FIMS RFP Q&A DOCUMENT (AS OF JANUARY 14, 2025)

This list of questions represents those submitted in December 2024 – January 2025 in response to the request for proposals (RFP) for the Future Injectable Market Steward (FIMS). These combined responses reflect collaborative thinking from the donors (the Children's Investment Fund Foundation and the Gates Foundation). Each question has been anonymized and organized thematically; each question has been copied as submitted, through responses consolidated.

As a reminder, **applications and concept notes are due January 31, 2025, in the required templates** (as attached to the RFP application portal). If you have additional questions or trouble accessing the templates, you may reach out to nora@mannglobalhealth.org directly for support.

PROPOSAL & TIMELINE		
Number	**Question**	**Response**
1.	Is there any possibility of an extension to the submission date of January 31st? The holiday period has significantly restricted the available time for organizing partnerships and proposal development.	We appreciate that this is a short time frame and understand that securing partnerships may be a challenge. However, due to internal timelines, we are unable to extend the submission date of January 31st, 2025. This initial RFP proposal submission is meant to represent phase 1 of the application and high-quality proposals may be invited for oral presentations in mid/late February (TBC).
2.	Is the 2500 word count inclusive of what is already in the template?	No, the 2500-word count does not include the template language. Please limit the proposal submission to 2500 words.
3.	Are we permitted to submit additional annexes? As referred to in the text it would be preferable to submit a TOC in order to illustrate the overall project including the expected results and KPIs.	Requested annexes include CVs of Key Personnel and Organigram of project structure. If your TOC (theory of change) does not fit within the word count, you may include it as a one-page addendum.
4.	**Complete RFP information:** our team has found out about this opportunity through this link, are there any other documents that we could receive to get a complete RFP info, in case we missed other important instructions?	This link is correct for accessing the full RFP. Two additional templates can be found within the application portal and include the **Concept Note template** and the **Budget template**, each hyperlinked in the application portal with associated instructions with their associated tasks. You may reach out directly to nora@mannglobalhealth.com if you have any trouble accessing the templates.

BUDGET		
Number	**Question**	**Response**
5.	Is there any anticipated duration or budget ceiling for this award?	The current thinking is that the duration of the award will run for four years from Sept 2025 to Sept 2029. A budget ceiling will not be provided this time; applicants should plan to provide an estimated budget based on their expectation of cost for activities for the project period. Robust budget discussions, instructions and templates will be provided during the investment development stage.
6.	Given the limited time and early stage of proposal development, could the donors provide any more expectation on the level of detail in the budget? At this stage it will be hard to provide detailed country-level budgets without clear indication of activity plans by country. Instead, we are assuming that a more indicative budget illustrating major cost drivers would be acceptable.	The RFP portal includes a budget template which includes the level of detail expected for this first round submission. Detailed country-level budgets are not expected at this stage, but we do expect summary budget and breakout for any sub vs prime costs, as well as estimated budget by market function (see specific guidance as included in the budget template). In addition, the budget should reflect activities are scoped with sustainability in mind as FIMS matures to autonomy.
7.	We understand that this RFP is to be co-funded by both CIFF and the Gates Foundation. Could you please confirm that the offeror is able to apply the Gates Foundation's indirect policy, which permits indirect cost rates of up to 15% for NGOs, when developing the budget?	Both CIFF and Gates limit the indirect cost rate to a maximum of 15% for NGOs. Information about indirect cost policies are available from each donor and will become more relevant during the formal investment development period.
8.	The RFP's overview section indicates that offerors should use a provided budget template to submit the proposed budget details; however, it does not appear that a link to the budget template was provided. Could you please share the required budget template?	The budget template is available within the application portal under the task titled "Attach Proposal Budget." You may reach out directly to nora@mannglobalhealth.com if you have any trouble accessing the templates.
9.	The Criteria section of the RFP indicates under Cost Efficiency that budgets should be disaggregated by partner, if applicable. Is the Gates Foundation budget template principle applicable, which states that subawards greater	For the first phase of proposal, please follow the budget template's guidance as follows: "For any subawardees that comprise >= 20% of the overall project budget, please also complete a detailed sub awardee budget showing key personnel and other associated costs." Create a copy of this tab for any additional subawardees. Additional

