



UNIVERSITY of  
RWANDA

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE & HEALTH SCIENCES

EAC REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR  
VACCINES, IMMUNIZATION & HEALTH SUPPLY  
CHAIN MANAGEMENT



## Call for Research Grant Proposals in priority areas of Vaccines, Immunization and Health Supply Chain Management (VIHSCM)



UNIVERSITY of  
RWANDA



April 2022



Summary									
Grant Title	Call for Research Grant Proposals in priority areas of Vaccines, Immunization and Health Supply Chain Management (VIHSCM)								
Grant Number	VIHSCM Research Grant 02 - 2022								
Number of Grants	Six (6)								
Funding Purpose	The general objective of the grant is to promote regional research capacity in the six priority areas of VIHSCM and enhance dissemination of best practices in the EAC region and beyond.								
Key Dates	<table><tr><td><i>Date of Issue:</i></td><td>21<sup>st</sup> April 2022</td></tr><tr><td><i>Closing Date:</i></td><td>20<sup>th</sup> June 2022</td></tr><tr><td><i>Feedback to applicants:</i></td><td>21<sup>st</sup> August 2022</td></tr><tr><td><i>Earliest Start Date:</i></td><td>23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022</td></tr></table>	<i>Date of Issue:</i>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2022	<i>Closing Date:</i>	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2022	<i>Feedback to applicants:</i>	21 <sup>st</sup> August 2022	<i>Earliest Start Date:</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2022
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<i>Earliest Start Date:</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2022								
Disbursement	The funds will be paid in instalments to the applicant's home institution as per the contract.								
Contact Person	Dr Domina Asingizwe, EAC RCE - VIHSCM Research Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Email: <a href="mailto:adomina23@gmail.com">adomina23@gmail.com</a></li><li>- Phone: +250788876046</li></ul>								



## **Call for Research Proposals in Priority Areas of Vaccines, Immunization and Health Supply Chain Management (VIHSCM)**

*Kigali, Rwanda – April 2022.*

### **Introduction**

One vital part of health systems is an efficient supply chain management for the provision of health commodities technologies like vaccines, diagnostics, medications, medical equipment and products for family planning.

The East African Community (EAC) established the EAC Regional Centre of Excellence (RCE) for Vaccines, Immunization and Health Supply Chain Management (VIHSCM) in 2015 at the University of Rwanda (UR) in Kigali in order to address challenges of vaccines and other health commodities supply chain management by strengthening the human resource capacity. Among the RCE's objectives are achieving excellence in research and dissemination of knowledge that informs the evidence base and best practices for VIHSCM and innovation in VIHSCM.

Even though the number of peer-reviewed publications on VIHSCM in the EAC region has increased over the past years, there is still a dire need for the creation and expansion of a more solid evidence base upon which to base policies and practices to improve the supply chain management of health commodities. Research conducted by national researchers, who have an in-depth understanding of the context and local realities, is lacking.

For this reason, the RCE-VIHSCM in collaboration with health supply chain management experts has identified gaps and key areas where further research on VIHSCM in the EAC is needed. This is the basis for the current Call for Research Proposals on VIHSCM and they are:

- Priority Area 1. Access to essential medicines and vaccines
- Priority Area 2. Use of innovation and technologies in VIHSCM
- Priority Area 3. Effective management of vaccines
- Priority Area 4. Supply Chain workforce: availability and strategies to build HR
- Priority Area 5. Quality of medicine
- Priority Area 6. Financing of medicines and vaccines

Through a competitive process of selection, funds will be provided to successful research proposals in these areas. The research proposal should ensure specific emphasis on promoting equitable access to vaccines and medicines. Therefore, the needs of marginalized groups and the rest of the population should be considered, and where possible data should be disaggregated by sex, age and socioeconomic quintiles in the analysis plan.

