



UNIVERSITY RESEARCH Co., LLC  
CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES



## **REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**RFA SOLICITATION NUMBER: 007I RHITES-N, ACHOLI**

**Community-based services to improve uptake of VMMC services for  
USAID Regional Health Integration to Enhance Services- North, Acholi (RHITES-  
N, Acholi)**

**Date of Issue: February 20, 2019**

**Submission Deadline: March 8, 2019 5PM**

**Proposals can be emailed to: [RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com](mailto:RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com)**

**or**

**Hard copies of proposals can be delivered to RHITES-N, Acholi**

**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 Applicant in the preparation and submission of an offer shall be borne by that Applicant. URC reserves the right to reject any and all applications 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. Context**

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 Diseases 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 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.

In 2007, the World Health Organization recommended male circumcision as a strategy that provides partial protection against HIV infection and that it is an important part of a comprehensive HIV prevention package. RHITES-N, Acholi activity is therefore currently offering VMMC services as part of our comprehensive HIV prevention package in seven districts of Agago, Gulu, Kitgum, Nwoya, Amuru, Lamwo and Omoro. The Uganda Population Health Impact Assessment report 2016/17, indicated that access to VMMC services in Acholi sub-region as a key HIV prevention package was low with 82.3% of males being uncircumcised. The challenges to this low VMMC coverage vary from service delivery factors, poor mobilization and education; religious and cultural factors all of which RHITES-N Acholi is addressing in a bid to increase access to VMMC services among men in Acholi sub-region. The project is therefore seeking to engage the services of local community-based organization(s) to increase the percentage of males that are getting circumcised from 17,000 males in 2018 to over 30,000 by end 2019; in target districts. Each district will have a local CBO that will support demand creation for males in the pivotal age group of 15 to 29 years. The outputs of the CBO will be evaluated on a daily basis by RHITES-N Acholi technical and M&E designated staff. This document serves to solicit a local CBO(s) with a background and community experience in mobilization, demand creation, follow up of clients and linkage to health system for VMMC services in district health facilities and their surrounding communities in Acholi sub-region.

## **2. Purpose of the RFA**

USAID RHITES-N, Acholi is looking for the services of one or more local CBOs/CSOs/NGOs to support the mobilization, education, referral and follow-up of males for VMMC services at the community level, within the districts of Agago, Gulu, Kitgum, Nwoya, Amuru, Lamwo and Omoro with the aim of;

- a) Increasing knowledge and awareness of the benefits of VMMC as a part of the combination prevention strategy to HIV reduction among communities.
- b) Mobilizing and referring males towards increasing the number of males age 15-29 years accessing circumcision services in reference to Table 01.
- c) Identifying and removing barriers, and dispelling myths associated with VMMC in the region.
- d) Identifying men who miss follow up appointments and together with service providers coordinate prompt follow up and/or escort them to nearby VMMC sites for follow-up.

- e) Having active tracking and documentation of all VMMC clients who may have missed Day 2, Day 7 and Day 30 follow up visits.
- f) Leveraging on other platforms (e.g. DREAMS, ANC) to ensure integrated service delivery and synergy.

Table I: VMMC annual target by district

District	VMMC Annual Target
Agago	3,894
Amuru	3,000
Gulu	6,030
Kitgum	4,000
Lamwo	3,000
Nwoya	3,000
Omoror	7,081
<b>Overall</b>	<b>30,005</b>

### 3. Scope of work

#### 3.1 Project Areas

This request for application (RFA) is targeting local CBOs/CSOs/NGOs for provision of community demand creation services to improve VMMC uptake in Agago, Gulu Nwoya, Amuru, Lamwo, Omoro and Kitgum districts. RHITES-N, Acholi activity therefore seeks a CBO/CSO/NGO to work with the following health facilities and their surrounding communities in the following districts:

- Gulu District (Gulu Regional Referral Hospital, Awach HC III TASO.)
- Kitgum District (Kitgum Hospital, Namokora HC IV, St. Joseph Hospital)
- Agago District (Patongo HC III, Kalongo Hospital)
- Amuru District (Atiak HCIV)
- Lamwo District (Madiope and Padibe HCIV)
- Nwoya District (Anaka Hospital and Alero HCIII)
- Omoro District (Bobi HCIII and Larogi HCIV)

***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.***

#### 3.2 Key activities

- a. Mobilization of target population for VMMC services at the health facility or community levels.
- b. Assist in mapping clients who missed follow-up at 48 hours, 72 hours and 7days after operation and link them to VMMC sites for follow up.
- c. Address community barriers and myths to VMMC uptake.
- d. Complete and timely documentation of referrals in community-facility linkage registers in required health management information systems

- e. Documentation of successes and strategies.
- f. Coordination with other community structures and existing platforms to increase uptake of VMMC services.