	than $1,000,000 should have a separate detailed budget template submitted, but for subawards under that threshold, only high-level figures disaggregated by partner are required?	budget details (including sub award budgets over $1M USD) will be required for the selected bid during the investment development process.
10.	Will this be a single combined award or two separate awards from CIFF and Gates?	Based on donor practices for co-funding investments, the grantee will be asked to sign a separate grant agreement with each donor, however the activities will be jointly funded.
11.	Normally we would budget by project period and not necessarily by calendar year, however the following considerations were included in the budget instructions: "Additional Considerations: Note that the first year of operation will kick off in September 2025, meaning the budget should reflect the short timeframe for that year." Do you expect us to budget September - December 2026 for year one then begin year 2 with January 2026?	Please ensure that you are looking at the latest version of the budget template within the application portal, which has been updated. Applicants should use the dates on the "detailed budget" tab to complete the budget exercise. For example, Year 1 should span September 1, 2025, to September 30, 2026.
12.	Is there any anticipated duration for this award? The budget template has a 3-year length on the general information tab and requests a 4-year budget on the detailed budget tab? The RFP focuses on 2030 for achieving market goals, but the budget template is for 4 years.	The current thinking is that the duration of the award will run for four years from Sept 2025 to Sept 2029. However, donor support for the project may be extended based on performance of the market steward, if the market requires continued support, and as funding becomes available. Please note the intention for the FIMS to drive the market and market stewardship activities towards autonomy and sustainability throughout the life of this award.
TEAM STRUCTURE		
Number	**Question**	**Response**
13.	Can an organization be bid on multiple consortia as a sub?	Yes, organizations and team members may appear on multiple bids and consortia.
14.	Is the expectation that the consortia that submit concept notes would be determined as they are – or is there a chance that the donors would choose to 'mix and match' partners from the first round	The intention is to review consortia as proposed without "mix and matching" submissions. However, if we feel that there is a specific opportunity partnering organizations or gaps in skillsets in proposed consortia, the donors may recommend different partnership models.

	and invite a different combination to the final proposal phase?	
15.	We noticed that the RFP is posted on a general BMGF RFP site; does this mean that it is open to the public for bidding, or are only invited institutions allowed to bid? (we also welcome information about who else was invited, in the latter scenario!)	Yes, this RFP was released as a public, open call for concepts and is open to the public for bidding.
16.	To what extent should the proposal prioritize the inclusion of local partners with regional expertise compared to global organizations with established track records in similar projects, particularly within a consortium model?	We highly encourage the engagement of local and regional partners with expertise, skills and networks for the prioritized areas and activities. Similarly, proposed models and organigrams should draw from public and private sector players and bridging cross-sectoral and cross-regional partnerships.
17.	Is there a preference for a neutral broker to help coordinate across countries? Or is there a preference for a consortium of actors with a presence in every country?	We do not expect a presence in every country, but the FIMS team should be able to build and leverage in-country relationships in all geographies. We are not directing a specific structure and welcome proposals (e.g., consortia, single entities, etc.) with creative and innovative architecture.
18.	Should the concept note define all partners, or is there flexibility to explore different partner configurations in the design phase, between March and September?	Please propose all partners you think will be required for executing this scope in this first phase of the proposal. However, the design phase for selected bidders may recommend additional partnerships or configurations.
FIMS SCOPE		
Number	**Question**	**Response**
19.	How should resources be allocated across the five priority areas ranging from high priority to medium priority?	This is to be determined by each applicant based on market assessment. The RFP indicates which of the market functions are considered high priority versus medium priority and we recommend that budgets reflect such (which can be approximate at this stage); further budget refinement will be required and allocations discussed during the formal investment period with the selected partners. We anticipate that resource allocation will vary across proposals of how to address key priorities may differ. In the application, please address

