



USAID | GHANA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

March 02, 2010

Reference: Project SEARCH – POPULATION, HEALTH AND NUTRITION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

**SUBJECT : Request for Task Order Proposal (RFTOP) No. 641-10-007:
RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AMONG MOST AT RISK POPULATION (MARP)**

TO ALL IQC Contractors:

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to Ghana is hereby requesting a task order proposal under the Project SEARCH – Population, Health and Nutrition Technical Assistance Support to implement the Research Activities Among Most at Risk Population (MARP) as described in Section C – Statement of Work (SOW). It is anticipated that a Firm Fixed Price (FFP) task order will be awarded as a result of the RFTOP. The estimated period of performance is four (4) years, depending on availability of funds.

Pursuant to Section F.6, Fair Opportunity of the referenced IQC, this RFTOP is issued to your firm per F.6.3(ii) of the basic award.

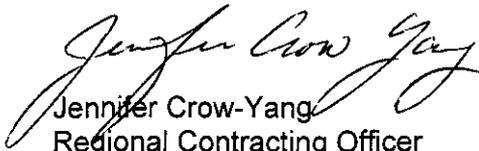
For instructions on proposal submission, see Section L to this RFTOP which sets forth requirements and instructions for the preparation and submission of technical and cost proposals, while Section M states the criteria by which task order proposals will be evaluated.

Issuance of this Request for Task Order Proposal (RFTOP) does constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. The closing date for proposal submission is April 14, 2010 3:00 pm local Accra, Ghana time.

Questions or communications regarding this RFTOP should be directed to Ms. Anne L. Busaka, Sr. Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) Specialist at accracontract@usaid.gov not later than March 17, 2010 1:00 pm local Accra, Ghana time. The subject line for all communications should read: RFTOP No. 641-10-007.

Contractors should retain for their records, copies of any and all attachments, which accompany your Proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jennifer Crow-Yang". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jennifer Crow-Yang
Regional Contracting Officer
Regional Acquisition & Assistance Office (RAAO)
USAID/West Africa

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AMONG MOST AT RISK POPULATION (MARP)
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SEARCH INDEFINITE QUANTITY CONTRACT		
SECTION A –REQUEST FOR TASK ORDER PROPOSAL (RFTOP)		
RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AMONG MOST AT RISK POPULATION (MARP)		
1	RFTOP Number	641-10-007
2	Date RFTOP Issued	MARCH 03, 2010
3	Issuing Office	USAID/WEST AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE OF ACQUISITION & ASSISTANCE (RAAO)
4	Contracting Officer	<i>Jennifer Crow-Yang</i> Office: IVG #202-216-6202 Ext. 1281 Local Telephone #: 011 233-21-741-1266 Ext. 1281 E-mail: jcrow-yang@usaid.gov
5	Proposals to be Submitted to	<i>Anne L. Busaka (see Section L for detailed information)</i> Office: IVG #202-216-6202 Ext. 1266 Local Telephone #: 011 233-21-741-1266 Ext. 1266 Email: abusaka@usaid.gov Email: accracontract@usaid.gov
6	Proposals Due	APRIL 14, 2010
7	Payment Office	See Section G.4 Invoices
8	Name of Firm	
9	IQC Task Order Number	
10	DUNS number	
11	Tax Identification Number	
12	Address of Firm	
13	RFTOP Point of Contact	Name Phone: Fax: Email:
14	Person Authorized to Sign RFTOP	
15	Signature	
16	Date	

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ACRONYM LIST

ART	Anti-Retroviral Treatment
BCC	Behavior Change and Communication
COTR	Contracting Officer's Technical Representative
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
C&T	HIV Counseling and Testing
DOD	Department of Defense
FSW	Female Sex Worker
FP	Family Planning
FFP	Firm Fixed Price
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDU	Intravenous Drug Use
GOG	Government of Ghana
GAC	Ghana AIDS Commission
GDHS	Ghana Demographic and Health Survey
MARP	Most At Risk Population
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSW	Male Sex Worker
MSM	Men who have sex with Men
NPP	Non-Paying Partner
NSF	National Strategic Framework
OI	Opportunistic Infection
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PHE	Public Health Evaluation
PMI	Presidential Malaria Initiative
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PMTCT	Prevention from Mother to Child Transmission
PLHIV	People Living with HIV/AIDS
SI	Strategic Information
STI	Sexual Transmitted Infection
SW	Sex Worker
TB	Tuberculosis
TO	Task Order
TWG	Technical Working Group

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SECTION B – SUPPLIES OR SERVICES AND PRICE/COSTS

B.1 PURPOSE

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), USAID/Ghana requires support to conduct *operational research activities among Most at Risk Population (MARP)* as detailed in Section C.1 Background.

B.2 CONTRACT TYPE

This is a Firm Fixed Price Contract. For the consideration set forth in the contract, the Contractor shall provide the deliverables or outputs described in Section C and comply with all contract requirements.

B.3 BUDGET

The Total Estimated Cost of this acquisition shall not exceed \$800,000.)

The Total Estimated Cost of this acquisition is \$ _____.

For Workdays Ordered \$ _____

For Other Direct Costs \$ _____

Ceiling Price \$ _____

The Firm Fixed Price of this acquisition is \$ _____. The contractor will not be paid any sum in excess of the ceiling price.

See instructions for budget preparation in Section L.6.

B.4 PAYMENT

The paying office information is provided in Section G.4.

B.5 OTHER RFTOP INFORMATION

The final statement of work for the task order that will result from this RFTOP will be incorporated at the time of award and shall be based on the proposal by the successful offeror.

END OF SECTION B

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SECTION C – DESCRIPTION / SPECIFICATIONS/STATEMENT OF WORK

C.1 BACKGROUND

According to UNAIDS estimates, HIV prevalence among adults peaked in 1998 at 2.4% and has gradually declined to 1.7% in 2008. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ghana is described as a mature, low-level generalized epidemic with a high level of infection among certain sub-populations. HIV prevalence varies by geographic location, age, and different sub-population groups. Sexual debut occurs relatively late (18 years old for women and 20 years old for men¹), but appears to be declining. It is estimated that over 70% of HIV-positive adults between 20-39 years old were infected via sexual transmission. Estimated HIV prevalence among certain most-at-risk populations remains very high: 30-45% among female sex workers (FSW) and 26% among men who have sex with men (MSM).² Unlike other African countries however, recent studies show that long-distance truck drivers and miners do not have high infection levels. Data available from VCT centers suggest that prevalence among otherwise very vulnerable *kayayee* (illiterate young female temporary migrants from the northern part of Ghana who work as market porters) is also below the national average. Prevalence among intravenous drug users (IDU) is not known, nor has an estimate of the number of IDU been made. The number of MSM is unknown, though a small study in Accra and Tema identified thirteen unique MSM networks. Nationwide, there are 270,000 people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV). Among the PLHIV who are in a relationship, 70% are in a discordant relationship and relatively few have disclosed their status to their partners. Stigma related to HIV/AIDS remains very high and is a major constraint for MARP and PLHIV groups seeking HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment services as well as other health care services. There are therefore many HIV/AIDS programming questions left unanswered which impact on current and future HIV programs in Ghana.

Ghana's multi-sectoral efforts against HIV and AIDS are led by the Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC) which has played an important role to ensure effective use of resources and management and coordination of HIV/AIDS activities in the country. Based on the "Three Ones" principle, the GOG has developed a five-year National Strategic Framework and a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan. Currently, the GOG is implementing its second National Strategic Framework (NSF II), 2006-2010 which provides broad planning and implementation guidance for public and private sector partners, as well as donors.

