

Annex 2: Information Requested: “Laos Maternal Child Health Nutrition Activity”

The specific questions for which USAID Laos is interested in receiving feedback include:

- 1) The MCHN Activity goal is to improve health and nutrition outcomes through health system strengthening. How is this captured in the Concept Note and Results Framework? Are there elements missing? What would be your recommendations for improvement?
- 2) The MCHN Activity identified critical areas to address for the Ministry of Health (MOH) to act as a steward of the health sector -- e.g. governing for improved quality, using data for decision making, adequate planning and budgeting, etc.. Are there other areas that you think are critical to address for the MOH at the central, provincial, and district levels?
- 3) The MCHN Activity is intended to address health disparities and increase access to quality maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and nutrition services for the most disadvantaged segments of population in Laos. Are there elements in the Concept Note that need to be strengthened to achieve this? What suggestions do you have to ensure this is well reflected in a Notice of Funding Opportunity?
- 4) Increasing the community's responsiveness and effectiveness to promote health and build a healthy environment is one of the expected results. What are your recommendations for achieving this result? Which organizations, community groups, if any, could the MCHN Activity work with to ensure that community work continues beyond the life of the Activity?
- 5) Building health care providers' skills in maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and nutrition is one of expected results. What would be your recommendations for integrating transformative capacity building approaches? Are there existing models that result in effectively building the core competencies and skills of health care providers? For example, in your experience, how could technology/digital medicine support capacity building initiatives in Laos? What might be some of your recommendations to strengthen gender-sensitive, socio-cultural competencies of providers? In your experience, what would be your recommendations to strengthen self-directed professional development? Which models would you recommend for USAID to review, either in Laos or in the region, that have resulted in increasing health care providers and managers' commitment to quality of care?
- 6) The MCHN Activity is intended to support innovations, including technology-based innovations. In the concept note, there is a suggested approach, the “*Partnerships and Innovation Fund*,” to mobilize Lao institutions and organizations to source local solutions. The “*Partnerships and Innovation Fund*” would crowdsource and fund innovative ideas to pilot new approaches to address RMNCAHN issues. This proposed “*Partnerships and Innovation Fund*” would need to be managed through a consultative process including MOH, USAID, the Recipient and possibly other health stakeholders. Key issues to address, selection of ideas to fund and documenting the results would to be done through consultations. The “*Partnerships and Innovation Fund*” would contribute to the MCHN Activity learning agenda. In your experience, is the “*Partnerships and Innovation Fund*” concept feasible and doable in Laos? What factors does USAID need to consider if it proposes this approach?

What would be your recommendations for USAID to consider strengthening the innovations component, beyond the idea of the “*Partnerships and Innovation Fund*”, to improve maternal, child, adolescent health outcomes?

7) The RMCHN Activity could possibly strengthen private sector engagement. However, USAID recognizes that health services are primarily provided by the public sector in Laos. Are there niches or areas where private sector engagement could be facilitated to improve reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and nutrition outcomes? What are your recommendations for MCHN to strengthen Private Sector Engagement (PSE)?