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USAID Broad Agency Announcement for Innovations for Improving Health System Performance

Federal Agency Name: The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Opportunity Title: Innovations for Improving Health System Performance

Opportunity Number: BAA-GH-IHSP-2018

Authority: This BAA is issued under Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Part 35.016 (c). This is not a FAR Part 15 Procurement.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 98.001 USAID Foreign Assistance Programs for Overseas

I. Overview

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is issuing this Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) to seek participants to co-create, co-develop, co-invest, and collaborate on research and development interventions to identify new approaches for improving health system performance, which move past traditional approaches and include new ways to ensure knowledge management of advances in the field.

The intent of the BAA is to allow co-creation and co-design to the maximum extent to create high quality, effective partnerships with great efficiency in time and resources. USAID will invite selected for-profit and nonprofit, public and private organizations to co-create research and development (R&D) solutions to the Problem and Challenge Statements stated in this BAA, including those organizations that have ideas, expertise, resources, and/or funding to add to potential solutions.

USAID wants to align goals with the partners under this BAA to co-invest and facilitate shared responsibility, shared risk, and shared resourcing. Shared resourcing requires that cash and other resources, both tangible and intangible, such as in-kind contributions, expertise, intellectual property, brand value, high-value coordination, and access to key people, places, and information, are directed towards reaching the solution to the Problem/Challenge. Co-investing does not require equal shared resources (such as 1:1 leverage), but rather resource contributions that are appropriate to the specific project's objectives, considering the comparative advantages brought by the participation of each party.

II. Problem and Challenge Statements

PROBLEM:

Health systems weaknesses create a significant barrier impeding the ability of low- and middle-income countries to transition from USAID assistance in health and achieve lasting health outcomes. Many countries struggle to provide accessible, equitable, quality, essential services and medicines that respond to the needs of their populations. Many preventable deaths continue to occur due to persistent systems challenges at the national and sub-national level. While country health systems should be able to provide high quality services, many are generally poorly resourced, inefficient, and ill-equipped to deliver those services.

A health systems strengthening approach built around strengthening individual health system building blocks has contributed greatly to our understanding of the components and conditions that constitute a well-functioning health system. The building block approach provided the international community with a fundamental way to address the topic of health systems strengthening and to promote its importance within a predominantly disease control and mortality-reduction construct to addressing health development challenges. In short, it enabled a common understanding of *what is health systems strengthening?* However, this approach alone lacks systems thinking and does not provide a clear and robust capacity development path for achieving sustainable health systems.

As the global landscape evolves, USAID's Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) activities must continue not only to respond to the changing development environment, but proactively shape the global agenda in health systems as well. Future investments in HSS need to follow a systems-thinking approach designed to improve health systems outcomes in support of more sustainable and robust overall health results.

In the increasingly global health community, the systemic health problems the world faces reach beyond national boundaries, and require increasing levels of collaboration and innovative thinking in order to solve them. The global health community has achieved stronger health system performance through better evidence and shared knowledge for policy-making, improved open-source technology, and improved approaches to collectively address communicable disease. USAID is a technical leader contributing to the generation, dissemination, and uptake of "global public goods" that extend benefits to all countries, all people, and across generations by increasing financial sustainability and accountability, enhancing quality and responsiveness, and delivering better health outcomes.

CHALLENGE:

Create innovative approaches to health systems strengthening which can rapidly move from testing to scale-up, incorporate systems thinking, and can be disseminated and adapted by different partners in multiple contexts. Harness the power of innovation and implementation science research to generate and disseminate new knowledge, tools, and approaches for improving, measuring, and monitoring health systems performance and sustainability. USAID

and its partners will work to rapidly implement solutions across mechanisms and create an environment for knowledge sharing, sustainability, scalability, and ultimately health impact.

III. The BAA Process

The amount of resources made available under this BAA will depend on the concepts received and the availability of funds from USAID and other resource partners. Some award types may not include any funding. The award process under this BAA has the following steps:

STAGE 1 - SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOIs)

USAID will review the Expressions of Interest to determine the extent to which each Expression of Interest addresses the criteria/eligibility stated below. Not all organizations that submit an Expression of Interest will be invited to proceed to Stage 2. Due to the number of Expressions of Interest received, USAID is not able to provide details on why Expressions of Interest were not selected.

