. Private providers are often fragmented, have poor referral systems and are underrepresented in rural areas. They often lack access to key resources and skills, including business skills, finance and credit, high quality training and continuous medical education, and quality, affordable medicines, other health commodities and equipment. Governments often impose policy restrictions on the private sector and serve a watchdog function rather than fostering active stewardship. In other cases, governments simply leave the private sector out of planning, policies, training and other programmatic areas, potentially missing opportunities to leverage or tap into their health expertise, reach, human resources and infrastructure. Private healthcare data systems are often not integrated with public systems. Reporting and use of private sector data often lacks sufficient robustness and transparency for the public sector to ensure effective oversight, management, and provision of health information, products, and services, and respond to emerging public health threats. Finally, patients can experience inconsistent quality of care and affordability of services at private sector health outlets.

Bureau for Global Health's Work in the Private Sector

USAID's [Private Sector Engagement Policy](#), launched in 2018, is an Agency-wide call to action and mandate to integrate market-based approaches into our development and humanitarian programs across all sectors¹. PSE is fundamental to USAID's goal to end the need for foreign assistance. This Policy is the first step, within a larger cultural and operational transformation, to expand our engagement with the private sector to achieve outcomes of shared interests Agency-wide. Additionally, USAID's [New Partnerships Initiative](#) (NPI) calls for greater engagement with new and underutilized partners to leverage significant private and non-US government funding to support and finance partner countries' own development. The principles behind NPI are outlined in the Agency's first-ever [Acquisition and Assistance \(A&A\) Strategy](#). The PSE Policy and NPI are an integral part of the Agency's [Journey to Self Reliance](#) approach.

As highlighted by the Private Sector Engagement Policy, the Bureau for Global Health (GH) actively pursues efforts to enhance private sector engagement by applying market-based approaches to global health across health elements. GH's broad array of strategic private sector partnerships enables it to support private sector innovators; use strategic planning, market shaping, and innovative financing to scale proven interventions, and support improved quality of care at the service delivery level by private providers. GH also develops strategies that support domestic resource mobilization (DRM) efforts from the private sector, works with national governments to prime health markets for greater private sector participation, and increases the availability of private sector data for policy and financing decisions. GH also works through national health financing systems to increase efficiency among private providers as they deliver healthcare, and has worked with partner governments to increase the inclusion of the private sector to participate in health systems and contribute to national health goals.

Several planned/active awards from the Global Health Bureau also support private sector health programming, but will differ from FHM in key aspects. These include:

- **MOMENTUM Round 2B (planned):** MOMENTUM Round 2B is a service delivery focused award seeking to expand access to and use of evidence-based, quality MNCH/FP/RH information, products, and services through private providers by: (1) ensuring increased availability of and demand for evidence-based, quality, voluntary family planning and MNCH information, services, and supplies through private providers; and (2) expanding public and private partnerships to ensure a total market approach for improved health care access and coverage.
- **Strengthening Health Outcomes in the Private Sector (SHOPS) Plus (2015-2021):** SHOPS Plus and its predecessor, SHOPS, aimed at increasing the use of priority health services through strategic expansion of private sector approaches in health systems to improve health outcomes. SHOPS Plus is currently held by Abt Associates and is scheduled to close out in September 2021. FHM will continue to work through a total market approach to increase access to priority health products and services recognizing that some users prefer accessing health goods in the private sector, as these services are

¹ USAID Private Sector Engagement Policy
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/usaid_psepolicy_final.pdf

often more convenient and/or accessible. The proposed program will also continue providing global technical leadership and convening stakeholders around private sector coordination and collaboration as SHOPS Plus has successfully accomplished.

- Support for International Family Planning and Health Organizations (SIFPO) 2 (2014-2020): is a service-delivery award, focused on consolidating, strengthening and scaling up best practices in voluntary clinical and community-based family planning and other healthcare directed at international service delivery organizations with a multi-country network of health clinics and community-based platforms.
- Scale for Impact (2016-2020): Managed by the GH Center for Innovation and Impact (CII), Scale for Impact aims to accelerate and magnify the impact of priority global health innovations by leveraging the most successful private sector principles and practices. The objective is the rapid development and diffusion of innovations by ensuring timely and appropriate planning for and introduction of priority global health products and technologies.
- NPI EXPAND: New Partners for Better Health (2019-2024): Managed by the Office of Country Support, NPI EXPAND supports missions and organizations to scale up innovative interventions by strengthening the capacity of New and Underutilized Partners (NUP), including the private sector. This program will help reach USAID's goal of increasing access to, and the uptake of, high-quality health care across priority areas, in line with USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance through sub-awards to local organizations, along with mentoring and technical support to strengthen their capacity.

