



Project Last Mile

Project Last Mile Health Innovator

Advisory Project

Matching Health Enterprises with Private Sector Expertise

To Improve Family Planning

Request for Application (RFA)

Date of Issuance	March 24 nd , 2021
RFA Closing Date	April 20 th , 2021
Anticipated Project Start Date	May 7 th , 2021

Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly challenged health systems across the globe. The pandemic has also placed an increasing strain on reproductive health services such as family planning that play a critical role in promoting safe motherhood and healthy families and improving women's economic and educational opportunities. Globally, more than 218 million women still have an unmet need for family planning. Given the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women, access to family planning resources is central to safeguarding women and girls' health during and after the pandemic.

Project Last Mile (PLM) is a cross-sector partnership between The Coca-Cola Company (TCCC) and its Foundation, The Global Fund, PEPFAR, USAID, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, designed to support Ministries of Health and partners in applying The Coca-Cola ecosystem's logistics, supply chain, and marketing expertise to strengthen public health systems across Africa. PLM has unparalleled access to the Coca-Cola ecosystem – a vast network of best-in-class agencies, logistics partners, retail outlets, and more –leveraged to explore synergies for public health systems to increase efficiency and impact through private-sector models.

With the support of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), PLM is seeking to identify and support innovators and social enterprises who demonstrate a proven or promising market-based approach to improve the availability of family planning products in Africa, are poised for growth, and would benefit from technical assistance in the area of route-to-market. Each enterprise will be matched with a PLM Subject Matter Expert (SME) and will gain one-on-one technical advice, coaching, and mentoring support to design a solution to a key route-to-market challenge being faced by the enterprise.

Eligible applicants can complete the application form at [\(Click here to access Online Application\)](#) by **5:00 pm EST, April 20th, 2021**.

Why Family Planning?

Expanding access to voluntary family planning is critical for safe motherhood, healthy families, gender equality, and women's empowerment and is a key factor in reducing poverty and building resilient communities. Despite these proven benefits, over 200 million women who want to avoid pregnancy are not using safe and effective family planning methods in developing countries. This is due to various reasons, including lack of access to information, products, or services.¹ Increasing access to family planning has the potential to save and improve so many lives. Each year, expanded access to family planning can:

- Prevent up to 30 percent of the more than 287,000 maternal deaths that occur.
- Save the lives of 1.4 million children under the age of five in high-need countries²

¹ UNFPA Family Planning Overview <https://www.unfpa.org/family-planning>

² USAID Family Planning and Reproductive Health Program Overview <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/FP-overview-6-12-19.pdf>

With the emergence and persistence of COVID-19, availability of and access to contraceptives has become even more difficult in low- and middle-income countries. Reduced access to contraceptives during a six-month lockdown could lead to up to 7 million unintended pregnancies. Supporting innovative and reliable solutions to sustain access to these essential products is even more critical.³

Scope of Support Available

Selected applicants will receive technical assistance, coaching, and mentorship through this program. Financial support is not available through this program. PLM will provide customized support and deliver practical outputs over six months to support health entrepreneurs to achieve strategic and social goals. Support from this program should support the organization's model in ways that will increase availability, access or use of family planning products; it may also benefit the availability, access or use of other products.

Through this program, successful applicants will receive:

1. Access to one or more subject matter experts with 20+ years of experience leading route-to-market initiatives in Africa from PLM, the Coca-Cola ecosystem, and broader fast-moving consumer goods industries.
2. A practical solution designed, in partnership with the applicant to address a core challenge (or opportunity) the enterprise is working through to help improve availability, access or uptake of products.
3. Coaching and mentorship during the program period to help prepare for the execution of the solution.

Note: This program will not be offering technical support related to accreditation or manufacturing of new products.

Route-to-market: Route-to-Market (RTM) is a strategic and operational approach used by companies, like The Coca-Cola Company, to develop and execute the roadmap to move products effectively and efficiently from a production or storage facility to the end-users, customers, or distributors. Route-to-Market plans answer key questions such as: What distribution channels should I use to reach different customer segments? Based on consumer demand, how frequently should we be delivering product and in what volumes? How do we manage and track inventory in an effective and efficient way? How can we support our customers to improve order generation, to increase our sales and more reliably understand demand? What does success look like to the customer, and what capabilities do we need in place to enable success to be achieved?