		which core activities will be prioritized and how they will be resourced and/or partner with existing initiatives and market actors.
20.	How is this award intended to complement other injectable investments? Other new contraceptive investments?	It is very much the intention of this project to complement other investments in the contraceptive injectables market and across the family planning sector. FIMS will be responsible for mapping existing initiatives and outlining strategies for leveraging synergies and partnerships across the sector.
21.	Given this variation throughout the RFP [in the description of which products are included], is the role/goal of FIMS about injectables [overall] (including DMPA-SC or DMPA-SC (SI), specifically? What additional injectable products should be anticipated within the duration of this award?	Please refer to the RFP overview which lists the injectables products that should be considered and the specific focus on DMPA-SC (SI), which is a top priority for this project: *"Responding to evolving market needs, FIMS will oversee all DMPA injectable contraceptive products including all administrative methods (subcutaneous, self-injection, provider administered and intramuscular), near-term generic options that are entering the market, and future injectable products in the pipeline as demand and supply for these products tend to be co-dependent. A key goal for FIMS is to catalyze a sustainable market for DMPA-SC (SI) (SI being currently less main-stream than provider administered injectables) with full independence by 2030, at which point the goal will be to reach a market of over 100 million units annually (up from the current allocation of 34 million units per year in 2024), with self-injection as a routine option in the method mix."*
22.	What additional injectable products should be anticipated within the duration of this award?	See #21.
23.	The RFP states, "The primary role of the FIMS will be to lead the global contraceptive injectables market and advance the 2030 strategic vision for DMPA-SC .... Responding to evolving market needs, FIMS will oversee all DMPA injectable contraceptive products including all administrative methods (subcutaneous, self-injection, provider administered and intramuscular), near-term generic options that are entering the market, and future injectable products in the pipeline." With limited funding, what are the donors' expectations for the project	FIMS is expected to primarily focus on DMPA-SC, and specifically SI. However, given the relationship between DMPA-SC (SI) and other injectable products, it is critical that the market stewardship function be engaged with other injectables as described in the RFP. From current product specific workstreams, this will (over time) shift towards category management. Thus, solid experience in assessing market dynamics across categories, alternatives and monitoring the market are critical core responsibilities of the FIMS.

	to work on and use funds to expand programming for all contraceptive injectable products? Should this read to steward DMPA SC within the overall contraceptive market?	
24.	Is there expected to be separate resourcing for supply-side interventions?	Both the Gates and CIFF teams (as well as other donors and national governments) have made significant investments in supply-side interventions that are considered complementary to this project. FIMS should be prepared to map and understand this ecosystem and to make strategic recommendations for additional investments where necessary.
25.	What expectations exist for addressing injectable-specific supply chain challenges that may intersect with broader family planning supply chain issues?	We encourage expertise around injectable-specific supply chain issues but recognize that many supply chain challenges are not unique to injectables and will not be solved within the scope of this project. FIMS should make strategic recommendations for improving the supply chain and should partner with others who are already working to address these issues. It will be a critical role of FIMS to work with existing partners in the ecosystem and should be prepared to map existing initiatives, activities and key partnerships working to advance the 2030 vision for DMPA-SC.
26.	Could the funders name priority countries in which they expect the awardee to operate?	Please see Figure 1 in the RFP, which illustrates the current market phasing strategy and the status of each geography within the market (attributed development to the Access Collaborative team). Additional country considerations will be discussed between the donors and the selected bidder during the investment development process. The level of effort and types of activities that will be required for each country varies significantly by market stage. It is not expected for FIMS to have a physical presence in all countries.
27.	Would the funders welcome results that benefit other SRH products beyond injectables, wherein FIMS functions naturally coincide with systems & processes for other products?	Yes, we welcome results that benefit other SRH products beyond injectables. However, the focus of the project is on the injectables market and specifically DMPA-SC (SI).
28.	Could the funders share additional detail on the 100M unit [demand] goal, specifically any	This estimate was based on previous analysis that demonstrated demand exists at this level by 2030. Our hope is that FIMS will participate in and steward ongoing forecasting and analysis to