Applications are invited to pay specific attention to the following cross-sectional issues: access to medicines and Universal Health Coverage; Climate Change; the involvement of the private sector; medicines/vaccines in migration/disaster/outbreaks; medicines for non-communicable diseases. In





addition, research projects on one of the above topics that include or make comparisons between different EAC countries (cross-countries studies) are encouraged.

### **Objectives of the grant**

The general objective of the grant is to promote regional research capacity in the six priorities areas of VIHSCM in the EAC region and enhance dissemination of best practices in the EAC region and beyond

The specific objectives of this call are to:

- generate knowledge relevant to the six priority areas
- strengthen the link between evidence generation and health policy making
- enhance experience exchange between the researchers in the EAC Member States
- stimulate capacity building and mentorship for research in VIHSCM

### **Who should apply?**

This Call for Research Proposals is open to all researchers from public universities and public research institutions in the EAC, as well as Government organizations with expertise in the VIHSCM based in the East African Community region. The Principal Investigator (PI) shall be working for one of the above-mentioned institutions, but the research team may include people from outside those institutions. Proposals respecting a gender quota of 30% for women will be prioritised. Also, proposals including 30% of junior EAC researchers will be prioritised. Collaborations between research institutions from different EAC Partner States on multi-country proposals are allowed.

### **Award and duration**

The award amount shall be a maximum of EUR 20.000 for each proposal, and the research project shall be implemented within a period of 18 months from the date the contract is signed.

### **Submission of research proposals**

All proposals shall be written in English and shall be submitted via email to [rcevihscmresearch@gmail.com](mailto:rcevihscmresearch@gmail.com) with copy to Cc. Research Coordinator [[adomina23@gmail.com](mailto:adomina23@gmail.com)]. During application, the applicant should specify the grant number in the subject. The following documents need to be submitted in PDF or Excel, using the recommended templates where applicable:

1. Cover letter
2. Application form
3. Work Plan
4. Budget Proposal
5. CVs of all team members
6. Signed and stamped Letter of Support from the host institution

The proposals should use the recommended templates as found in the Annexes of this call and available on the RCE VIHSCM website: <https://hscm.ur.ac.rw>

Incomplete files and submissions after the deadline will not be considered.



### **Acceptable Budget Expenditure Categories:**

This document provides a summary of allowable expenditures under the research proposals in the priority areas of Vaccines, Immunization and Health Supply Chain Management (VIHSCM) that is funded through the RCE-VIHSCM. Only eligible expenditures related to the project activities are to be included in the project budget.

The following are acceptable budget expenditures:

1. Research expenses, justifiable conferences/seminar/workshop costs, research field work, costs for enumerators, scientific publications, consumables, communication costs, and costs related to dissemination of research findings.
2. Equipment, supplies and materials, including small equipment, consumables to be purchased, fabricated, or hired that will be used during the course of the project.
3. Transport, costs for accommodation, meals, per diem, and related expenses.
4. Training related costs not exceeding 10% of the total grant budget, such as training cost for data analysis or other technical trainings.
5. Allowances to facilitate the research assistants and eventual consultants for project implementation. This budget should not exceed 50% of the total grant budget, including facilitation for PI and research team members

#### **Disclaimer:**

a) The expenditure categories listed above are not exhaustive. Therefore, any budget items submitted are subject to RCE-VIHSCM final decision and may be approved or rejected at RCE-VIHSCM discretion at the time of contract signature.

b) No expenditure on staffing cost outside of EAC is allowed.

### **Evaluation criteria and description**

Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.





