



UNIVERSITY RESEARCH Co., LLC
CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

CONTRACT NUMBER: 72061718C00001

RFA SOLICITATION NUMBER: 0072 RHITES-N, ACHOLI

Request for applications to provide socio-economic strengthening services (SES) to Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) in Gulu, Agago and Omoro districts for USAID's Regional Health Integration to Enhance Services-North, Acholi (RHITES-N, Acholi).

Date of Issue: February 20, 2019

Submission Deadline: March 8, 2019

Proposals can be emailed to: RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com

or

**Hard copies of proposals can be delivered to RHITES-N, Acholi at
Plot 2 Elizabeth Road, Senior Quarters, Gulu, Uganda**

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute a contractual commitment on the part of URC (the "Client") nor does it commit URC or the US Government to pay for costs incurred in the submission of a proposal. All costs of the Offeror in the preparation and submission of an offer shall be borne by that Offeror. URC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to make no award at all or to make an award without further discussion or negotiations if it is considered to be in the best interests of the activity and URC.

I. Background

RHITES-N, Acholi is a five-year initiative (December 19, 2017, to December 18, 2022) that builds on USAID investments and national advances to increase access to and use of high-quality integrated services that accelerate the ability and capacity of eight districts to respond to the specific health needs of residents in the Acholi sub-region. The Activity is implemented by University Research Co., LLC (URC) and its partners: Gulu Women's Economic Development and Globalization (GWED-G); Infectious Disease Institute (IDI); and Panagora Group.

The goal of the Activity is to increase the effective use of integrated health services that contribute to measurable and lasting improvements in the Acholi sub-region and develop health systems to sustain these gains.

Its three main objectives are to:

- Increase availability and accessibility of health services in priority areas of HIV prevention, care, and treatment, MNCH, Malaria, TB, Nutrition and WASH.
- Improve health systems for quality services
- Increase adoption of health behaviors.

RHITES-N Acholi is currently supporting the implementation of Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) interventions to Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) in all sub-counties of Gulu, Agago and Omoro districts.

RHITES-N Acholi seeks applications from suitable local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society organizations (CSOs) to provide a full package of DREAMS services to “DREAMS Girls” in Gulu, Agago and Omoro districts of Northern Uganda.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this RFA is to provide Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) enrolled in DREAMS Initiative i.e. Negative pregnant 15-24 years, married 15-19years, given birth at 15yrs and AGYW in transactional sex 15-24yrs with a core package of DREAMS services in DREAMS supported districts of Gulu, Agago and Omoro districts. ***CBOs/CSOs/NGOs may submit applications for one or more districts. URC may select one or more than one CBO/CSO/NGO under this grant.***

3. Budget ceiling:

The anticipated range for this award is \$ 50,000 - \$100,000. However, the Client will consider the best value for money from Offerors. The Cost Proposal should be submitted in Uganda shillings.

4. Scope of work

4.1 Project Areas

This request for application (RFA) is targeting local CBOs/CSOs/NGOs to provide Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) enrolled in DREAMS Initiative i.e. Negative pregnant 15-24 years, married 15-19years, given birth at 15yrs and AGYW in transactional sex 15-24yrs with a core package of DREAMS services in DREAMS supported districts of Gulu, Agago and Omoro districts.

4.2 Key activities:

Community awareness and engagement on DREAMS

- The identified CBOs/CSOs/NGOs shall conduct community awareness on DREAMS in targeted districts with special focus on district and community leaders, women and men, AGYW and sexual partners

Annual enrollment of AGYW and peer group formation

- There shall be screening and enrolment of AGYW in DREAMS initiative in line with sub population category. At enrolment, there shall be collaboration with health workers to provide HTS and other services to enrolled AGYW

Training in stepping stones and SASA! approaches and support roll out to peer groups and community

- The identified CBOs/CSOs/NGOs shall conduct training of peer facilitators in stepping stones and SASA! approaches aim at empowering peer groups to address HIV risk factors in community, increase demand for clinical services among AGYW and violence prevention among girls and women in community. The peer groups will be supported to attend group sessions consistently to ensure completion

