

USAID Effective Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Services (E-WASH) Program

Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) (Multiple Rounds) E-WASH Innovation Grant Fund: Strengthen policy, institutional and regulatory frameworks for improved WASH services (includes establishing accountability mechanisms)

E-WASH is seeking to issue grant(s) to local non-US organizations including 1) large youth-led and women-led organizations, 2) business development service providers and non-governmental organizations, and 3) tertiary institutions for the purpose of implementing scalable innovative solutions to strengthen urban WASH governance and operations. EWASH has a strong interest in leveraging the expertise of new and underutilized partners.

Background on USAID Effective Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Services (E-WASH) Program

As part of the United States Government's (USG) efforts to address gaps in urban water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services in Nigeria, USAID/Nigeria aims to improve urban water service delivery by strengthening the governance, financial and technical viability of **six (6)** State Water Boards (SWBs) in Abia, Delta, Imo, Niger, Sokoto, and Taraba States (I-STAND). E-WASH will work towards achieving the following mutually reinforcing objectives:

- I. Creating professionally managed and commercially oriented SWBs;
- II. Improving the financial and operational viability of SWBs;
- III. Strengthening policy, institutional and regulatory frameworks for improved WASH services; and
- IV. Building national and state WASH advocacy, coordination, and communications for reform.

These efforts align with the USAID Water and Development Strategy 2013/2018 Strategic Objective 1: Improve health outcomes through the provision of sustainable WASH. They also align with the USAID/Nigeria Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) Development Objective 3, Strengthened good governance; Intermediate Result (IR) 3.2, Improved responsiveness of selected government institutions; and IR 3.3, Increased capacity for civic advocacy, monitoring and engagement; and Component 4: Build Coordination, Advocacy, and Strategic Communications to Promote Reform

The E-WASH Program is part of USAID's wider efforts to build closer coordination with the Government of Nigeria (GON), including the Federal Ministry of Water Resources (FMWR), select SWBs of Abia, Delta, Imo, Niger, Sokoto, and Taraba allied stakeholders to advance broad-based economic growth and resilience through improved WASH services in urban areas.

E-WASH Theory of Change:

Increased access to sustainable WASH services will only be achieved in urban areas within Nigeria when SWBs undergo a reorganization process to develop professional and commercially oriented practices that enable them to operate efficiently as commercial entities. They must have autonomous, accountable, and transparent management and strengthened corporate governance with clear priorities

for effective and inclusive service provision. Well-functioning SWBs must have performance-based contracts, good monitoring capabilities, trained personnel, cost recovery, a proper tariff structure, and asset maintenance management systems. Creating good corporate governance in SWBs is essential to increase access to sustainable water services.

E-WASH targets urban WASH challenges, especially at the water board or utility level, building from five key assumptions:

- The state governments that own the water boards will be committed to reform efforts.
- Governance improvements in the water boards will be strengthened by state governments' motivation and willingness to entrench corporate structure in the water boards.
- The state governments are committed to adjust tariffs in terms of both cost recovery and affordability.
- Broad-based stakeholder engagement, effective civil society engagement, and accountability mechanisms are necessary to monitor and advocate for reform.
- USAID can continue to work effectively with other development partners, particularly the World Bank and African Development Bank, to achieve meaningful scale and impact; and
- USAID's efforts will catalyze governance improvements within the SWBs.

E-WASH Innovation Grant Fund: Strengthen policy, institutional and regulatory frameworks for improved WASH services (includes establishing accountability mechanisms)

E-WASH is working to create a favorable enabling environment for urban WASH sector reforms in select states, focused on policy, legal, institutional and regulatory frameworks.

As part of this, E-WASH is aiming to have select SWBs ready for investments (“finance-ready”), which requires not only utility-level reform but also transformation of the environment in which they exist. Sustained sector reform requires strengthened policy, legal, institutional, and regulatory frameworks; and a shift in mindset of both politicians and the people they serve: the consumers. E-WASH is working to establish or deepen accountability mechanisms between the State government and the service providers through both supply and demand-side accountability measures. Furthermore, interventions under this activity will include efforts to better understand how sanitation is addressed (or not addressed) in the states. So far, under E-WASH support, all participating state water utilities are mandated to handle sanitation (i.e. sewage/wastewater). There may be opportunities to help utilities achieve economies of scale and incorporate urban sanitation into the regular operations of the State's water utilities.

Award(s) will contribute to one or more of the results below:

Result 1: A new or innovative approach to increasing or improving the policies, laws, agreements, regulations, or investments (public or private) that promote access to improved water supply and sanitation.

Result 2: There are increased numbers of private operators trained and are providing urban sanitation services as a result of E-WASH intervention.

Results 3: There is an increased percentage of the targeted population using safely managed sanitation services.

Minimum Eligibility Criteria.

Applicants must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements to qualify for funding under this REOI.

- Be legally registered as a non us non-governmental organization or for-profit private entity and having capacity to operate in Nigeria.
- Have a physical office in Nigeria.
- Have demonstrative success in the proposed area of intervention and other WASH related solutions
- Preferred to have been active for at least 3 years' operating within their sector and respective state.
- Have three (3) or more full time or part time staff.
- Be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project, not acting as an intermediary/consultant.
- Be willing to comply with all technical and financial requirements for participation in the program, including reporting and documentation of project activities, communication strategy and capacity development opportunities.
- Be eligible to receive funded awards from the United States government.

Organizations that do not meet the criteria above will not be considered.