For years, USG has been the lead partner in targeting interventions towards most at risk populations. Currently, other donor partners, especially the Global Fund target MARP by directly funding implementers or through the GAC. Under PEPFAR II, and under the auspices of the Partnership Framework, PEPFAR/Ghana anticipates a considerable increase in funding over the next five years. The preliminary objectives of the Partnership Framework are to assist GOG in reducing number of new HIV infections by 30%, increase the number of persons on ART from 30% to 60%, as well as to rapidly increase the number receiving non-ART clinical care.

¹ Ghana Mini-COP 2009

² NSF II, 2006-2010

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While a number of studies and research activities have been done in the areas of HIV/AIDS risk behaviors, attitudes and knowledge to help sharpen HIV programming for MARP, the dynamics of the epidemics and target groups involved requires on-going analyses of the HIV environment to better identify and understand HIV risks associated with both existing and emerging MARP; identify and map locations of existing and emerging MARP for HIV programming and better understand how to improve the knowledge, skills and effectiveness of HIV prevention interventions to inform the development of innovative HIV prevention interventions.

C.2. STATEMENT OF NEED

United States Government (USG) seeks the services of a contractor to provide technical assistance in conducting operational research activities among MARP in order to inform current and future HIV/AIDS prevention efforts in Ghana, so as to help reduce HIV/AIDS transmission among MARP and their sexual partners. It is anticipated that a Firm Fixed Price (FFP) task Order will be awarded as a result of this RFTOP.

The total estimated cost of this acquisition shall not exceed \$800,000.00. The estimated period of performance of this TO is four (4) years.

C.3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this program are as follows:

1. Conduct cost-efficient, small-scale operational research on relevant and timely issues to improve the design and implementation of interventions addressing MARP;
2. Disseminate the above operational research findings, conclusions and recommendations.

C.4 SCOPE OF WORK

The Contractor shall undertake a series of activities for USG/Ghana that focuses primarily on operational research, and recommendations for improved priority setting and strategic direction and planning within the HIV portfolio. USG Ghana requires a proposed program of work that is both creative, realistic, and cost-efficient to address small-scale gaps in research that are impinging on effective HIV prevention program design and implementation among MARP. The suggested approaches shall build upon existing studies, methodologies and data and be forward-thinking in its efforts to answering challenging operational issues. The proposed operational research shall address key issues related to the design and implementation of prevention interventions for MARP and PLHIV, including but not limited to MSM, CSW, IDU, and prison populations.

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The operational research and formative analyses shall not require experimental or quasi-experimental epidemiological methods, such as large-scale cohort, cross-sectional, or randomized designs, nor should there be any experimental comparison groups. Biomarkers for HIV or other sexually transmitted infections shall not be a component of any of the operational research proposed under this scope of work. Additionally, the operational research shall not necessarily seek to produce generalizability of the results. The operational research for this program must not fall under the definition of public health evaluation (PHE).

To improve efficiency, whenever possible, the HIV/AIDS operational research activities undertaken by the Contractor shall be linked with HIV/AIDS prevention, care, treatment, and support services and other health prevention activities to ensure that data and analyses are used for program planning and improvement. The contractor's reports shall include general recommendations for addressing any potential information or programmatic gaps uncovered through the research activities. In order for operational research to be of maximal value, dissemination of the results must occur in a timely fashion and target the appropriate audience, who may include, among others, program designers, managers, and implementers, the Ghana AIDS Commission, other government ministries, local/district authorities, and donor partners. The dissemination activities must take advantage of already established forums in Ghana, including meetings of the National Technical Working Group, the MARP Technical Working Group, the Partnership Forum, and others. In order to ensure cost-efficient dissemination, it is not envisioned that the dissemination activities shall include individual workshops organized by the Offeror.

C.5. TASKS

The task order involves operational research and shall consist of specific activities as outlined below. The activities are intended to provide rapid, though high-quality answers to pressing implementation and operational issues related to MARP and PLHIV.

Contract activities for the duration of the project shall include:

1. Systematic strategic research exercises which must ensure that USG/Ghana prevention programming is aligned with and responsive to the Ghanaian HIV/AIDS epidemic. The research studies shall contribute to the identification of key questions that shall be answered through future re-alignment of program priorities and programming. The primary aim is to utilize available data and evidenced-based recommendations for improved HIV prevention programming and targeting, including necessary programmatic shifts and/or new programming needs.

In year one, the Contractor shall conduct five (5) research activities as follows:

- a. Conduct formative analyses to better identify and understand the HIV risks associated with prison populations in Ghana;
- b. Conduct situation analyses to identify and map locations of IDU, using qualitative or other innovative research methods;

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- c. Conduct operational research to better understand how to improve the knowledge, skills and effectiveness of peer educators in HIV prevention interventions for MARP;
- d. Conduct formative analyses on MSM who are also engaged in sex work to understand their needs and to inform the development of innovative HIV prevention interventions;
- e. Conduct formative research on young MARP in high-prevalence areas to understand their needs and to inform the development of innovative HIV prevention interventions;

In year 2, 3 and 4, additional research areas have been proposed for completion by the contractor, subject to availability of funding and identification of specific research subject between the COTR and the contractor. The contractor shall focus on but not limited to the following research areas during the subsequent years:

- Operational research on the use of new and emerging technologies (e.g. mobile telephones, internet) to improve the reach and effectiveness of prevention interventions among MARP
- Formative analyses on older “undercover” MSM to understand their needs and to inform the development of innovative HIV prevention interventions
- Formative analyses using qualitative methods on condom use among FSW to attempt to resolve reporting disparities between various surveys and methodologies
- Formative analyses on *kayayee* (illiterate young female temporary migrants from the northern part of Ghana who work as market porters) to understand their HIV-related risks behaviors
- Formative analyses to better identify and understand the HIV risks associated with IDU in Ghana
- Formative analyses to better understand the secondary prevention and related needs of PLWHA and the reach of current interventions.

The selection of the specific additional topics for the operational research in subsequent years shall be determined in consultations between the USAID COTR, Ghana AIDS Commission, other relevant stakeholders and the contractor. At a minimum, an annual meeting between selected key stakeholders shall be held to discuss emerging priorities that may warrant investigation under this program in future years. The COTR shall make the final decisions on what studies to be pursued in subsequent years of the program.

The task shall lead to the following results:

- a. Identification of priority target populations and effective interventions for future programming.
- b. Identification of gaps that exist in the current USG/GOG HIV MARP portfolio.

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C.6. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The roles and responsibilities of the successful Contractor and USAID are as follows:

Contractor:

1. Within 30 days after the signing of the task order, provide a revised overall work plan and a monitoring and evaluation plan, to be approved by USAID, that describes all activities, their sequence and time frames, output/milestone and performance indicators against which the results achieved by the contractor will be measured.
2. Submit quarterly financial summaries for the Task Order contract showing cost to date, budget estimate, advances, contractual obligation, variations and cost to complete. The contractor will track the level of funding available and utilized for sub-grants (if any) and the level of funding available and utilized for administrative support and oversight.
3. Submit semi-annual progress reports to USAID that describe progress in implementing the program in accordance with the terms of the Task Order, and measured against results specified in the overall work plan.

USAID and the SO team:

1. Specification of the directions shall be included in a COTR letter of which a copy will be provided to the contractor.
2. USAID through the designated COTR shall provide programmatic and financial oversight of the task order.