Socio-Economic Strengthening

- The AGYW peer groups shall be trained in economic strengthening approach (financial literacy and VSLA concepts). Support the groups to start saving scheme through provision of saving kits as this will not only provide AGYW with opportunity to save but also give them a platform to share risk factors still prevailing in their community and jointly develop a risk reduction plan. HTS and other services will be better provided to AGYW in VSLA groups
- Support peer groups develop a business plan for an IGA enterprise which can be supported. The selected CBOs/CSOs/NGOs will be expected to provide IGA support to 568 peer groups formed across three DREAMS districts

Parenting/Caregiver

- Provide parenting skills to parents of AGYW through “VSLA Plus” groups
- Provide life skills-building to AGYW through “VSLA Plus” groups
- Use SINOVIYO evidence-based curriculum for imparting parenting skills to parents

Referral to clinical services

- Work with facility teams to provide HTS to AGYW and partners
- Refer AGYW for family planning, r HCT and/or ART for positives
- Provide condoms to AGYW and partners
- Provide psychosocial support and referral for GBV and Post Violence Care as needed
- Link adolescent girls and young women engaged in sex work to health facilities for PrEP

Social Asset Building and Girl Platforms

- Identify the social and other protective assets AGYW need to mitigate certain risks and tailor program content to help craft stepwise, achievable benchmarks for girls by age, social category, and context

- Mobilize out-of-school adolescent girls in urban slums or rural areas, providing them with adult female mentors and offering education on HIV and AIDS and related issues, as well as non-formal education and links to health services
- Gather male sexual partners of adolescent girls into discussion groups that focus on promoting care-giving to wives and children and addressing extramarital partnerships, alcohol abuse, and violence.
- Improve girls' ability to protect themselves by reducing their social isolation and providing them with social safety nets through mentors, peer groups, civic engagement, health information, and services to reduce sexual exploitation and abuse and to provide functional literacy skills.

5. Methods

- The selected CBOs/CSOs/NGOs are expected to work in close collaboration with RHITES-N, Acholi district technical teams, district health office, District Community Development Officer, District DREAMS Focal Person and community leaders at sub-county, parish and village levels. Applicants are expected to demonstrate competence in providing HTS and other services including socio-economic interventions at the community level, preferably in districts of the Acholi sub-region.
- A detailed Monitoring and Evaluation Plan showing how the applicant will track DREAMS interventions in the target districts and regularly update the UDTs.



Expected Deliverables

#	Intervention	Deliverable	Timeline
1	Planning, M& E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan • Detailed Workplan that demonstrates a package of interventions the applicant will use to deliver DREAMS interventions to AGYW in one or more of the target districts. 	1 st Week of the award
2	Financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reporting 	10 th day of the new month
3	Technical Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a technical report integrating all interventions details below 	10 th day of the new month
a	Community awareness and engagement on DREAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitization meetings on DREAMS conducted in supported districts • Community resource persons identified and or strengthened to support DREAMS activities 	
b	Enrolment of AGYW and peer group formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitization meetings on DREAMS conducted in community • Eligible AGYW enrolled in line with sub population segments • A functional peer groups formed in community 	Quarterly
c	Training on stepping stones and SASA! approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGYW supported to complete 10 sessions stepping stones sessions • AGYW and immediate cycle of influence mobilize to participate in SASA! community dialogues 	
d	Socio-Economic Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ AGYW trained in financial literacy and VSLA concepts ✓ Peer groups supported with saving kits and actively saving ✓ Peer groups supported to develop a business plan for IGA support ✓ . ✓ . ✓ In-kind grants provided to selected groups of DREAMS girls in Gulu, Omoro and Agago districts ✓ technical support on SES provided to enterprises selected by groups of DREAMS girls in Gulu, Omoro, and Agago 	

e	Parenting/Caregiver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ parenting skills provided to parents of AGYW through “VSLA Plus” groups ✓ life skills-building provided to AGYW through “VSLA Plus” groups ✓ Life skills-building provided to 20,000 AGYW 	
f	Referral for HTS and other services in communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolled AGYW and partners linked for HTS and other services like FP, condoms, GBV post care. • Link HIV positive AGYW and partners to ART • • Link peer groups to community resources like Youth livelihood, women empowerment grant at sub county etc • Adolescent girls and young women engaged in sex work linked to health facilities for PrEP and GBV post care 	
g	Social Asset Building and Girl Platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the identified social and other protective assets AGYW need to mitigate certain risks and tailor program content to help craft stepwise, achievable benchmarks for girls by age, social category, and context ▪ out-of-school adolescent girls mobilized in urban slums or rural areas, and provided with adult female mentors, and offered education on HIV and AIDS and related issues, as well as non-formal education and linked to health services ▪ gathered male sexual partners of adolescent girls into discussion groups that focus on promoting care-giving to wives and children and addressing extramarital partnerships, alcohol abuse, and violence. ▪ Document a minimum of 2 success stories of how girls’ ability to protect themselves has been improved by reducing their social isolation and providing them with social safety nets through mentors, peer groups, civic engagement, health information, and services to reduce sexual exploitation and abuse and to provide functional literacy skills 	