Localized route-to-market models enable The Coca-Cola System to achieve consistently full availability of their products to urban and rural areas across Africa through managed low-cost distribution models often unmatched by other private sector organizations. PLM's team of route-to-market experts have supported The Coca-Cola System with successfully designing and deploying world-class solutions to tackle challenging last mile distribution issues in Africa. PLM can help you assess, modify, adapt or design new approaches to optimize distribution, delivery, and access to products from the point of storage to end-users, customers, or distributors. Examples of Route-to-Market support can include:

³ Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage – UNFPA Interim Technical Note https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/COVID-19_impact_brief_for_UNFPA_24_April_2020_1.pdf

- Outlet Creation and New Customer Prospecting Strategy
- Picture of Success Development and Excellence in Execution
- Customer Service Strategy
- Order Generation and Inventory Management
- Last Mile Network and Route Optimization
- Inventory Deployment Planning
- Forecasting and Demand Planning
- Strategic Sourcing and Supplier Management

What types of questions can PLM help you answer?

- We want to expand our product delivery options to include direct-to-consumer delivery. Is this feasible for us? What would be required to establish and operate this new delivery channel?
- Tracking consumption and forecasting product demand across our product portfolio and customer segments is very difficult, leading to costly, ad-hoc order replenishments and missed sales opportunities. What tools and approaches can we put in place to improve demand forecasting and planning?
- By 2023, we want to expand our customers from 1,000 pharmacies to 2,000 pharmacies, including expansion into a new region. What is the most efficient, effective approach to expand distribution and effectively service new and current clients?
- We have a growing network of 200 sales agents, how might we improve performance management, compensation modelling and customer service protocol to improve employee engagement and increase sales?
- We have a wide portfolio of products available to our customers with inconsistent availability at the point of purchase. How do we prioritise the product portfolio to meet the customer needs, and what additional execution elements need to be performed at the customer to make consumers aware of the products and services available to them?

Eligibility

Who Can Apply?

This section describes who can apply to be considered for this program. All applicant organizations should demonstrate a proven or promising market-based approach to improve family planning products' availability to consumers in one or more of the eligible countries. While family planning products must be part of the product portfolio, the approach may also support availability of other essential health products, or other products.

Preference will be given to enterprises in Innovation Stages **3, 4 or 5**, as defined by the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA) and Global Innovation Exchange⁴:

- **Stage #3 - Proof of Concept:** Your concept has been field-tested to demonstrate early potential in a 'real-world' setting.
- **Stage #4 - Transition to Scale Stage:** The innovation demonstrated small-scale success, and you are building the business model and engaging partners to enable you to scale.

⁴ The Six Innovation Stages by the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA- GLOBAL INNOVATION EXCHANGE
<https://www.globalinnovationexchange.org/resources/blog-the-six-innovation-stages>

- **Stage #5 - Scaling Stage:** You are replicating and/or adapting the innovation to expanded geographies and populations for large-scale impact.

PLM will prioritize selection of applicants who, based on articulated needs and context, can most benefit from PLM expertise to demonstrably improve availability, access or use of family planning products and who can work well with PLM's remote project delivery model.

To be considered, applicants should meet the following conditions:

- Be registered and operating as a legal for-profit or not-for-profit social enterprise.
- Be operating and serving communities in one or more of the eligible countries.
- Demonstrate keen interest and commitment to strengthen, design and test the solutions co-designed during or soon after the project period.
- Demonstrate a sustainable business or funding model to support sustained and expanded operations.

Refer to Annex 1 for enterprises that would not be eligible for this program.

Eligible Countries

Applicants must ensure that their solution is currently serving or expected to serve customers in one or more of the following eligible countries:

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| • DR Congo | • Ethiopia |
| • Ghana | • Liberia |
| • Kenya | • Mali |
| • Madagascar | • Malawi |
| • Mozambique | • Rwanda |
| • Nigeria | • South Sudan |
| • Senegal | • Uganda |
| • Tanzania | • Zambia |
| • Benin | • Burkina Faso |
| • Côte d'Ivoire | • Guinea |
| • Mauritania | • Niger |
| | • Togo |

Supporting Documents

Please provide the following for your application:

- Completed application form (provided in Annex 2) submitted via online portal.
- Company registration information
- Any other information you would like to share on your company/proposed team's qualifications including, but not limited to, capabilities, product or service specifications, or proposed initiative to support your application.

