

# Re-examining Traditional Methods: Q&A

## Country Selection

Q: We received several questions on country selection/country eligibility and have included answers on these below:

- **Concepts must include two sub-Saharan African countries and one South Asian country.**
- **For South Asia, we have strong preference for either India or Pakistan. Concepts that do not propose research in one of these two countries are unlikely to be considered for the proposal phase.**
- **Sub-Saharan Africa: DRC is top priority country and preference will be given to concepts that propose research include DRC. Concepts that do not include DRC are less likely to be considered for the proposal phase.**
- **While we expect site selection to be finalized for a proposal submission, we understand that sites are likely to be illustrative in many cases for this concept submission/development.**

Q: May applicants propose research in both India and Pakistan (e.g. including one site per country)?

- **We are looking for only 1 south-Asian country and would advise applicants to choose India OR Pakistan.**

Q: Can you clarify which countries are priority countries for the BMGF FP program?

- **BMGF FP priority countries are: Nigeria, DRC, Kenya, India, Pakistan, Ethiopia, and the Ouagadougou partnership countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Togo, Niger, and Senegal).**

Q: May applicants propose research in more than three countries while remaining within the allocated budget and timeline?

- **Yes.**

Q: Is Kenya is eligible for this research proposal?

- **Yes, Kenya is eligible as one of the three proposed countries for this research project. As a reminder, concepts must include proposed research in three countries. Concepts that propose research in only one country will not be considered.**

Q: What does Gates mean by contemporary developing countries?

- **Countries that are classified as low- or middle-income countries.**

Q: If we choose a county that has a "different traditional method use profile" in sub-Saharan Africa, will we be penalized if that country is not also a Gates priority country?

- **Although we have a preference for research on traditional method use in BMGF priority FP countries, concepts will not be penalized for including a non-BMGF FP priority country as a second sub-Saharan Africa provided it has a different enough traditional method use profile from the other sub-Saharan African country.**

Q: Can you clarify what was meant by "one other country with a different traditional method use profile priority for countries that are in SSA"? We understood this to me a country in SSA that has a different profile for traditional use than very high in SSA, but weren't entirely clear what was meant by 'profile priority'.

- **Your assumption is correct, although the profile differences need not be based solely or entirely on overall traditional use rates but could include other justifications for why a country has a "different" profile for traditional method use compared to the other proposed sub-Saharan African country.**

## Site Selection

Q: What is the required (or suggested) number of study sites per country: 1-2 or 2-3?

- **We apologize for the conflicting information on this in the Request for Concepts. Concepts should include minimum 2 sites per country. It is up to the organization to propose the location and profile of the sites and provide a justification/explanation for the proposed site selection.**

Q: Is it required to have the study sites to cover both urban and rural areas in each country?

- **This is desirable but is not required.**

Q: Can in-country organizations be included as subcontractors on more than one concept note?

- **Yes.**

Q: How are "study sites" defined? Is there a preference for size (or other characteristic) of the areas chosen within a country?

- **We leave it up to the submitting organizations to define study sites but preference will be given for variation among site profiles.**

Q: Outcome 1 indicates that traditional method use will be estimated in 1-2 study sites per country. Is the quantitative data intended to be representative of these 1-2 study sites or the country as a whole?

- **We expect quantitative data to be representative only of the study site.**

Q: Do the study sites need to align with where the PMA2020 surveys have been conducted in the past? (For example, if PMA has sampled 2 provinces in the past, should this RFP target those same provinces?)

- **Proposed study sites do not need to be aligned with where PMA2020 surveys have been conducted.**

Q: For the qualitative phase of the study, are researchers allowed to use other types of qualitative data analysis such as content analysis, instead of grounded theory?

- **Yes; it is up to the researcher to propose and justify which qualitative approach they want to use.**

Q: It is mentioned that 1-2 study sites per country should be selected for the study for the estimation of traditional method use. Is the study site defined at the facility level, community or district level? Is it possible to propose more than 1-2 sites per country?

- **Up to the partner to define study site. There should be a minimum of two sites per country but it is possible to propose more.**

## Survey-Related

Q: Does interviewing men (in addition to women) for quantitative and/or qualitative methods fall within the scope of RFC?