### **3.3 Methodology**

The selected CBO/CSO/NGO is expected to work in close collaboration with RHITES-N, Acholi, the District Health Office, community structures and leverage on other existing platforms e.g. DREAMS, ANC, male platforms at sub-county, parish and village levels. Applicants are expected to demonstrate competence in coordination, collaboration and community engagement translating into improved uptake of health services.

The selected CBO/CSO/NGO will identify influential persons in the community, like opinion leaders, cultural leaders, church leaders, positive deviants, satisfied men and women, age appropriate peers, who will use all available social platforms to advocate for VMMC activities.

The CBO/CSO/NGO structures at community level will conduct home visits, map out areas with high number of uncircumcised males, provide interpersonal communication strategies and refer physically/escort them or mobilize them at a central place from where they can be offered VMMC services or be transported to the VMMC static site.

They will conduct community dialogues; support mass media radio talk shows work with VMMC district technical officers to demystify myths on VMMC, use drama shows to pass over messages to the targeted audiences.

#### 4. Deliverables

The successful CBO (s) will be expected to show how they will achieve the following deliverables;

#	Intervention	Deliverable	Timeline
1	<b>Planning</b>	Detailed work plan, specifying strategies the applicant will employ to achieve increased uptake of VMMC services in Agago, Omoro, Lamwo, Nwoya, Amuru, Gulu and Kitgum, within one month of the award.	One month after award
	<b>M&amp;E</b>	A detailed monitoring evaluation and learning plan (MELP) plan	One month after award
2	<b>Financial management</b>	Financial report	10 <sup>th</sup> day of the new month
3	<b>Technical reporting</b>	Technical report (with the following details)	Monthly
	<b>VMMC</b>	Community-facility linkages showing number of males mobilized, referred and received VMMC as part of the VMMC program for HIV prevention	
		VMMC clients followed by CSO at community level 2-3 times to ensure they are recovering well	
		Triangulation of mobilization efforts with health facility targets and achievement in VMMC	
		Conduct monitoring of demand for VMMC services through tracking clients referred for services and were served verses the mobilization target (90% success rate of referred clients)	
		Support provided to peer support club (s) to conduct peer dialogue sessions, community dialogue sessions, and mapping area in need of VMMC	
		Support four community mobilization campaigns per month in district	
		Support six (6) community dialogue sessions per month conduct community awareness creation on benefits VMMC services while referring clients to VMMC sites	
		Established and maintained active peer support club (s) for continuous mobilization and education of community members on VMMC to impact negative attitudes	Once off – 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter

## 5. Award

The Award (s) will be offered to the CBO/CSO/NGO whose technical and cost application demonstrates the most responsive and cost-effective approach and methodology to meet the RFA requirements, and whose offer represents the best value to RHITES-N, Acholi.

## 6. Eligibility

CBOs/CSOs/NGOs 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

### Organizations Not Eligible to Participate in the Grant Program

- Political parties, groups, 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.
- Ugandan Government entities.

## 7. 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](mailto:RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com) by March 8, 2019 5pm 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.

## 8. Instructions for applicants

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

### 8.1 Technical Application Instructions

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

- a) **Executive summary** (1 Page Maximum)

- b) **Context** (1 Page Maximum): This section should include a general overview of the proposed approach to this activity.
- c) **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.
- d) **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.

## 9. Cost Application Instructions

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

### 9.1 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 the 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 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 eligibility of items and costs should be addressed to [RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com](mailto:RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com) or hard copies of applications can be delivered to USAID's Regional Health Integration Enhance Services-North, Acholi (RHITES-N, Acholi), Plot 2 Elizabeth Road, Senior Quarters, Gulu, Uganda, prior to February 28, 2019.

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

## 10. Evaluation criteria for application

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

1. Technical Approach (30 points)
  - 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
  - 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)
  - 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 past successful implementation of similar activities.
  - 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 application (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.

## 11. Submission instructions

Proposals must be submitted in English to [RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com](mailto:RhitesAcholiProcurement@URC-CHS.com) or hard copies of proposals can be delivered to **USAID's Regional Health Integration Enhance Services-North, Acholi (RHITES-N, Acholi)**, Plot 2 Elizabeth Road, Senior Quarters, Gulu, Uganda by March 8, 2019, at 5pm EAT. The proposal must be divided into two parts, the Technical Application and the Cost Application. The two parts should be electronically/or in hard copy submitted at the same time.

1. The Technical Application should be typed in a 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 font not less than 9.
2. The Technical Application 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 Application 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 a modification. Modifications after the deadline for proposals will be communicated only to those Applicants who submitted proposals.