C.7. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

Deliverables include;

1. Overall, a total of twenty (20) protocols over the life of the proposed 4 year period shall be developed.
2. Final reports that outline research findings, recommended programmatic shifts, if any, and /or new programmatic needs for use and dissemination through a national HIV/AIDS Stakeholder's forum. This deliverable is required in-country and comes at the completion of each research study. The results of these discussions with partners and within USG team shall contribute to a possible strategic reorientation of the USG portfolio for prevention of sexual transmissions.
3. Prepare (1-2 page) advocacy papers based on the operational research findings targeting program implementers and policy-makers for each study completed.
4. Conduct dissemination sessions to present and disseminate all operational research findings, conclusions and recommendations from each topic that is pursued.

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The contractor shall organize and disseminate research finding and advocacy papers at meetings with Ghana AIDS Commission, selected Government of Ghana ministry representatives, local/district government representatives, representatives from selected implementing organizations, and other relevant stakeholders for each study completed.

All of the evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations shall be documented in individual reports. All written deliverables shall also be submitted electronically to the COTR. Bound/color printed deliverables may also be required, when directed by the COTR.

C. 8 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The contractor shall submit monthly progress and performance reports, and monthly financial reports to USAID in compliance with the terms of the Task Order. The reports shall include:

- a) Annual work plans (1-2 pages),
- b) Semi-annual and annual progress reports (2-5 pages each), and
- c) Quarterly financial reports.

A final report that synthesizes the work, deliverables and results of the project over the entire task order duration will be due before the task order completion date.

C. 9. IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Contractor shall provide contract management necessary to fulfill all the requirements of this task order. This includes cost and quality control under this contract.

C.10 PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN

The contractor's performance shall be evaluated based on the completion of specific tasks as outlined in the Task Order, adherence to the work plan, and reports submitted to the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR).

END OF SECTION C

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SECTION D – PACKAGING AND MARKING

D.1 AIDAR 752.7009 MARKING (JAN 1993)

(a) It is USAID policy that USAID-financed commodities and shipping containers, and project construction sites and other project locations be suitably marked with the USAID emblem. Shipping containers are also to be marked with the last five digits of the USAID financing document number. As a general rule, marking is not required for raw materials shipped in bulk (such as coal, grain, etc.), or for semi-finished products which are not packaged.

(b) Specific guidance on marking requirements should be obtained prior to procurement of commodities to be shipped, and as early as possible for project construction sites and other project locations. This guidance will be provided through the cognizant technical office indicated on the cover page of this contract, or by the Mission Director in the Cooperating Country to which commodities are being shipped, or in which the project site is located.

(c) Authority to waive marking requirements is vested with the Regional Assistant Administrators, and with Mission Directors.

(d) A copy of any specific marking instructions or waivers from marking requirements is to be sent to the Contracting Officer; the original should be retained by the Contractor.

D.2 BRANDING

The Contractor shall comply with the requirements of the USAID “Graphic Standards Manual” available at www.usaid.gov/branding, or any successor branding policy.

D.3 BRANDING STRATEGY PLAN

The Branding Strategy (BS) is developed to outline the framework in which materials and communications produced under this task order will be used to deliver the message that the assistance is from the American people, as well as to ensure appropriate use of the USAID identity markings. In line with ADS Chapter 320 (Branding and Marking) and USAID's overall policy, all assistance delivered, including communication products and publications produced under this task order, whether for public events or for distribution, will be branded with the brand identity of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and will carry the message that assistance is provided by the American people. Such materials will also be branded with any program logo developed by the prospective contractor, in consultation with the designated COTR, and approved by USAID.

The contractor will be responsible to comply with the following branding requirements when developing the branding implementation plan and marking plan:

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General:

- All USAID programs, partially or fully funded, are required to be marked appropriately as “American Aid”. (Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961)
- The contractor must develop a branding implementation plan and marking plan and submitted to contracting officer of USAID for approval. The marking plan should detail the type and level of marking for activities, public communications, and commodities that will have USAID identity.
- There are presumptive exceptions that may apply if marking would interfere with USAID and recipient program’s goals. Presumptive exceptions can be approved through the contracting officer via marking plan.
- An emergency marking waiver can be determined by the USAID Mission Director for safety reasons.
- USAID reserves the right to review materials that might bear the USAID Identity before production to ensure they comply with the marking plan and branding regulations.
- Public communication should also include a disclaimer.
- In circumstances when the USAID Identity cannot be displayed visually, recipients are encouraged to verbally acknowledge USAID and the American people for their generous support.

USAID Logo:

- The brand-mark must always include the tagline. Do not re-create the USAID Identity under any circumstances.
- The color background of the USAID Identity can only be “white, light gray or light blue”. On publication covers, the background of the USAID Identity must always be “white.”
- The Graphic Standard Manual (found at www.usaid.gov) provides specific technical guidance around the color, clear space, minimum print size and usage for the logo as well as font guidelines.
- The USAID Identity and sub-brand should be in color whenever possible. The black-only option can be used whenever print technology or budget does not allow for the full-color or two-color version. No other color combination is permitted.
- Programs under USAID should not have a competing logo.
- The USAID Identity can be used vertically or horizontally.
- The country sub-brand is for USAID Mission use only.
- Concerning letterhead, USAID contractors or grantees may use the USAID brand identity on letterhead; however, they must not use this letterhead for administrative communications as outline in ADS 320.3.1.5.

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For Contractor:

- Contractors own organizational logos **should NOT be included** on program materials unless approved in advance by USAID.
- For USAID funded communications published by a contractor, the USAID Identity must be placed in the upper left corner in a white field.
- Contractor must **NOT** use the USAID brand mark on their business cards. They may, at their option, use the phrase “USAID Contractor” or “USAID Grantee” as appropriate on their business cards to identify their working relationship with the agency.
- There are mandatory communications templates for common items such as success stories and power point presentations. For power point presentations, the Identity is preferred on all sides but is required on title and transition slides. If Identity is not on all slides, use a headline at top of slide. Never move Identity to bottom of slides.

D.4 Branding Implementation Plan (BIP)

The contractor must develop BIP that describe how the program will be promoted to beneficiaries and host-country citizens. It outlines the events (press conferences, site visits, etc.) and materials (success stories, Public Service Announcements [PSAs], etc.) the contractor will organize and produce to assist USAID in delivering the message that the assistance is from the American people.

The BIP should specifically address the following:

- a) How to incorporate the message, “This assistance is from the American people,” in communications and materials directed to beneficiaries, or provide an explanation if this message is not appropriate or possible.
- b) How to publicize the program, project, or activity in the host-country and a description of the communications tools to be used. Such tools may include the following:
 - Press releases;
 - Press conferences;
 - Media interviews, etc.
- c) The key milestones or opportunities anticipated to generate awareness that the program, project, or activity is from the American people, or an explanation if this is not appropriate or possible. Such milestones may be linked to specific points in time, such as the beginning or end of a program, or to an opportunity to showcase publications or other materials, research findings, or program success. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Launching the program;
 - Announcing research findings;
 - Publishing reports or studies;
 - Spotlighting trends;
 - Promoting final or interim reports; and
 - Communicating program impact/overall results.

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D.5 Marking Plan

A Marking Plan shall be developed by the prospective contractor to enumerate the public communications and program materials and other items that visibly bear or will be marked with the USAID Identity. Per ADS 320.3.2, USAID's policy, programs and project's activities, public communications, or commodities implemented or delivered under contracts and sub-contracts exclusively funded by USAID have to be marked exclusively with the USAID Identity. Where applicable, a host-country symbol or ministry logo, or another U.S. Government logo may be added.

