Request for Proposal # 2023-017
President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) Insights Program – Malaria Operational Research and Program Evaluation

I. Summary of Deadlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Release of Request for Proposal</td>
<td>May 2, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation of interest due</td>
<td>May 19, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact-finding questions received by</td>
<td>May 19, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to fact-finding questions</td>
<td>May 26, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposals due</td>
<td>June 12, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bidders notified of decision</td>
<td>July 14, 2023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that PATH reserves the right to modify this schedule as needed. All parties will be notified simultaneously by email of any changes.

II. PATH Statement of Business

PATH is the leader in global health innovation. An international nonprofit organization, we save lives and improve health, especially among women and children. We accelerate innovation across five platforms—vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, devices, and system and service innovations—that harness our entrepreneurial insight, scientific and public health expertise, and passion for health equity. By mobilizing partners around the world, we take innovation to scale, working alongside countries primarily in Africa and Asia to tackle their greatest health needs. Together, we deliver measurable results that disrupt the cycle of poor health. Learn more at www.path.org.
III. Project Background

President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) Insights Program

A. Project Background: The U.S. President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) Insights for Malaria (Insights) project partners with malaria affected countries to ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources to fight malaria and save lives. Working in collaboration with national malaria programs (NMPs) and country research institutions, the project prioritizes, designs, implements, and disseminates research that identifies best practices for control and elimination, informs strategies to achieve and maintain high levels of intervention coverage, and guides deployment of new tools and approaches. See www.insightsmalaria.org for more information.

B. Malaria Operational Research and Program Evaluation Opportunity: Through the PMI Insights project, PMI intends to provide funding and technical support for the design and implementation of malaria operational research (OR) and/or program evaluation (PE) research in malaria-affected PMI-focus countries in sub-Saharan Africa (see Table 1). As defined by PMI, OR is the “application of social science research methods, statistical analysis, and other appropriate scientific methods to judge, compare, and improve policies and program outcomes from the earliest stages of defining and designing programs through their development and implementation with the objective of the rapid dissemination of conclusions and concrete impact on programming.” This call for proposals aims to identify proposed studies that will provide evidence that will help national programs and their partners address operational problems, challenges, or barriers to achieving intended coverage or impact of malaria interventions. Program evaluation is defined as the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgements about program design, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future program development.1 Findings are intended to inform decisions about program implementation. This call for proposals aims to identify proposed studies that provide evidence around interventions or approaches for which there is already robust evidence of efficacy, however evaluation questions remain around effectiveness under routine program implementation. This does not include upstream research related to the early development of new tools (e.g., product development or initial safety and efficacy trials of new products) for malaria control and elimination nor routine entomological monitoring for evaluating insecticide resistance or therapeutic efficacy studies of antimalarials.

PMI Insights led a country-driven prioritization process resulting in a prioritized list of OR and PE topics. These topics were identified by multiple National Malaria Programs and their research partners indicating broad relevance; have the potential to guide high-impact interventions and approaches; have strong potential to improve efficiency and address inequities; and address an approach or intervention that has strong potential for scalability and sustainability. The outputs of this prioritization process are available at: www.insightsmalaria.org/research-prioritization. Bidders are encouraged to highlight linkages between proposed work and this prioritized list of research topics.

PMI Insights anticipates providing up to $3 million in funding across multiple subawards to support a number of research studies. Each individual proposal shall be evaluated on a best value basis, and there is no envisioned minimum or maximum amount for an individual subaward. PMI Insights reserves the right to ask for revisions to proposals if necessary.

C. Eligibility Criteria:

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. To be eligible for this funding opportunity, the proposed study must be led by researchers that reside and work within the proposed study country. Local entity academic and research institutions legally organized under the law of the country, with principal place of business or operations in the country, and with majority ownership by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the country will be given preference over locally established partners that operate as part of international organizations or institutions.

Academic and research institutions based outside the study country will only be considered if they are put forth as a partner to the lead institution and whereby the lead institution meets criteria outlined in #1 above.