In addition, there are a number of other Global Health mechanisms that have private healthcare components, but do not focus on the private health sector. The activities envisioned under the FHM mechanism will bring a unique and differentiated private sector perspective to GH's work in health systems and will fulfill a current unmet need.

III. USAID'S ENVISIONED FUTURE ACTIVITIES

III A. Proposed Project Design

FHM is proposed as a five-year global program encompassing multiple award mechanisms that will provide technical assistance, in-country capacity building, private sector capital and business support activities.

As a key goal, Frontier Health Markets seeks to improve the functioning of health markets and increase engagement with the private sector for improved health outcomes. A health market is defined as a system and/or environment with core (supply/demand) and supporting functions (rules, financing, stewardship/governance) that enable the exchange of health products, services, and information across the healthcare chain. Key actors in a health market include consumers, providers/suppliers, governments, and facilitators. The interplay of preferences and motivations between these actors across each of the core and supporting functions leads to key outcomes of quality, growth, equity, and sustainability of the exchange.

Given the importance of understanding the local market environment is a key step in establishing a pathway for successful engagement with the private sector for improved health outcomes in lower and middle income countries (LMIC). We will be exploring strategies and approaches to addressing key market constraints and barriers that inhibit the functioning of local markets in mixed (public-private) health systems.

This following suite of program elements will serve as GH's flagship private health sector project.

Activity One – *Private Sector Flagship* will invest in market development; provide global technical and thought leadership to advance the field; generate evidence, learning and innovation; and facilitate greater public-private collaboration for voluntary family planning and other health areas, including maternal, newborn and child health, malaria, TB, other infectious diseases, and HIV/AIDS. This activity contributes directly to the USAID's PSE policy by scaling up the application of market-based approaches for health. It focuses on improving the functioning of local health markets where the private sector contribution is systematic, complementary, and enhances countries' ability to fortify and diversify their healthcare delivery.

For example:

- Establishing a health market development facility/platform to facilitate and sustain strategic engagement among market actors;
- Strengthening governance and stewardship capacities by the public sector to better engage with the private sector, including examining the role of development partners in private-sector stewardship, and efforts to improve trust, dialogue and partnership between public and private sectors;
- Providing market analytics to improve the understanding and harness the potential of local markets with effective and efficient approaches of gathering, analysing, and facilitating the systematic application of private sector data for informed decision making by both public and private sectors, including approaches to accessing, aggregating and disseminating private sector data;
- Improving the integration and interoperability of public and private sector health information systems;
- Supporting reforms to improve institutional norms, rules and regulations in support of greater private sector participation in healthcare delivery;
- Scaling up user-centered, high-impact, and evidence-informed practices with a focus on improving overall quality of care in the private sector;
- Creating greater demand and matching it with affordable supply of consumer-driven health products and services to better ensure access, choice, and sustained uptake.

Other innovative or proven approaches to achieve the stated goals are also encouraged.

Activity Two - *Private Sector Engagement Staff Support* will provide tailored support to USAID Missions to assess, design, implement, and evaluate health market development and private sector engagement activities. This activity seeks to build mission capacity for private sector assessments, market analysis, and healthy market strategies; activity scoping and design;

developing market measurement and monitoring tools; training and skills building around PSE policy and operational plans; building capacity to carry out evaluation of market development and private sector activities and approaches.

Activity Three - *Private Sector Capital Fund* seeks to improve access to capital for local, market-oriented solutions for voluntary family planning and other healthcare in order to strengthen the capacity of the private sector and functioning of health markets. Technical approaches might include utilizing innovative financing techniques to increase access to and/or provide initial capital for local micro, small and medium sized health enterprises. Creative solutions will help scale and sustain the availability, choice, and expand access to quality and affordable health products, services, and information among key populations and in priority geographic areas. In addition, this activity seeks to catalyze and support the scale and growth of local innovations and approaches, including digital solutions through approaches such as the provision of small grant seed funding to promising new ventures in order to provide proof of concept and bring new ideas to scale.

Activity Four – *Business Support Facility* aims to build capacity of local market actors and innovators in the health sector with business skills development. It will support the beneficiaries of the Private Sector Capital Fund and other local businesses to scale tested models, launch new service delivery lines and products, expand to new markets, and innovate. In addition, this activity will function in collaboration with the Private Sector Capital Fund to improve strategic planning and business processes and capabilities of private health sector players so they can access private financing.

III B. Proposed FHM Results Framework

Objective: Increased private sector contributions to advancing voluntary family planning and other health (including, maternal, newborn and child health, malaria, TB, other infectious diseases, and HIV/AIDS) outcomes

Result 1: **Improved market environment** for greater private sector participation in the delivery of health products and services.