The Marking Plan should address the following requirements:

- a) Public communication financed by USAID contracts that are print products must prominently display the USAID Identity, when appropriate. These communications include, but not limited to, the following:
- Publications;
 - Reports;
 - Research results, studies, and evaluations;
 - Brochures, leaflets, informational, and promotional materials;
 - Folders;
 - (Non-administrative) Advertisements about program events/activities;
 - Training manuals, workbooks, and guides;
 - Press releases, fact sheets, media advisories;
 - Letterhead used for program-related purposes (invitations to events, etc...), as opposed to contractor administrative purposes.

The Marking Plan may include requests for exceptions to marking requirements, if any; however, it has to be approved by the Contracting Officer.

Branding guidance and digital file format are available for download at www.usaid.gov/branding.

END OF SECTION D

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SECTION E - INSPECTION AND ACCEPTANCE

E.1 TASK ORDER PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Task order performance evaluation shall be performed in accordance with Project SEARCH IQC, Section E.2 – Inspection and Acceptance and Section F.7 – Monitoring and Evaluation Plan..

END OF SECTION E

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SECTION F – DELIVERIES OR PERFORMANCE

F.1 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The estimated period of performance for this task order shall not exceed Four (4) years. The actual period of performance shall be reflected in the resultant Task Order.

Within 30 days after the signing of the task order, the contractor shall provide a revised overall work plan and a monitoring and evaluation plan, to be approved by USAID, that describes all activities, their sequence and time frames, output/milestone and performance indicators against which the results achieved by the contractor will be measured.

F.2. DELIVERABLES

Deliverables	(see Section C.7 above)
1.	The contractor shall deliver Overall, a total of twenty (20) protocols over the life of the proposed 4 year period shall be developed
2.	Final reports that outline research findings, recommended programmatic shifts, if any, and /or new programmatic needs for use and dissemination through a national HIV/AIDS Stakeholder's forum. This deliverable is required in-country and comes at the completion of each research study. The results of these discussions with partners and within USG team shall contribute to a possible strategic reorientation of the USG portfolio for prevention of sexual transmissions.
3.	Prepare (1-2 page) advocacy papers based on the operational research findings targeting program implementers and policy-makers for each study completed
4.	Conduct dissemination sessions to present and disseminate all operational research findings, conclusions and recommendations from each topic that is pursued. The contractor shall organize and disseminate research finding and advocacy papers at meetings with Ghana AIDS Commission, selected Government of Ghana ministry representatives, local/district government representatives, representatives from selected implementing organizations, and other relevant stakeholders for each study completed.

See Section C.7 Expected Deliverables for full information and definitive listing. All of the evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations shall be documented in individual reports. All written deliverables shall also be submitted electronically to the COTR. Bound/color printed deliverables may also be required, as directed by the COTR.

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F.3 TECHNICAL DIRECTION AND DESIGNATION OF RESPONSIBLE USAID OFFICIALS

Technical Directions during the performance of this task order shall be provided by the designated Task Order Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) in the USAID/Ghana Health Office, and in his/her absence, his/her designee, the Alternate COTR, as designated by the Task Order Contracting officer.

The Contracting Office is;

Jennifer Crow-Yang
Regional Contracting Officer
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Regional Acquisition & Assistance Office (RAAO)
No. 24 Fourth Circular Road, Cantonments
P.O. Box 1630, Accra, Ghana
Telephone: IVG 202-216-6202 Ext. 1281
Telephone: 233-21-741-1281
Email: jcrow-yang@usaid.gov

The COTR and A/COTR will be designated separately by the Contracting Officer.

The Technical Office is:

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Health, Population and Nutrition Office
No. 24 Fourth Circular Road, Cantonments
P.O. Box 1630, Accra, Ghana

F.4 PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The place of performance under this Task Order shall be in Ghana, as specified in the Statement of Work.

Geographic Coverage

Depending on the operational research topic, application of the findings may have a national or a local focus. In all cases, data collection methods and geographic regions in Ghana should be selected such that study costs remain low. (see attachment J.4)

F.5 AUTHORIZED WORK DAY / WEEK

No overtime or premium pay is authorized under this Task Order.

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F.6 REPORTS AND DELIVERABLES OR OUTPUTS

In addition to the requirements set forth for submission of reports in Sections I and J, and in accordance with AIDAR clause 752.242-70, Periodic Progress Reports, the Contractor shall submit reports, deliverables or outputs as further described below to the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) (referenced in Sections F.3 and G). All reports and other deliverables shall be in the English language, unless otherwise specified by the COTR.

(a) **Monthly Reports:** The Contractor shall provide to the COTR, within 5 days after the end of each month, a report on the activities undertaken during the month. The monthly report should seek to be a brief yet precise, description of the activities, with emphasis on issues that have arisen, impacts made, constraints encountered, and suggestions for additional actions that might be taken. The monthly report should also include the Contractor's accrued monthly expenditures. The COTR is responsible for transmitting this information to the USAID financial management office responsible for the contract.

(b) **Quarterly Reports:** Quarterly Reports shall be submitted within seven calendar days before the start of the new quarter. The scope and format of the quarterly reports will be determined in consultation with the COTR.

(c) **Annual Workplans:** Annual Workplans shall be required of the Contractor that will detail the work to be accomplished during the upcoming year. The scope and format of the Annual Workplan will be agreed to between the Contractor and the COTR during the first thirty days after the award of the contract. These Annual Workplans may be revised on an occasional basis, as needed, to reflect changes on the ground and with the concurrence of the COTR.

The first Annual Workplan shall be submitted within one month of award of the contract. The workplan should include the estimated monthly funding requirements during the upcoming year of program implementation, necessary to meet all program objectives within the contract. USAID will respond to the workplan within five calendar days.

(d) **Final Report:** The Contractor shall prepare a final report that matches accomplishments to the specific paragraphs of the Scope of Work. The final report will be drafted to allow for incremental improvements in the process, both generally within USAID and specifically with respect to this contract.

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**F.7 AIDAR 752.7005 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT
EXPERIENCE DOCUMENTS (JAN 2004) (AAPD 04-06)**

(a) Contract Reports and Information/Intellectual Products.

(1) The Contractor shall submit to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) copies of reports and information products which describe, communicate or organize program/project development assistance activities, methods, technologies, management, research, results and experience as outlined in the Agency's ADS Chapter 540. Information may be obtained from the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR). These reports include: assessments, evaluations, studies, development experience documents, technical reports and annual reports. The Contractor shall also submit to copies of information products including training materials, publications, databases, computer software programs, videos and other intellectual deliverable materials required under the Contract Schedule. Time-sensitive materials such as newsletters, brochures, bulletins or periodic reports covering periods of less than a year are not to be submitted.

(2) Upon contract completion, the Contractor shall submit to DEC an index of all reports and information/intellectual products referenced in paragraph (a)(1) of this clause.

(b) Submission requirements.

(1) Distribution.

(i) At the same time submission is made to the COTR, the Contractor shall submit, one copy each, of contract reports and information/intellectual products (referenced in paragraph (a)(1) of this clause) in either electronic(preferred) or paper form to one of the following:

(A) Online: <http://dec.usaid.gov> ;

(B) By mail (for pouch delivery):

DEXS Document Submissions
M/CIO/KM/DEC
RRB M.01.010
Washington, DC 20523-6100

For questions on DEC submissions, contact;

M/CIO/KM/DEC
Telephone: +1 202-712-0579
Email: DocSubmit@usaid.gov

(ii) The Contractor shall submit the reports index referenced in paragraph (a)(2) of this clause and any reports referenced in paragraph (a)(1) of this clause that have not been previously submitted to DEC, within 30 days after completion of the contract to one of the address cited in paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this clause.