Criteria for Expressions of Interest:

1. Expressions of Interest must indicate the research or development idea which will work towards discovering potential solutions to the Problem and Challenge Statements, by increasing knowledge and understanding of potential solutions, exploiting scientific discoveries or improvements in technology, materials, processes, methods, devices, or techniques, advancing the state of the art, or using scientific and technical knowledge in the design, development, testing, or evaluation of a potential new product or service (or of an improvement in an existing product or service). Any awards issued under this solicitation will be for Applied Research or Development, as those terms are defined in 48 USC 35.001, as follows:

“Applied research” means the effort that:

- a. normally follows basic research¹, but may not be severable from the related basic research;
- b. attempts to determine and exploit the potential of scientific discoveries or improvements in technology, materials, processes, methods, devices, or techniques; and
- c. attempts to advance the state of the art. When being used by contractors in cost principle applications, this term does not include efforts whose principal aim is the design, development, or testing of specific items or services to be considered for sale; these efforts are within the definition of “development,” given below.

¹ The primary aim of basic research is a fuller knowledge or understanding of the subject under study, rather than any practical application of that knowledge. (FAR 2.101)

“Development” means the systematic use of scientific and technical knowledge in the design, development, testing, or evaluation of a potential new product or service (or of an improvement in an existing product or service) to meet specific performance requirements or objectives. It includes the functions of design engineering, prototyping, and engineering testing; it excludes subcontracted technical effort that is for the sole purpose of developing an additional source for an existing product.

2. Expressions of Interest must demonstrate the potential to have a significant impact (e.g. breakthroughs, not incremental improvements), that ultimately could achieve that even greater impact at scale.
3. Expressions of Interest must indicate the background and expertise of the organization, and the managerial and technical staff or team engaged in the endeavor.
4. Expressions of Interest must indicate what co-investment resources are available to bear on the solution, including those from the submitting organization and those from other third party businesses, donors, foundations, or other organizations. Such resources include cash and other resources, both tangible and intangible, such as in-kind contributions, expertise, intellectual property, brand value, high-value coordination, and access to key people, places, and information.
5. USAID will also consider the reputation of an organization and its past performance in assessing the ability of the organization to contribute to the co-creation.

STAGE 2 - DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT PAPER

During Stage 2, key stakeholders will co-create potential solutions to the Problem/Challenge by brainstorming and innovating solutions and resources, potentially leading to concept papers that USAID or other resource partners will consider for funding.

USAID will review the Expressions of Interest and will select those organizations that USAID determines have addressed the criteria/eligibility stated within the BAA to an extent that the organization will make a significant contribution to the co-creation. The co-creation will also include USAID and other co-investment organizations that may be able to contribute cash and other resources, both tangible and intangible, such as in-kind contributions, expertise, intellectual property, brand value, high-value coordination, and/or access to key people, places, and information.

Co-creations may take the form of a workshop, conference, meeting, or other the method at the discretion of the USAID. For this BAA, a co-creation workshop is expected to take place in the greater Washington, DC area. For more information on co-creation and its design approaches, see <https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/co-creation-discussion-note-ads-201>. Unless provided otherwise, organizations are responsible for all costs incurred by the organization to participate in the co-creation.

Not all organizations that participate in the co-creation will be invited to co-design and co-develop a Concept Paper (Stage 2). The Concept Paper, generally 5-10 pages, will further detail and explain the project.

STAGE 3 - REVIEW BY THE PEER AND SCIENTIFIC REVIEW BOARD

USAID and the organizations connected with each Concept Papers will present the Concept Paper to the Peer and Scientific Review Board, comprised of experts from USAID, partners, and/or outside parties. The Peer and Scientific Review Board will review Concept Papers and recommend which applicants should be considered Apparently Successful Partners. Using its technical expertise, the Peer and Scientific Review Board will recommend whether to move forward with the project, including revisions/additions to the project, and potential partners and resources.

Not all organizations that present a Concept Paper to the Peer and Scientific Review Board will be invited to move to Stage 4.

STAGE 4 - AWARD DETERMINATION

USAID will review the Peer and Scientific Review Board's recommendations and consider other information, such as resource availability and Agency priorities, and will make a determination whether to move forward with the Concept Paper. For Concept Papers that demonstrate a valid innovation to address the Problem/Challenge Statement, the Contracting/Agreement Officer will assess the partner's responsibility and identify the anticipated instrument type to facilitate project design.