	Criteria	Sub-criteria	Details	Weight (100%)
1	Proposal	Scientific merit and feasibility	<p>Reflect on the proposed rationale, approach and methodology.</p> <p>Reflect on the scientific, ethical, logistics and technical feasibility as proposed.</p> <p>Reflect on extent to which proposal clearly addresses one of six priority VIHSCM areas</p> <p>Reflect on extent to which proposal clearly focuses on equitable access to vaccines and medicines</p> <p>Reflect on extent to which proposal addresses one or more of cross-sectional areas identified, and/or is a multi-country proposal</p>	<p>15 %</p> <p>15 %</p> <p>10 %</p> <p>5 %</p> <p>5 %</p>
2	Track record of joint applicants	Past research	Reflect on past contributions to knowledge production (e.g. journal articles, book chapters, designs, performances, etc.) of the <u>team</u> .	10 %
3	Gender & capacity building	Gender	Research team consists of at least 40% women	5 %
		Capacity building	Reflect on extent to which a component of capacity building for research and stimulating interest of (junior) researchers in VIHSCM is included	5 %
4	Impact	Impact on knowledge production	Reflect on extent to which proposed research significantly advance discovery and understanding on VIHSCM in the EAC region	5 %
		Wider impact	It is clear how such impact will be measured and followed up	5 %
5	Collaboration	Liaison within EAC	The research promotes experience exchange between the region Partners States, institutions and researchers	5 %
6	Dissemination	Publication	There is a clear dissemination plan, including commitment for publication	5 %
7	Realistic plan and budget	Plan of activities	Realistic plan with timelines	5 %
		Specific Budget lines for research	Detailed Budget with unit costs, as well as budget justification	5 %
TOTAL				100%

### Plagiarism Check

Plagiarism in any form will not be accepted. All submitted proposals will be subjected to plagiarism checks and hence liable to rejection when exceeding 25% on a similarity index excluding references and titles.



Any text taken verbatim from other sources needs to be identified using quotation marks and proper references. Applicants are requested to pre-check their proposals for plagiarism before uploading to avoid any repercussions at a later stage.

### **Feedback to the applicants**

The RCE VIHSCM office will inform applicants on the outcome of their application.

For more information, please contact Dr. Domina Asingizwe, RCE VIHSCM Research Coordinator:

- Email: [adomina23@gmail.com](mailto:adomina23@gmail.com)
- Phone: +250788876046

WE WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK WITH YOUR APPLICATION!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Stephen Karengera'.

**Dr Stephen KARENGERA**  
EAC RCE-VIHSCM Director



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Appendix I. APPLICATION FORM

COVER SHEET OF APPLICATION FORM

SHADED AREA FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY	
DATE RECEIVED (dd/mm/yy)	RCE-VIHSCM PROPOSAL ID NUMBER RCE-VIHSCM / .....
NAME OF COUNTRY OF APPLICANT	HAS THIS PROPOSAL BEEN SUBMITTED TO ANOTHER AGENCY FOR FUNDING YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
NAME OF ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTION	IF YES, WRITE NAME OF AGENCY WITH ACRONYM
TITLE OF PROPOSAL (120 characters maximum):	
WHAT IS THE PRIORITY AREA ADDRESSED BY THIS PROPOSAL? (more than one area can apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Topic 1: Access to essential medicines and vaccines <input type="checkbox"/> Topic 2: Use of innovation and technologies in VIHSCM <input type="checkbox"/> Topic 3: Effective management of vaccines <input type="checkbox"/> Topic 4: Supply chain workforce: availability and strategies to build HR <input type="checkbox"/> Topic 5: Quality of medicines <input type="checkbox"/> Topic 6: Financing of medicines and vaccines	
NAME OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)	
LAST NAME:	FIRST NAME(S):
TITLE:	
POSTAL ADDRESS:	
NAME OF PI's INSTITUTIONAL HEAD:	
ADDRESS	





