

Call for a mentor institute (Nigeria only)

Implementation research to strengthen
data systems for immunization coverage
and equity

Published: 1 July 2020
Deadline: 31 July 2020



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Overview

The Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research is seeking an in-country mentorship institute for their joint initiative on 'Implementation Research on data and information systems for immunization in Nigeria'. The mentorship institute will provide technical mentorship in implementation research to local research teams, and local organizational facilitation and administration of all aspects of the initiative. **This is not a call for research projects.**

Background and objectives

Although immunization programmes reach approximately six out of seven of the world's infants, global coverage has stagnated at 86% in recent years. An estimated 19.4 million infants, many of whom are concentrated in disadvantaged and under-served communities, miss out on basic vaccines and are therefore vulnerable to serious health and nutrition threats.[1] Additional globally and locally relevant evidence is needed to better understand how best to reach and meet the needs of these children and their families. Implementation research (IR), recognized as critical to strengthen health systems,[2] can produce the information needed to bridge this knowledge gap by addressing key questions concerning programme or policy implementation.

The Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research (the Alliance) is collaborating with UNICEF and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, on an initiative with the twofold objective of:

- Promoting the generation of high quality, relevant and usable IR on data and information systems for immunization.
- Applying and using the evidence to address implementation bottlenecks and accelerate impact on coverage and equity.

To help execute this initiative, the Alliance will now select a mentor institute based in Nigeria. The mentor institute will organize a workshop with government stakeholders to set research priorities, will make grants to Nigerian implementer-led research teams based on the IR priorities identified, provide continuous technical assistance and quality assurance through the research process, organize further workshops for protocol development, and for research utilization, and ensure the production of knowledge outputs including policy briefs and journal articles.

The mentor institute will be a research institution based in Nigeria that will provide technical mentorship in IR to the research teams, and local organizational facilitation and administration of all aspects of the initiative. The mentor institute will work in close collaboration with government stakeholders and will operate with oversight from the Alliance Secretariat.

Through this call, the Alliance is seeking bids from interested Nigerian institutions with teaching/training capacity in IR and

financial and administrative capability to serve as the mentor institution.

Specific tasks of the mentor institute

- Deliver a priority-setting workshop with government stakeholders at national and/or regional level to identify priority topics for research grants, including arranging logistics and local travel, invitations, developing the agenda and facilitation, recording minutes and preparing reports of the workshop.
- Develop and issue a call for expressions of interest, based on the priorities identified, for in-country teams led by health system decision-makers. Arrange transparent review and selection of proposals for funding support.
- Make subgrants to the selected research teams for undertaking the research.
- Deliver a protocol development workshop to assist selected research teams in developing sound IR protocols. This includes arranging logistics and local travel, sending invitations, developing the agenda and facilitation, recording minutes and preparing reports of the workshop.
- Facilitate submission to local IRBs for ethical clearance.
- Provide technical assistance to research teams and quality assurance throughout the IR life cycle – from protocol development to data collection and analysis, write up, dissemination and utilization of research findings.
- Monitor the implementation of research grants ensuring timely deliverables. Make regular progress reports to the Alliance Secretariat on process, outcomes, challenges and recommendations for improvements.
- Support research teams to translate research findings into a project report, recommendations, policy briefs and presentations.
- Deliver at least one dissemination workshop focused on utilization of the research findings by government stakeholders, including arranging logistics and local travel, invitations, developing the agenda and facilitation, recording minutes and preparing reports of the workshops.

- Deliver and edit a series of articles or a special issue of a journal, including making an agreement with a suitable journal, supporting preparation and submissions of manuscripts by the grantees, writing an editorial, and convening a team of co-editors.

Selection criteria

For consideration as a mentor institution, the following selection criteria apply:

- Demonstrable experience of leadership in the public health community in Nigeria (essential) and globally (desirable).
- Strong reputation and experience in health systems and implementation research, and in research mentorship.
- Administrative capacity to issue and manage subgrant contracts to research teams in Nigeria.
- Track record of working with the government on issues relevant to the call.
- Experience of service on government boards or committees on topics of relevance (desirable).