Application Process

The application process for the E-WASH Innovation Grant will take place in two steps as described below

1) Stage One – Concept Note:

Applicants will submit a Concept Note using the template provided below following the instructions contained in this document. RTI will acknowledge the submission of Concept Papers within three (3) business days. RTI will review Concept Papers against the merit review criteria detailed below. Technical Evaluation Committee meet bimonthly through the application open period. RTI will provide individual results to each applicant within 30 working days following the meeting of the Technical Evaluation Committee. Applicants who do not meet the objectives, minimum eligibility requirements or receives inadequate rating will be rejected.

2) Stage Two – Full Application:

Successful applicants from Stage One will be invited to a Co-creation and ideation workshop, which will be facilitated by relevant technical advisors. The ideation workshop will provide successful concept note applicants with support to address weaknesses identified in their concept note and align concepts to EWASH's objectives. A technical advisor will support the applicant in expansion of the concept note to a program description and grant application. Applicants will submit a grant application in response to a Request for Application (RFA). Grant Applications will be evaluated based on the technical factors detailed in the RFA.

This funding opportunity will be open until October 31, 2020 and concept notes will be accepted through the entire funding opportunity time. Concept notes will be reviewed by Technical Evaluation Committee on a monthly basis in accordance with the stated factors below.

Interested organizations should kindly send their indication of interest by email to grants@ewash.rti.org with the email subject “E-WASH Innovation Grant Fund: IPD” on or before 22nd June, 2020.

Stage One-Concept Note Technical Evaluation Criteria

Concept papers will be reviewed by a Technical Evaluation Committee according to the criteria described below. The purpose of this review is to ensure that prospective partners bring appropriate capabilities, experiences and potential contributions to the co-creation process (if held) and ultimately the implementation of activities. A concept paper is determined to be successful if it receives a PASS overall based on the criteria below, which are listed in descending order of importance.

[Note: The criteria below are for the concept paper only. Additional criteria will be circulated as a part of a full Request for Applications for Stage Two Applicants.

Technical Element	Definition
Advancing E-WASH Objective/s	The extent to which the Concept Paper explains how the technical approach will help create a favorable environment for urban WASH sector reform in select states, focusing on policy and institutional and regulatory frameworks.
Technical Approach	The degree to which the proposed approach presents a cohesive plan that is technically sound, innovative, feasible, and cost effective, in addressing service delivery bottlenecks, regulatory performance and institutional and policy strengthening within the Urban WASH sector. In addition to the extent to which the proposed plan for measuring results is feasible and relevant to monitoring project impact.
Sustainability	The extent to which the Concept Paper’s proposed approach is sustainable and increases the likelihood that the relevant urban WASH sector institutions will be able to continue the program’s activities and/or maintain its achievements.
Institutional Capacity	The degree to which the applicant demonstrates expertise and experience in implementing urban WASH reform programs consistent with the program statement and results. In addition, the extent to which the concept paper demonstrates an appropriate management structure, organizational capabilities, expertise, and experience in project implementation in Nigeria.

RTI will assess its level of confidence that the applicant will successfully perform based on the technical evaluation criteria listed above. In doing so, RTI will utilize the following confidence approach to select successful applicants from Stage One:

Green	RTI has high confidence that the applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performing with little or no intervention.
Yellow	RTI has some confidence that the applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performing with some intervention.
Red	RTI has low confidence that the applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, or will be successful in performing even with intervention.

Name of applying organisation	
Project name	
Date of submission	
Proposed grant value (NGN)	
Proposed project duration (in months)	
Contact name	
Contact position	
Senior sponsor name and position (if different to contact)	
Email address	
Telephone number	
Correspondence address	
DUNS number (if available)	

Overview: Please introduce your organisation, including background, vision, and mission. Please outline the geographies in which you operate, your target population and your current programmes and interventions.

Context: If relevant, describe your organizations any existing programmes and / or interventions which focus on urban WASH, gender and social inclusion, mobile technology, or both.

Proposed project. Describe the project, objectives, and rationale, including how it fits into your overall mission. What is your 'offering'? (this can be a mobile-based product or service, or tariff marketing campaign, etc) How will it help you better reach and serve the urban poor in terms of WASH service delivery? What is innovative about the approach you are proposing?

Target population: Define the target population for this project, stating also which geographic focus it will take.

Definition of success: How do you define success for the proposed project? What do you anticipate is the concrete social value of this project, including the potential large-scale increase in access to water, sanitation, and hygiene services? Please share any quantitative targets you may already have, including those relating to the number of resource-poor women served.

Sustainability: How will you ensure that your offering is sustained beyond the Innovation Fund grant period?

Delivery and management: How do you plan to deliver the project, e.g. through a consultant or through existing staff? Who will be responsible for the implementation of the project and for the deployment of the grant funds? Who will be responsible for managing the partnerships?

Use of funds: How do you anticipate using this grant funding? Why is this grant necessary to move the project forward? How will you ensure that the impact of the Innovation Fund grant is additive, rather than duplicative, with regards to other funding your organisation receives?

Please complete the following section

1. Is your organisation a for-profit entity? **__Yes __No**
2. Is your organisation registered in Nigeria? **__Yes __No. If so, please attach a copy of registration.**
3. Has your organisation been in operation for 3 years or more? **__Yes __No**
4. If awarded a grant, is your organisation willing and able to share commercial project data (e.g. subscriber data, brand tracker, etc.) with USAID E-WASH on a confidential basis? **__Yes __No**