Request for Additional Information. USAID will work with partners identified by the Peer and Scientific Review Board, and co-develop the project and assist the partner to provide additional information with respect to the respondent's technical approach, capacity, management and organization, past performance, and budget, as well as representations and certifications, as needed.

Final Review and Negotiation. The USAID Contract/ Agreement Officer will engage in final review, negotiation, responsibility, cost reasonableness, etc., and will co-develop the award instrument with the Apparently Successful Partner. If the Apparently Successful Applicant and USAID cannot arrive at a mutually agreeable arrangement, USAID may cancel the project at no cost to the Government.

Award. Awards under this BAA will be made to the Apparently Successful Partners on the basis of their ability to achieve solutions to the Problems/Challenges, as provided herein. The standard clauses or provisions for awards are generally prescribed by law and regulation and will vary considerably by award type. Information regarding clauses and provisions will be offered to the Apparently Successful Applicant when the award type is identified

IV. Additional Considerations

- A. Expressions of Interest are not evaluated against other Expressions of Interest, but solely whether USAID believes that the submitter will be a valuable contributor to the co-creation process. USAID may limit the number of initial submissions selected to move forward based on efficiencies.
- B. Concept Papers are not evaluated against other Concept Papers, but solely based on USAID's determination that the Concept Paper will successfully address the Problem and Challenges set forth herein. USAID may limit the number of Concept Papers selected to move forward based on efficiencies.
- C. Decisions regarding USAID's pursuit of a particular project, technology or relationship are based on all available information, evidence, data, and resulting analysis.
- D. Eligibility Information. Public, private, for-profit, and nonprofit organizations, as well as institutions of higher education, public international organizations, non-governmental organizations, U.S. and non-U.S. governmental organizations, multilateral and international donor organizations are eligible under this BAA. All organizations must be determined to be responsive to the BAA and sufficiently responsible to perform or participate in the final award type.

V. Specific Rights Reserved for the Government under this BAA

The Government reserves specific rights, in addition to rights described elsewhere in this document or by law or regulation, including:

- 1. The right to award multiple awards, a single award, or no awards.
- 2. The right to make award without discussions, or to conduct discussions, whichever is determined to be in the Government's interest.
- 3. The right to accept proposals in their entirety or to select only portions of proposals for award or co-investment.
- 4. The right to select for award an instrument type that is appropriate to the specific development context, partner relationship, and proposal selected for award. Instruments types include, but are not limited to, contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, public-private partnerships, Inter-Agency Agreements, Government to Government Agreements, Donor to Donor Agreements, and Memorandums of Understanding.
- 5. The right to co-create projects with one or more respondents under the BAA.

6. The right to request any additional, necessary documentation upon initial review. Such additional information may include, but is not limited to, a further detailed proposal, budget, and representations and certifications.
7. The right to fund or co-invest in proposals in phases, with options for continued work at the end of one or more of the phases.
8. The right to award instruments under this BAA that do not commit or exchange monetary resources.
9. The right to remove organizations from the BAA process.

VI. Information Protection

USAID's goal is to facilitate research and development that will lead to innovative, and potentially commercially viable, solutions. Understanding the sensitive nature of submitters' information, USAID will work with organizations to protect intellectual property.

Expressions of interest should be free of any intellectual property that submitter wishes to protect, as the expressions of interest will be shared with USAID partners as part of the selection process. However, once submitters have been invited to advance beyond co-creation, submitters can work with USAID to identify proprietary information that requires protection.

Therefore, organizations making submissions under this BAA grant to USAID a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to use, disclose, reproduce, and prepare derivative works, and to have or permit others to do so to any information contained in the Expressions of Interest submitted under the BAA. If USAID further engages with the organization regarding its submission, the parties can negotiate further intellectual property protection for the organization's intellectual property.

Organizations must ensure that any submissions under this BAA are free of any third party proprietary data rights that would impact the license granted to USAID herein.

VII. Expression of Interest Information

This BAA will have addenda issued under the subject matter discussed above. Do not respond directly to this document. Expression of Interest information will be available within each addendum issued under this BAA.