

MOMENTUM Country and Global Leadership (MCGL) Project Request for Proposal (RFP) for Facility-based Costing in Côte d'Ivoire

Purpose: To collect data for a comparative cost estimation of family planning service delivery in the private and public sectors in Côte d'Ivoire

Eligibility Criteria

1. Be an independent consultant, a nongovernmental organization (NGO), community-based organization (CBO), university, or private firm. The independent consultant must be a citizen or lawful permanent residents of Côte d'Ivoire; organizations and private firms must be organized under the laws of Côte d'Ivoire; have their principal place of business in Côte d'Ivoire; be majority-owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Côte d'Ivoire or managed by a governing body, the majority of whom are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Côte d'Ivoire; and not be controlled by a foreign entity or by an individual or individuals who are not citizens or permanent residents of Côte d'Ivoire.

Please provide proof of business or organizational registration/s, such as a certificate of registration, or other documentation demonstrating the above requirements, as part of the proposal application for this award.

2. Research experience, including study design, data collection, data management, data analysis, write-up of results, and dissemination as demonstrated by an example of at least one previous study.
3. Research experience in family planning (FP).
4. Financial data will be collected at facilities to estimate and compare the cost of providing FP services in public and private facilities. **The successful applicant will therefore need to demonstrate relevant experience collecting and analyzing health service finance or costing data or can add a candidate/consultant with this experience to their team.**

Deadline for submission of proposal: **October 20, 2023, 17h00**, local time in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Any application submitted after the deadline may be automatically rejected.

Submit applications to RFPCI@avenirhealth.org

Format of RFP: Cover page, a maximum of 3 pages of proposal (see details below), plus an illustrative budget, a writing sample, proof of meeting the above eligibility criteria (e.g., registration documents), and one reference letter from current or past research collaborators or funders.

Incomplete applications may be rejected.

Award Mechanism: Firm Fixed Price Contract

Tentative Contract Start Date: On or around October 30, 2023

Duration of Study: 2-3 months

1. STUDY TO COMPARE THE COST OF PROVIDING FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND PUBLIC SECTOR.

1.1 Introduction

The Momentum Country and Global Leadership (MCGL) project, funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by a consortium led by Jhpiego, is seeking a partnership with an independent consultant or a local organization in Côte d'Ivoire to carry out the above-named activity. Jhpiego leads a consortium of organizations (including Avenir Health), which implements the MCGL project. Under MCGL, Avenir Health will conduct a study to investigate the variations in public and private provider cost structures and cost drivers for key family planning and maternal health (FP/MH) services to contextualize and disseminate findings for the benefit of Côte d'Ivoire health and policy decisionmakers. The MCGL project aims to support the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene - Universal Health Coverage (MHPH-UHC) in its efforts to fight maternal and neonatal mortality, including the prevention and management of malaria during pregnancy in Côte d'Ivoire, through an approach to improving the quality of FP provision. The goal is to strengthen Côte d'Ivoire national policy, advocacy, and governance for strategic, equitable, and sustainable FP programming.

This RFP is issued by Avenir Health as part of the MCGL project implemented by Jhpiego with funding from USAID. It describes the program background, objectives, and the technical areas of focus, qualifications of individuals and organizations applying, content and format of application, and criteria for evaluating applications.

1.2 Background

A recent study conducted by the MCGL/Côte d'Ivoire project in Bouaké and Beoumi found that the price of family planning services varied considerably across facilities. The study did not investigate the actual causes of the differential prices across methods. The present study will attempt to understand the elements of service delivery that cause the cost of services to be higher or lower by method and between the public and private sector.

In the context of the government's intent to provide free FP services (called *gratuité* as a shorthand), it is important to understand the nature of the costs of offering services since an important element of financing services is being significantly altered. In the context of *gratuité*, there is speculation that some family planning clients may only be able to use the private sector when services are unavailable in the public sector (potentially due to stock-outs or lack of other key commodities). Understanding the costs in the private sector may be useful for contemplating policy changes that could help negotiate lower prices in the private sector or including the private sector in the provision of free commodities from the government.

