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स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग, स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार  
कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

Indian Council of Medical Research  
Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health  
and Family Welfare, Government of India

**Date: 04/08/2023**

## **Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Multistate Implementation Research Study for the development of sustainable, scalable model of implementation strategies for prevention and treatment of anaemia**

### **Overview**

High prevalence of anaemia remains a problem across different age groups in India. Addressing anaemia requires multi-sectoral approach, as it is a multi-factorial problem and both distal factors (socio demographic and household factors, environmental factors, health system access and services, and food security) as well as proximal factors (diet, nutrient deficiencies, infection/disease, and genetic factors) contribute to it.

To address high prevalence of anaemia, Government of India has taken several initiatives since 1970s with introduction of National Nutritional Anaemia Prophylaxis programme. In the year 2017, POSHAN Abhiyaan was launched with an aim to reduce the burden of anaemia among young Children (6-59 months), women and Adolescent Girls (15-19 years) as one of its objectives. Subsequently, in 2018, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched Anaemia Mukh Bharat (AMB), to strengthen the existing mechanisms and foster newer strategies for tackling anaemia. The AMB involves a life cycle approach providing preventive and curative mechanisms through a 6X6X6 strategy including six target beneficiaries, six interventions and six institutional mechanisms for all stakeholders to implement the strategy. Though the launch of Anaemia Mukh Bharat has increased the IFA supplementation coverage for all beneficiary groups, recent national health survey (NFHS 5, 2019-21) reported an increase in the prevalence of anaemia across all age groups. Assessing the effectiveness and coverage of strategies under Anaemia Mukh Bharat programme may be useful in finding out the probable reasons for increase in the prevalence of anaemia.

Addressing anaemia being one of the health priorities of Government of India; the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in consultation with experts, has identified priority areas for implementation research on anaemia such as improving compliance to IFA, streamlining logistics and resource availability, generating demand from the population for supply of IFA tablets and testing of haemoglobin; harness synergy in programme implementation across line divisions and departments for integrated and synchronized implementation of the anemia detection, management and prevention strategies etc.

The ICMR is inviting Expressions of Interest (EOI) from researchers to join a team dedicated to a Multistate Implementation Research Study for the development of sustainable, scalable model of implementation strategies for prevention and treatment of anaemia.

ICMR invites EOIs proposals that address the below-mentioned research question

**How can we develop a sustainable, scalable model of implementation strategies to achieve high (at least 80%) and effective population- based coverage of the 6 beneficiary groups by the 6 interventions of the AMB programme for prevention and treatment of anaemia?**

## Objectives

1. To achieve high and effective population-based coverage of prophylactic dose of IFA supplementation and deworming, in a defined population, for the above six beneficiary groups including
  - children aged 6-59 months
  - children aged 5-9 years
  - school going adolescent girls and boys
  - women of reproductive age group
  - pregnant and lactating women
2. To achieve high and effective population-based coverage of therapeutic management of anemia in a defined population, for the above six beneficiary groups.
3. Establish collaborative partnerships with various stakeholders (health systems, governmental departments, local governance institutions, district and block administration as needed, community) in the context of AMB.
4. To achieve anemia reduction as per the target of AMB program (3% absolute reduction in a year) among women of reproductive age and children.

## Outline of the Study

**Research Design-**A range of implementation research designs/frameworks (e.g., Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research) may be adopted. Mixed methods research with an appropriate mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches and participatory approaches are to be a part of the methodology.

**Target Population-** Beneficiaries of the AMB programme, i.e. children aged 6-59 months; children aged 5-9 years; adolescent girls and boys; women of reproductive age group and pregnant and lactating women

**Methods Setting/Local Context of Implementation Research-**The unit of implementation may be an entire district or a block of a large district. The proposal should describe the essential characteristics of the district/block, including epidemiology, socio-demographic profile, current health indicators, topography/geography, the existing healthcare facilities, particularly AMB coverage, and the rationale for choosing the district/block.

**Duration of the Study-** Up to 3 years. However, an additional period of 3-6 months for preparatory activities (with no additional costs) can be incorporated into the proposal.

**Formative phase-** The formative phase (3-6 months) aims to identify the barriers and facilitators for the effective functioning of AMB. The focus will be on management practices, existing operational mechanisms, resource utilization patterns and determinants. Methods could include a secondary review of relevant data, primary data collection, and key informant interviews from communities and health systems. The methods used, their purpose and outputs may be specified in the proposal.

