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CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

EOI-2024-6024-001

Data Collection and Logistical/Translation Services to support an evaluation of Cambodia's National Positive Parenting Program

DATE OF ISSUE: October 3, 2024

Expressions of Interest must be emailed to: heard@urc-chs.com

Deadline for Expressions of Interest (EOI):

Sunday, October 13, 2024, 11:59 PM US EST
(in Cambodia: Monday, October 14, 2024, 10:59 AM ICT)

Submit EOIs and Questions by email ONLY to: heard@urc-chs.com

Contact Person: Damien Chevaillier

Issuance of this Call for Expressions of Interest does not constitute a contractual commitment on the part of URC, nor does it commit URC/HEARD or the US government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an expression of interest. All costs of the Potential Offeror in the preparation and submission of an expression of interest shall be borne by that Potential Offeror. URC may reject any submission that does not fully comply with requirements of the Call for Expressions of Interest. URC reserves the right to reject any and all Expressions of Interest and to issue no Request for Proposals at all without further discussion or negotiations if it is considered to be in the best interests of the project and URC.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

University Research Co (URC) is looking to procure the services of a local firm to provide **data collection** and **logistical/translation services** that will be required for conducting an evaluation of a USAID-co-funded Positive Parenting Program in Cambodia. URC intends to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) in October for short turn-around. The purpose of this Call for Expressions of Interest is to identify interested parties and seek feedback on the attached Draft RFP (see Annex 1).

Expressions of Interest (**not to exceed 1 page**) are being sought by **Sunday, October 13, 2024 11:59 PM US EST (in Cambodia: Monday, October 14, 2024, 10:59 AM ICT)**. This short submission should include brief summary of previous experience and current expertise in implementing data collection activities of similar size and scope, highlighting child protection programs/systems experience (including parenting and caregiver support services if applicable) and USAID or other donor-funded experience. Instructions for completing the Expressions of Interest can be found below in **Section 7**.

2. APPLICANTS OF INTEREST

The Successful Offeror for the anticipated RFP will be a local Cambodian firm, or a firm that has an office in Cambodia and extensive experience there, with a specific skill set and organizational capacity expected to include the Eligibility Criteria described in **Section 7.1** below.

3. BACKGROUND

In 2013, Cambodia's Ministry of Social Affairs Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and Ministry of Women's Affairs led the implementation of Cambodia's Violence Against Children and Youth Survey (VACS). Based on its findings, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) within the Government of Cambodia, with the support of other ministries, brought together a group of stakeholders, including UNICEF, ICS-SP, and others to develop a five-year national parenting strategy (2017-2021, which has since been extended to 2024). The program's goal was to encourage all caregivers (parents, community members, etc.) to change behavior and practices around violence against children. One component was to implement an intervention called the "Positive Parenting Program".

The Positive Parenting Programme aims to work towards ending violence against children and preventing unnecessary family separation in Cambodia, with a focus on the home environment. It is developed for all caregivers, and aims to address norms (including gender norms), issues around discipline, unaffectionate parent-child relations, and expectations about children's behaviour and development. There are various levels of the positive parenting program, designed to address various levels of need/high-risk parental behavior. The program takes a "lifecycle" approach, where they provided information to parents at all stages of the lifecycle (0-18 years).

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Health Evaluation and Applied Research Development (HEARD) Project is designing and conducting with Government of Cambodia counterparts and development partners an evaluation to assess the implementation and effectiveness of Cambodia's Positive Parenting Programme on reducing violence against children primarily (secondary

outcomes to be included will be determined during scoping, e.g. intimate partner violence (IPV)). The evaluation will assess whether the knowledge acquired by parents and caregivers through programme exposure leads to behavioral changes, adoption of positive parenting practices, and a decrease in harsh and violent discipline.

4. OVERALL EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The overall evaluation objective is to assess whether the Cambodia Positive Parenting Programme makes a positive difference in improving parent-child interactions and reducing violence against children. This evaluation aims to assess program effectiveness and implementation to the extent possible within budget and time, and to make recommendations on design of a future impact evaluation should an impact evaluation be feasible in the future. The USAID/HEARD Project implementation learning evaluation will be carried out in close coordination with a parallel UNICEF-conducted evaluation, with the respective evaluation teams working to ensure complementarity and to synthesize findings across the two efforts.