FP programs have historically had limited financial data for decision making around resource allocation and prioritization efforts, as well as around program implementation. Also, Policymakers and partners involved in funding and managing health care programs require information about how costs and utilization of different types of service delivery vary. This proposed costing study will provide routinely reported cost data to help inform decision-making processes through identifying potential efficiencies.

1.3 Objectives and Study Focus

The aim of this study is to understand the cost of providing FP services in Côte d'Ivoire in both the private and public sectors so that policymakers, donors, and implementing partners have the data necessary to project future FP resource needs.

The study will estimate the unit costs, i.e., cost of FP for one person per year, by method, and by geography. These direct costs will be estimated as a function of service delivery and FP method both in the private and public sectors Côte d'Ivoire.

To achieve the aforementioned, the contractor will conduct facility data collection and interviews with providers/facility managers in 24 health facilities in 04 districts: Beoumi, Bouaké Sud, Bouaké Est, Bouaké Ouest (facility list will be provided in the study protocol) that offer FP services. A qualitative section of the data collection instrument will require interviewing 8 FP stakeholders and two pharmacies.

1.4 Principles of collaboration

MCGL offers co-Principal Investigator designation between activity lead and an in-country representative. As such, Avenir Health will have already designed the protocol, data collection tools, and analysis plan, and will request IRB approval. MCGL/Jhpiego will also select the study sample (with the list included in the protocol) and Avenir Health will analyze the results. The contractor will identify and hire/contract the data collection team. Avenir health will train the team, pilot test the tool with the team, provide data collection oversight and support the data management and cleaning. The contractor will enter the raw data into a data entry tool that will be designed by Avenir Health. Avenir will request both data collection forms (raw data) and the completed data entry tool to be provided as deliverables. Avenir Health will orient the data collection team on the tool, participate in the pilot-testing of the data collection instrument to field test the data collection tool, and be available to respond to questions from data collectors on a day-to-day basis for the purpose of quality control.

1.5 Deliverables

The following deliverables are expected to fulfil this assignment successfully:

1. Finalized data collection timeline.
2. Data collection tool orientation meeting/training; meeting agenda, minutes/brief report, and participants' list.
3. Electronic dataset of collected data.
4. Excel data entry workbook
5. Brief data collection final report highlighting the challenges and the lessons learned.

1.6 Financial allocation provided by USAID through Jhpiego/MCGL/Avenir Health

The offer will be contingent to ethical approval. Avenir Health reserves the right to award the contract to one or none of the proposals submitted.

2. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

2.1 Proposal

Applicants are asked to submit a proposal to Avenir Health at RFPCI@avenirhealth.org by October 15, 2023, 17h00, local time in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Please include a cover sheet with the title of your proposal, the date of submission, your name (for independent consultants), your organization's name for organizations, and a contact person's name, phone number, and email address. Proposals should be a maximum of 3 pages (exclusive of cover page, budget, and writing sample), single-spaced, in size 12 Time Roman font with right, left, top, and bottom margin of 1 inch each, and your organization's name indicated in a header or footer. **Proposals must be submitted in French or in English.** Incomplete or late applications may be rejected.

2.2 Content and Format of Proposal

Applicants should demonstrate the following:

- Strong research skills and experience with qualitative research in family planning and/or Maternal Health.

- Experience in conducting facility audits/data collection, collection of expenditure data, and provider interviews, including study design, data collection, data management, analysis, and write-up of results as demonstrated by an example of at least one study. Experience collecting FP cost/expenditure data is a plus.
- Experience conducting financial costing studies to examine the cost of services at the facility level.