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(2) Format.

(i) Descriptive information is required for all Contractor products submitted. The title page of all reports and information products shall include the contract number(s), Contractor name(s), name of the USAID cognizant technical office, the publication or issuance date of the document, document title, author name(s), and strategic objective or activity title and associated number. In addition, all materials submitted in accordance with this clause shall have attached on a separate coversheet the name, organization, address, telephone number, fax number, and Internet address of the submitting party.

(ii) The report in paper form shall be prepared using non-glossy paper (preferably recycled and white or off-white using black ink. Elaborate art work, multicolor printing and expensive bindings are not to be used. Whenever possible, pages shall be printed on both sides.

(iii) The electronic document submitted shall consist of only one electronic file which comprises the complete and final equivalent of the paper copy.

(iv) Acceptable software formats for electronic documents include WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, and Portable Document Format (PDF). Submission in PDF is encouraged.

(v) The electronic document submission shall include the following descriptive information:

(A) Name and version of the application software used to create the file, e.g., MSWord6.0 or Acrobat Version 5.0.

(B) The format for any graphic and/or image file submitted, e.g., TIFF-compatible.

(C) Any other necessary information, e.g. special backup or data compression routines, software used for storing/retrieving submitted data or program installation instructions.

END OF SECTION F

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SECTION G – TASK ORDER ADMINISTRATION DATA

G.1 CONTRACTING OFFICER'S AUTHORITY

The Contracting Officer is the only person authorized to make or approve any changes in the requirements of this task order and notwithstanding any provisions contained elsewhere in this task order, the said authority remains solely in the Contracting Officer. In the event the Contractor makes any changes at the direction of any person other than the Contracting Officer, the change shall be considered to have been made without authority and no adjustment shall be made in the contract terms and conditions, including price.

G.2 TECHNICAL DIRECTION

USAID/Ghana, Health Office shall provide technical oversight to the Contractor through the designated COTR. The contracting officer shall issue a letter appointing the COTR for the task order and provide a copy of the designation letter to the contractor.

G.3 ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

In order to receive payment, all deliverables must be accepted and approved by the COTR.

G.4 INVOICES

One (1) original of each invoice shall be submitted on an SF-1034 Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other Than Personal to the Controller, USAID/Ghana. One copy of the voucher and the invoice shall also be submitted to the Contracting Officer and the COTR.

Electronic submission of invoices is encouraged. All electronic vouchers must be sent to: Accra-cont@usaid.gov.

The SF-1034 must be signed, and it must be submitted along with the invoice and any other documentation in Adobe.

Paper Invoices shall be sent to the following address:

Mailing address:

Controllers Office
USAID/West Africa
P.O. Box 1630
Accra.

Attn: Priscilla Twum-Ampofo

If submitting invoices electronically, do not send a paper copy.

END OF SECTION G

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SECTION H – SPECIAL TASK ORDER REQUIREMENTS

H.1 KEY PERSONNEL

The contractor shall provide the following key personnel for the performance of this task order:

The Offerors shall propose at least four Ghana based researchers, of which one senior researcher shall assume the role of key personnel but not on full time basis. This position must be personnel directly responsible for management of the contract, or whose professional/technical skills are certified by the TO COTR as being essential for the successful implementation of the activity. S/he will oversee all activities and ensure technical quality and timeliness of deliverables.

USAID reserves the right to adjust the level of key personnel during the performance of this task order.

H.2 LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

The contractor personnel and/or consultant shall have English language proficiency to perform the technical services. All deliverables shall be produced in English unless otherwise notified by the designated Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR).

H.3 GOVERNMENT FURNISHED FACILITIES OR PROPERTY

The Contractor and any employee or consultant of the Contractor is prohibited from using U.S. Government facilities (such as office space or equipment) or U.S. Government clerical or technical personnel in the performance of the services specified in the Task Order unless the use of Government facilities or personnel is specifically authorized in the Task Order or is authorized in advance, in writing, by the COTR.

H.4 CONFIDENTIALITY AND OWNERSHIP OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All reports generated and data collected during this project shall be considered the property of USAID and shall not be reproduced, disseminated or discussed in open forum, other than for the purposes of completing the tasks described in this document, without the express written approval of a duly-authorized representative of USAID. All findings, conclusions and recommendations shall be considered confidential and proprietary.

H.5 CONTRACTOR'S STAFF SUPPORT, AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTICS ARRANGEMENTS

The Contractor shall be responsible for all administrative support and logistics required to fulfill the requirements of this task order. These shall include all travel arrangements, appointment scheduling, secretarial services, report preparations services, printing, and duplicating.

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H.6 PERIODIC PROGRESS REPORTS (OCT 2007)

(a) The contractor shall prepare and submit progress reports as specified in the contract schedule. These reports are separate from the interim and final performance evaluation reports prepared by USAID in accordance with FAR 42.15 and internal Agency procedures, but they may be used by USAID personnel or their authorized representatives when evaluating the contractor's performance.

(b) During any delay in furnishing a progress report required under this contract, the contracting officer may withhold from payment an amount not to exceed US\$25,000 (or local currency equivalent) or 5 percent of the amount of this contract, whichever is less, until such time as the contractor submits the report or the contracting officer determines that the delay no longer has a detrimental effect on the Government's ability to monitor the contractor's progress.

END OF SECTION H

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SECTION I – CONTRACT CLAUSES

I.1 Reference Project SEARCH IQC.

END OF SECTION I

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SECTION J – LIST OF DOCUMENTS EXHIBITS AND OTHER ATTACHEMENTS

SECTION J - LIST OF ATTACHMENTS –

Attachment Number	Title
J.1	USAID Supported Districts – 1 page
J.2	Appendix A – Proposed Illustrative Research: Background and Questions – 1 page
J.3	Appendix B – Most-At-Risk populations in Ghana, including People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) - 2 pages
J.4	USAID Health Activity Districts – June 2009 - 1 page
J.5	USAID FORM 1420-17 Contractor Biographical Data Sheet* 1 page

* A hard copy is attached at the end of this document; however, for an electronic version, please locate the form at <http://www.usaid.gov/forms/AID1420-17.doc>. The copy of the form is being provided herewith for reference purpose only.

END OF SECTION J

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SECTION K – REPRESENTATIONS, CERTIFICATIONS, AND OTHER STATEMENTS

Not required.

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SECTION L - INSTRUCTIONS, CONDITIONS, AND NOTICES TO OFFERORS

L.1 GENERAL

The Government anticipates the award of one (1) Fixed Price Task Order as a result of this RFTOP; however, it reserves the right to make multiple awards or no award.

L.2 ACQUISITION SCHEDULE

The schedule for this acquisition is anticipated to be as follows:

	<u>Date</u>
RFTOP issued	March 03, 2010
Questions due	March 17, 2010
Answers to questions disseminated	March 24, 2010
Proposals due	April 14, 2010
Technical evaluation	April 19 to 26, 2010
Award of task order	May 27, 2010
Performance begins	June 14, 2010
Debriefings begin (if required)	June 03, 2010

All Questions relating to this RFTOP must be submitted to Anne L. Busaka at abusaka@usaid.gov via email no later than March 17, 2010, 3:00 p.m. local time Accra, Ghana. Unless otherwise notified by an amendment to the RFTOP, no questions will be accepted after this date. Offerors must not submit questions to any other USAID staff, including the technical office for either the Task Order or the basic IQC.

