

**Solicitation Number:** US4172.01.22

**Consultancy Title:** Strengthening Capacity of Women Religious on Early Childhood Development

**Project Date Issued:** 3/3/2022

**Inquiry Date:** 3/9/2022

**Proposal Deadline:** 3/16/2022

**Duration:** 20 months

**Number of days:** 60

## **Scope of Work for Strengthening Capacity of Women Religious on Early Childhood Development Project (SCORE- ECD II) IMBC Training and mentorship**

### **1.0: Background: CRS and Implementing Partners**

Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the official international humanitarian agency of US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) was founded in 1943 and carries out the commitment of the Bishops of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas in over 100 countries around the world. CRS programs assist persons based on need, regardless of creed, ethnicity or nationality and works through local church and non- church partners to implement its programs. Our Catholic identity is at the heart of our mission and operations.

### **1.1 Project Background**

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in collaboration with partners in Ghana, Zambia, Kenya and Malawi is implementing a three-year SCORE ECD III project with support from Conrad and Hilton Foundation, through Catholic Sister organizations towards achieving the goal **children 0-3 years old in the target areas live in nurturing environments by 2024**. Phase III of the project is supporting the sustainability and leadership of 5 National Associations and 32 Congregations of Catholic Sisters in the four countries. The project is strengthening sisters' organizations, adapting and refining the SCORE model by scaling up a targeted maternal mental health component, incorporating household economic strengthening, SMART Couples interventions, and introducing a quality improvement component in Sister-managed health facilities. The project theory of change is that *if Catholic Sisters and their organizations continue to expand and improve their technical and organizational capacities, then they will more effectively and sustainably provide services to caregivers of young children, leading to those caregivers being better able to provide nurturing care, which ultimately improves child development outcomes*. At the same time, *if Catholic Sisters and their organizations become more effective and sustainable, then they will be better placed to provide leadership and influence at the policy level, contributing to an enabling environment for children and families across the target countries to thrive*.

### **2.0: SCORE ECD Project Goal and Strategic Objectives**

The overall goal of the SCORE ECD III project is that children 0-3 years old in the target areas live in nurturing environments by 2024. The Strategic Objective are:

Objective 1: Sisters deliver nurturing care and family strengthening services to caregivers of children 0-3 by 2024

Objective 2: Caregivers of children 0-3 years old provide their children nurturing care by 2024

Objective 3: NACCS have strengthened organizational capacity by 2024

**Purpose:** The purpose of this Scope of Work is to describe the technical support needed from the consultant in facilitating the implementation, quality, and adaptation of the integration of *The*

*Mothers and Babies Course*<sup>1</sup> (MBC)/integrated early childhood development (iECD) as part of the Strengthening the Capacity of Women Religious in Early Childhood Development (SCORE ECD) project.

### **Description of the Intervention**

The iMBC/ECD curriculum is a prevention model based on cognitive behavioral therapy with the aim of supporting pregnant women and mothers with children under two years of age to become more resilient, decrease risk for future depression, and manage daily stressors effectively. In addition, the updated version of the iMBC is integrated with selected early childhood development (ECD) messages. The integration of these messages is intended to increase mothers' knowledge of the stressors associated with pregnancy and parenting young children and promote early stimulation behaviors and bonding to support child development.

The model's theory of change, posits that if mothers understand and manage their mood, engage in positive coping skills<sup>2</sup> to adapt to their internal and external realities, they will have improved mental wellbeing. Improved mood coupled with ECD knowledge and skills acquired during group sessions will lead to greater parenting self-efficacy, leading to increased uptake positive care behaviors both for the mother and the child, ultimately improving child development.

To ensure quality and fidelity of the intervention and in line with the recommendations of the previous pilots, CRS require technical assistance of a consultant from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

Key activities to be accomplished by the consultant

1. Review final version of iMBC materials
  2. Identify ways that SCORE ECD content can be integrated with iMBC, what materials can be deleted from this version.
  3. Ultimately have an adapted iMBC manual for Ghana, Malawi, Zambia and Kenya that includes relevant MNCH and family strengthening contents
  4. Virtually train SCORE ECD staff based on adapted iMBC version
  5. Include time for feedback on additional modifications to be made to go in the field
  6. Include time for field practice and feedback
  7. Modify the MBC based on feedback from training
  8. Using existing iMBC data that are already being collected in SCORE III for research purposes
    - a. The consultant will take the lead in submitting the IRB for approval of this project in SCORE III and support CPs identifying research questions.
- Provide TA to CPs teams to present and publish their findings so that others can learn from their experience.
  - Facilitate collaboration with local universities and ministries of health to increase reach and scope for sustainability purposes.

