



## ***Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research***

### **Small Grants Programme to Develop Health Policy and Systems Research**

#### ***Call for Proposals***

*Deadline: 14 July 2000*

#### ***Promoting Policy Research for Health Systems Development***

In collaboration with the World Health Organization,  
an initiative of the

#### **Global Forum for Health Research**

#### **World Health Organization**

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#### ***Introduction***

Developing countries face increasingly complex problems in health needs and services for which traditional solutions are no longer effective. Health policy and systems research (HPSR) is therefore in increasing demand to clarify problems, identify solutions and test interventions. Yet this endeavour must itself rise up to the challenge by providing better evidence and information for policy and health systems and doing so in an effective, acceptable and equitable manner. To this end HPSR capacity has to be strengthened at all levels, including research quality, project relevance, financial and

institutional support and effective utilisation of evidences by policy makers and other actors.

The Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research was established in November 1999 as an initiative of the Global Forum for Health Research in collaboration with the World Health Organization to contribute to health development and the efficiency and equity of health systems through research on and for policy. Among its tasks, the Alliance is contributing to develop HPSR and promote national capacity with particular emphasis on countries who currently have limited capacity to participate and benefit from HPSR but that are strongly committed to



improvement.

To contribute to the development of HPSR and help promote capacity, the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research calls for letters of intent for small grants aimed to support capacity development, good quality research and its integration into the research to policy cycle.

### **Objective**

Grants will aim to contribute to improved health by encouraging relevant, valid, and sustainable research and its application to the health policy and management process.

### **Grants**

Two types of grants will be awarded:

#### **Young Researcher Grants**

These grants aim to support the growth and potential of HPSR in the medium term by funding projects of young researchers working as part of a research team or students who are doing Masters or Doctoral level dissertations in a relevant subject. Close co-ordination will be sought between the academic and methodological support provided by the host programmes or senior researchers and Alliance training and grant requirements.

#### **Research to Evidence Grants**

These grants aim to strengthen capacity for the application of HPSR to the policy process. Financial support will be provided to experienced researchers and policy/decision-makers to undertake short research projects involving empirical study or analysis of existing data. These should take the form of an interaction between researchers and policy/decision-makers which fosters the production of evidence for the policy process, such as a sabbatical period by an academic spent in a health-related institution with policy/decision-making roles, or a part-time sabbatical period spent by a policy/decision-maker in an academic institution.

Besides financial support for research, the Alliance will organise training and development workshops for grantees which will provide support in proposal development, and writing up and communication of research results.

### **Research topics and approaches**

No specific topics will be prioritised. Applicants should address health policy and systems research defined broadly as the production of new knowledge and applications to improve how societies organise themselves to achieve health goals, including how they plan, manage and finance activities to improve health, as well as the roles, perspectives and interests of different actors in this effort. The health system functions of regulation, organisation, financing and delivery of services are the focal subjects of HPSR. Broader determinants directly affecting the health system are also considered within the purview of HPSR, such as the impact of social policies against poverty and exclusion, and the consequences of globalisation, especially trade and multilateral trade agreements. Outside the scope of HPSR would be research focusing on environmental, political, cultural and economic determinants and processes that affect health indirectly.

### **Who can apply**

#### **Young Researcher Grants:**

Applicants must either be:

- working in a research group led by more senior researchers or
- enrolled in a Masters or Doctorate programme, in which case the proposed research project should be an integral part of the requirements for graduation.

The letter of intent can be submitted by a senior researcher (in the case of research groups) or academic supervisor (in the case of students), or by the junior researcher in which case the supervisor should endorse the proposal. Proposals could involve one or more junior researchers.

### **Research to Evidence Grants**

Individuals based at health-related institutions may apply. Health-related institutions or units may be involved in funding, advising, consultancy, administration, service provision, research, training, technology development or advocacy. Government and private institutions are equally welcome. The applicant(s) should have or be able to establish collaboration with another institution or internal unit leading to the formation of a team with at least one researcher and one policy/decision-maker. The supporting member(s) of the team should endorse the letter of intent. Applications will be accepted only from institutions in developing countries, but teams including developed country institutions are eligible.

### **Project selection and technical support**

Letters of intent will be selected by the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research on a competitive basis. In the first phase, up to 50 letters of intent are expected to be selected on the basis of relevance and technical merit. Applicants will then be invited to present a draft proposal at a first training and protocol development workshop. On this basis participants will finalise their proposals and will be asked to submit them to the Alliance for the award phase. In this phase, approximately 40 proposals will be supported on the basis of their technical merit. After the preliminary report is submitted the principal investigator will be invited to a second training and development workshop to support write-up and the design of dissemination and application strategies. Projects will receive technical support during execution tailored to their needs. It is anticipated that regional HPSR networks will collaborate in these activities.

### **Budget, duration and contractual arrangements**

Grants will be awarded for up to one year with a modest budget to support field work and

office support. Requests for salary support will need to be fully justified. Grants will be awarded by the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research in Geneva, Switzerland through a contract between the Global Forum for Health Research and the applicant's institution. Payment will be in two portions: one at signature of the contract, the other upon presentation of the final version of the deliverables.

### **How to apply**

Letters of intent should be received by the Alliance not later than close of business on 14 July 2000. Awards will be announced for the 4 August. Letters should contain the following information not to exceed 1,200 words:

#### *Administrative information*

1. Type of grant requested
2. Project title
3. Name, position and contact information of applicant
4. Details of supporting institution/unit:
  - 4.1. For junior researchers in research group: details of research group and name(s) of senior researchers
  - 4.2. For students: description of Masters' or Doctoral programme and name of course director
  - 4.3. For Research to Evidence Grants: name and details of both research and policy partners
  - 4.4. For Research to Evidence Grants: name and details of both research and policy partners
5. Brief CVs of key individuals (junior researchers and their supervisors, or researchers and policy/decision-makers, including training on research; skills in computer/data analysis and list of research studies previously undertaken.

#### *Research project information*

6. Aims and objective of the proposed project
7. Conceptual framework and methodology

8. Data analysis plans
9. Justification:
  - 9.1. Evidence of relationship to HPSR priorities at country level
  - 9.2. Academic/technical support available (specify level of training in the case of student applications, and supervisory capacity in the case of research groups)
  - 9.3. Potential to improve research capacity of researchers and policy actors
  - 9.4. Potential application of research to the national policy and health system process
- 9.5. Relationship to existing research and health policy/programme activities
- 9.6. Planned use of existing research data, if appropriate
- 9.7. Institutional support for the project
10. Deliverables (reports, publications, manuals, data bases, policy guidelines etc.)
11. Global budget and duration (projects should be completed in one year or less; give only a total budget at this stage)
12. Budgetary contribution by host and partner institutions.

**Send letters to:**

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