

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Rapid Strengthening of Blood Transfusion Services in Selected Countries in Africa and the Caribbean for the Ministries of Health and National Transfusion Services Under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

Announcement Type: New, Cooperative Agreement.
Funding Opportunity Number: 04077.
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 93.943.

Key Dates:

- Application Deadline: March 1, 2004.

Executive Summary: An important aspect of the President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief is to provide assistance to ensure a safe and adequate blood supply. The focus of this initiative is 14 countries in Africa and the Caribbean heavily affected by HIV/AIDS: Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Haiti, Guyana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The purpose of this announcement is to rapidly provide support to the Ministries of Health or the Government's National Transfusion Services in the 14 targeted countries, with the goal of developing and implementing a national safe blood program with demonstrable results within the first year of the Emergency Plan. Specific activities include implementation of blood safety programs, including management, operations, and monitoring.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Authority: This program is authorized under section 301(a) and 307 of the Public Health Service Act, [42 U.S.C. 241 (a) and 242l] as amended and under Public Law 108-25 (United States Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Act of 2003) [22 U.S.C. 7601].

Purpose: President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief has called for immediate action to turn the tide of HIV/AIDS in Africa and the Caribbean, preventing at least seven million HIV infections within five years. An important aspect of the President's plan is to provide assistance to ensure a safe and adequate blood supply. The focus of this initiative is 14 countries in Africa and the Caribbean heavily affected by HIV/AIDS: Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Haiti, Guyana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria,

Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that five to ten percent of all HIV transmissions are attributable to unsafe blood transfusions. Transmission of HIV and other blood-borne pathogens via blood transfusion is preventable by establishing an adequate supply of safe blood through a systematized blood transfusion service and minimizing unnecessary transfusions. However, according to the WHO, among blood donations in Africa in 2002, only 90 percent were screened for HIV, 55 percent for Hepatitis B virus, and only 40 percent for Hepatitis C virus.

The rapid implementation of safe blood programs and precautions against medical transmission of HIV is a priority area for the President's plan. The purpose of this announcement is to rapidly provide support to Ministries of Health and National Transfusion Services in the 14 targeted countries, with the goal of developing and implementing a national safe blood program in each country with demonstrable results even within the first year of the Emergency Plan.

Measurable outcomes of this program will be in alignment with the following performance goal for President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief: Prevent 7 million new HIV infections. The initiative will involve large-scale prevention efforts, including the rapid establishment and strengthening of safe blood transfusion services.

This initiative is a coordinated effort led by the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator at the Department of State and involves various U.S. Federal Government agencies, including, the Department of State, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Defense, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Activities: Awardee activities for this program area are as follows: *A. Infrastructure*—Assess current infrastructure needs for a national, regionalized blood transfusion system, including regional blood collection and processing facilities, laboratory testing equipment and supplies. Strengthen regional blood collection facilities and capacity in major urban areas, preferably near major health care facilities. Provide standard blood collection and laboratory equipment and reagents to regional blood collection facilities to collect blood and test it for transfusion-transmitted infections, and to perform blood grouping and cross matching.

B. Blood collection—Develop generic and site-specific protocols for obtaining, handling and storing, transporting, and

distributing blood for use in blood collection facilities. Develop and maintain a network of blood donor recruiters and blood donor counselors to operate from each regional center. Develop and maintain a system to identify a network of low risk and repeat blood donors. Manage blood collection facilities that have the capacity to obtain, handle and store blood safely with good recordkeeping. Implement effective quality assurance procedures for collecting and storing blood.

C. Testing—Develop generic national and site-specific protocols for testing blood for HIV, hepatitis and syphilis. Manage blood testing facilities, ensuring good recordkeeping. Implement effective quality assurance procedures for testing blood.

D. Transfusion and Blood Utilization—Develop and implement national guidelines for the appropriate use of blood and blood products, nationally and regionally. Develop blood utilization review and quality assurance systems for blood usage.

E. Training—Develop and provide training programs and continuing education programs for health care professionals involved with blood transfusion services, such as physicians, nurses, physician assistants, community health aides, counselors, and laboratory technicians in the fields of blood donor recruitment and blood collection. Develop and provide training programs and continuing education programs for physicians and laboratory technicians in basic principles and practice of blood banking and transfusion medicine. Develop educational programs for health care providers, nurses and the general public on safe transfusion practices, including reducing the demand for unnecessary transfusions and recognizing community norms in practices regarding blood transfusions.

F. Monitoring and evaluation—Implement a system for reviewing and adjusting program activities based on monitoring information. Measure clinical outcomes to assess the impact of the program.

Funding will be provided to initiate new programs or expand existing programs (e.g., expanding from one region to other regions of the same country) that include the above components. Technical assistance in support of the activities listed in this program announcement will be provided to the Ministries of Health or the National Transfusion Services by CDC, as well as by the organizations that successfully compete for funding under a separate CDC cooperative agreement program announcement focused on the