U.S. Government reserves the right to amend the schedule as necessary.

L.3 PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Technical and cost proposals must be submitted separately. Both technical and cost proposals will be evaluated. On a relative basis, cost is less significant than all technical factors combined.

a) The Technical proposal will be scored by a Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) using the criteria shown in Section L.5 below.

b) Evaluation points are not assigned for cost; the evaluation will include level of effort estimated, identified by name for each labor category and proposed rate. A detailed breakdown of other direct costs (transportation, travel, per diem, etc) must be accompanied by notes explaining the basis for the estimate for each category of cost in sufficient detail to facilitate determination of cost reasonableness. Supporting documents must be provided, as necessary. For proposed costs over \$500,000, the offeror must also submit a subcontracting plan.

c) The criteria below are presented by major category, with relative order of importance, so that offerors will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of proposals.

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Note: These criteria serve as: (1) the standard against which all proposals will be evaluated, and (2) to identify the significant matters which should be addressed in the proposals.

Questions submission:

All questions and requests for clarification relating to this RFTOP must be directed to Anne L. Busaka at abusaka@usaid.gov not later than 15:00 hours local Accra, Ghana time on the due date specified in Section L.2 above.

Proposal Submission:

The offerors must submit the proposals by the due date specified in Section L.2 above by 15:00 hours local Accra, Ghana time to the following address:

Technical and cost submission in separate binders to:

Anne L. Busaka
Sr. Acquisition 7 Assistance Specialist
U.S. Agency for International Development
No. 24 Fourth Circular Rd., Cantonments
P.O. Box 1630, Accra, Ghana

Telephone; 233-21-741-1266

In addition to the hard copy submission, an electronic submission must be sent to: accracontract@usaid.gov.

L.4 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS

- (a) RFTOP Instructions: If an Offeror does not follow the instructions set forth herein, the Offeror's proposal may be eliminated from further consideration or the proposal may be down-graded and not receive full or partial credit under the applicable evaluation criteria.
- (b) Accurate and Complete Information: Offerors must set forth full, accurate and complete information as required by this RFTOP. The penalty for making false statements to the Government is prescribed in 18 U.S.C. 1001.
- (c) Offer Acceptability: The Government may determine an offer to be unacceptable if the offer does not comply with all of the terms and conditions of the RFTOP.
- (d) Proposal Preparation Costs: The U.S. Government will not pay for any proposal preparation costs.

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L.5 INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Technical Proposal Submission Format

The Technical Proposal in response to this RFTOP shall address how the offeror intends to carry out the Statement of Work contained in Section C. It shall demonstrate a clear understanding of the work to be undertaken and the responsibilities of all parties involved. The technical proposal should be organized by the technical evaluation criteria listed in Section M.

Proposals are limited to **20** pages for all information requested herein, **OVER 20 PAGES WILL NOT BE EVALUATED**. Proposals shall be written in English and printed on standard 8 1/2" x 11" paper or A4 (216mm by 297mm paper), single spaced, using Times New Roman font, regular, size 12 with each page numbered consecutively. The eight (8) page proposed research protocol (see Appendix A) counts towards the 20 page total. Attachments (annexures) should not exceed 15 pages and must be lettered (e.g. Attachment "A") and can include resumes of key personnel, letters of support, letters from public entities, and other supporting documents, such as tables or charts.

- Table of contents listing all pages, numbers and attachments
- Acronym list, as necessary

The technical proposal shall include the following information:

a) Technical Understanding and Approaches:

The technical proposal should present cost-efficient, strategic, and technical approach(es) that describe how the offeror shall effectively and efficiently conduct two proposed studies (see Appendix A – Attachment J.2). The response should be in the form of an outlined research protocol, including (but not limited to) sections outlining methodologies and sampling, an analysis plan, and potential collaborations.

- Propose cost-efficient and sound technical approach(es) for two research protocols for the questions found in Appendix A (attachment J.2).

b) Personnel and Management Structure:

The technical proposal must demonstrate that the Offerer is able to identify a minimum of four (4) Ghana-based researchers by name and position and include a resume (brief summary of each person's relevant work experience) for these personnel.

The proposal should also outline how the program will be managed, describing the roles and responsibilities of the proposed research staff and the management structures that will be put in place to ensure that the staff have the support necessary to effectively produce the contract deliverables.

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- Propose personnel who have relevant professional qualifications and experience appropriate to manage and undertake operational research activities.
- Propose sound and strategic management structures to effectively and efficiently carry out the proposed scope of work

c) Corporate Experience & Past Performance:

The technical proposal should demonstrate that the Offerer's management of the overall project and the individual operational research activities will be effective and cost-efficient in rapidly undertaking operational research topics, while maintaining a high level of quality. The Offeror shall come up with a performance monitoring plan to effectively monitor and report on the activities and results, and show clear understanding of the opportunities and constraints related to supporting the objectives and activities outlined in the SOW and achieving the planned results

- Demonstrate organizational knowledge and corporate capability to develop, manage, implement, monitor and evaluate similar activities in Africa.
- Describe relevant work experience and representative accomplishments in managing and implementing similar rapid programs.

The offeror shall submit a list of 5 contracts and/or subcontracts awarded within the last five years and provide performance information for each of the activities; i.e. list of contact names, job titles, mailing addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses, as well as the project name, primary location(s) of work, term of performance, and dollar value.

(USAID recommends that you alert the contacts that their names have been submitted and that they are authorized to provide performance information concerning the listed contracts if and when USAID requests it)

If extraordinary problems impacted any of the referenced contracts, provide a short explanation and the corrective action taken.

USAID reserves the right to obtain past performance information from other sources including those not named in the Offeror's application.

L.6 COST PROPOSALS INSTRUCTIONS

Cost has not been assigned a score but will be evaluated for cost reasonableness, allocability, allowability, cost effectiveness and realism, adequacy of budget detail and financial feasibility and cost sharing (if applicable). While cost may be a determining factor in the final award decision, especially between closely ranked proposals, the technical merit of proposals is substantially more important under this RFTOP.

This will be a four-year task order with an estimated budget of \$800,000 over the life of the project. The contractor is expected to propose a realistic budget to support the expected results described in the statement of work in Section C of this RFTOP.

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The cost proposal shall be submitted under separate cover from the technical proposal and should be prepared in accordance with the basic IQC and the SOW. While there is no page limit, the Offerors are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary detail to address the solicitation requirement.

Cost Elements	Total
Direct Labor	\$ _____
Travel, Transportation & Perdiem	\$ _____
Allowances	\$ _____
Equipment	\$ _____
Subcontracts	\$ _____
Other Direct Cost	\$ _____
Indirect Cost	\$ _____
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	\$ _____

The contractor's budget shall include the following information:

A detailed level of effort estimate: Provide a separate line item for each proposed individual and identify each by name and labor category as set forth in the contract. Biographical Data Sheets (AID Form 1420-17) supporting proposed daily rates for proposed candidates.

A detailed estimate for other direct costs (for example, travel, allowances, per diem etc.): Please explain the basis and budget narrative for the estimate for each category of cost.