The research study may be done in two phases:

- a. *Phase 1: is in year 1 to examine the feasibility and acceptability of the study* (what does it take to start this program? Some illustrative questions are: How do you identify need for this program? This can be done by interviewing different stakeholders: providers and potential participants re: their perceptions of mental health issues for pregnant women and new mothers, and what services are needed for this group). This will be done

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<sup>1</sup> The Mothers and Babies Course, Huynh-Nhu Le, PHD et al, George Washington University, 2004,2011

<sup>2</sup> Coping skills include: (1) having more helpful thoughts, (2) engaging in pleasant activities, and (3) spending time with people who are encouraging influencers

during the first 7 months of implementation. The data from informant interviews can be used.

- b. *Phase 2 is to analyze the data from participants to see the intervention works.* This includes baseline to post-intervention quantitative and qualitative data.

9. Follow up with virtual (Teams/Skype) supervision for project officers
10. Come out with a realistic schedule for the activities to be carried out

#### Key working relationships

- SCORE ECD Project Coordinator
- SCORE ECD Project Manager - Ghana
- SCORE ECD III Project Manager - Kenya
- SCORE ECD III Project Manager - Zambia
- SCORE ECD III Project Manager – Malawi
- STA MCH- CRS HQ

**Period of Performance:** The period of performance is from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, to November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Table 1:** Deliverables for Integrated Mothers and babies Course, Facilitation, Adaptation and Implementation, SCORE ECD III Project (April 1st, 2022 – November 30, 2023)

s/n	Activity Category	Activity	Deliverable	Means of verification	Timeline/ of Days	Proposed month of activity
<b>Phase 1</b>						
1	Review final version of IMBC materials	Review iMBC learning materials	Review meeting with team on outcome of review	Review notes	1	April, 2022
2		Ultimately have an adapted iMBC manual for Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia that includes relevant MNCH and family strengthening content	An integrated manual with MNCH and family strengthening content	Integrated manual	1	April, 2022
3	Virtual Master Training of staff and Partners on adapted iMBC version	Preparation for training	Pre-training meeting with project management team	Meeting Notes	4	April, 2022
		Training on iMBC content	Train SCORE ECD III Project team on adapted iMBC content	Attendance sheet/Training Report	5	May, 2022
		Post training debrief following field practice	Participation in meetings	Meeting Notes	2	June, 2022
<b>Phase II</b>						

4	Post Practice Modifications	Modify the MBC based on feedback from training and practice	Incorporation of feedback into modified manual	Meeting Notes	4	June, 2022
		Planning for Zoom supervision for project officers	Participation in planning meeting with SCORE ECD team	Meeting Notes	1	July, 2022
		Biweekly calls to review and plan for next steps	Participation in biweekly calls	Call Notes	2	July, 2022
5		Booster Sessions			4	April, May, June, July, August, September and October 2023
6		Follow up skype calls with supervisors and score staff in Malawi and Zambia every 3 months countries	Participation in skype calls Malawi and Zambia	Call Notes	3	January, April, July, October 2023
7		Follow up individual skype calls with supervisors and score staff in Kenya and Ghana every 3 months countries	Participation in Skype calls Kenya and Ghana	Call Notes	3	January, April, July, Oct 2023
<b>Total number of working days needed</b>					<b>30 days</b>	
8	Work with MEAL staff and project staff to implement SCORE ECD III as a research project, obtaining IRB approval from relevant institutions including University to conduct research project, review measures, review analysis of data for quality improvement and research products: dissemination of products, including conference and publications.				<b>30 days</b>	March 2022- October 2023

## **Payment Schedule**

**Phase I** – After completion of the review of final version of IMBC materials and Virtual Master Training of staff and Partners on adapted iMBC version 60%

**Phase II** - Post Practice Modifications 40%

## **3.0 Application instructions**

Applicants must submit the following material:

- cover letter and CV that demonstrates qualifications and a list of clients/projects that he/she has supported in undertaking in similar work.
- A 2-4 page summary of their approach to conducting the assignment and completing the deliverables.
- Please include established daily rate and anticipated level of effort.

## **Clarifications**

Questions must be submitted via e-mail to [kathleen.mackin@crs.org](mailto:kathleen.mackin@crs.org) no later than close of business 9, March 2022 [11:59 PM EST for electronic submission]. The solicitation name indicated above (Strengthening Capacity of Women Religious on Early Childhood Development Project) must be included in the subject line. Responses will be provided to all known offerors.

CRS is under no obligation to respond to questions that are not received prior to the aforementioned deadline.

## **Proposal Deadline**

All proposals must be received by CRS (to [kathleen.mackin@crs.org](mailto:kathleen.mackin@crs.org)) no later than 16 March 2022 [11:59 PM EST for electronic submission]. The solicitation name indicated above must be included in the subject line.