Call for proposals:

Use of market shaping to increase access to maternal health supplies in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Nigeria
 **Innovation Fund Guidelines**

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Innovation Fund Guidelines

# Background

The Innovation Fund is the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition’s flagship initiative for inspiring and financing new activities that further the Coalition’s strategic goals and those of its Implementing Mechanisms (IM): Working Groups, Caucuses, and Regional Forums. It is a critical catalyst for bridging all the sectors—advocacy, technical, commercial—that make up the Coalition’s large and diverse membership.

Launched in 2009, the Innovation Fund came into being to ensure that all of the Coalition’s working groups had equal access to the funds needed to carry out their objectives. In 2014, the number and types of groups have expanded to all implementing mechanisms of the Coalition, but the principle underlying the Fund remains the same. Activities eligible for support must serve the larger community, not just the interests of the applicant or implementing agency.

Traditionally, the Coalition has defined the concept of innovation broadly to include any promising new idea with the potential to bring about positive change. Innovation need not mean a radical departure from previous practice but rather could include new approaches to existing processes. Innovation also can apply to systems or processes and the generation of new knowledge. Finally, innovation extends to applying an existing strategy in a new context for the first time, thereby shedding light on how best to replicate and scale up new approaches at the country level.

# Focus on Maternal Health Supplies

The RHSC’s work in the maternal health sector is led by the MHS Caucus, one of the eight implementing mechanisms in the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (RHSC). The Caucus was born out of the June 2011 Access for All Conference, where members requested that the RHSC´s successes in improving FP commodity security be employed to address the challenges facing access to MHS and in particular the leading three life-saving commodities: oxytocin, misoprostol and magnesium sulfate.

Priority activities of the MHS Caucus have included the following:

* Support recommendations of the UN Commission on Life-saving Commodities (UNCoLSC).
* Increase the Coalition´s engagement with the Maternal Health (MH) community, and the membership of MH organizations and representatives within the Coalition.
* Work with Coalition member organizations to build the evidence base for MHS.
* Adapt and utilize existing tools and resources to support better forecasting, management and market dynamics for MHS.
* Provide targeted financial support for MHS activities.

The RHSC is looking for proposals to implement in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and/or Nigeria, one or more implementmarket shaping recommendations from the report [*Increasing Access to Essential Maternal Health Supplies*](http://www.rhsupplies.org/uploads/tx_rhscpublications/Increasing_Access_to_Essential_Maternal_Health_Supplies_-_A_scoping_of_market-based.pdf). The report, prepared by R4D, was commissioned specifically with the purpose of identifying opportunities to apply market shaping tools to address weaknesses in the areas of: affordability, availability, assured quality, appropriate design, and awareness. Because the results of the work to be carried out will shape and inform the Coalition’s future work in the MHS space, sustained engagement by successful applicants is critical. Successful applicants are expected to share project results, collaborate with RHSC members, and organize an end-of-project webinar. All applicants should be members of the RHSC.

Funding for these grants is made possible by the generous support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

# Application process

The Innovation Fund application process on maternal health supplies is a competitive funding with the following schedule:

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| Release of Call for Proposals | July 28, 2016 |
| Proposal submission | September 12, 2016 |
| Notification to applicants | October 24, 2016 |
| Grants issued | November 14, 2016 |

The application and annexes should be sent electronically to Milka Dinev at mdinev@rhsupplies.org by Monday, September 12st, 2016 at 5pm EST time. Applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to the MHS Caucus leadership and members for guidance and feedback and to discuss their project ideas prior to final proposal submission. Please channel all communications through Milka Dinev at mdinev@rhsupplies.org.

An initial screening will take place by the MHS Caucus Chair and selected members of the Caucus under whose authority the proposal is being submitted. Proposals that pass this screening (with or without subsequent modifications) will be submitted to the Innovation Fund’s formal review committee, which includes two members of the Coalition’s governing body, its Executive Committee; the Coalition Director; a representative of PATH (as fiscal agent for funding of sub awards), and potentially external technical expert(s) on maternal health supplies. Applications will be scored by the review committee using a checklist provided in Annex 2 of this announcement. During the review process, the committee may also request further clarification and may, if deemed appropriate, recommend adjustments to the proposed scope of work or budget.