E-MAIL 1:		E-MAIL 2:	
<input type="checkbox"/> UNIVERSITY <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER			
REQUESTED AMOUNT (EUR .....)		PROPOSED DURATION (12 MONTHS MAX): .....	
SIGNATURE OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR		SIGNATURE (AND STAMP) OF INSTITUTIONAL HEAD	
NAME & DATE:		NAME & DATE:	
<b>1. PROPOSAL SUMMARY</b>  Please provide one page executive summary, <b>up to 500 words</b> . The summary should include (i) rationale (ii) objectives, (iii) methods, (iv) expected outcomes (national / regional perspective)			
<b>2. BACKGROUND</b>  Please provide a <b>2-page background</b> . Background includes literature review of previous studies on the subject (global / regional / national), stating its public health importance and rationale of proposing the study this time at this place on this population, considering gender, equity and human rights (please quote references using a standardized citation style)			
<b>3. OBJECTIVES</b>  <b>3.1 General objective:</b> the overall aim expected to be achieved from this research  <b>3.2 Specific objectives:</b> 2-3 clearly stated SMART specific objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant to EAC, time-bound), which break-down the general objective  1.  2.  3.			



#### 4. METHODOLOGY

An appropriate clear description of activities and information on the general plan of work should be provided here. The methodology section should describe;

**4.1 Study design** (observational / experimental, mentioning specific type, accordingly)

**4.2 Study setting / data sources** (clearly indicating where the study will be conducted: country, city, institution(s), department(s), etc.). This includes settings for primary data collection, and specific sources of secondary data (e.g. medical records; health registers; insurance registers; national census records, etc.)

**4.3 Study population** (study subjects and their respective characteristics)

**4.4 Sample size** (sample size assumptions / estimate)

**4.5 Sampling method** (method to be used to select subjects ensuring a representative sample of the target population; inclusion and exclusion criteria)

**4.6 Data collection** (data collection method(s) and tool(s) as appropriate: ***data collection tool(s) to be annexed to the proposal*** but sections / variables described under this section; focus group/interview guidelines; checklists; anthropometric measurements (e.g. weight, height, circumference, BMI, WHR, etc.) with reference to measurement / estimation method; biological measurements (laboratory investigations with reference to measurement / estimation method / kit); relevant definitions of exposure(s) and outcome(s) as appropriate to proposal; background / number of data collectors, etc.

**4.7 Data management plan** (A clear plan of data coding, entry, cleaning, and analysis to be used, considering disaggregation of collected data by sex, age and socio-economic quintiles. Please mention specific statistical tests and references software)

**4.8 Coordination, monitoring and quality control** (plan for field work supervision to ensure proper / scientific data collection, data management, quality control indicators, etc.)

#### **4.9 Ethical considerations:**

All research proposals submitted for the Grant must adhere to ethical conduct of research on human subjects. This commitment will be ensured by the RCE-VIHSCM Selection Committee. The PIs are required to obtain clearance from an official Ethical Review Committee/ Institutional Review Board once the proposal has been awarded, which is a **condition** for consideration for funding. Litigation involving human research must be accompanied by: (a) copy of ethical clearance certification and (b) the informed consent documents (in English and local language).



5. TIME FRAME OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES (Gantt chart)

Please indicate the activities to be conducted and check the corresponding timing by marking (X) or shade the appropriate cell(s). Overlap is expected (i.e. more than one activity in certain months)

Starting Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
Expected End Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity	Year 1											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Milestone I: obtain ethics approval from relevant authority												
Submission of the Progress Report*												
Milestone II: submission of draft report												
Submission of the Final technical and Financial Report*												
Milestone III: submission scientific publication of research												





## 6. BENEFICIARIES OF RESEARCH RESULTS

Who are the direct/ indirect beneficiaries of the study, what are the benefits both groups [direct / indirect] are likely to accrue in the short or long term.

## 7. REFERENCES CITED

Any references cited should be listed here, using standardized citation style (e.g. Vancouver Style). This includes citations for scientific papers, books, reports, laboratory methods, standardized questionnaires / check-lists, biostatistical software, etc. References should be listed in numerical ascending order with corresponding citations in the text, marked as shown [#].

- Journal articles should start with name of author (with suffix et al, if more than six authors), followed by title of study, name of journal, volume, page numbers and **year** of publication (in bold at the end).
- Books should start with the title, followed by Editors, Publishers, and **year** of publication (in bold at the end).

