

Contracting Authority: Raks Thai Foundation

Terms of Reference (TOR) for

a Consultant to conduct operational research on LLIHN usage and associated factors in mobile and migrant populations, particularly forest-goers, to support malaria activities in Ubon Ratchathani and Si Sa Ket provinces of Thailand

Under the program title

Regional Artemisinin-resistance Initiative to Elimination (“RAI2E 2018-2020”)

Regional Component

Finance by

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Requisition number	PG 154/2562
Issued dated	1 September 2019
Purpose	The purpose of these Terms of Reference (ToR) is to hire a professional consultant (Consultant) to design and conduct operational research for the RAI2E project. The main focus of this study is to follow up and assess LLIHN usage, but also clearly identify behaviors and needs of, and factors relating to, hard-to-reach MMPs, particularly forest-goers, to improve service delivery of Raks Thai Foundation and partners, according the scope of work in this TOR.
Program Title	Regional Artemisinin-resistance Initiative to Elimination (“RAI2E 2018-2020”)
Funding Source	The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
Require for competitive bidding	Yes

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these Terms of Reference (ToR) is to hire a professional consultant (Consultant) to design and conduct operational research for the RAI2E project. The main focus of this study is to follow up and assess LLIHN usage, but also clearly identify behaviors and needs of, and factors relating to, hard-to-reach MMPs, particularly forest-goers, to improve service delivery of Raks Thai Foundation, according to the scope of work in these TOR.

Raks Thai Foundation (Raks Thai) is responsible for the ToR under the Regional Artemisinin-resistance Initiative to Elimination (RAI2E), which is funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) through the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

2. BACKGROUND

The Regional Artemisinin-resistance Initiative to Elimination (RAI2E) is a multi-country initiative funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) from 2018 to 2020. This initiative is implemented through strategic partnerships across the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), which includes Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Through this initiative, the Greater Mekong Subregion has committed to eliminate malaria by 2030, and earlier in some countries.

Civil Society Organizations in the GMS work in partnership with the government; providing services in active foci areas (active transmission in the last 6 months) which include established villages and remote and hard-to-reach communities, which include national, mobile, migrant and ethnic populations.

Raks Thai Foundation has been engaged with the Global Fund since its inception, and currently implementing two projects under RAI2E; the Country Component and the Regional Component. The Country Component is implemented in Ubon Ratchathani, Si Sa Ket, Kanchanaburi, Ratchaburi, Prachuap Kiri Khan, Chumphon, Surat Thani, and Ranong. The Regional Component supplements programmatic gaps in Ubon Ratchathani and Si Sa Ket. In addition to Raks Thai Foundation's work, civil society organizations (CSOs) also implemented malaria activities in Mae Hong Son, Tak, Songkhla, Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat.

Activities are implemented according to three main strategies:

1. Building community resilience to contribute to malaria elimination
2. Responding to active transmission through the 1-3-7 Strategy
3. Distribution of long-lasting insecticide treated nets and hammock nets (LLIN/LLIHN)

Northeast Thailand, the focus of the Regional Component, is one of the highest malaria burden regions in Thailand. Between 2015 and 2016, the region saw a significant decline (400%) in malaria (4564 to 1134). However, in following years, the malaria incidence has slowly increase again by approximately 10-15% per year (1134 in 2016, 1249 in 2017, 1435 in 2018). The highest incidence is found along the borders with Cambodia and Lao PDR, and assumed to be related to limited and irregular service access and behaviors of the populations. In 2018, there were 1345 cases in the region (SS: 908, UB: 527). Of these, males accounted for 93% and 91% respectively, and Thai nationals accounted for 97% and 99% respectively.

To support malaria elimination in this region, the Regional Component was planned according to the following details:

Goal:

- To make an as large as possible contribution to the elimination of falciparum malaria from the GMS, and to prevent the emergence or spread of artemisinin resistance.

Objectives:

- To interrupt transmission of *P. falciparum* through usage of long-lasting insecticide treated hammock nets by targeted populations.
- To provide access to prevention, diagnosis and treatment for mobile and migrant populations.
- To closely monitor trends in LLIHN usage and health seeking behavior, to identify and take action to control outbreaks.