Applications should meet the following criteria:

1. Propose an OR or PE study according to the definitions provided above.
2. Propose OR or PE implementation in one or more eligible countries (see Table 1).
3. A clearly justified budget inclusive of all costs for the proposed intervention/approach to be tested as well as research costs.
4. Describe the approach or intervention that will be the focus of the OR or PE; how the approach/intervention will be implemented, including timing, location, and implementation team; and funding for the approach/intervention which may be covered within the proposal budget or in-kind by the National Malaria Program, other implementing partner, or other funding source. Note: if costs of the intervention/approach will be covered by the National Malaria Program, other implementing partner, or other funding source, a letter of support clearly stating as such must be included with the proposal.
5. Demonstrate alignment with National Malaria Program strategy / goals / objectives.
6. Demonstrate alignment with PMI strategy (see www.pmi.gov/home/pmis-strategy/ for more information).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Eligible countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Ghana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IV. Scope of Work and Deliverables**
A. Scope of Work: PATH seeks an interested institution or partnership of institutions to lead design and implementation of a research study. This work is inclusive of design and implementation of the approach or intervention to be tested under the research study as relevant. The work will be undertaken under technical oversight and coordination from colleagues at PMI Insights (see https://www.insightsmalaria.org/about-us) and PMI.

The specific tasks under this scope of work are:

1. Write a comprehensive study protocol inclusive of data collection forms and consent forms. The protocol must be reviewed and approved by PMI Insights and PMI.

2. Obtain all required ethical, administrative, and/or regulatory approvals to conduct the study in the focal country.

3. Develop standard operating procedures (SOP) to guide the implementation of data collection as well as implementation of the intervention (if relevant). SOPs must be reviewed and approved by PMI Insights and PMI.

4. Develop a statistical analysis plan to guide data analysis and reporting. The SAP must be reviewed and approved by PMI Insights and PMI.

5. Develop a research use plan in collaboration with PMI Insights that will detail stakeholders and activities to support uptake and use of research findings.

6. Implement primary data collection according to the study protocol and SOP standards and timelines. Ensure robust supervision of intervention implementation (if relevant) and data collection as well as monitoring of data quality during the data collection period.

7. Conduct data cleaning and analysis according to the agreed upon SAP and within the agreed upon timeframe.

8. Produce dissemination products and lead dissemination activities to meet objectives and implement activities outlined in the agreed upon research use plan.

The anticipated timeframe for this scope of work begins October 1, 2023. All work should be completed by September 30, 2025.

B. Deliverables: The table below lists the expected deliverables and approximate timeline for their completion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Final study protocol for submission to review boards.</td>
<td>October 31, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>All required ethical, administrative, and regulatory approvals in place to conduct the research.</td>
<td>January 31, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Final SOPs to guide fieldwork.</td>
<td>January 31, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Final SAP to guide data analysis.</td>
<td>January 31, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Research use plan to guide dissemination.</td>
<td>March 31, 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Monthly progress reports during data collection</td>
<td>Due the 15th of the month following the reporting month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Final clean dataset(s)</td>
<td>Within 3 months after completion of data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dissemination products as outlined in the research use plan</td>
<td>Within 3 months after completion of data collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the outlined deliverables noted above, the PMI Insights team requests the institution to:

1. Incorporate collaboration with the national malaria program and technical advisors from PMI and PMI Insights into all aspects of study design, implementation, analysis, and dissemination.
2. Co-develop a detailed work plan with the PATH PMI Insights team to plan and track progress throughout the study.
3. Participate in weekly check-in calls with the PATH PMI Insights team, to provide updates on progress achieved and to discuss inputs/feedback on specific deliverables and any challenges in carrying out the scope of work.
4. Participate in routine check-in calls with PMI as requested.

V. Proposal Requirements - Financial

Provide itemized costs for the total scope of this project, based on the scope of work and deliverables outlined in Section IV. The final scope of work may be subject to negotiation; however, bidder selection will be made against the original scope of work. Bids should include itemized costs for key elements of the scope of work, as follows:

- Percent participation in total level of effort according to key staff.
- Rates of key staff.
- Estimated total level of effort and associated costs.
- Itemization of all other costs, e.g., agency costs, agency fees, sub-contracted resources, administrative costs, supplies, tax, etc.

VI. Proposal Requirements – Technical

To supplement your institution’s submission during the RFP stage for this scope of work, please provide a narrative on your technical approach of no more than 10 pages to accomplish the Scope of Work and Deliverables per section IV, including:

- Background and relevance of the study, including but not necessarily limited to relevance for achieving national malaria program goals and objectives.
- Description of the focal approach or intervention to be tested or evaluated.
- Description of the proposed study design and plan for implementation.
- Description of anticipated use of research findings, including potential use to inform policy, strategy, program guidelines, and/or funding applications.
- Discussion of project management and roles of project team.
- Timeline to meet the deliverables.
- Potential obstacles and plan to overcome them.
- Identification of major internal and external resources.