The proposal should include the following sections:

I. TECHNICAL APPROACH (not to exceed 2 pages):

- A. **Introduction and Status of FP in Côte d’Ivoire:** This section should demonstrate understanding of the current situation in Côte d’Ivoire as it relates to family planning.
- B. **Data Collection Strategy:** Based on the current situation in Côte d’Ivoire as addressed under heading A, and the study background, objectives, and focus (provided above in 1.2, 1.3), briefly describe your proposed approach. The approach being proposed needs to be feasible to complete data collection in 2-3 months, and should include:
- **Key areas of inquiry at the national, district and facility level.** Please outline what types of information will be needed to collect and if relevant, describe where you will collect the cost of FP services. For example, will all data be available at the site level? Will the team need to request data at the national level? Where will the team obtain information about FP commodities, salaries, and building and infrastructure costs?
 - **Selection of data collectors.** Please describe how you will select the data collectors for this assignment. Outline how you will identify potential candidates, what qualifications and skills you will seek, and what selection criteria you will use.
 - **Training of data collectors.** Avenir will orient the data collection team to the tool and work jointly with the team to conduct the pilot test; Avenir will modify the tool as necessary from the pilot test.
 - **Outline of main data collection tools:** The data collection tool and guide will be drafted by Avenir Health. Please describe what you expect the tool to include.
 - **Facility Selection and Sample Size:** Districts and facilities will be pre-determined in the study protocol by MCGL/Jhpiego, but there will remain some leeway in other sites to be selected if one of the selected facilities decline to participate in the study. Please assume that the sample will include 24 sites, and 10 key informant interviews (inclusive of two selected pharmacies).
 - **Data Collection.** Please describe how you would go about collecting the data. Please outline how you would go about assessing the various components of the cost of activities, such as labor, overhead, transportation, etc. and describe the approach taken to assign costs to these categories.
 - **Data Entry and Management Plan.** Please also discuss how you will carry out data entry and ensure quality oversight.
 - **Staffing Plan:** Provide information on the number and type of key personnel you will use to implement this research activity. Include information about their level of experience (e.g., 3 years’ experience collecting cost data/using SPSS). The team should include at least one team leader (lead consultant) who would act as primary contact for Avenir Health. The team leader must have ample time available to respond to Avenir requests on a day-to-day basis.
 - **Language Skills:** Although teams will not be evaluated on their ability to communicate in English, Avenir Health will need to know whether the research team has English skills, to plan for the right type of support. Please indicate English proficiency of the team, as well as experience working with a translator.
 - **GANTT Chart:** The proposal should include an illustrative timeline with milestones to show how the activity will be completed within 2-3 months. Please assume study start date of October 30, 2023.

II. PAST EXPERIENCE (not to exceed 1 page)

Provide brief but enough details of past experience with qualitative research to fully demonstrate technical knowledge and expertise, as well as capacity to implement the logistical aspects of delivering high quality research results, including capacity to securely enter, manage, and transfer large amounts of confidential data. For example, this can include a description of methods used, sampling strategy, sample size, range of respondents interviewed/target populations, selection and training of interviewers, analysis techniques (including use of qualitative software), engagement of stakeholders in developing and carrying out research, and dissemination of findings. Please also include a description of past experience conducting costing and/or expenditure studies.

III. BUDGET (*Not included in maximum page limit*)

Please provide an illustrative budget to implement the assignment, which should be completed in 2-3 months. Budget must be put together in US dollar (USD). The budget should be submitted in Excel format, using the budget template below. Budget narrative in a word document describing each line item and the proposed cost must accompany the budget.

The budget template is broken down into four sections, one section for each deliverable. Thus, the consultant/firm should budget how much it costs to complete each project deliverable. The budget components and requirements are described below.

Labor: Budget the cost associated with staff time necessary to complete this assignment. The labor cost cannot include any overhead or indirect costs.

Travel: Budget any in-country travel to the respective districts you would expect to incur to fulfil this assignment.

Consultants/data collectors: Budget any consultants/data collectors fee that you may contract to fulfil this assignment.

Other Direct Costs: Budget any other costs necessary to complete this assignment that have not been captured in the above-listed categories. This may include costs associated with the data collection such as printing of data collection tool and communications (phone communication/internet) for data collectors. This cost category can include operational costs associated with staff working on this assignment.