During 2018, Raks Thai Foundation conducted various activities to support malaria elimination from the region. This included detailed mapping of all active foci areas, including communities and worksites, conducted health education sessions, organized mobile testing, and distributed LLINs and LLIHNs to malaria affected communities and individuals. These activities were conducted in 21 townships, comprising 71 villages, with a total population of 67,934 people. Within this area, we included established villages within 5km of forest areas, ethnic minority groups and large settlements associated with plantations. In addition, we specifically prioritized mobile and migrant populations (MMPs) working and living in the areas highlighted above, estimated as 8% percent of the total population. These MMPs include:

- Seasonal agricultural laborers and plantation workers.
- Traditional slash-and-burn and paddy field farming communities visiting their forest farms
- Forest workers in the formal sector (police, border guards, forest/wildlife protection services)
- Forest workers in the informal sector (hunters, small-scale gem/gold miners, people gathering forest products [precious timber, construction timber, rattan/bamboo]
- Formal and informal cross-border migrant workers (Legal and illegal workforces)

These mobile and migrant populations (MMPs) are often targeted by interventions as a homogenous group, but in actuality they have varying patterns of health behavior and utilization of health services due to their proximity to services, occupation, sex, income and legal status. These MMPs, in addition to some static Thai populations, are considered ‘forest-goers’, and tend to be travel regularly to high burden areas and stay overnight deep in forest settings, sleeping under makeshift shelters. This creates a large at-risk population of both MMPs and static host communities.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE TOR

In order to support project implementation, assess malaria knowledge, treatment-seeking behaviors and preventive practices among these different categories of MMPs in Ubon Ratchathani and Si Sa Ket, Thailand, Raks Thai Foundation seeks to contract a Consultant to design and conduct operational research. The main focus of this study is to follow up and assess LLIN and LLIHN usage, but also clearly identify behaviors and needs of, and factors relating to, hard-to-reach MMPs, particularly forest-goers, to improve service delivery. Raks Thai has maintained records of all individuals who received an LLIN or LLIHN during 2018 and 2019, which can be used to develop a clear methodology and data collection plan. By utilizing available records, and a respondent-driven sampling methodology to reach this population, we hope to provide further insight which can aid health services, community workers and policymakers in developing interventions that can better reach these populations at-risk.

4. EXPECTATION

The expectations of these ToR are:

1. To work collaboratively and productively with Raks Thai Foundation program staff and partners who are involved in planning, implementation, data collection and data analysis to develop a clear methodology and conduct research in Ubon Ratchathani and Si Sa Ket;
2. To analyze evidence to better understand the needs, behaviors, and factors relating to MMP and forest-goer populations' access to malaria services, particularly relating to LLIHN usage. This may include socio-economic conditions, net ownership and awareness of malaria among the target population;
3. Explore and compare findings with regional good practices to develop clear recommendations for adapting interventions within the current RAI2E grant and for future project design; and
4. To synthesize evidence and develop communication material that can be shared with all stakeholders following the conclusion of the study and before December 2019.

5. SCOPE OF WORK

The Consultant will be responsible for planning, conducting and communicating all aspects of the operational research, in collaboration with Raks Thai. The scope of work includes the following activities:

1. Review existing information from the region, and activity records by Raks Thai
2. Develop methodology and associated tools according to the Objectives in order to conduct operational research in Ubon Ratchathani and Si Sa Ket provinces
3. Provide any necessary training to field staff on methodology and associated tools to support with conducting the operational research.
4. Conduct operational research, in collaboration with Raks Thai, to define:
 - a. Effectiveness of LLIN and LLIHN and usage by MMPs and forest goer populations.
 - b. Needs and requirements of malaria interventions to support MMPs and forest-goers
 - c. Trends and behaviors relating to MMPs and forest-goers, and other factors associated with malaria services including personal and socio-economic demographic details.
5. Draft a report which details the findings of operational research, and draft practical recommendations to adapt the current intervention for greater impact, and recommendations for future activity design
6. Share results and a report with Raks Thai, its partners, and key stakeholders working on malaria elimination to further discuss good practice and sustainability of the program.
7. Submit final report in Thai and English with soft file to Raks Thai.

6. DURATION

The period expected for methodology design, data collection, data analysis and report should be proposed by the Consultant in the application and reflect the expected deliverable due-dates between 18 October 2019 and 31 January 2020

7. DUTY STATION

The consultant is expected to use their own facilities, space, and make use of their own equipment throughout the scope of work identified in this TOR. Moreover, in collaboration with Raks Thai, the consultant must engage through email, phone communication, and face-to-face meeting as required.

