

Call for Proposal from Academic Intuitions/ Research Organizations/ Consultancy Agencies for:

Conducting a qualitative study to explore contextual factors affecting successful implementation and uptake of post exposure/infection treatment in urban settings

The Challenge TB (CTB) Project is the flagship global initiative for implementing USAID's tuberculosis (TB) strategy and is being implemented in 22 countries, including Bangladesh by a unique coalition of nine international organizations in TB control. The CTB is being implemented in Bangladesh since 2014 and providing technical assistance to the National TB Control Program (NTP), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), Government of Bangladesh (GoB). The current focus on the initiative is to lay strong ground for the Zero TB Cities Initiative recently launched by the MOHFW. One of the most important components of the Zero TB Cities Initiative will be post exposure treatment among eligible household contacts of index TB cases. As part of its urban focused activities, CTB is looking for an Academic Intuition/Research Organization/Consultancy Agency to carry out one qualitative study for better understanding of the barriers and facilitating factors to successful implementation and uptake of post exposure treatment in urban settings. This study will be conducted among index tuberculosis cases, household contacts, healthcare providers and all other stakeholders involved in TB care so that programs and policies can be adapted to improve care delivery system and quality of care.

Please find enclosed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the provision of input to the study entitled:

- Qualitative study to explore contextual factors affecting successful implementation and uptake of post exposure/infection treatment in urban settings

The CTB invites interested Academic Intuitions/ Research Organizations/ Consultancy Agencies to submit their short proposals (not more than 12 pages including 2 pages for list of references, font type Times New Roman and font size 12 and at least 2cm page margins in all sides) including budget covering the items outlined in the ToR and accompanied by the following application documents:

- Short Technical and Financial proposals separately
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) of Principal Investigator and all proposed co-investigators (maximum 2 pages).
- Letter of motivation outlining how your institution/organization/agency's (including investigators) experience, skills, qualifications and professional networks fit with the required deliverables (two pages maximum) of the call
- Copies of at least five relevant study reports and/or articles published by the investigators as team in peer-reviewed international journal through indication of www links in the CV and submission of hard copies of at least 3 reports/papers with the technical proposal.

In order to participate in the call, please submit your detailed proposal with budget – to Interactive Research and Development (IRD), Bangladesh Office located at Florida Castle, Suite E2, House # 7, Road # 23/A, Gulshan 1, Dhaka -1212, Dhaka-1212 - by end of business day (Bangladesh Time) **21 January 2018**.

Terms of Reference for Conducting:
“A qualitative study to explore contextual factors affecting successful implementation and uptake of
post exposure/infection treatment in urban settings”
from
Academic Institutions/Research Organizations/ Consultancy Agencies

Assignment	A qualitative study to explore contextual factors affecting successful implementation and uptake of post exposure/infection treatment in urban settings
Duration of the contract period	10 weeks
Primary study location (s)	Zone 3, 4 and 5 of Dhaka South City Corporation
Contracting entity	Challenge TB Project, IRD Bangladesh

Context of the research:

Bangladesh is one of the world's 30 high Tuberculosis (TB) burden countries with annual occurrence of 353,600 new TB cases and treatment coverage rate (notified cases/estimated incidence) of 62% (Global Tuberculosis Report 2017). About 73, 000 people die annually in Bangladesh due to Tuberculosis. Another important challenge is Multi Drug Resistance Tuberculosis (MDR-TB) - with an estimated 9,700 MDR-TB cases per year. The findings from 2015-16 National TB Prevalence Survey show that TB prevalence rates vary by location and demographic groups. The survey showed very high rates in urban areas, and among men and the elderly. These high rates of TB in urban areas and high risk groups may be due to huge rural-to-urban migration, over crowded living conditions with poor housing in slum areas, poverty well as limited access to quality healthcare services. Based on this evidence, the 2018-2022 National Strategic Plan for TB calls for an approach that targets cities and the populations at risk.

Bangladesh has made significant progress in its fight to prevent, detect and treat TB. The National TB Program (NTP) of Bangladesh along with its partners has been maintaining good basic TB control services with reasonable case detection and excellent treatment outcomes. Bangladesh is the first country in the Region that introduced shorter treatment regimen for MDR-TB and is achieving high cure rate for MDR-TB patients (75%). Despite promising achievements, an estimated 150,000 TB cases remain missing every year in Bangladesh and addressing TB infection equitably and comprehensively is a challenge. This is particularly challenging in urban settings like Dhaka, where universal access to quality diagnostic services and treatment are over stressed by myriad factors such as the influx of rural-to-urban migrants and the complexity of urban health care infrastructure. The new perspectives and ways of addressing TB treatment and control are needed as the disease continues in a persistent manner. New technology, such as geographical information systems, will be useful in this process.