The evaluation methods are likely to include document review, secondary data analysis, Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, observations and a survey. Children may be included in the evaluative exercise with the required safeguarding. The evaluation shall point out promising practices / lessons learnt/ weaknesses / gaps/ bright spots that we can build on /expand and new opportunities that should inform implementation and the Government of Cambodia's future Positive Parenting Strategy. Findings and recommendations from this evaluation can also be used by government and other development partners to determine how efforts and resources can be better directed towards strengthening parent and caregiver support services in Cambodia.

5. TIME FRAME

The evaluation activities will take place from October 2024 to April 2025 with data collection and cleaning phase anticipated in November 2024 - February 2025 for 4-5 weeks.

For the purposes of responding to this RFP, offerors should follow the illustrative timeline below with the understanding that the timeline may shift during implementation.

Tentative schedule for key tasks

Key Tasks	November	December	January	February
Training of data collectors	X			
Conducting data collection in selected sites/facilities		X	X	
Entering, cleaning, and supporting preliminary analysis datasets			X	X

6. EXPECTED ACTIVITIES

In close collaboration with the HEARD evaluation team, it is anticipated that contracted activities will include Data Collection and Logistical and Translation services.

A. Data Collection

Data collection efforts include:

A.1 Pre-Data Collection

1. Test (and translate) data collection tools and interview guides;
2. Select and utilize appropriate electronic means of storage for collected quantitative and qualitative will be stored;
3. Develop an operational plan for data collection that identifies team composition (including how data collectors will be identified and appropriately trained), deployment schedule (once sites for assessment have been identified), and timeframe;
4. Develop a data collection, entry, cleaning, and quality assurance plan for both the quantitative and qualitative data.

A.2 Data Collection

1. Deliver introductory letters to each site/community to be assessed if determined to be applicable;
2. Collect qualitative and possibly quantitative data at site level, including interviews (and possibly surveys) with key informants, observations, and record reviews, as applicable; in the case of surveys, electronic quantitative data collection using tablets is desired;
3. Conduct some focus group discussions (FGDs) with groups of community representatives, including parents and possibly children (with the appropriate safeguarding);
4. Carry out interviews with a sample of program facilitators and managers, and with clients (parents and children, with the appropriate safeguarding) receiving services through the different models implemented at sites;
5. Ensure that all required site-level data is collected accurately before departing each site;
6. Transcribe (and translate from Khmer to English) all qualitative interviews

A.3 Post-Data Collection

1. Upload quantitative and qualitative data from completed questionnaires/interview guides into database that has been approved by the HEARD evaluation team;
2. Work with the HEARD evaluation team to do data cleaning, quality assurance, and preliminary data analysis (*preliminary analysis support will primarily be needed for qualitative data*);
3. Compile a report on the data collection exercise.

B. Logistical and Translation Services:

1. Assist HEARD evaluation team with organizing meetings with identified stakeholders, note taking, sharing actionable meeting notes, and arranging ground transportation services and hotel accommodations throughout Cambodia for URC staff (to be paid for by URC), as needed;
2. Provide interpretation services during meetings and during data collection activities in the field;
3. Translate evaluation protocol, questionnaires and other written data collection tools, and reports and presentations on findings from English into Khmer, as requested;
4. Translate completed questionnaires and interview transcripts from Khmer into English.

7. INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

7.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Firms that are interested in participating in this RFP should meet the following requirements:

- **Availability** of an appropriate team leader with a high-level of knowledge and proficiency in conducting quantitative and qualitative data collection in various parts of Cambodia.
- **Capacity** for conducting the managerial, technical, and financial administration activities required to achieve the results outlined in this RFP.
- **Capacity** to assemble a qualified team of data collectors capable of collecting the required information from sites spread throughout the country using an already developed and approved questionnaire and program observation and record review protocol.
- **Capacity** to transcribe and enter collected information into an electronic database and the skills to collate, clean and possibly support preliminary analysis of qualitative data as guided by the HEARD evaluation team.
- **Capacity** for conducting child protection program evaluation data collection activities at selected sites (to be determined) within the country, as well as experience in conducting qualitative data (i.e. in-depth interviews, focus group discussions) with identified key stakeholders.
- **Experience** in providing logistical services: organizing meetings with government institutional actors and community members, note taking, coordinating travel (e.g. arranging ground transportation and lodging as needed in Phnom Penh and other areas in Cambodia).
- **Experience** in providing simultaneous translation (oral and written) services (Khmer-English and English-Khmer) in child protection sector.
- **Experience** working with USAID or other international donor-funded programs is preferred

Responses from organizations that do not meet the above eligibility criteria will not be reviewed and evaluated.