The Process

- Applications will be open until **5:00 pm EST, April 20th, 2021**.
- Submissions will be assessed against the evaluation criteria detailed below.
- Final decisions will be communicated to selected applicants around May 7th, 2021, and up to 3 organizations will be selected to participate in the program.
- Following selection, successful enterprises will be expected to begin the Solution Design Process alongside the PLM SME that they have been matched with. The Solution Design Process is expected to occur between May through July and will provide enterprises with the opportunity to define their key issue and work towards a solution with their SME.
- Selected enterprises will be expected to complete progress reports against intended results after six months and 12 months of completing the program.



Technical Assistance Selection Criteria

Project Last Mile and USAID will select organizations based on an overall determination of which proposals best demonstrate the ability to further USAID's goals of accelerating progress in global health, improving access to, availability or use of family planning products and can benefit most from PLM's

specific offerings and expertise. The following factors will be taken into consideration as part of this determination. Note: The order in which the factors are listed does not necessarily reflect importance.

Evaluation Criteria

- 1 Overview of Solution and Market Opportunity:** Successful applicants will clearly articulate their relevant current or proposed service offering(s), describe their business model and results to date, and explain the market opportunity and value proposition for both customers and prospective funders. PLM will ask applicants to review the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA)⁵ Six Stages of Innovation and self-identify which stage applies to the organization. Preference will be given to enterprises in Stages 3, 4 or 5 with accredited/certified, clear and proven or promising solution and feasible market opportunity.
- 2 Organizational Capabilities and Capacity:** Successful applicants should be able to demonstrate sufficient human resource capacity to work closely with PLM throughout the duration of the activity.
 - **2.1 Capacity:** Indication of available staff including a Project Champion for the duration of the program.
 - **2.2 Capability:** Demonstrated aligned core competencies of the enterprise and ability to work with PLM to design and implement the solution.
- 3 Geographic and Customer Reach:** Applicants should be able to demonstrate the number of customers they are currently serving or aim to serve in each eligible country (See Eligible Country List above).
- 4 Anticipated Results and Impact:** Applicants should clearly indicate (1) the expected results of participating in the program (2) how participation will impact improvements in availability, access or use of family planning products and other essential health products, and (3) likely level of results at scale if fully successful.
- 5 Sustainability of Business Model:** Applicants should demonstrate how the business model provides an opportunity to scale the solution and manage any financial costs associated with scaling. How can PLM support help enable your organization to become more sustainable?

Each criterion will be given a score between 1 and 5 in accordance with the following guidelines: 1 – Do Not Recommend; 2 – Weak; 3 – Average; 4 – Good; and 5 – Very Good.

⁵ The Six Innovation Stages by the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA- GLOBAL INNOVATION EXCHANGE
<https://www.globalinnovationexchange.org/resources/blog-the-six-innovation-stages>

Additionally, applicants are encouraged to submit the following information. These will not be primary factors considered in partner selection; however, inclusion of this information is appreciated and may enhance your application.

- **Enterprise Ownership and Demographics:** Demonstrated commitment to the enterprise having ownership or joint management by women and/or having a workforce that includes the near or equal proportion of women and men.
- **Social Development:** Intent to generate social and/or environmental impact through demonstrated investments in women, marginalized populations, local community initiatives, job creation, and income generation or environmentally friendly manufacturing practices.
- **Innovation:** Creativity and differentiation of the solution that has the potential to transform the current market structure positively.

Thank you for your interest in participating in this program. We look forward to reviewing your application! Please complete and submit your application by **5:00 pm EST, April 20th, 2021**
[\(Click here to access Online Application\)](#)

ANNEX 1 - REASONS FOR EXCLUSION

Potential applicants cannot participate in this Call for Applications or be selected for an award if:

- a. They are bankrupt or being dissolved, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations.
- b. They have been convicted of an offense concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata (i.e., against which no appeal is possible).
- c. They are guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Contracting Authority can justify.
- d. They have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes following the legal provisions of their country.
- e. They have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization, or any other illegal activity.
- f. They have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations in connection with a procurement procedure or other grant award procedure.
- g. They are a political party or affiliated structure.
- h. They or their suppliers is actively and directly engaged in patent activities, development, assembly, production, trade, or manufacture of mines or such activities in respect of components primarily utilized in the manufacture of mines.
- i. They or their suppliers is engaged in any practice inconsistent with the rights outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including Article 32 thereof, which, among other things, requires that a child shall be protected from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Applicants are also excluded from participation if they are subject to a conflict of interest at the time of the call for applications.