Indirect Costs: Budget any indirect costs associated with the staff working on this assignment. *Note that Negotiated Indirect Cost Recovery Agreement (NICRA) with USAID or CPA certification is required to justify indirect rates.* If the firm does not have these documents, any operational costs associated with staff working on this assignment needs to be included under the Other Direct Costs category.

IV. WRITING SAMPLE (*Not included in maximum page limit*)

Please provide a writing sample in French or English that demonstrates write up of research results. For example, the write-up of the results of a previously conducted research study.

V. REFERENCES (*Not included in maximum page limit*)

Please provide 1-2 names and current contact information (email and phone) of references from previous or current research partners or funders.

VI. PROOF OF MEETING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA described above to demonstrate that you are a citizen of Côte d'Ivoire or a legally registered organization/business in Côte d'Ivoire. *(Not included in maximum page limit.)*

3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be evaluated by a team with expertise in qualitative research, FP, and costing. Evaluation of proposals will be based on applicants' demonstration of the specific experience described in response to the items in section 2.2. Proposals will be examined and evaluated according to the following steps and criteria.

STEP 1: OPENING SESSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK

The following will be assessed:

- The deadline has been respected. **If the deadline has not been respected the proposal may automatically be rejected.**
- Program eligibility criteria as stated on the front page. **Proposals from individuals or organizations that do not satisfy the Eligibility Criteria will not be considered and evaluated further.**
- The proposal includes proof of citizenship or company registration in Côte d'Ivoire as described in the **Eligibility Criteria.**

STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE FULL PROPOSAL

An evaluation of the quality of the proposals, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicants/organizations, will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria specified below. Note: MCGL/Avenir Health reserves the right to amend the evaluation criteria subject to MCGL/Jhpiego instructions.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the full proposal:

Technical Approach [35 Points]

Individual/Organizational Experience and Past Performance [20 Points]

Team Composition [20 Points]

Overall presentation [10 Points]

Cost [15 Points]

4. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE SOLICITATION

Notice of non-binding solicitation: MCGL/Avenir reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals received in response to this solicitation and is in no way bound to accept any proposal.

MCGL/Avenir may amend or cancel this invitation, in whole or in part, at any time, extend the deadline for submitting proposals and/or determine whether a proposal complies with the requirements of the invitation.

Issuance of this call for proposals does not constitute an award commitment on the part of MCGL/Avenir Health, nor does it commit MCGL/Avenir Health to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. In addition, final award of any resultant agreement cannot be made until a selection has been made by Avenir Health. The final decision of the award will be at the sole discretion of Avenir Health based on the pre-award survey outcomes.

Confidentiality: applications, discussions, and all information received in response to this solicitation will be held strictly confidential, except as otherwise noted.

Budget template (to be submitted in an Excel format)

		No of Units	Days	% effort	Daily rate	Total	Comments
Personnel	Staff category (the list below is illustrative)						
	Coordinator					\$ -	
	Project Manager					\$ -	
	Statistician					\$ -	
	Data Manager					\$ -	
	Data collectors					\$ -	
	Data Input					\$ -	
	Consultant Specialist in Economic					\$ -	
	Consultant -Epidemiologist					\$ -	
	Consultant -Epidemiologist					\$ -	
Sub Total - Personnel						\$ -	
SUPPLIES & MATERIALS		Quantity	Unit cost			Total	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
Subtotal Supplies & Materials						\$ -	
TRAVEL (details in the next sheet)	Data collectors	No. persons	No. days	Cost/Trip		Total	
	Travel/transport to Sites - Local					\$ -	
	Lodging/accommodation					\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
Subtotal Travel						\$ -	
OTHER		No units	Cost/Unit			Total	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
						\$ -	
Subtotal OTHER						\$ -	
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS						\$ -	
	NICRA/Indirect cost (x%)						
TOTAL COST						\$ -	