The training, if required, shall take place at a training venue selected by the consultant and agreed with Raks Thai on costs.

8. DELIVERABLES

Deliverables expected for this TOR align with the scope of work, above, and detailed again below:

Activity	Deliverables	Duration/Due Date
a)	Review of existing RAI2E project data and preparation of a detailed list of required documents or records that are needed from Raks Thai in order to prepare research methodology	October 2019
b)	Methodology and tools that will be used during the research period	Draft: 27 Oct 2019 Final: 3 Nov 2019
c)	Two trainings with implementing staff in Ubon Ratchathani and Si Sa Ket	Nov 2019
d)	Implementation of the operational research according to agreed methodology and tools	Nov 2019
e)	A report which includes findings from the operational research and recommendations to adapt the current interventions and design future activities	Draft: 31 December Final: 17 January
f)	A presentation and associated materials and present findings to Raks Thai, its partners and key stakeholders	31 January 2020

9. PAYMENT AND CONSULTANT FEES

Consultant fees

Total amount proposed for these ToR is THB 300,000. This includes all Thai Taxes, VATs and communication costs. The consultant is responsible for managing all costs associated with the ToR unless otherwise outlined below.

Any additional arrangements, including meetings, workshops, trainings and stakeholder consultations outside the scope of these ToR, including additional research provinces and events in Bangkok, will be organized and agreed in collaboration with Raks Thai Foundation and will be paid by Raks Thai Foundation. Raks Thai Foundation will cover all costs of printing and distribution of the research publication.

Payment

The payment will occur in three instalments:

Instalment	Conditions	Payment verification
1 st installment, which corresponds to 30% of total amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After contract signed by Raks Thai and the Consultant, and all required document completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract signed by Raks Thai and the Consultant, and all required document completed. 1st payment invoice.
2 nd installment, which corresponds to 30% of total amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of deliverable A, B, and C including all documents related to referring activities Satisfactory receipt of deliverable product by Raks Thai. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Product of deliverable A, B, and C including all documents related to these deliverables. 2nd payment invoice.
Final installment, which corresponds to 40% of total amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of deliverable D, E, and F including all documents related to referring activities. Satisfactory receipt of deliverable product by Raks Thai. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Product of deliverable D, E and F including all documents related to these activities. Final payment invoice.

Installment payment is subject to satisfactory receipt of the deliverables within the project timeframe and pending review of the deliverables by the Raks Thai Foundation – Director and designated staff of Program Quality Department. Each payment will be made in Thai Baht to the bank account designated by the Consultant or authorized representative of the Consultant.

10. RIGHTS AND PROPERTIES

Raks Thai Foundation own the data, rights and property for all products under these Terms of Reference. Dissemination of products and services owned by Raks Thai Foundation are subjected to a written permission from an authorized person of Raks Thai Foundation. The sharing or distribution of products or any other contents or documents produced under these ToR without permission from Raks Thai is not allowed.

Raks Thai will not be responsible for any harms or claims, liabilities, suits, actions (including charges, disbursements and reasonable fees of counsel), proceedings, damages, expenses and obligations of any kind that be incurred by the Consultant or asserted against the Consultant, its officers and employees, by or on behalf of any person on account of, based or resulting from, arising out of (or which may be claimed to arise out of) the willful acts or omission of the Consultant and its agents, employees, research sites, assignees, transferees, delegates or successors, for which the Consultant retains responsibility.

11. QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Technical requirement:

The consultant must have skills and able to demonstrate evidence of experience in:

- Mixed method research on health or socio-economic issues in Thailand and/or the Greater Mekong Subregion
- Fluent Thai language and ability to present findings in English to various stakeholders.
- Excellent technical knowledge in the areas of public health focusing on malaria
- Clear understanding of political, social and health issues in Si Sa Ket and Ubon Ratchathani provinces, relating to both Thai and non-Thai populations.

Required documents:

- Organization profiles, including name, official address, and legal registration document or ID/Passport with at least 6-months validity of the consultant;
- Confirmation of availability during the contract period to travel to Ubon Ratchathani and Si Sa Ket for data collection and a timeline to meet the deliverables outlined in the ToR;
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the Consultant and any associated staff that will support the Consultant, including note-takers or translators;
- Example of previous works and/or experiences that reflect the deliverables and scope that are listed in scope of work;
- A proposal, which includes a detailed work-plan and budget, as well as other supporting documents (if any) for the consultancy.

12. APPENDIX

N/A