Upon completion of the review, the Secretariat will inform all applicants of the committee’s recommendations. Successful applicants will receive reporting and disbursement schedules. All contractual obligations must be met before any funds can be disbursed.

# Application criteria

All applications must observe the following conditions:

* They should make a convincing case that the proposed activity increases access to affordable, quality maternal health supplies in one or more of the three prioritized countries.
* Preference will be given to implementing organizations based in low- and middle income countries.
* Cost sharing or leveraging of resources is strongly encouraged. It, along with “value for money” will figure prominently in the scoring of proposals. Outcomes should be proportional to the level of investment requested.

The following activities are not eligible for support:

* Research proposals requiring approval by an ethical review board (to avoid a delay before contracting and funding of these activities).
* Routine service delivery or the sponsorship of meetings.
* Proposals submitted by multilateral agencies.

# The grant

The maximum value of any single proposal is US$55,000, with an implementation period of no more than 12 months. Proposals for less than the maximum value amount are welcome and encouraged.

# Monitoring and reporting requirements for all grants

Recipient organizations must submit financial and narrative progress reports and a final financial and narrative report within 30 days of the end of the project’s activities. Progress reports must indicate the degree to which the project is meeting the timelines and outcomes as outlined in the application. They must also include additional information if requested in the original award agreement. Finally, they should explain any notable deviations from the application and the steps being taken to remedy these deviations. The recipient organization will be notified of the reporting schedule upon issuance of the award.

Progress reports and expected deliverables outlined in the grant agreement will be monitored by the RHSC Secretariat and shared with the MHS Caucus. Grantees are expected to actively share project results with the MHS Caucus and engage its members throughout the life cycle of the project (e.g. through participation in annual meetings or regular teleconferences). The successful applicant will be expected to organize a webinar to disseminate the results of the project.

# Relevant background documents:

* [*Increasing Access to Essential Maternal Health Supplies*](http://www.rhsupplies.org/uploads/tx_rhscpublications/Increasing_Access_to_Essential_Maternal_Health_Supplies_-_A_scoping_of_market-based.pdf)
* <http://www.rhsupplies.org/fileadmin/uploads/rhsc/Uploads/Documents/Dalberg_Report_Market_Shaping_for_Family_Planning_WEB.pdf>
* <http://www.rhsupplies.org/fileadmin/uploads/rhsc/Working_Groups/Maternal_Health_Supplies_Caucus/Documents/Essential_Medicines_Maternal_Health_1_.pdf>
* <http://www.rhsupplies.org/fileadmin/uploads/rhsc/Working_Groups/Maternal_Health_Supplies_Caucus/Documents/BusinessCase_MagnesiumSulfate.pdf>
* <http://www.rhsupplies.org/fileadmin/uploads/rhsc/Working_Groups/Maternal_Health_Supplies_Caucus/Documents/BusinessCase_Oxytocin.pdf>
* <http://www.rhsupplies.org/fileadmin/uploads/rhsc/Working_Groups/Maternal_Health_Supplies_Caucus/Documents/BusinessCase_Misoprostol.pdf>
* <http://www.rhsupplies.org/fileadmin/uploads/rhsc/Working_Groups/Maternal_Health_Supplies_Caucus/Documents/MHS_Caucus_fact_sheet_May_21_2013.pdf>
* <http://www.rhsupplies.org/fileadmin/uploads/rhsc/Uploads/Documents/A_Business_Approach_to_Transforming_Public_Health_Supply_Systems.pdf>
* <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/healthymarkets_primer_0.pdf>

# Annex 1: Application form (page 1/5)

## Instructions to applicants:

Use this form to describe and submit your application. **Please limit the length to five pages (not including the cover page, budget narrative, or budget attachment)**. Use eleven-point font, one-inch margins, and single spacing. Applications must be submitted to Milka Dinev, at mdinev@rhsupplies.org: approved proposals will be forwarded to the Innovation Fund.

