Call for Applications
Training workshop on implementation research for effective access to and delivery of health technologies

Submission deadline: 31 October 2019

The UNICEF/UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) invites applications from research teams in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to participate in a 5-day consultative workshop on implementation research for effective access and delivery of health technologies. The workshop is organized under the auspices of the Access and Delivery Partnership which aims at accelerating access and delivery of new health technologies for tuberculosis (TB), malaria and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), in support of efforts of Member States of the United Nations to attain universal health coverage (UHC) (http://adphealth.org/approach/).

Between 7 and 9 research teams (of three members each) comprised of implementers (from ministries of health / drug regulatory agencies / supply chain systems) and researchers from countries in the WHO African Region, will be selected and invited for the workshop.

BACKGROUND

TDR and the World Health Organization (WHO) collaborate with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and PATH in the Access and Delivery Partnership. This unique partnership recognizes that the introduction of new health technologies can place significant burden on existing health systems in LMICs, including challenges relating to affordability, regulatory control, selection and prioritization, supply and distribution, and safety monitoring. ADP strengthens the capacities in LMICs with the aim of promoting well-functioning health systems that are essential for access to, and delivery of, health technologies. By accelerating efforts to address these challenges, ADP seeks to support and contribute to efforts in LMICs to attain UHC.

One of the areas of capacity strengthening is implementation research for effective supply chains, service delivery and patient access. ADP is also scaling-up its reach and impact through an increased focus on South–South collaboration. To complement its in-country activities, ADP is facilitating South–South learning and exchanges on policy, programmatic and technical issues that represent common challenges across different health systems. Through such collaborations, ADP is extending the reach of its interventions across a larger number of countries. In light of the foregoing, ADP plans to convene a set of intercountry capacity building workshops on implementation research. The main resource material for this workshop will be the implementation research toolkit.
THE WORKSHOP

Research teams will be supported to participate in one of two regional workshops planned for 9 – 13 December 2019 in West Africa (venue to be decided) for West and Central Africa, and 10 – 14 February 2020 in Arusha, the United Republic of Tanzania, for East and Southern Africa.

Participants will be supported to systematically identify and develop plans aimed at addressing tangible challenges and bottlenecks limiting effective delivery of health interventions within their health systems. The 5-day workshop will feature presentations, discussions, and group activities on:

1. the value chain of the introduction and delivery of new health interventions / technologies in the health system;
2. understanding the essential principles of implementation research and application in the health system;
3. contextualizing Implementation Research to address bottlenecks;
4. formulating research questions; and
5. preparing and funding an implementation research project proposal.

At the end of the workshop it is expected that each team would have acquired enough skills and knowledge to formulate research questions on specific implementation barriers relevant to their country context and produce a draft research plan to address the issue. A nucleus of multidisciplinary regional facilitators in implementation research will be identified from the participants for additional pedagogy and incorporation into a rota of regional resource persons.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications must be submitted by research teams from African countries wishing to address issues impeding delivery of health interventions or efficiency of health systems in their country.

The leader of the team must be an implementer having direct experience with the issue(s) to be addressed and must be employed by a national government agency with responsibility in the area (for example disease programme, regulatory authority, procurement and distribution agency, medical services).

Applicants are encouraged to apply as multi-disciplinary teams which comprise of implementers and researchers with a track record of commitment to public health. Depending on the focus of the team, relevant sectors such as public health, policy, community mobilization, communication and health promotion should be included. Teams from the following countries are particularly encouraged to apply: Cameroon, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

Applications from teams addressing issues from a gender perspective are particularly welcome.
HOW TO APPLY

Each research team applying should nominate 4 candidates (including the leader) out of which 3 will be selected if the team is invited to attend the workshop.

The following information and documentation must be provided:

1. A document combining 1-page CVs of each of the four research team candidate members, including their research experience, educational and employment history.

2. A summary (no more than 200 words) of the contextual or implementation barriers of interest to the team. The summary must include: a) information on how the issue was identified; b) the impact of this issue on the health system / programme implementation / health outcome; and c) major stakeholders to be considered in addressing the issue.

3. Other documents (maximum 5 pages) to support the application, e.g. letter of support / endorsement from relevant national authorities or agencies.

Applications must be submitted online using the WHO DataCol portal form found in this link:

https://extranet.who.int/datacol/survey.asp?survey_id=4080

User name: IRworkshop
Password: 2468

An active email address is required to submit an application. A confirmation email will be sent to this address to acknowledge successful submission. Only one application may be submitted per team. Multiple submissions will not be accepted. Information and documents to be included with the submission are listed above.

Applicants are advised to prepare all supporting documentation prior to starting the submission process.

Applicants are also advised to avoid last minute submissions as this could overload the system or fail due to internet connectivity problems. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Deadline for submission of proposals: 31 October 2019, 13:00 GMT

SELECTION PROCESS

Between 7 and 9 research teams (each of 3 members) comprised of implementers (from ministries of health / drug regulatory agencies / supply chain systems) and researchers from countries in the WHO African Region, will be selected and invited to attend one of the workshops.

Participating teams will be selected following an open competitive call for applications. The applications will be evaluated based on:

1. composition and relevance of experience represented in the team;
2. the problem identified as an implementation challenge in the delivery of health services; and
3. relevance of the issue identified to enhancing access and delivery of a target intervention of efficiency of the health system.
For further information, contact:

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