If subcontracting is contemplated: The contractor shall indicate the types of work to be subcontracted, stating the percentage of each type of work subcontracted, the extent to which competition will be solicited prior to selection, subcontractor(s) selected and reasons therefore, and the method of analyzing prospective subcontractor proposals.

a. Salary and Wages: A detailed level of effort estimate shall be provided for the four-year period. The contractor shall provide a separate line item for each proposed individual and identify each by name, title, proposed level of effort, daily rate and total costs

The contractor shall provide the computations that were utilized in developing the proposed local-hired national personnel and other non-U.S. expatriate salary. The contractor shall show the unburdened rate and any other costs applied to develop the proposed salary. Additionally, out-year labor escalation shall be explained and justified.

b. Fringe Benefits: If the Contractor has a fringe benefit rate that has been approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, such rate must be used and evidence of its approval must be provided. If a fringe benefit rate has not been so approved, the cost proposal must propose a rate and explain how the rate was determined. If the latter is used, the narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, FICA, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in dollars and as a percentage of salaries;

c. Sub-Contractors: Any goods and services delivered by a subcontractor

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d. Travel and Transportation: The contractor must include international and in-country air travel. Per diem is calculated based on current rates.

e. Other Direct Costs: . This includes communications, report preparation costs, passports, visas, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than insurance included in the applicant's fringe benefits), equipment, office rent abroad, office supplies and other related supply items related to this activity; etc.

f. Indirect Costs: The Contractor shall support the proposed indirect cost rate with a letter from a cognizant U.S. Government audit agency, a Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement (NICRA), or with sufficient information for USAID to determine the reasonableness of the rates. Indirect Costs in accordance with your approved NICRA but not to exceed any indirect cost ceilings set forth in the IQC.

Note: Individual subcontractors should include the same cost element breakdowns in their budgets as applicable.

END OF SECTION L

SECTION M – EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD

M.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

- (a) The Government may award a task order without discussions with offerors.
- (b) The Government intends to evaluate task order proposals in accordance with Section M of this RFTOP and award to the responsible contractor(s) whose task order proposal(s) represents the best value to the U.S. Government. “Best value” is defined as the offer that results in the most advantageous solution for the Government, in consideration of technical, cost, and other factors.
- (c) The submitted technical information will be scored by a technical evaluation committee using the technical criteria shown below. The evaluation committee may include industry experts who are not employees of the Federal Government. When evaluating the competing Offerors, the Government will consider the written qualifications and capability information provided by the Offerors, and any other information obtained by the Government through its own research.

For overall evaluation purposes, technical factors are considered significantly more important than cost/price factors.

M.2 TECHNICAL PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The specific evaluation criteria below, tied to the Technical proposal instructions in Section L are as follows:

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Technical understanding and Approach	60
Personnel Structure and Management Structure	25
Corporate Experience and Past Performance	15
Total Technical Evaluation Points	100

A brief explanation of each criterion is provided in the subsections below the criteria summary.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Government intends to evaluate Task Order proposals in accordance with the technical evaluation factors provided below and award to the responsible contractor whose Task Order proposal represents the best value to the U.S. Government. “Best Value” is defined as the offeror that results in the most advantageous solution for the Government, in consideration of technical factors and cost. The Government reserves the right to award without negotiation.

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TECHNICAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

(1) TECHNICAL UNDERSTANDING AND APPROACHES (60 Points)

Offerors will be evaluated on the basis of the extent to which they can:

- Propose sound methodology and sampling strategy for two research protocols for the questions found in Appendix A ;
- Identify an effective analysis plan for each illustrative research topic;
- Propose cost effective research strategies for the proposed illustrative research topics found in Appendix A;
- Propose innovative ideas and collaborations for capturing information from the proposed populations given in Appendix;
- The quality of the Offerors approach to addressing sensitive topics and MARPs in the proposed activities.

(2) PERSONNEL STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE (25 Points)

Proposal demonstrates key personnel have requisite breadth and depth of technical expertise and experience in management, planning and provision of specialized technical assistance necessary for achievement of program results. The proposal clearly:

- Propose personnel who have relevant professional qualifications and experience appropriate to manage and undertake operational research activities;
- Propose sound and strategic management structures to effectively and efficiently carry out the proposed scope of work, including clear lines of communication between the proposed personnel and USAID staff;

(3) CORPORATE EXPERIENCE AND PAST PERFORMANCE (15 Points)

Offerors will be evaluated on the basis of the extent to which they can:

- Demonstrate organizational knowledge and corporate capability to develop, manage, implement, monitor and evaluate similar activities in Ghana or other countries in Africa;
- Describe relevant work experience and representative accomplishments in managing and implementing rapid research with MARPs.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AMONG MOST AT RISK POPULATION (MARP)
REQUEST FOR TASK ORDER PROPOSAL (RFTOP)
641-10-007

M.3 TECHNICAL UNDERSTANDING AND APPROACH (60 POINTS) [SEE SECTION L.5 (a)]

M.4 PERSONNEL STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE (25 POINTS) [SEE SECTION L.5 (b)]

M.5 MANAGEMENT PLAN AND CORPORATE EXPERIENCE (15 POINTS) [SEE SECTION L.5 (c)]

M.6 COST PROPOSAL EVALUATION

The proposed Task Order ceiling is provided to all offerors. Cost has not been assigned a score but will be evaluated for cost reasonableness, allocability, allowability, cost effectiveness and realism analysis to determine what the Government should realistically expect to pay for the proposed effort, the contractor's understanding of the tasks, the contractor's ability to perform the task order, adequacy of budget detail and financial feasibility and cost sharing (if applicable). While cost may be a determining factor in the final award decision, especially between closely ranked proposals, the technical merit of proposals is substantially more important under this RFTOP. A cost realism analysis will be conducted on the highest ranked technical proposals.

Evaluation of cost proposals will consider but not be limited to the following:

- Cost realism and completeness of cost proposal and supporting documentation;
- Overall cost control evidenced by proposal (such as avoidance of excessive high salaried staff, excessive home office staff, and other costs in excess of reasonable requirements)
- Appropriateness of the total resource allocation for the proposed tasks;
- Cost Effectiveness and efficiency of the organization's approach and its ability to perform the statement of work:
 - i) Effectiveness of proposed cost control structure
 - ii) Cost efficiency of proposed other direct costs;
 - iii) Subcontracting plans/marketing methods are clearly defined
 - iv) Competitiveness of pricing and sound purchase methods of international and in-country air travel and surface transportation.

END OF SECTION M

CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEE BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

1. Name (Last, First, Middle)		2. Contractor's Name	
3. Employee's Address (include ZIP code)		4. Contract Number	5. Position Under Contract
		6. Proposed Salary	7. Duration of Assignment
8. Telephone Number (include area code)	9. Place of Birth	10. Citizenship (if non-U.S. citizen, give visa status)	

11. Names, Ages, and Relationship of Dependents to Accompany Individual to Country of Assignment

12. EDUCATION (include all college or university degrees)				13. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (See Instructions on Reverse)		
NAME AND LOCATION OF INSTITUTE	MAJOR	DEGREE	DATE	LANGUAGE	Proficiency Speaking	Proficiency Reading

14. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

1. Give last three (3) years. List salaries separate for each year. Continue on separate sheet of paper if required to list all employment related to duties of proposed assignment.
2. Salary definition - basic periodic payment for services rendered. Exclude bonuses, profit-sharing arrangements, or dependent education allowances.

POSITION TITLE	EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS POINT OF CONTACT & TELEPHONE #	Dates of Employment (M/D/Y)		Annual Salary
		From	To	Dollars

15. SPECIFIC CONSULTANT SERVICES (give last three (3) years)					
SERVICES PERFORMED	EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS POINT OF CONTACT & TELEPHONE #	Dates of Employment (M/D/Y)		Days at Rate	Daily Rate in Dollars
		From	To		

16. CERTIFICATION: To the best of my knowledge, the above facts as stated are true and correct.

Signature of Employee	Date
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17. CONTRACTOR'S CERTIFICATION (To be signed by responsible representative of Contractor)

Contractor certifies in submitting this form that it has taken reasonable steps (in accordance with sound business practices) to verify the information contained in this form. Contractor understands that the USAID may rely on the accuracy of such information in negotiating and reimbursing personnel under this contract. The making of certifications that are false, fictitious, or fraudulent, or that are based on inadequately verified information, may result in appropriate remedial action by USAID, taking into consideration all of the pertinent facts and circumstances, ranging from refund claims to criminal prosecution.