7.2 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expressions of Interest are **limited to one page** and should include a summary of previous experience and current expertise in:

- implementing data collection activities of similar size and scope,
- highlighting child protection programs/systems experience (including parenting and caregiver support services if applicable) and
- highlighting USAID or other donor-funded experience.

7.3 FORMAT REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

- **Limited to one (1) page** not including cover page and questions/feedback
- The EOI should have **Cover Page** (not included in the page limit) with the following information:
 - ✓ Solicitation number (EOI-2024-6024-001);
 - ✓ Name of organization submitting the EOI;
 - ✓ Contact person, telephone number, fax number, address, and name(s) and title(s) of person(s), who prepared the EOI, and corresponding signatures.
- Written in English only
- Typed in a Microsoft Word compatible program, single-spaced with a 12-point font and one-inch margins

- Labeled with page numbers, the solicitation number (EOI-2024-6024-001) and the name of the offeror organization on every page
- Saved and submitted as one document in pdf or Word format, with all sections and appendices put together
- Emailed to heard@urc-chs.com, by **Monday, October 13, 2024 11:59 PM US EST**, copying Damien Chevaillier at dchevaillier@urc-chs.com
- The **subject line of the email** must be: EOI-2024-6024-001: EOI for Data Collection/ Logistics Services in Cambodia

7.4 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

- Offerors are encouraged to send any questions or feedback about the Draft RFP provided in Annex 1
- Questions and Feedback is optional and should be submitted together with EOIs
- There is no page limit for Questions and Feedback is
- Language for Questions and Feedback is English only
- Other format requirements are as described above for Expressions of Interest

8. REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

The HEARD team may schedule meetings/conference calls with the submitters of EOIs that meet requirements outlined in Section 7.1 of this document. A final RFP will be issued in early October requesting short (five-page) technical proposals and a cost proposal from eligible and interested Offerors. Eligible and interested Offerors who submit an EOI will be notified when the RFP is released.

ANNEX 1: DRAFT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

DRAFT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP SOLICITATION NUMBER: RFP-2024-6024-001

Data Collection and Logistical/Translation Services to support an
evaluation of Cambodia's National Positive Parenting Program

DATE OF ISSUE: Anticipated in October

Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a contractual commitment on the part of URC, nor does it commit URC/HEARD or the US government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. All costs of the Offeror in the preparation and submission of an offer shall be borne by that Offeror. URC may reject any submission that does not fully comply with requirements of the RFP. 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 project and URC.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE RFP

University Research Co (URC) is looking to procure the services of a local firm to provide **data collection** and **logistical/translation services** that will be required for conducting an evaluation of a USAID-funded Positive Parenting Program in Cambodia. URC intends to issue a Firm Fixed Price subcontract to the successful offeror.

2. SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Successful Offeror will be a local Cambodian firm, or a firm that has an office in Cambodia, with a specific skill set and organizational capacity described in Section 7.1 below.

3. BACKGROUND

In 2013, Cambodia's Ministry of Social Affairs Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and Ministry of Women's Affairs led the implementation of Cambodia's Violence Against Children and Youth Survey (VACS). Based on its findings, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) within the Government of Cambodia, with the support of other ministries, brought together a group of stakeholders, including UNICEF, ICS-SP, and others to develop a five-year national parenting strategy (2017-2021, which has since been extended to 2024). The program's goal was to encourage all caregivers (parents, community members, etc.) to change behavior and practices around violence against children. One component was to implement an intervention called the "Positive Parenting Program".

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The overall evaluation objective is to assess whether the Cambodia Positive Parenting Programme makes a positive difference in improving parent-child interactions and reducing violence against children. This evaluation aims to assess program effectiveness and implementation to the extent possible within budget

and time, and to make recommendations on design of a future impact evaluation should an impact evaluation be feasible in the future. The USAID/HEARD Project implementation learning evaluation will be carried out in close coordination with a parallel UNICEF-conducted evaluation, with the respective evaluation teams working to ensure complementarity and to synthesize findings across the two efforts.

