Local Engagement and Response Network (LEARN):
Strengthening Localized Multi-Sectoral Readiness and Response to Infectious Disease
Outbreaks in Humanitarian Settings
Call-for-Applications

APPLICATION PROCESS

International Medical Corps is pleased to announce the release of this call for applications to identify Local and/or National Non-Governmental Organizations (L/NNGOs) for participation in the **Local Engagement and Response Network (LEARN):** *Strengthening Localized Multisectoral Readiness and Response to Infectious Disease Outbreaks in Humanitarian Settings project.*

LEARN is a capacity building project of LNNGOs, to improve the capacity of local first responders, by setting up and supporting networks of representative of all sectors; and working to contextualize, localize, and strengthen their capacity to respond to infectious diseases outbreak and emergencies. The project aims to (i) support LNNGOs as they engage and coordinate with critical ID coordination platforms and public health institutions; (ii) improve LNNGO readiness and multi-sectoral response to ID outbreaks; and (iii) improve LNNGO ability to ensure the capacity of community-based structures and workforces are strengthened, so that there will be an overall improvement in the timeliness, reach, and coverage of readiness and multi-sectoral responses to ID outbreaks of epidemic or pandemic potential in humanitarian settings. The project will target 80 L/NNGOs across 14 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Humanitarian emergencies have become increasingly complex, and operational contexts are often characterized by high volatility and security concerns. Local and national NGOs are at the forefront of responding to these emergencies. They are often the first to arrive, bringing critical capacities, including knowledge of and proximity to crisis-affected communities. However, they often have not had the opportunity or resources to strengthen key operational components necessary for addressing large-scale emergency responses. To address some of these challenges, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) has partnered with International Medical Corps (IMC) to systematically support local and national NGOs to ensure that these organizations are best placed to respond to infectious diseases outbreak and emergencies. The LEARN project invites organizations to participate in an intensive training program to become key emergency responders strengthening their capacity to respond to infectious diseases outbreak and emergencies.

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Applicants for the second cohort of the LEARN project will be drawn from local and national NGOs registered in Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Nigeria who are committed to strengthening areas of operation within their organization related to infectious disease preparedness and response.

Selected organizations will receive capacity strengthening support from Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in core operational areas including Finance, Procurement, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL), Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and Resource Mobilization as well as infectious diseases outbreak and emergency response. SMEs will work collaboratively with selected organizations to develop capacity strengthening plans tailored to their needs to enable a better

response to humanitarian crises in the future. The support and training by SMEs will be offered both remotely and in person to provide a highly tailored and hybrid longer-term training program. The project will additionally cover travel expenses related to local and national NGOs' staff participation as and when applicable.

SELECTION CRITERIA

To qualify as an applicant, organizations must meet the following selection criteria.

Registration as an independent L/NNGO in Cameroon: Organizations must be legal entities with proof of registration as independent L/NNGOs in their home country and without political affiliation. The registration certificate must be valid for at least six months from the date of the application submission. Organizations will be asked to share copies of higher management/board approved institutional policies (i.e., Child Protection policy, HR/Personnel policy, Finance Policy, Mission/Vision), as available.

Geographic Presence: LEARN Project will seek to strategically select a worthwhile mix of LNNGOs operating in high impact humanitarian geographic areas with greatest need as well as those located in other parts of the country. *In addition to the Far North, Littoral and North-West and Southwest region.*

Minimum number of years of experience: Organizations must be operational for a minimum of three to ten years preferably in humanitarian and emergency response sectors.

Project language: Participating staff must be proficient in either English or/and French (verbal and written), as project activities and materials will be available in both languages. Organizations with a background in either language are welcome to participate, and all key project materials will be provided in both English and French to accommodate staff preferences. Applicant organizations will be required to confirm their ability to engage in the project using one or both languages in their application.

Level of engagement in humanitarian response activities: Participating organizations must be actively engaged in humanitarian response activities. Priority will be given to those with experience in programming during humanitarian crises.

Sectoral Experience: Organizations must be able to provide a complete list of humanitarian response sectors they have supported or implemented in the past 5 years.

Staffing: Organizations must demonstrate that they have 8-10 full or part-time staff covering core organizational areas such as HR, Finance, Procurement, MEAL, and Program Operations. Organizations MUST assign a senior-level staff member as a consistent point of contact for the project; however, project activities are not limited to senior staff. The Organization must be able to provide verifications when needed.

