REQUEST FOR BIDS

Issue Date/Time: 10 January 2013, 17:00 Central European Time (CET)
Closing Date/Time: 10 February 2013, 11:59 CET

Request for BIDS: External Review of Implementation Research Platform

1. Purpose

The purpose is to conduct an external review of progress, accomplishments, and challenges encountered by the Implementation Research Platform since Nov 2010, as well as to inform the development of next phase of the IRP’s work.

2. Background

Launched at the first Global Symposium on Health Systems Research in Montreux, Switzerland on November 16, 2010, the Implementation Research Platform (IRP) is a collaboration among five associated programs and departments within the World Health Organization: the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research (AHPSR), the Department of Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health (MCA), the Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP), the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (PMNCH). The IRP supports new and ongoing research to improve access to interventions essential to achieving health-related Millennium Development Goals.

The Norwegian Government Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) provided the initial financing to launch the IRP; this was followed by support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), and the Swedish International Cooperation Agency (Sida). The first cycle of funding for the Implementation Research Platform by Norad and DFID will be completed in 2013. At this juncture, the donors of the IRP and Scientific and Oversight Group (SOG) would like to have an in-depth understanding of the accomplishments of the IRP to-date as well as assess the mechanisms through which it works.

3. Scope and content of the external review

The external review will cover the objectives and strategies of the IRP (see Annex 1) as well as the mechanisms for collaboration among the IRP partners. Specifically, the review should examine:
• the progress that it has made towards its work-plans from 2010-2012;
• the engagement of WHO partners as a coordinated platform for implementation research and the mechanisms through which the partners are collaborating;
• the strategies currently used by the IRP to solicit and fund implementation research;
• the extent to which the IRP is engaging with country-level partners (government, research institutions, civil society) around issues related to implementation research; and
• the extent to which the IRP is reaching out to global actors and stakeholders.

4. Time Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2013</td>
<td>Consultants identified and recruited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2013</td>
<td>External review team begins work</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>Completion of review</td>
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5. Reporting

The external review team will report to the IRP Scientific Oversight Group (SOG</doctype> ). The SOG provides strategic direction in planning the IR Platform activities; reviews and approves major decisions made by the IR Platform Secretariat, including funding of research grants; advocates the role, utility and benefit of IR Platform to national governments and development communities; and helps the IR Platform Secretariat in raising funds for IR.

6. Criteria for the recruitment of the external review team

The following criteria will be applied:

• experience in the conduct of program reviews and evaluations, particularly in the field of implementation research;
• experience managing and/or assessing partnerships and collaborations
• knowledge of global stakeholders in the field of Implementation Research.

None of the external reviewers should directly benefit from, or be involved in, the IRP’s governance, its past activities, or current activities.

7. Instructions to Bidders

The application will be a short concept note (3-5 pages in total) that includes the following elements:
• Brief institutional profile and biography(s) of the team member(s) demonstrating capacity to undertake this work
• A description of the proposed project approach
• Estimated and itemized budget summary
• Contact details of the project lead

The application in PDF should be sent to alliancehpsr@who.int with ‘IRP External Review’ in the subject line by no later than 11:59 on 10 February 2013 CET.
Annex 1: IRP Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the Implementation Research Platform (IRP) is to promote and support implementation research that accelerates progress towards health-related Millennium Development Goals 4, 5, and 6. Specially, the IRP has the following objectives:

1. Support country-led research, to derive lessons on best ways of scaling up interventions and services in low [and middle] - income countries and translate this into policy and action through appropriate advocacy and communication with suitable target audiences.

2. Synthesize and disseminate evidence related to promising approaches for addressing health system barriers to optimize delivery for existing interventions.

3. Build capacity for health systems research (with focus on implementation research) and knowledge translation.

4. Create a common platform for promoting implementation research and contribute to methods for generating, synthesizing and translating knowledge from implementation research.

5. Facilitate effective research collaboration on reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria and other neglected diseases in countries, under the umbrella of health systems.

The IRP will ensure that all activities undertaken reflect basic principles of equity, including considerations for vulnerable populations, emerging leaders/researchers, and gender perspectives. Additionally, the work of the IRP will be guided by the following key principles:

- Research and capacity should be directed towards implementation research that is country-led and initiated, has systematic involvement of country institutions, and is linked to national strategies;

- Policy and local programme implementers will be involved to support national, district and local level implementation;

- Capacity building to undertake and lead implementation research is a central element to success in scaling up, operating under the principle of learning by doing;
• Establishment of networks and collaborative multi-country activity for learning from each other and creating and utilizing opportunities to inform policy and action