The evaluation methods are likely to include document review, secondary data analysis, Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, observations and a survey. Children may be included in the evaluative exercise with the required safeguarding. The evaluation shall point out promising practices / lessons learnt/ weaknesses / gaps/ bright spots that we can build on /expand and new opportunities that should inform implementation and the Government of Cambodia's future Positive Parenting Strategy. Findings and recommendations from this evaluation can also be used by government and other development partners to determine how efforts and resources can be better directed towards strengthening parent and caregiver support services in Cambodia.

5. TIME FRAME

The evaluation activities will take place from October 2024 to April 2025 with data collection and cleaning phase anticipated in November 2024 - February 2025 for 4-5 weeks.

For the purposes of responding to this RFP, offerors should follow the illustrative timeline below with the understanding that the timeline may shift during implementation.

Tentative schedule for key tasks

Key Tasks	November	December	January	February
Training of data collectors	X			
Conducting data collection in selected sites/facilities		X	X	
Entering, cleaning, and supporting preliminary analysis datasets			X	X

6. EXPECTED ACTIVITIES

It is anticipated that the activities to be carried out by the successful applicant, in close collaboration with the HEARD evaluation team, will include the following:

C. Data Collection

A.1 Pre-Data Collection

1. Test (and translate) data collection tools and interview guides;
2. Select and utilize appropriate electronic means of storage for collected quantitative and qualitative will be stored;
3. Develop an operational plan for data collection that identifies team composition (including how data collectors will be identified and appropriately trained), deployment schedule (once sites for assessment have been identified), and timeframe;

4. Develop a data collection, entry, cleaning, and quality assurance plan for both the quantitative and qualitative data.

A.2 Data Collection

1. Deliver introductory letters to each site/community to be assessed if determined to be applicable;
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4. Carry out interviews with a sample of program facilitators and managers, and with clients (parents and children, with the appropriate safeguarding) receiving services through the different models implemented at sites;
5. Ensure that all required site-level data is collected accurately before departing each site;
6. Transcribe (and translate from Khmer to English) all qualitative interviews

A.3 Post-Data Collection

1. Upload quantitative and qualitative data from completed questionnaires/interview guides into database that has been approved by the HEARD evaluation team;
2. Work with the HEARD evaluation team to do data cleaning, quality assurance, and preliminary data analysis (*preliminary analysis support will primarily be needed for qualitative data*);
3. Compile a report on the data collection exercise.

D. Logistical and Translation Services:

1. Assist HEARD evaluation team with organizing meetings with identified stakeholders, note taking, sharing actionable meeting notes, and arranging ground transportation services and hotel accommodations throughout Cambodia for URC staff (to be paid for by URC), as needed;
2. Provide interpretation services during meetings and during data collection activities in the field;
3. Translate evaluation protocol, questionnaires and other written data collection tools, and reports and presentations on findings from English into Khmer, as requested;
4. Translate completed questionnaires and interview transcripts from Khmer into English.

7. INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESPONSES

7.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Firms that are interested in participating in this RFP should meet the following requirements:

- **Availability** of an appropriate team leader with a high-level of knowledge and proficiency in conducting quantitative and qualitative data collection in various parts of Cambodia.
- **Capacity** for conducting the managerial, technical, and financial administration activities required to achieve the results outlined in this RFP.

- **Capacity** to assemble a qualified team of data collectors capable of collecting the required information from sites spread throughout the country using an already developed and approved questionnaire and program observation and record review protocol.
- **Capacity** to transcribe and enter collected information into an electronic database and the skills to collate, clean and possibly support preliminary analysis of qualitative data as guided by the HEARD evaluation team.
- **Capacity** for conducting child protection program evaluation data collection activities at selected sites (to be determined) within the country, as well as experience in conducting qualitative data (i.e. in-depth interviews, focus group discussions) with identified key stakeholders.
- **Experience** in providing logistical services: organizing meetings with government institutional actors and community members, note taking, coordinating travel (e.g. arranging ground transportation and lodging as needed in Phnom Penh and other areas in Cambodia).
- **Experience** in providing simultaneous translation (oral and written) services (Khmer-English and English-Khmer) in child protection sector.
- **Experience** working with USAID or other international donor-funded programs is preferred

Responses from organizations that do not meet the above eligibility criteria will not be reviewed and evaluated.