Sustainability: Organizations must demonstrate that they are currently implementing programs and have sufficient funding to continue humanitarian response programming for a minimum of one year at the time of application. Organizations must also demonstrate that they have a community presence and may work with community workers or volunteers registered with the organization.

Community Presence: it is a plus if the organizations have several community workers or volunteers registered with them, including individuals from various sectors such as development agents, CHWs, VHTs, and field agents. Applicants will be asked to demonstrate their level in the communities.

Commitment to Gender balance: Selected Organizations will be required to sign a Letter of Commitment to uphold gender balance in their organizations and will be strongly encouraged to nominate at least 2 women in senior management positions to take part in project activities.

Humanitarian Cluster Membership: it is a plus if organizations are registered with and have previous representation in the national humanitarian cluster network.

Organizational Commitment to the LEARN Program: Selected organizations must sign a Letter of Commitment to the LEARN program. The most senior official (President/CEO/ED) of the selected L/NNGOs will have to sign the agreement with International Medical Corps, outlining the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. Additionally, organizations must be able to commit to upholding the principles and conduct of International Medical Corps, particularly about combating trafficking in persons and protecting against sexual exploitation.

SELECTION PROCESS

1.   **Review of the Application Package:** Upon receipt of the full application package, representatives from International Medical Corps will review the application packages and confirm that the applicants meet the specified criteria for taking part in the project and have submitted all the required documentation.

2.   **Shortlisting applicants:** The LEARN project team will assess the applicant organization based on their applications and shortlist organizations according to the defined selection criteria. When needed, the project team may request clarification or more information from an applicant.

3.   **Conducting interviews:** The project team will hold interviews with shortlisted local and national NGOs to discuss their applications. An invitation for an interview does not automatically mean that the organization will be selected for participation in the project.

4.   **Notification of results:** Once the interviews are completed and the project team has made its final selections, all organization applicants invited for an interview will be notified of their application results.

5.   **Letter of Commitment:** Upon notification of a successful application, the most senior official of the selected local and national NGOs' (President/CEO/ED) will have to sign a Letter of Commitment with International Medical Corps that articulates the roles and responsibilities of all parties during this project. Selected organizations will also have to agree to uphold the principles and conduct of International Medical Corps including the combatting of trafficking in persons and protection from sexual exploitation.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications should be submitted by the Deadline: October 23, 2024, 11:59pm CAT.

Applications submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Interested organizations with questions about this application process may contact the LEARN project team at LEARNproject@internationalmedicalcorps.org. Please include your name, the name of your organization and contact information in the communication. **Any questions or inquiries should be sent to the LEARN project team by October 18nd, 2024 11:59pm CAT**

This application is a voluntary process, and the applicants will not be reimbursed or compensated for preparing the application or any other claims. Please note that, due to the anticipated high volume of applications, the LEARN project team is not able to provide feedback to organizations that are not selected to take part in the project.

The LEARN team will monitor the developments of COVID-19 and may adjust project implementation activities to ensure the safety of the project staff and of the NNGOs. These adjustments may result in limiting travel under the project, delivering in-person activities virtually, etc.

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION

International Medical Corps is a global humanitarian organization dedicated to saving lives and relieving suffering. Since its founding in 1984, International Medical Corps has operated in more than 80 countries, providing more than $3.6 billion in emergency relief and training to communities worldwide. In addition to responding to humanitarian emergencies, it works to improve communities' quality of life by providing them with the skills needed to recover from adversity, chart their own path to self-reliance and become effective first responders themselves. International Medical Corps is currently active in about 30 countries and is leading many global projects and research initiatives. The nonprofit, non-partisan organization is a leader in managing projects aimed at strengthening the capacity of local and international emergency responders, as well as providing technical guidance and assistance to strengthen humanitarian assistance.

Application Weblink

The link to the application is here: <https://ee.kobotoolbox.org/x/Yab6ymx1>

This application needs to be completed all at once. It should take less than 30 minutes. *If you navigate away from it, you will not be able to return to complete your work.* Multiple applications from the same organization will not be considered.

Please review your application before submitting. Incomplete applications will not be considered for participation in this project.

Thank you for completing the application for the LEARN project! If you have any questions or inquiries, please reach out to LEARNproject@internationalmedicalcorps.org **by October 23nd, 2024, 11:59pm CAT.**