Please also include a letter of support from the following stakeholders. Letters of support do not contribute towards the 10-page limit.

- National Malaria Program
VII. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The following is a list of significant criteria against which proposals will be assessed. The criteria are listed in order of priority, however they are not weighted.

A. Relevance of the proposed study to meeting national malaria program goals and objectives. This may include, but is not limited to, alignment with national operational research priorities.
B. Relevance of the proposed study to meeting PMI strategic goals and objectives.
C. Scientific merit of the proposed study design.
D. Feasibility of the proposed plan for implementation of the intervention and data collection.
E. Clear and achievable research use case(s) for evidence resulting from the study (i.e., findings will inform specific policies, strategies, program guidelines, and/or funding applications).
F. Relevant institutional capabilities and past experience, including relevant expertise to design and conduct the proposed research, strength of relationship and alignment with national malaria program stakeholders, and demonstrated capabilities in timely and high-quality primary data collection.
G. Appropriateness of proposed personnel who will perform this scope of work.
H. Costs (as detailed in Section V), evaluated based on a best value determination.

Note: PATH reserves the right to include additional criteria.

VIII. Instructions and Deadlines for Responding

A. PATH contacts
   Technical/Program Contact: Megan Littrell (mlittrell@path.org)
   Procurement Contact: Hoang-Kim Vu (kvu@path.org), and Teresa Gingras (tingras@path.org)

B. Confirmation of interest
   Please send a statement acknowledging receipt of this solicitation and your intent to respond or not respond no later than May 19, 2023 by 5pm EST. Send the confirmation to the contacts listed above.

C. Fact-finding questions
   Questions on this solicitation will be accepted via email to the contacts listed above through May 19, 2023. Questions and answers to all questions will be provided on May 26, 2023 to all participants who confirmed interest. Please note that responses will not be confidential except in cases where proprietary information is involved. Inquiries after this date cannot be accommodated.

D. Proposals due: Jun 12, 2023
   Completed proposals should be submitted by email to the contacts listed above. The subject line of the email should read: RFP # 2023-017 Your Company Name.
E. Selection of short-list
PATH reserves the right to select a short list from the bids received. PATH has the option to interview and discuss specific details with those candidates who are on the short-list.

F. Conclusion of process
Applicants will be notified of PATH’s decision by July 14, 2023. Final award is subject to the terms and conditions included in this solicitation, as well as successful final negotiations of all applicable terms and conditions affecting this work. All suppliers who take part will be informed of the outcome in writing once the process is complete through email.

IX. Terms and Conditions of the Solicitation

A. Notice of non-binding solicitation
PATH reserves the right to reject any and all bids received in response to this solicitation and is in no way bound to accept any proposal.

B. Confidentiality
All information provided by PATH as part of this solicitation must be treated as confidential. In the event that any information is inappropriately released, PATH will seek appropriate remedies as allowed. Proposals, discussions, and all information received in response to this solicitation will be held as strictly confidential, except as otherwise noted.

C. Conflict of interest disclosure
Suppliers bidding on PATH business must disclose, to the procurement contact listed in the RFP, any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest could be present if; there is a personal relationship with a PATH staff member that constitutes a significant financial interest, board memberships, other employment, and ownership or rights in intellectual property that may be in conflict with the supplier’s obligations to PATH. Suppliers and PATH are protected when actual or perceived conflicts of interest are disclosed. When necessary, PATH will create a management plan that provides mitigation of potential risks presented by the disclosed conflict of interest.

D. Communication
All communications regarding this solicitation shall be directed to appropriate parties at PATH indicated in Section VIII. A. Contacting third parties involved in the project, the review panel, or any other party may be considered a conflict of interest and could result in disqualification of the proposal.

E. Acceptance
Acceptance of a proposal does not imply acceptance of its terms and conditions. PATH reserves the option to negotiate on the final terms and conditions. We additionally reserve the right to negotiate the substance of the finalists’ proposals, as well as the option of accepting partial components of a proposal if appropriate.

F. Right to final negotiations
PATH reserves the option to negotiate on the final costs and final scope of work and reserves the option to limit or include third parties at PATH’s sole and full discretion in such negotiations.

G. Third-party limitations
PATH does not represent, warrant, or act as an agent for any third party as a result of this solicitation. This solicitation does not authorize any third party to bind or commit PATH in any way without our express written consent.

H. Proposal Validity
Proposals submitted under this request shall be valid for 90 days from the date the proposal is due. The validity period shall be stated in the proposal submitted to PATH.