The selection committee will also consider how the proposal responds to the following additional factors:

- Value for money
- Monitoring and evaluation of this programme of work

The selected mentor institution will be expected to work independently, regularly completing and reporting on agreed products, while maintaining an ongoing collaborative relationship with the Alliance Secretariat. **At least 50% of the named team members on the bid should be women.**

Funding and period

The maximum amount of funding available from the Alliance will be US\$ 285 000. No further funding will be provided by the Alliance within and beyond the project period. The activities will be implemented across 2020-2021 and **the end date should not exceed 31 December 2021.**

One priority-setting workshop with local stakeholders, one protocol development workshop for research teams, and one dissemination workshop should be included, as should the costs of monitoring the implementation of research grants. At

least 70% of the total budget should be reserved for the grant awards to eight implementer-led research teams. No more than 15% of the total budget should be used for project management and staff salary costs.

Application process

Deadline: 31 July 2020, 11:59 CEST

Bids submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

Successful applicants can expect to be notified within one month of the deadline. WHO may, at its own discretion, extend this closing date for the submission of bids by notifying all applicants thereof in writing.

Submissions of bids should be made at alliancehpsr@who.int. Please use the subject: **WHO Bid Ref. Call for a Mentor Institute (Nigeria)**

Submissions of **not more than 5 pages** (standard font size 11, 1.15 linespacing, normal margins should include the following:

- **Contact details:** Name of the bidding institution including contact details and name of a key contact person.
- **Motivation for applying:** A description of how this work fits in with the bidder's expertise and aligns with current areas of work in teaching and training in implementation research.
- **Composition of the proposed team:** names, expertise, function in institution, gender, and role in team and experience relevant to the call. CVs may be included as an annex to the submission.
- **Project plan:** Description of a 15-month plan based on the outlined specific tasks of the mentor institute and the selection criteria outlined.
- **Itemized budget** for 15 months based on the specific tasks outlined. This call will not fund equipment or support for hiring new permanent teaching staff. The budget should be in US \$. **Please also provide a summary budget** of the total costs broken down by the following categories (not all may be applicable): personnel, supplies/facilities, equipment, communications, travel and per diem, and workshops (one each for priority setting, protocol development and dissemination). Costs of peer reviewed research publications / a special Issue will be supported by the Alliance Secretariat, and should not be included in the

budget. Institutional overheads should not exceed 13%. The Alliance may challenge proposed costs that it does not consider appropriate or as offering optimal value for money.

Notes for applicants

1. WHO may, at any time before the closing date, for any reason, whether on its own initiative or in response to a clarification requested by a (prospective) applicant, modify the bid by written amendment. Amendments could, *inter alia*, include modification of the project scope or requirements, the project timeline expectations and/or extension of the closing date for submission.
2. All prospective applicants that have submitted a bid will be notified in writing of all amendments to the bid and will, where applicable, be invited to amend their submission accordingly.
3. Applicants should note that WHO reserves the right to:
 - a. Award the contract to an applicant of its choice, even if its bid is not the lowest;
 - b. Accept or reject any bid, and to annul the solicitation process and reject all bids at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected applicants and without any obligation to inform the affected applicants of the grounds for WHO's action;
 - c. Award the contract on the basis of the Organization's particular objectives to an applicant whose bid is considered to be the most responsive to the needs of the Organization and the activity concerned;
 - d. Not award any contract at all;
 - e. Eliminate bids for technical or other reasons throughout the evaluation/selection process. WHO shall not in any way be obligated to reveal, or discuss with any applicant, how a bid was assessed, or to provide any other information relative to the evaluation/selection process or to state the reasons for elimination to any applicant.
4. WHO is acting in good faith by issuing this request for bids. However, this document does not obligate WHO to

contract for the performance of any work, nor for the supply of any products or services.

5. WHO reserves the right to enter negotiations with one or more applicants of its choice, including but not limited to negotiation of the terms of the bid(s), the price quoted in such bid(s) and/or the deletion of certain parts of the work, components or items called for under this bid.
6. Within 30 days of receipt of the contract, the successful applicant shall sign and date the contract and return it to WHO according to the instructions provided at that time. If the applicant does not accept the contract terms without changes, then WHO has the right not to proceed with the selected applicant and instead contract with another applicant of its choice.

References

- [1] Progress and Challenges with Achieving Universal Immunization Coverage 2018 WHO/UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization Coverage (Data as of July 2019) Who.int. (2019). [online] Available at: https://www.who.int/immunization/monitoring_surveillance/who-immuniz.pdf [Accessed 30 June 2020].
- [2] Ghaffar, A., Langlois, E., Rasanathan, K., Peterson, S., Adedokun, L. and Tran, N. (2017). Strengthening health systems through embedded research. Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 95(2), pp.87-87.