Reports should start with title, followed by name of writer, reference to organization for which it was written, reference number of report if any and **year** of reporting (in bold at the end)

## 8. PROPOSAL BUDGET WITH JUSTIFICATIONS

Budget breakdown should be provided in a tabular format, as shown below, with the full term of requested budget from the Grant. The breakdown should be restricted to 2 pages.

### Instructions for budget items:

#### i. Personnel

RCE-VIHSCM expects that the PIs and Co-Investigators will be faculty / researchers at eligible institutes, with research as one of their normal functions. RCE funds will not pay basic salaries for researchers but **may contribute to allowances** for PIs and Co-Investigators. Personnel costs may also include compensation for data collectors, field workers, lab technicians, data managers, etc. However, the personnel cost could not exceed 50% of the total grant budget.

#### ii. Material and Supplies

The budget must indicate the general types of expendable materials and supplies required, with their estimated costs. The breakdown should be more detailed when the cost is substantial.

#### iii. Equipment

The Grant does not support general purpose equipment, such as a personal computers, telephone sets, photocopying / facsimile machines etc.

#### iv. Human Subjects

The needs for requiring direct compensation of participants (which is not generally recommended) must be fully justified (e.g. transportation, hot meals, etc.)

#### v. Travel

Travel and its relation to the proposed activities must be specified and itemized by destination and cost. The Grant does not support travel outside the EAC region.



**vi. Field Work**

Funds may be requested for field work necessary for data collection other than the personnel cost.

**vii. Training**

Training expenses should be minimized to only specialized training needed for staff using related research equipment or improving research skills

**viii. Dissemination of Results**

The cost involved must be in accordance with the proposed dissemination plan such as local conferences, publications and dissemination workshops. Participants are encouraged to contribute to dissemination activities within the EAC region.

**ix. Other Costs**

The budget must identify and itemize other anticipated costs not included under the headings above. Examples include telecommunications and photocopying. Reference books, periodicals and other scientific literature may be charged to the Grant only if they are specifically required for the project.

**OUTLINE OF THE BUDGET (in EUR)**

Total Amount Requested: EUR .....

**Budget Breakdown**

No	ITEM OR ACTIVITY	Amount Requested from RCE-VIHSCM Grant	Amount available from other Sources	JUSTIFICATION
1.	Personnel* -			
2.	Materials & Supplies - -			
3.	Equipment - -			
4.	Local Travel			



	-			
	-			
5.	Field work			
	-			
6.	Training			
7.	Dissemination of results**			
8.	Other costs**			
	<b>Total EUR</b>			

\*Up to 30 % of total budget; \*\*Up to 5 % of total budget;

#### 9. APPENDICES

Please provide as appendices:

- Data collection form(s)
- Informed consent forms (in English and local language)
- Short CVs of investigators including 1 page of relevant publications
- Proof of affiliation to an EAC based institution for only Principal Investigator (PI)
- Letter of support from the proposed grant recipient institution





APPENDIX II

**Certification for Proposal**

I certify to the best of my knowledge that:

- i. All statements in the proposal entitled

"....."  
"....."

(Excluding scientific hypotheses and scientific opinions) are true and complete, and

- ii. The text and graphics herein as well as any accompanying publications or other documents, unless otherwise indicated, are the original work of the signatories or individuals working under their supervision.

I agree to accept responsibility for the scientific conduct of the project and to provide the required project reports, if an award is recommended from the RCE-VIHSCM Grant, as a result of this proposal.

NAME (TYPED)	Signature	Date (dd/mm/yy)
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR		
CO-INVESTIGATOR-1		
CO- INVESTIGATOR-2		
CO- INVESTIGATOR-3		
NAME (TYPED)	Signature	Date (dd/mm/yy)
TITLE		
TELEPHONE NUMBER	FAX NUMBER	E-MAIL ADDRESS