Signature of Contractor's Representative	Date
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ATTACHMENT J-1: USAID supported Districts:

Region		Districts
Western region	1	Jomoro
	2	Shama Ahanta East
	3	Wassa West
	4	Ahanta West
Greater Accra	5	AMA
	6	TMA
Eastern	7	New Juaben
	8	Suhum Kraboa Coaltar
	9	Birem south
	10	Kwahu West
	11	Asuogyaman
	12	Fanteakwa
	13	Yilo Krobo
Ashanti	14	Manya Krobo
	15	Obuasi Municipla Ass
	16	Offinso
	17	KMA
Brong Ahafo	18	Nkoranza
	19	Techimana
	20	Kintampo
	21	Sampa
Central	22	Capc Coast
	23	Awutu-Efutu-Senya
	24	Agona Swedru
Volta	25	Ketu
	26	Ho
Upper East	27	Bawku Municipal
	28	Bolgatanga
	29	Kasena Nankana
Upper West	30	Wa

Appendix A

Proposed Illustrative Research: Background and Questions

Based on the data below and knowledge of the local environment, please outline a proposed research protocol to answer the below research question(s). Limit your responses (in outline form) for both scenarios to no more than eight (8) pages total.

HIV Transmission among Prison Populations

Background

- High prevalence of HIV infection in many prisons combined with HIV risk behaviors create a crucial public-health issue for correctional institutions and, at a broader level, the communities in which they are situated.¹ In Ghana, relatively little is known about HIV prevalence and related risk factors among prison populations. One study found that HIV prevalence among selected inmates was 19% in 2005². The study articulates three potential modes of transmission that could be occurring in prisons: male-to-male anal intercourse, injecting drug use, and tattooing.

Research Questions

- What is the most common mode of transmission in prisons?
- What are the most urgent prevention needs of prisoners?

Improving the Knowledge, Skills, and Effectiveness of Peer Educators

Background

- Numerous HIV prevention interventions addressing most-at-risk populations (MARP) in Ghana rely upon peer educators to deliver HIV/AIDS knowledge and behavior change messages through interpersonal and group-level activities. The overall impact of these interventions (i.e. reduction in HIV transmission) relies upon the skills of these peer educators.

Research Questions

- What cost-efficient measures can be undertaken by partners who utilize peer educators to improve the effectiveness of these peer educators?

¹ Dolan K. et al (2007) "HIV in prison in low-income and middle-income countries." *Lancet Infect Dis* 7: 32–41.

² Adjei, A. et al (2006) "Prevalence of human immunodeficiency virus, hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus and syphilis among prison inmates and officers at Nsawam and Accra, Ghana." *J Med Microbi* 55:593–597.

Appendix B

Most-At-Risk Populations in Ghana, including People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV)

Female Sex Workers (FSW): Sex work in Ghana is concentrated mostly in urbanized areas and in commercial centers. FSW are categorized as “seaters” or “roamers”. A seater is stationary while a roamer is mobile. Roamers usually work at night and can be found on the streets or at “pick-up spots” such as bars, discotheques, video centers and internet cafés. More hidden roamers use mobile phones to reach clients, little is known about this sub-population. In general, roamers are more dispersed, mobile and difficult to reach. Also, many roamers do not self-identify as sex workers. Stigma and discrimination against FSW is very high. Overall, HIV prevalence among seaters is higher than roamers, 45% and 31% respectively. Some data suggest that the rate among seaters is declining while the rate among roamers is increasing. Declared condom use with clients among FSW is high (99%). However, only 23% of roamers and 21% of seaters use condoms with their non-paying partners (NPP).³ The high prevalence among FSW is inconsistent with the declared rate of condom use.

Interventions targeting seaters have been implemented for over a decade in Ghana and have achieved relatively high levels of coverage. The much larger group of roamers has received less attention and is only partly covered. The again much larger group of women who sell sex but do not self-identify as sex workers is even less covered with prevention interventions and is also less understood. There is a growing network of STI clinics with providers specially trained to counsel, diagnose and treat FSW and MSM. Recently, a MARP BCC strategy using a helpline with peer educators and text messaging seems to be successful at encouraging MARP to use counseling and testing and STI services.

Men who have sex with Men (MSM): Homosexuality is culturally unacceptable in Ghana. Frequently, MSM face very negative reactions when their MSM status is disclosed, ranging from verbal harassment to violence. According to a study funded by USAID in 2008, the HIV/AIDS prevalence among MSM is estimated to be 26%. About half of those surveyed reported having sex with both men and women, and engaging in high risk behaviors such as unprotected anal sex. Because of the high level of stigma and discrimination, MSM often they hide their identity, making it difficult for them to access health services and for implementers to reach them with HIV prevention programs. Sex work is also common among some MSM, with the exchange of goods and money for sex featuring prominently in the MSM community. It is possible that MSM sex tourism to Ghana is increasing and there are anecdotal and media reports of blackmail and

³ SHARP BSS 2006

extortion in the MSM community. Programs to date have reached about 10,000 MSM mainly in the major urban areas, using peer-education, similar telecommunication interventions as for FSW, providing selected MSM-friendly clinical facilities and drop-in centers. Programs still have limited coverage and reach mainly younger MSM, including bi-sexuals. Little is known about 'older' MSM, their specific needs and lifestyle.

Non-Paying Partners (NPP): Non-paying partners are usually the boyfriends of sex workers and live in the same community. Most NPP are aware that they are at high risk of HIV infection and interventions have stressed 100% condom use. NPP may be a source of "bridging" of HIV/AIDS infection to the general population. The HIV/AIDS prevalence, according to one small study, among NPP in Ghana is at 39%.⁴ Not all FSW report having non-paying partners and the size of the sub-population is unknown.

Prison Populations: Data on HIV prevalence and risk behaviors among prison populations is extremely limited. However, one study suggests that HIV rates among prison populations, especially in one location housing inmates with long-term sentences, are much higher than in the general population. It is unclear whether intravenous drug use (IDU), use of sharps (e.g. for tattooing), or male to male anal sex is driving this. Currently, HIV prevention interventions in prisons are limited or non-existent. The imprisonment rate for Ghana is estimated to be approximately 55 per 100,000.

Injecting Drug Users (IDU): While Ghana sits along illegal drug transport routes, little is known about injecting drug use in its population. Very little data have been collected on the HIV and related risk behaviors among IDU. Currently no interventions are targeting IDU.

People Living With HIV/AIDS: Approximately 270,000 people are living with HIV/AIDS in Ghana. Although the GOG has dramatically expanded the number of ART sites, from 46 in 2006 to 117 in 2009, only 18,032 PLHIV⁵ are currently on ART. Access to ART services for PLHIV remains a major challenge, constrained by several factors including: a limited number of ART clinics, unwillingness to reveal one's HIV status, lack of money to pay for transportation to ART services, and lack of family support. Stigma exists among PLHIV as well as among health providers and the community at large, which creates an environment that discourages PLHIV from seeking HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment services.

⁴ SHARP BSS 2006

⁵ Ghana POW 2009

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