The Challenge TB (CTB) Project is the flagship global initiative for implementing USAID's TB strategy and is being implemented in 22 countries including Bangladesh by a unique coalition of nine international organizations in TB control. In Bangladesh the CTB is being implemented since 2014 and has been providing technical assistance to the National Tuberculosis Control Program (NTP) and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to strengthen its activities in addressing the challenges of TB/HIV, MDR-TB and the use of new drugs and technologies.

In October 2017, the MOHFW with support from USAID and CTB Initiative has launched the Zero TB Cities Initiative with strong political commitment to ending TB and signed a declaration with a call for action "uniting to make our cities TB free." In order to lay strong ground for the Zero TB Cities Initiative the CTB will undertake a set of activities mostly focusing in urban Dhaka to support the Government to better prevent, identify missing cases and treat tuberculosis and help save lives in urban settings. The Urban TB initiative will use comprehensive evidence-driven interventions of the Search, Treat and Prevent (STP) strategy. The Initiative builds on existing platforms and relies on multi-stakeholder engagement including coalitions of local governments, businesses, civil society and multiple funders under the leadership of the NTP.

CTB as part of its urban focused activities in line with the Zero TB Cities Initiative is going to implement post exposure treatment for susceptible TB in Zone 3, 4 and 5 of Dhaka South City Corporation among the household contacts of the index TB patients. The success to implementation and uptake of post exposure treatment for household members of index TB patient involves many stakeholders that include family members, healthcare providers, community leaders and health administrators. With the current program, we have had mixed experience with some households in urban areas successfully starting Isoniazid Preventive Therapy (IPT) while others refuse to start or continue IPT. Therefore, it is critical to understand the barriers and facilitating factors to successful implementation and uptake of infection treatment in urban settings in Dhaka, we would like to conduct a qualitative study with all the stakeholders involved so that programs and policies can be adapted to improving quality.

Objectives:

1. To explore barriers and facilitating factors to successful implementation and uptake of post exposure/infection treatment amongst household contacts of index TB patients in Zone 3, 4 and 5 of Dhaka South City Corporation
2. To understand perceptions and views of key stakeholders in Dhaka on the use of different post exposure/infection treatment regimens and their preferences
3. To build evidence-base to further contextualize and generate policy responses towards better implementation and improved uptake of post exposure/infection treatment

The assignment:

In order to assist the NTP, DGHS, MoHFW, Government of Bangladesh and CTB achieving the stated objectives above, the hiring Academic Institute/ Research organization/ Consultancy Agency is expected to carry out the tasks as described below.

The agency/organization (s) will carry out: A qualitative study to explore contextual factors affecting successful implementation and uptake of post exposure/infection treatment in urban settings.

Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The hiring organization/agency will need to produce the following:

No	Description	Deadline to complete activities
1	Final version of study protocol (technical and financial)	30 January 2018
2	Final sets of study tools (qualitative)	08 February 2018
3	Data collection	28 February 2018
4	Data entry and Analysis	15 March 2018
5	Draft report of the qualitative study	20 March 2018
6	Dissemination of findings among wider stakeholders	30 March 2018
7	Final study report	15 April 2018

Eligibility:

Any academic institutions, research organizations or consultancy firms in public or private sector, which are duly registered under the rules of GoB, are eligible to participate in this call. However, the institution/organization/agency must demonstrate previous experience of conducting qualitative studies or

related studies in Bangladeshi context and also have the profound ability to conduct public health research without compromising the international standards of excellence.

Specific Experience, Expertise, Abilities and Skills:

The institution/organization/agency and the principal investigator and co-investigations associated with them should have the following skills and professional experiences. The roles and responsibilities of all named researchers and partners (if any) should be clearly defined.