Project Areas

This particular request for application (RFA) is targeting local CBOs/CSOs/NGOs for the provision of socio-economic strengthening services in each of the target districts, Gulu, Agago, and Omoro. RHITES-N, Acholi, therefore, seeks partners to provide SES/DREAMS services in the following sub-counties per district:

Gulu district (Bungatira, Bardege, Awach, Patiko, Palaro, Layibi, Pece, Paicho, Laaro, and Unyama sub-counties)

Agago district (Adilang, Lira palwo, Omot, Lapono, Paimol, Parabongo, Wol, Omiya Pachwa, Lukole, Patongo, Lamiyo, Kotomor, Arum and town councils of Kalongo, Patongo and Agago sub-counties)

Omoro district (Odek, Koro, Lakwana, Lalogi, Bobi and Ongako sub-counties)

Submission of Questions

RHITES-North Acholi will offer clarifications and guidance on all matters related to the requirements of this RFA. In the course of completing the application forms, all questions that might arise must be directed through RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com this RFA. Questions for clarification will only be accepted before February 28, 2019.

This kind of communication will allow information sharing with potential partners to RHITES-N, Acholi's socio-economic strengthening/DREAMS program and help them to better understand the RFA and explain the elements of the scope presented. All questions and clarifications will be shared with all applicants.

Eligibility

CBO/CSO/NGO that are interested in responding to this RFA should meet the following requirements:

- Registered as a nonprofit CBO, CSO or NGO with the Government of Uganda and legally allowed to operate.
- Must have at least 2 years' experience carrying out similar work in Northern Uganda.
- Must have extensive demonstrated experience carrying out assignments of similar size and complexity (Copies of two past reports of similar work will be required).
- Demonstrated expertise in community mobilization and engagement.
- Sufficient level of trained and experienced professionals committed to the work outlined in the activities section
- A verifiable reputation of integrity and competence
- Experience with USAID funding programs and knowledge of USAID/PEPFAR programs is added advantage
- Have a record of implementing DREAMS activities, particularly with adolescent girls and young women

Organizations NOT Eligible to participate:

- Political parties, groups, or institutions or their subsidiaries and affiliates.
- Organizations that advocate, promote, or espouse anti-democratic policies or illegal activities.
- Faith-based organizations whose objectives are for discriminatory and religious purposes, and whose main objectives of the deliverables are of a sectarian religious nature.

Submission Guidelines for Applicants

Both electronic submission and hand-delivered responses to this RFA will be permitted. All electronic responses should be submitted to RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com by **March 8, 2019** 5 pm East Africa time. Organizations applying for more than one district should apply in a single application. Multiple applications from the same organization will not be accepted.

Instructions for Applicants

Applicants are encouraged to review in detail the following eligibility requirements, preparation and submission instructions.

Technical Proposal Instructions

The Technical Proposal shall be a maximum of 10 pages containing the following sections in the order shown, using clear and concise language:

- Executive summary** (1 Page Maximum)
- Context** (1 Page Maximum): This section should include a general overview of the proposed approach to this activity.
- Technical approach** (7 Pages Maximum): This section should include a brief description of the Applicant's technical and strategic approach to providing the services requested herein.
- Institutional capacity** (1 Page Maximum): This section should briefly describe the capacity of the Applicant with respect to:
 - **Previous experience** in implementing data collection activities of similar size and scope, highlighting USAID or other donor-funded experience, as applicable;
 - **Personnel experience and capability.** The Applicant will propose an individual or team with specific roles, responsibilities, and qualifications of each member. Each team member will have a thorough understanding and demonstrated experience conducting similar assignments. The Applicant should propose at least 1 senior level team member to function as the team lead.