7.2 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Technical and Cost Proposals:

- Technical and Cost Proposals must be submitted in English and emailed to heard@urc-chs.com, copying Damien Chevaillier at dchevaillier@urc-chs.com by **October TBD, 2024, 5:00 PM (ET)**.
- The subject line of the email must be: **RFP-2024-6024-001: Proposal for Data Collection/ Logistics Services in Cambodia**
- Number of award(s) expected: **one**
- The proposal must be divided into two parts, **the Technical Proposal** and **the Cost Proposal**. The two parts should be electronically submitted at the same time.
- Maximum page length of technical proposal: **5 (five)** pages maximum (not including Cover Page, Annexes)
- Language for technical and cost proposals: English only

All responses received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in Section. Applications may be judged as nonresponsive if they do not follow the instructions in the RFP. Section 8 addresses the technical evaluation procedures and criteria for the responses. Applicants are advised to carefully read the instructions.

Modifications to the RFP 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 Offerors who submitted proposals.

7.3 CONTENT OF TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

The technical proposal must be specific, complete, and presented concisely, demonstrating the applicant's **Organizational Capabilities and Technical Expertise** with respect to achieving the activities described in the RFP. The applicant's statement of Organizational Capabilities and Technical Expertise must include the following areas:

- Section 1: Previous experience and current expertise in implementing data collection activities of similar size and scope, highlighting child protection programs/systems and related experience (including parenting and caregiver support services) and USAID or other donor-funded experience (**limit 2 pages**).
- Section 2: Previous experience and current capacity related to providing in-country logistical and translation service to evaluation teams (**limit 1 page**).
- Section 3: Personnel experience and capability (**limit 1 page**):
 - a. The Offeror should propose 1 senior level team member to function as the team lead and summarize his/her specific training, role, and relevant experience in organizing and leading data collection activities.
 - b. The Offeror will propose a team with specific roles, responsibilities and qualifications of each member. Each team member will have a thorough understanding and demonstrated experience conducting similar assignments.
- Section 4: Institutional capacity to coordinate and implement the above-mentioned activities; including technical, financial, and administrative management capacity (**limit 1 page**).

7.4 FORMAT REQUIREMENTS FOR TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

- a. The technical proposal should be:
 - Written in English
 - Typed in a Microsoft Word compatible program, single-spaced with a 12-point font and one- inch margins
 - Saved and submitted as one document in pdf or Word format, with all sections and appendices put together
 - Labeled with page numbers, the RFP number (RFP-2024-6024-001) and the name of the offeror organization on every page
 - Limited to five (5) pages not including cover page and annexes
- b. The technical application should have **Cover Page** (not included in the page limit) with the following information:
 - ✓ Program/Project title;
 - ✓ RFP reference number;
 - ✓ Name of organization applying to the RFP;
 - ✓ Contact person, telephone number, fax number, address, and types name(s) and title(s) of person(s), who prepared the application, and corresponding signatures.
- c. **Curricula Vitaes (CVs)** of proposed team lead and other personnel will be included in Annex.

7.5 COST PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Since the locations of data collection, and number of surveys are being further discussed the cost proposal asks for unit prices, based on current assumption of a 4-5-week data collection throughout Cambodia. The final data sampling frame will be determined after the award.

- a. The Cost Proposal must be submitted in a separate document at the same time the technical proposal is submitted.
- b. The Cost Proposal should consist of a budget with budget narrative
- c. Detailed budget should be submitted in Microsoft Excel format (with formulas) broken down by data collections services and logistical/translation services
- d. Budget narrative describing the cost assumptions made, if any, for each item listed in the proposed price so that each cost element is fully explained.
- e. A copy of Tax ID Registration, corporate business registration or operating license.
- f. The anticipated range for this award is **\$40,000 – \$55,000**. However, URC will consider the best value for money from Offerors. The Cost Proposal should be submitted in United States Dollars.