- **Interviewing men is not within the scope of the RFC but a partner would not be penalized for proposing to include men if it does not compromise research outcomes as they relate to women.**

Q: What is the key question on which sampling and power calculations for the survey sample should be based?

- **Sampling and power calculations should be based on traditional method contraceptive rates (i.e. traditional method CPR) at the lowest administrative level available.**

Q: Would panel data addressing RFC objectives by following up respondents from previous surveys acceptable?

- **It is unlikely that a concept note that includes this approach, as its primary source of data collection, would be considered for the proposal phase.**

Q: According to DHS use in computation of CPR is defined as highest ranked by efficiency when use of multiple methods is envisioned. So in getting to sample the users of traditional method, should we focus the definition to specific bands of usage e.g. ever used, used in the last three months etc.?

- **The primary sample for traditional method users should be current or recent users and it is up to the proposing org to propose how they would define this.**

Q: Should we consider methods such as withdrawal as traditional methods

- ***From the RFC: "withdrawal and periodic abstinence account for the vast majority of traditional method use, however, "traditional methods" are often synonymous with these two contraceptive approaches, and these two methods are the primary focus of this Request for Concepts. Although the objective of this research project is a better understanding traditional method use and how it fits into the current FP landscape, it is likely that other forms of non-modern methods and/or coitally-dependent methods may figure prominently as well."***

Q: Given the known differences between the traditional methods, should we limit to creating a profile for traditional method users in general or should we develop a profile for each and every traditional method that is in use in the country and account for what is used by more than 10% of the users of traditional methods.

- **Our primary interest is to get a profile of traditional method users as a group, but we would expect data to be disaggregated by type of method.**

Q: Should our findings be generalized at the national level or should we aim to provide regional level conclusion based on country CPR based groupings. We understand that the TOR explicitly mentioned 1 to 2 sites per country (outcome 1) which pose a risk of misrepresentation?

- **We expect quantitative data to be representative only of the study site.**

Q: In regards to dissemination of findings- is this finding only limited to Outcome 3 and Outcome 4 and as listed in page 3. Can the organizations once this is made public use it to create policy dialogues that influence policy specific to countries where the research has been undertaken, can organizations conduct policy based thematic discussions with relevant stakeholders.

- **This RFC scope does not address policy and/or advocacy and such work is considered outside the scope and timeline of proposed study.**

Q: Can the research proposal have a mix of methodologies in qualitative research; over and above as listed on page 4 of the RFC?

- **Yes.**

Q: Does BMGF understand "traditional method users" to include women only, or male partners as well?

- **Including men/partners is not within the specific scope of the RFC but concepts would not be penalized for proposing to include research/data on men/partners, so long as it does not compromise research outcomes as they relate to women.**

Q: Do we have to follow the 4-phase sequence proposed in the RFP? Could we go with qualitative interviews before embarking on quantitative data collection?

- **Concepts are not required to follow the 4-phase sequence. While it's reasonable to undertake formative research before embarking on and qualitative data collection, however, a concept would have to include strong justification for completing qualitative data collection prior to quantitative data collection.**

Q: Can you elaborate on any requirement for cross-country analysis or comparison in the scope of this study?

- **We do not have specific requirements for cross-country analysis or comparisons at this time, and only subsequent invited proposal submissions would be expected to provide substantial details on propose parameters for this work.**

Q: Can you please clarify if the scope of this RFC permits secondary analysis on data that the Institute may have already collected (but not yet analyzed) on traditional methods?

- **That is outside of the scope. Secondary analysis can certainly be used to inform concept development but would not be considered as part of the specific project scope as it relates to the research outcomes.**

Q: Are all three articles expected to be submitted to peer-reviewed journals by the end of the 2-year grant period?

- **Ideally all three articles would be ready for submission or submitted for peer-review by the end of the 2-year grant period but we understand flexibility in timeline is necessary preparing and submitting manuscripts.**

## RFC Submission & Administration

Q: May applicants submit or be included in more than one application (i.e. as lead on one and sub-partner on another, or listed as a partner on more than one concept submission)?

- **Yes, both organizations and individuals can be included as part of one or more grant.**

Q: Can Gates please clarify what is included in the 10-page concept note limit? Does this include the concept memo, management structure, key personnel, budget narrative, budget, annex for key personnel biosketches, and annex for past performance? Are annexes included within the 10-page limit?