Cost Proposal Instructions

The Cost Proposal must be submitted in a separate document in Microsoft Excel format (with formulas) at the same time the technical proposal is submitted. The Cost Proposal shall consist of a budget and budget narrative describing the following costs, as applicable:

What can be funded

URC will reimburse the awardee for all expenses and charges that are reasonable, allowable, allocable and eligible. Examples of types of cost that will be allowed under the anticipated Subaward:

1. Staff or consultant time specifically related to the scope of work.
2. Expenses for meetings required for assignment purposes, including community meetings, campaigns, dialogues, etc.

3. Expenses for tools printing and report write-up.
4. local per diem (SDA) expenses whilst in the field.
5. Local travel costs associated with mobilization or community engagement.
6. Other operational expenses that are directly related to the assignment.

9.2 What cannot be funded

Operating costs of a CBO/CSO/NGO such as:

1. Salary supplements or stipends for government staff.
2. Purchase of computers
3. Purchase of vehicles
4. Any construction or renovation activity
5. Anything that is not directly related to the assignment.

This list is not all-inclusive, and additional questions on the eligibility of items and costs should be submitted as per the instructions in the *Submission of Questions* section.

The anticipated range for this award is \$ 50,000 - \$100,000 for one year. However, the Client will consider the best value for money from Applicants. The Cost Proposal should be submitted in Uganda shillings.

Evaluation Criteria for Application

The complete technical proposal will be reviewed by a technical review panel, convened by RHITES-N, Acholi and evaluated against the following criteria:

1. **Technical Approach (30 points)**
 - The technical approach reflects knowledge and expertise in community engagement and mobilization
 - Proposed strategies timeline is realistic and reflects a good comprehension of the activities presented in this RFA
 - The technical approach is clearly articulated and presents a thorough understanding of the interplay of key sectoral involvement and clearly articulates how to operationalize this activity in northern Uganda
2. **Qualifications of Team Leader and Key Personnel (20 points)**
 - The team leader has demonstrated experience carrying community intervention including -coordination and collaboration, on site-level assessment of interventions in northern Uganda
 - Experience and qualifications of personnel are appropriate relative to their respective roles on the team
3. **Organizational Capacity/Past Performance (20 points)**
 - Strong capability of the CBO to successfully conduct all aspects of proposed activities as determined by the past successful implementation of similar activities.
 - A clear description of the roles and responsibilities of team members
 - Proposed team leader has the qualifications necessary to successfully complete the work detailed in the RFA
4. **Evaluation of Cost Proposal (30 points)**

After the Technical Proposal is evaluated by the technical review panel, the team will review the Cost Proposal. RHITES-N, Acholi will assess whether the proposed budget is

realistic and feasible given the items and activities described. RHITES-N, Acholi may contact applicants to revise budgets if any issues or questions are identified.

Submission Instructions

Proposals must be submitted in English to RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com or hard copies of proposals can be delivered to **RHITES-N, Acholi**, Plot 2 Elizabeth Road, Senior Quarters, Gulu, Uganda by March 8, 2019, 5 pm EAT. The proposal must be divided into two parts, the Technical Proposal, and the Cost Proposal. The two parts should be submitted at the same time either electronically/or in hard copy.

1. The Technical Proposal should be typed in 12-point font and not exceed 10 pages (not including Cover Page, Table of Contents, List of Acronyms or Appendices) submitted in Microsoft Word or searchable PDF format. Tables could be in a font not less than 9.
2. The Technical Proposal should be submitted in the order indicated below.
 - I. Cover Page
 - II. Table of Contents
 - III. List of Acronyms
 - IV. Executive Summary
 - V. Context
 - VI. Technical Approach
 - VII. Institutional Capacity
 - VIII. Annex with CVs and biodata forms of proposed key staff.

Note that the Cover Page, Table of Contents, and List of Acronyms do not count toward the 10-page maximum for the Technical Proposal.

3. The Cost Proposal should be sent as a Microsoft Excel document.
4. A Budget Narrative should be typed in a 12-point font, not to exceed 2 pages, and submitted in Microsoft Word or searchable PDF format.
5. Modifications to the RFA may be made at any time prior to the Proposal submission deadline. Deadline for submission may be extended depending on the scope of modification. Modifications after the deadline for proposals will be communicated only to those Offerors who submitted proposals.