**Implementation Phase-** While the detailed implementation plan will evolve from the formative phase, some indicative implementation strategies may be provided. Sustainable implementation plans would be given a higher priority. Implementation plans proposed and their rationale may be included and outlined in the proposal.

**Documentation and Evaluation Phase-** The proposal should specify what processes and tools would be documented concurrently. Evaluation methods should be specified in the proposal, keeping in mind the implementation research nature of the study.

## **Format of Expression of Interest (EOI) to be submitted**

### **A. Rationale of proposed study including the choice of sites (states and districts) to be included where the implementation shall be carried out**

The proposal should clearly state the rationale for the study, the recommended sites (which are likely to be relatively more vulnerable due to reasons of geography (remoteness; climate change; disaster-proneness); socio-economic or cultural disadvantage; may be preferentially included (states and districts) and the likelihood of utilization of the model by stakeholders in the future. The proposal can also provide evidence from previous research on the topic in the county or elsewhere, and describe any district or state-specific challenges related to implementation for the target group(s).

### **B. Implementation Strategy**

Provide a clear and detailed description of the intervention(s) to be implemented, including the target population, the intervention components, and the implementation strategies. You may include preparatory activities, mapping, a timeline, steps of implementation, measures of outcome, data management and deliverables.

### **C. Address feasibility and scalability**

Address the feasibility and scalability of the proposed intervention or policy, including the resources needed for implementation, the capacity of the implementing organization, and the potential for wider adoption and scale-up.

### **D. Research Team**

Summarise and justify the composition of the research team, based on the expertise of the individual team members in designing and implementing the project. Also, highlight the skillset and expertise the members shall bring to the research team that shall be constituted by the ICMR Hqrs for the development of final protocol and research project implementation.

### **E. Established relationships with state and district health systems and other stakeholders**

Operational feasibility would be key for this implementation research study. Include the collaborations that have been established with the potential stakeholders and participants including health systems, governmental departments, local governance institutions, district and block administration as needed, community.

### **Illustrative Budget outline (additional to the 2-page limit)**

The final site budgets for the proposal will be developed by the selected research team(s) under the guidance of ICMR. In this EOI, provide an estimated budget outline (no budget justification required at this stage) under the following headings: staff, recurring contingency, data management, travel and equipment.

### **One-page CV of the principal investigator and other key investigators (additional to the 2-page limit)**

Please provide a one-page CV of the PI and other key investigators from each identified area. Each CV should include:

- Academic and professional qualifications
- Current position and affiliation
- Up to five most relevant previous research grants
- Upto five most relevant previous publications
- Experience in undertaking projects on anaemia from the public health perspective

**Review process:**

The EOI documents for the ICMR's Multistate Implementation Research Study for the development of sustainable, scalable model of implementation strategies for prevention and treatment of anaemia will be evaluated and shortlisted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). The ICMR team will screen the applications for technical accuracy and eligibility. The shortlisted teams will then collaborate to develop a detailed proposal, under the guidance of ICMR Hqrs, The proposal will be evaluated based on factors such as study design, feasibility, data management capabilities, prior experience, engagement with public health and potential for seamless integration. The feasibility and suitability of integration of the proposed methodology in the final proposal to be developed under the guidance of ICMR Hqrs shall also be considered while shortlisting the EOI.

**Who can submit the EOI?**

The EOI can be submitted through ONLINE MODE ONLY by scientists/ professionals who have regular employment in Medical Institutes/ Research Institutes/ Universities/ Colleges/ Government and semi-government organizations and NGOs (documentary evidence of the recognition including a DSIR certificate should be available).

**Points to be kept in mind while submitting the EOI**

1. The EOI must address the specific research question that is mentioned in the call text.
2. Collaborative, multi-centre, interdisciplinary, innovative research initiatives from the applicant are encouraged.
3. Descriptive studies, systematic reviews and secondary data analysis will not be considered
4. Should focus on outcomes that are translatable into policy.
5. Foreign collaboration is not allowed under the call.

Interested parties should fill out the Google form at the below link and submit an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** as per the Format given above. Only shortlisted PI will be contacted

**Link- <https://forms.gle/QLD312oaBrEEo5Ni8>**

**Timeline**

Activities	Date
Release of Call	August 4, 2023
Last date for submission of EOI	September 5, 2023
Shortlisting of EOIs	September 30,2023
Proposal Development Workshop	October 20, 2023
Submission of a full proposal	October 30, 2023

**For any queries related to the call, please contact**

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