- **Overall concept submission should be no longer than 15 pages, this is a combination of the concept narrative and the annexes. Required components for submission are listed below.**
- **Required components**
  - **Concept memo – (5 page maximum, using the template and guidelines provided)**
  - **Budget (this does not factor into page limit restrictions)**
    - **If you chose to submit a budget narrative in a word document it will not be counted against your page limit (no longer than 1 page)**
  - **Annexes**
    - **Management Structure (not to exceed 1 page)**
    - **Key Personnel (not to exceed 1 page)**
      - **We expect a description of key personnel positions and brief background on the candidates' experience to be included. From RFC: "This should clearly explain how the technical expertise, education and experience of all key personnel members contribute to achieving expected results; the role and estimated amount of time each key personnel member will devote to the Activity and/or specific components within the Activity."**

Q: Do references count towards the page count for the concept note, or can references be included as an appendix?

- **References will not count against the page count – however we do not expect concepts to include a substantial number of references.**

Q: Can Gates please confirm that the cover letter is not included in the 10-page limit?

- **Confirmed. The Cover Page is not included in the 10-page limit and it is not requirement for submission.**

Q: May applicants submit the concept note budget in word or excel? Does the budget count towards the 10-page limit?

- **Yes, applicants may submit the concept note budget narrative in either word or excel. If submitting in word, the budget narrative will not count towards the 10-page limit.**

Q: Should we submit concept notes via email to [FPproposals@gatesfoundation.org](mailto:FPproposals@gatesfoundation.org) or via Gates' Request for Concept Notes website?

- **Submissions must be made through the website where you will be asked to create a log in. Please see the "How to Apply" section located on the solicitation website. If you have any issues submitting, please email us at [FPproposals@gatesfoundation.org](mailto:FPproposals@gatesfoundation.org)**

Q: Can Gates please confirm that we are only required to complete a separate budget template and narrative for a sub-partner if their budget is greater than \$1 million USD?

- **Applicants are not required to submit a separate subaward budget for the concept submission.**

Q: Would the Foundation permit a grantee to seek co-funding to support this particular body of work?

- **Concepts are expected to propose full execution of scope within the BMGF budget allocation is expected and achievement of the project outcomes should not be reliant on securing co-funding. However, we welcome co-funding that could fund additional elements or activities that build off this investment's specific scope.**

Q: Can you confirm if there is an overhead cap on the "Re-examining Traditional Method Use" program? If so, is it the same for foreign non-profits and institutes of higher education.

- **Maximum Indirect Cost Rates**

Indirect cost rates for grants are subject to the following limitations:



- **The rates provided above are the maximum rates allowed under the foundation's policy.**
- **Maximum Indirect Cost Rates and limitations apply to both the primary applicant organization and any sub-grantees. Each respective organization may receive indirect costs UP TO the rate applicable to their organization type.**

Q: Please clarify whether we should submit 1 page biosketches for each key personnel, 1 page max description of all key personnel (expertise, contributions to project, etc) or include both bio-sketches and description in the annex.

- **Key Personnel section should not exceed 1 page for all positions. Formal biosketches are not required for each position.**
  - **We expect a description of key personnel positions and brief background on the candidates' experience to be included. From RFC: "This should clearly explain how the technical expertise, education and experience of all key personnel members contribute to achieving expected results; the role and estimated amount of time each key personnel member will devote to the Activity and/or specific components within the Activity."**

Q: The second to last paragraph in the Introduction section describes an "award of \$1.5–\$2 million for up to a 2-year project grant for primary data collection in three countries." However, outcomes 3 and 4 go beyond primary data collection. Are these outcomes expected within the 2-year period and covered by the \$1.5-\$2M award?

- **Outcome 3 is included in the specific scope of work, though the timeline for manuscript submission may be flexible. Funding for manuscript submission is expected to be covered by the final project award amount, although some costs related to publishing accepted papers produced from this project can be covered by BMGF (including after the project end date). Outcome 4 requires that data collected through this project should be de-identified (or stripped of all identifiers) and made publicly available.**

Q: Is there a scope for deadline extension for the submission?

- **We have extended the timeline for concept submission. Concepts will now be due October 14.**
- **Please see updated timeline below**
  - **October 14: Deadline for Submitting Concept Memos**
  - **October 30: Finalist(s) Notified to Submit Full Proposal**