For any questions, please contact innovation@rhsupplies.org

**Date:**

**Project title:**

**Amount requested: US$**

**Project start date:**

**Project end date:**

**Name of applicant organization/fiscal agent to receive funds:**

**Contact information (name of main contact, mailing address, telephone, and email):**

**Which of the following Strategic Goals, does your proposal support?:**

* Availability: To ensure the availability of reproductive health products and supplies from the manufacturers through the supply systems to point-of-access.
* Choice: Women and men are better able to choose from a wider range of contraceptive and other reproductive health supply options currently available in the global marketplace.
* Equity: To reduce the financial and product-related barriers that hinder access to the supplies people need to ensure their sexual and reproductive health.
* Quality: Women and men in low- and middle-income countries are able to obtain reproductive health supplies they know are safe and effective and meet international quality criteria.

**Please adhere to the following format in outlining your proposed project. The narrative sections of the application (sections 1 – 8) are limited to a maximum of five pages total.**

## 1. Introduction

Describe briefly (two paragraphs maximum) the rationale for the activity being proposed in the context of the Report [*Increasing Access to Essential Maternal Health Supplies*](http://www.rhsupplies.org/uploads/tx_rhscpublications/Increasing_Access_to_Essential_Maternal_Health_Supplies_-_A_scoping_of_market-based.pdf)*.* Specify the particular recommendation(s) that you wish to address, and the country or countries in which you intend to carry out your intervention. Indicate why you have chosen to pursue the recommendations you have, how the intervention(s) you propose to undertake can be considered “market shaping”, and what the consequences (in terms of the MHS market and/or people’s lives) of a successful project are likely to be for the country or countries you have chosen. Specify how you see your work benefitting the Coalition’s MHS work as a whole, whether in terms of knowledge sharing and/or replicability. Describe why you have approached the Innovation Fund as a source of funding for this application. Have other donors previously been approached? Is co-funding available?

## 2. Context

In one paragraph, situate this project within the maternal health supplies landscape in your focus country or countries. Do not repeat information contained in the [*Increasing Access to Essential Maternal Health Supplies*](http://www.rhsupplies.org/uploads/tx_rhscpublications/Increasing_Access_to_Essential_Maternal_Health_Supplies_-_A_scoping_of_market-based.pdf) report, but do include information or insights that you feel strengthen the case for funding your proposal. Describe any consultations with important stakeholders or background research to ensure that the proposal does not duplicate but builds on existing work.

## 3. Project goal and objectives

Describe the overall goal(s) of the project and explain: 1) how they relate to the recommendations you have chosen to address and, if relevant, improve access to maternal health supplies; and 2) how you intend to demonstrate the achievement of these objectives.

## 4. Major activities and milestones

What actions will you take to solve the problem described in the introduction? Provide descriptions of the major activities needed to meet each objective outlined in section. Explain how the activities link to the objective/outcome and provide indicators (qualitative or quantitative) and/or milestones that can be used to gauge progress and/or completion of the major activities. Identify in the format below key milestones that will be used to measure progress on these activities.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Objectives/Activities  | Indicators/Milestones  | Completion Date(s)  |
| Objective 1: Activity X Activity X Activity X | X X X |   |
| Objective 2: Activity X Activity X Activity X | X XX |   |
| Objective 3: Activity X Activity X | X X X |   |

## 5. Innovation

As stated in the guidelines, innovation is defined as “any promising new idea with the potential to bring about positive change.” Based on this definition, provide a brief description as to how this project can be considered innovative.

## 6. Organizational capability

In less than ten lines, specify the attributes of your organization that make you appropriately suited to undertake the proposed activity. This should not be a boilerplate description of the organization itself but rather a focused statement about its suitability for the activities at hand.

Please identify any other organizations that are expected to play a significant role in the implementation of the proposed work. If the proposed activity is to be carried out jointly, please explain (in less than ten additional lines) the rationale for joint implementation and describe the added value each partner brings.

## 7. Monitoring and evaluation

What needs to happen for you to be able to claim success, and how will you know you have achieved it? Describe the proposed methodology for measuring project success. Please indicate how and when you plan to assess the results through internal and/or external evaluations, describing plans for data collection, analysis, and decision-making.

## 8. Dissemination and utilization of knowledge

Describe (one to two paragraphs) what you plan to do to ensure that the results of your proposed activity will be communicated to and inform the work of the Coalition, its members, and/or the broader reproductive health supplies community. Where does the Coalition, as an institution, fit into those plans as an agent of change? How do you intend to use the Coalition (e.g. its communications media, meetings, staff, etc.) as a vehicle for disseminating new knowledge and/or facilitating its utilization?