ANNEX 2 – APPLICATION FORM

Application Form (To be completed by each applicant using VC4A Online Portal)

ORGANIZATION	<p><i>Name of organization:</i></p> <p><i>Type of organization:</i></p> <p><i>Address:</i></p> <p><i>Phone:</i></p> <p><i>Email:</i></p> <p><i>Website:</i></p> <p><i>Is your organization registered in one of the eligible countries? If yes, which one(s)?</i></p> <p><i>Is your organization locally owned and operated in one of the eligible countries?</i></p>
POINT OF CONTACT	<p><i>Name:</i></p> <p><i>Phone:</i></p> <p><i>Email:</i></p>
COUNTRY/DATE REGISTERED AND DATE STARTED OPERATING	
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	
ANNUAL REVENUE	
OVERVIEW OF SOLUTION AND MARKET OPPORTUNITY (500 WORDS)	<p><i>Please (1) articulate your current or proposed solution/service offering(s) to improve availability, access or use of family planning products (2) describe your business model and results to date, (3) explain the market opportunity and value proposition for both customers and prospective funders and (4) review the International Development Innovation Alliance (IDIA*) Six Stages of Innovation and self-identify.</i></p> <p><i>Please include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Description of the product or service including (estimated) cost for end-users.</i><i>Value proposition and how this solution meets a market need. How does your offering relate to the current standard of care/options available in the market?</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Description of customer base and the size of your target market (if available) Self-select your organization's IDIA Stage of Innovation (1-6)</i>
GEOGRAPHIC AND CUSTOMER REACH (300 WORDS)	<i>Briefly describe which countries your solution is currently available and estimate the number of customers you serve in each country. You may also specify countries that are in the pipeline.</i>
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITIES AND CAPACITY (300 WORDS)	<p><i>a. Describe your organization's qualifications and team capabilities delivering solutions to improve availability, access to or use of family planning or related products. If your organization recently entered this sector, describe relevant experience and capabilities to demonstrate qualifications to succeed in this new sector.</i></p> <p><i>b. Who from your team would be designated as Project Champion to work alongside the PLM subject matter expert?</i></p>
PRIMARY CHALLENGES TO DEVELOPING/ SCALING SOLUTION (300 WORDS)	<i>Describe the primary challenges your enterprise/initiative faces to ensuring availability, access or use of family planning products to your customers.</i>
ACCREDITATION (300 WORDS)	<i>Has your solution been accredited/certified for use in any settings? If yes, please provide details of the accreditation received, in particular, focusing on any accreditation received for the solutions' use in healthcare settings. If not, please confirm your solution does not require accreditation, or if it does, where you currently are in the processes of receiving accreditation.</i>
DETAILS OF SUPPORT REQUIRED (300 WORDS)	<i>Describe how you would like PLM technical advisory support to help your organization improve availability, access to or use of family planning products. What specific challenges or opportunities can this activity support you to address?</i>

ANTICIPATED RESULTS AND IMPACT (300 WORDS)	<i>Describe the intended results of participating in this program. What is your desired outcome/result from participating in this program (i.e., increase in sales, customer reach, etc.)?</i>
SUSTAINABILITY OF BUSINESS MODEL (300 WORDS)	<i>We hope that PLM support will help your enterprise grow. Describe how PLM's support can contribute to your ability to create a more sustainable model?</i>
ENTERPRISE OWNERSHIP, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND/OR INNOVATION <i>(Optional & Encouraged)</i> (300 WORDS)	<i>Describe how your enterprise and/or solution contribute to social development. Examples include and are not limited to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Ownership or joint management by women and/or near or equal proportion of women and men in workforce</i> ● <i>Staff skill development/capacity building</i> ● <i>Investments in women and/or marginalized populations</i> ● <i>Job creation and income-generating opportunities</i> ● <i>Engagement in local community initiatives.</i> ● <i>Environmentally friendly/sustainable products or practices.</i> ● <i>Ownership or joint management by women and/or near or equal proportion of women and men in workforce</i> ● <i>Innovation: Creativity and differentiation of the solution that has the potential to transform the current market structure positively.</i>
SUPPORTING INFORMATION (OPTIONAL)	<i>This is an optional section to provide additional information regarding your enterprise that has not been covered in previous sections.</i>

Please complete and submit your application by **5:00 pm EST, April 20th, 2021**

[\(Click here to access Online Application\)](#)