	analyses that demonstrate that demand exists at this level?	understand demand (and supply) over time as the market continues to evolve.
29.	Do the funders have a set of minimum requirements or expectations around KPIs?	The primary output of the FIMS work will be to drive the market towards the 2030 vision for DMPA-SC. At this time, we do not have specific KPIs to share publicly but will work jointly on developing key metrics and KPIs during the formal investment development period.
30.	Are there any existing or preliminary KPIs already identified for each core function (e.g., market intelligence, supply chain management, etc.) that can guide proposal development?	At this time, we do not have specific KPIs to share publicly but will work jointly on developing key metrics and KPIs during the formal investment development period. The proposal should outline suggested KPIs and outcomes that drive towards the 2030 market vision for DMPA-SC.
31.	Will funding be available through this investment to support significant scale-up efforts in early-stage countries, for example in Phase 2/3 geographies, or do the donors envision those efforts are funded separately (e.g., via DISC, the COF, etc.)?	In early-stage countries, we anticipate some portion of FIMS funds will support scale-up efforts. However, we also expect FIMS to partner with and leverage other activities, programs and partnerships (e.g. DISC program, COF and other donor funded FP programs) where available and appropriate to maintain cost efficiency. This can be further discussed during the investment development period and will be dependent on country context and gap analysis.
32.	Sustainability is captured under FIMS function 1 (Market Stewardship). Is your lens on sustainability that this is an issue to address at a high level (globally) or more a component of in-country?	Both global and in-country sustainability are important to address.
33.	High-level stakeholders are identified as UNFPA, USAID, donors, and Ministry of Health officials. How, if at all, will contacts at Pfizer and generic manufacturers be engaged?	There may be specific scope for which engaging manufacturers directly will be necessary (e.g., supply planning), however, manufacturer relationships will primarily be managed by the donors (as currently executed). Potential conflict of interests should be considered and safeguarded.
34.	What is the relationship between FIMS and the I-SAG? What type of interaction can FIMS anticipate (if any) with the I-SAG?	FIMS will ultimately be accountable to I-SAG (strategic advisory group) through bi-annual meetings and routine communication; the I-SAG will serve as an advisor for FIMS.
35.	The RFP referred to an I-SAG FIMS framework, can we see that?	The details that can be shared at this time of I-SAG's design of FIMS are the description of the market functions and the illustrative

		competencies as written in the RFP. Please ensure that you are looking at the current live version of the RFP.
36.	Would the FIMS project consortium have a seat on the I-SAG?	FIMS will not have a formal seat on the I-SAG; however, FIMS will be expected to coordinate closely with the I-SAG throughout the project.
37.	Within the vision of the I-SAG, would we expect the greatest impact on the global level or at the last mile?	It is important for FIMS to develop a set of clearly defined metrics and measures of success, as well as key dependencies, to ensure transparency of FIMS's role and accountability. Both global and last mile impacts should be considered to have impact, though the scope of FIMS is not intended to focus on last mile *distribution*, for example, if that is what is intended in this question.
38.	How has the experience with SEMA influenced the design of this work? Recognizing that this is focused on DMPA SC, is there an incoming vision for how cross-product learning and coordination be integrated into this work?	FIMS is expected to draw on best practices to inform market stewardship and market shaping approaches for injectables. Where possible, building relationships and working with other stakeholders for cross-product learning should be prioritized. This may include lessons learned from SEMA and other previous investments / initiatives.
39.	Do you have a vision for how tightly this integrates with the rest of the ecosystem? For example, do you envision a specific advisory board to work across actors (e.g., VAN, RHSC, UNFPA, CHAI) vs. relying on integration into existing structures, or shall we propose that as part of the process?	FIMS is expected to closely coordinate with other actors in the ecosystem, including those proposed in this question. The overall goal of driving towards sustainability means that the project should attempt to integrate with and leverage existing structures, where possible, while also promoting the goals of the project.