1. The institution/organization/agency should have previous experience of conducting qualitative study in urban settings in Bangladesh including public and private sectors exposure, as well as experience in USAID, GoB and/or other donor agency funded studies/projects/programs.
2. The principal investigator and/or co-investigators should have:
 - a. At least a PhD (with 5-7 years of professional experience) or Masters Degree (with 10 years of professional experience) in public health, anthropology, social science, health service or policy research specifically related to research in the field of TB and health systems and policy.
 - b. Each research team member (principal investigator/co-investigators) should have at least seven relevant study reports and/or published papers in peer-reviewed international journals individually in the field of TB, health system and policy. Among those, at least five papers published by all team members should be specifically in the area of TB in peer-reviewed international journals
 - c. Good understanding about urban and slum situation and health condition with previous experience conducting qualitative research and/or interventions in urban/slum settings
 - d. Familiarity in TB control with special focus to preventive approach and experience of health policies and research tools, specifically the WHO recommended minimum conditions required to provide quality TB services.
3. Technical competence in prevention and control of TB and public health.
 - a. Proven ability to conduct qualitative research and prepare high quality reports of a similar nature.
 - b. Ability to clearly identify and relates research findings with local, national and regional TB policies and communicate the mutual benefits for TB service providers and public stakeholders in Bangladesh.
 - c. Good understanding of mixed method research both for qualitative and quantitative
 - d. Skills in planning, training, and monitoring of research activities, and in development of locally-adapted research
 - e. Must possess excellent communication and qualitative research reporting skills in English, both written and spoken
 - f. Proven ability to write and present complex research and policy-related report in English for a non-technical audiences
 - g. Skills in providing realistic recommendations based on research findings, and link them with formulation of legislations, policies, strategies and action plans for communicable disease control in Bangladeshi context.

Proposal Format

The academic institutions/ research organizations/ consultancy agencies responding to this call are requested to follow the proposal format provided in the Annex A and B.

Annex A: Format of the Technical and Financial Proposals

Technical proposal:

Technical proposal should not exceed 12 pages A4 size, including two pages for list of relevant references. Page number at the bottom of each page should be included. The page margin should not be less than 2cm all sides. Preferably 2.5 cm in the Left and 2 in others Up, Down and Right sides. The font size should be no less than 12 Times New Roman and line space no less than 1.15 cm.

The technical proposal should comprise the following components and details:

- An **introduction** to the current scenario of TB and TB in urban context in Bangladesh
- **Rationale** of the study with clearly described scientific and practical significance of the proposed study
- Clearly formulated **aims and objectives** of the study
- **Study methods** including study type, study sites, explicitly described study population, study tools development, data collection and data analyses approach etc.
- The methods section also should include how you are going to maintain the quality of the data during the data collection as well as data analyses phases
- A clearly outlined **list of activities aligned with timeline** should be included
- The technical proposal also should include the **implications** of the study
- List of references to be included at the end of the technical proposal

Financial proposal:

A financial proposal must be submitted separate to the Technical proposal. This should include clearly specified different components of the study activities along with the cost budgeted accordingly. This may include Personnel cost (ie. Salary), Field research cost (i.e. field data collection, analyses and report write up), Travel cost (local travel only), basic equipment cost etc.

Associated indirect cost also should be included; however the proportion should not exceed 8% of total budget. The contribution cost by the implementing agency/partners is welcome either in Cash or In-Kind supports forms.

CVs and relevant documents

Please include CV/s of principal investigator and co-investigators not exceeding three pages A4 size (two pages CV plus one page list of relevant publications).

Appendix B: Review of proposal and awarding the grant

Both the technical and financial proposals will be reviewed by the committee formed with the representatives of NTP/DGHS, CTB team members and TB experts in Bangladesh.

Starting and Completion Dates and Duration: The studies should be started within 10 days of approval of the agreement and be completed all research and related activities within the agreed duration. This will be determined while preparing the agreement up on awarding the grant for the proposed study.

Assessment of the project application

The applications will be assessed using the following criteria:

A. Responsiveness to the Call:

- The proposed study should focus on qualitative assessment of post exposure treatment in zone 3,4 and 5 of DSCC
- The project should align with the interest of the Zero TB Cities Initiative, country's TB strategies, plans and programs to find missing TB cases and address the burden of urban TB in the country, particularly in urban hotspot areas

B. Proposal Quality

- Well-written and explained clearly
- High quality in relation to the highest international standards of scientific excellence
- Well-formulated research questions and/or objectives
- Methodologically sound and clearly described methods of data collection, data management and analyses
- Reasonable and justifiable budget
- Feasible within the proposed time period

C. The Potential Contribution to search, treat and prevent approach in urban areas

- Potentials for addressing burden of TB in urban areas of Bangladesh
- Potential support for ongoing efforts to TB diagnosis, treatment and prevention/control in Bangladesh
- Immediate relevance for policy formulation and programs implementation in urban settings
- Potential importance to relevant key stakeholders working for TB prevention and control in Bangladesh

D. Strategy for Results Dissemination

- The results of the proposed study should be shared with relevant multiple stakeholders organizing the dissemination workshop/s
- Partnership with other organizations nationally and/or globally is encouraged
- The findings of the study could be shared nationally and internationally via reports and publications