## 9. Budget narrative (please download the budget template [here](https://www.rhsupplies.org/fileadmin/uploads/rhsc/Innovation_Fund/Guidelines/IF_Budget_and_financial_report_template_2016.xlsx))

The budget component of the application includes a budget spreadsheet and a corresponding budget narrative. Together, they must clearly link the funding you have requested to the major activities described. The budget narrative and spreadsheet should only include the funds requested from the Coalition; however, a brief summary of other sources of support to the project should be included in the narrative.

* Personnel and fringe benefits: Identify the key staff or positions required for this project and the level of effort for each.
* Consultants: List amounts to be paid to individuals and specify what services they will provide. The budget narrative should include descriptions of the work to be performed and associated rates.
* Funds to other organizations: Identify funds that will be used to issue sub agreements or subcontracts to other organizations in furtherance of the project. Include all agreements to be made and/or negotiated with other entities and the price and deliverables over a specified period in relation to the activities proposed. The budget narrative should include concise descriptions of the work to be performed, rates, and whether the contract is confirmed or projected.
* Travel and per diem: Include transportation costs directly related to the major activities, including expenses for all modes of transportation, lodging, meals, automobile expenses, mileage reimbursement, and per diem payments. If your organization has a per diem policy, these should not exceed the US government rates for domestic travel or the WHO/UN or US Department of State rates for international travel for the location. Travel can be grouped according to trip(s) as long as all cost assumptions, including class of travel, are detailed in the budget narrative. Note that backup documentation (receipts) may be required for travel including M&IE, and business class is not allowable.
* Other project costs: The budget narrative should include an itemized list of supplies to be purchased (e.g. other non-personnel/ project-related costs such as office supplies, postage, software, meeting costs, communications, printing, etc.) and all cost assumptions. Desktop and laptop computers are not allowable costs.
* Overhead cost rates: These rates are maximum allowances. If your organization has lower rates, the lower rates should be used. If your budget includes overhead costs, please provide a copy of your institutional overhead policy. If you have a NICRA (negotiated indirect rate cost agreement), please provide a copy. If you do not and the application is successful, then the organization will be required to provide a written explanation of the institutional overhead policy, three years of audited financial statements, and an auditor’s statement as to how it is calculated. If these items cannot be provided, then indirect/overhead rates will not be allowed. To the extent that overhead costs are applicable, they are subject to the following limits:
	+ Up to 15 percent of total direct costs for non-US academic institutions and all private, voluntary, and nongovernmental organizations, regardless of location (including United Nations).
	+ Up to 10 percent of total direct costs for US universities and other academic institutions.
	+ No overhead costs will be paid to US government agencies.
	+ Rates apply to all primary and sub recipients that are part of the application.

# Annex 2: Review checklist of the review committee

## 1. Justification of the project (35 points)

* Is the project in line with the recommendations of the [*Increasing Access to Essential Maternal Health Supplies*](http://www.rhsupplies.org/uploads/tx_rhscpublications/Increasing_Access_to_Essential_Maternal_Health_Supplies_-_A_scoping_of_market-based.pdf)Report?
* Does the proposal focus on Bangladesh, Ethiopia and/or Nigeria?
* Does the project hold out reasonable promise of delivering on expectations? Is it likely to have an impact on overcoming barriers that impede access to maternal health supplies?
* Does the project contribute to the work and effectiveness of the MHS Caucus?

## 2. Well-defined (30 points)

* Does the proposed intervention(s) correspond to what the literature describes as “market shaping”?
* Are objectives and outcomes clearly defined and linked to activities?
* Can the work be carried out adequately in the proposed timeline?
* Is the implementation plan reasonable and rational?
* Does the proposed implementing organization(s) have the capacity and experience required to carry out the work successfully?
* Is the monitoring and evaluation plan adequate?

## 3. Innovative (15 points)

* Does the project correspond to what the Coalition has defined as “innovative?”
* If successful, does the proposed work offer reasonable prospects for inspiring further by Coalition members?

## 4. Budget plan (10 points)

* Clearly described.
* Appropriate for the work described.

## 5. Funding alternatives: (10 possible bonus points)

* Have other donors already been approached?
* Is co-funding available?
* Requested funding does not replace investments that would have been made anyway.