What can be funded

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

1. Staff time specifically related to the scope of work
2. Expenses for meetings required for assignment purposes, including: data collector training, production or printing of documents
3. Lodging, Meals and Incidental (M&IE) expenses for data collection team whilst in the field
4. Local travel costs associated with the data collection
5. Telecommunications related to the data collection
6. Other expenses that are directly related to the assignment.

Examples of what cannot be funded:

1. Salary supplements or stipends
2. Transportation of interviewees/respondents for data collection
3. Purchase of vehicles
4. Rent for office space

This list is not all-inclusive, and additional questions on eligibility of items and costs should be addressed to heard@urc-chs.com and submitted as part of Expression of Interest and Questions as noted on the cover page of this RFP.

8. REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

8.1 TECHNICAL REVIEW

A Technical Review Committee will evaluate the Offerors' Organizational Capacity and Technical Expertise Statements taking into account the eligibility criteria (Section 7.1) and the technical review criteria (Section 8.2) found in this RFP.

8.2 REVIEW CRITERIA FOR TECHNICAL AND COST PROPOSALS

Technical responses will be reviewed and evaluated against the following criteria:

1. Organizational Capacity/Past Performance

- a. Strong capability and experience of the Offeror to successfully conduct all aspects of the data collection and analysis as determined by past successful implementation of similar activities.
- b. Experience and current expertise related to providing in-country logistical and translation service to evaluation teams
- c. Demonstrated Institutional capacity to coordinate and implement the activities in the SOW; including technical, financial, and administrative management capacity.

2. Qualifications of Proposed Team

- a. Proposed team leader has demonstrated leadership, expertise and experience carrying out data collection activities, including site-level assessment, training and facilitation in Cambodia
- b. Proposed data collection team has demonstrated expertise and experience in the area of data collection in the child protection sector in Cambodia.
- c. Proposed Experience and qualifications of logistics coordinator and translator(s).

3. Evaluation of Cost Proposal

After the Technical Proposal is evaluated by the technical review panel, HEARD will review the Cost Proposal. HEARD will assess whether the proposed budget is realistic and feasible given the items and activities described. HEARD may contact Offerors to revise budgets if any issues or questions are identified.

8.3 NOTIFICATION PROCESS

URC will review and select a proposal submitted in accordance with the criteria set forth in this RFP.

URC reserves the right to disregard any proposals that do not meet the requirements. URC is not obligated to issue a financial instrument or award as a result of this RFP.

ANNEX: ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON THE USAID HEARD PROJECT

The purpose of the Health Evaluation and Applied Research Development (HEARD) Project is to undertake research and evaluation efforts to accelerate progress towards achieving USAID's global health and development goals, including Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Death, achieving an AIDS Free Generation, and Protecting Communities from Infectious Diseases Initiatives, including the Global Health Security Agenda. The HEARD Project will focus on evaluative and targeted research that accelerates research-to-use processes.

The HEARD Project is engaged with building a partnership around IS through the creation the Implementation Science Collaborative (ISC). The ISC is comprised of organizations that work to advance global health goals as implementation support organizations, regional health bodies, policy advocacy groups, civil society-based evidence advocates, research organizations, and academic institutions. This strategic mix of partners will help to inform which research questions are prioritized in different contexts, to generate and analyze evidence, and to better package and move evidence through channels which render it more accessible to inform policy and practice.

The HEARD Project and the ISC will seek to:

- Effectively respond to evaluation and research-to-use global health priorities: developing the study designs and issue-specific partnerships required to navigate a complex effort along a strategic research-to-use pathway;
- Actively engage national, regional, and global-level stakeholders for the development of those priorities: engaging and supporting a growing community of interested implementers, policy makers, and investigators in shaping and promoting a more relevant research-to-use agenda and capacity; and by
- Strengthening and connecting the institutional applied research capacities required to sustain a vigorous implementation science agenda in support of global health goals, emerging threats and new opportunities.

Our approach is illustrated in Figure 1, below. Emphasizing effective stakeholder engagement and knowledge management throughout, the four main strategies of the HEARD Project are: (1) partnership and agenda development; (2) data liberation and evidence strengthening; (3) research and evaluation study design and implementation; and (4) the acceleration of evidence-to-use processes.

Figure 1. Key strategies for accelerating research-to-use