- Result 1.1: Enabled effective public sector **stewardship of and engagement with the private sector**
- Result 1.2: Mobilized and leveraged **resources and incentives** to improve private sector capacity, responsiveness, and financial sustainability
- Result 1.3: Improved institutional **norms, rules and regulations, and organization** of the private sector to support market growth
- Result 1.4: Increased collection and utilization of private sector **data and market intelligence** for decision-making, public sector integration, and commercial insights

Result 2: **Improved equitable access to and uptake of** quality consumer-driven health products and services.

- Result 2.1: Improved **quality of care** and **client-centered focus of** healthcare interventions in the private sector
- Result 2.2: Enhanced, sustainable **supply** of quality, affordable health products and services in the private sector
- Result 2.3: Increased **demand** for priority health products and services in the private sector

IV. HOW TO SUBMIT A RESPONSE

USAID seeks input from a range of partners, including not-for-profit organizations, commercial entities, companies, faith-based and community organizations, universities and think-tanks with a focus on family planning, maternal, newborn and child health, malaria, TB, other infectious diseases, and HIV/AIDS. Interested organizations should submit:

1. Organizational Capability Statement that addresses the below-listed core competencies and experience; and
2. Technical Feedback on the proposed project design and results framework in Section III.

A. Organizational Capability Statement

Please submit an Organization overview and capacity statement, not to exceed 3 pages, including:

- a. Organization name and address;
- b. Point of contact name, telephone number and email address;
- c. Description of the organization's capabilities and capacity to implement the work described in section III;
- d. Reference 2-3 relevant recent projects implemented by the organization.
- e. Response to capabilities listed in this section, below.

Under the Organizational Capability Statement, interested organizations should briefly describe their qualifications, skills and capacity to assemble an adequate team to address one or more key areas below:

1. Health Market Development and Private Sector Engagement:

- Significant experience working in mixed health systems, market development, and private sector engagement in lower and middle income countries (LMIC);
- Significant experience in health market assessment and analysis, producing and communicating actionable market insights, and facilitating stakeholder engagements;
- Experience with innovations and market-based solutions for systematic engagement with the local private sector (including informal) that have the potential to improve health outcomes
- Experience in providing support to governments for greater public stewardship of and engagement with the private sector;

- Experience working with country governments on shaping policy, rules, and regulations governing the private health sector;
- Experience implementing strategies, approaches, innovations enhancing routine data collection from the private sector, including quality improvement, analysis, interpretation and use of health data, as well as integration of public and private health information systems;
- Experience with quality improvement in the private sector among clinical and non-clinical², or networked as well as non-networked private providers
- Experience implementing demand generation and affordable supply strategies in the private sector;
- Experience in organization and networking of private health entities, including informal sector players;
- Demonstrated success in introducing and scaling innovation for health, including digital solutions.

2. Staff Support

- Experience in capacity building, training, and technical assistance related to engaging private sector actors, or designing, implementing and evaluating market development and private sector health interventions;
- Experience in change management and institutionalization of systems and practices.

3. Access to Finance

- Experience assessing, designing, and implementing interventions that increase access to finance for local micro, small, medium, and large sized enterprises in the health sector;
- Experience with innovative financing instruments, managing a grant making facility and/or revolving loan fund, and supporting credit guarantees, impact bonds.

4. Business Development

- Experience in the provision of business support services, including but not limited to business planning, financial management, operations, and marketing/communications;
- In-depth understanding of local industry norms and practices; ability to facilitate strategic engagements and partnerships.

² Clinical providers are those working in a clinic or similar health facility setting while non-clinical providers are those who work outside of a formal clinic setting.

B. Technical feedback on Activity Design and Results Framework

Please share your innovative ideas and best practices and provide technical feedback and comments related to the proposed project design and results framework in Section III, not to exceed 4 pages on the following:

- Possible improvements to the FHM proposed project design and results framework (for example if elements are not reflected, missing, or need more attention or clarification);
- Proposed objective, activities, and illustrative results (for example if elements are feasible, measurable, and achievable within a 5-year time period);
- Creative, innovative new ideas and solutions in support of the envisioned project design and the results framework.

No other documents or information is requested at this time. Respondents must not send any additional information other than what is requested and to adhere to the page limits mentioned. Statements sent in response to this Request for Information (RFI) Notice must not exceed 7 single-sided pages using an 11/12 pt. minimum-point font size minimum.

All responses must be submitted electronically to **Jacquelin Bell at jacbell@usaid.gov** no later than **June 5, 2020 by 12:00pm EST**. You will not receive confirmation of receipt for your response or individualized feedback or suggestions. No basis for claims against the U.S. Government shall arise as a result of a response to this RFI or from the U.S. Government's use of such information.