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SCALE
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PRO-WASH
Practices, Research and Operations
in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

PRACTICES, RESEARCH & OPERATIONS IN WATER,
SANITATION & HYGIENE (PRO-WASH)

AND

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY IN AGRICULTURE,
LIVELIHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT (SCALE)

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

RFA: SC-PRO-WASH-RFA-2021-03

Subject: Successful partnerships for Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) in the Takunda and Amalima Loko intervention areas of Zimbabwe

Date RFA Issued:	November 18, 2021
End of Question Period:	December 2, 2021
Due Date for Applications:	December 23, 2021
Award Ceiling:	\$200,000 USD
Issued by:	Save the Children Federation, Inc./PRO-WASH Activity

Disclaimer: This request is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of the PRO-WASH Award and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Introduction from the SCALE and PRO-WASH Teams

November 18, 2021

Dear Applicants,

I am pleased to share with you this REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) for applied research to support the learning and evidence building efforts of the PRO-WASH and SCALE Awards funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).

SCALE works to strengthen capacity in agriculture, livelihoods and the environment, in BHA-funded development and emergency food security activities.

PRO-WASH focuses on the quality of WASH interventions through capacity strengthening, knowledge-sharing and applied WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) research opportunities to support sustainable WASH practices in BHA-funded development and emergency food security activities..

This RFA is designed to provide innovative, context-specific research on strategies for improving Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) operation, access, reliability and sustainability for BHA partners. The focus is on two RFSA partner areas in Zimbabwe (Amalima Loko and Takunda), but the resulting tools, guidance or findings are expected to be relevant to multiple BHA partners and active projects supporting food security and WASH activities.

The Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) approach to water service delivery covers both WASH and agriculture activities. A MUS is designed to supply domestic water as well as water for productive uses, such as irrigating a garden or crops, raising livestock, or running a small business. By providing reliable water access to communities or households, MUS can boost users' resilience to shocks and stresses, improve food security, and support livelihoods and economic activities. But MUS can also present a more complex set of challenges than water services designed for domestic use only, and these challenges are not always solved by standard WASH or agriculture approaches to infrastructure provision.

MUS is a part of Resilience Food Security Activities (RFSA) funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), and RFSA partners continue to find innovative ways to improve the operation and sustainability of these systems. This applied research, convened by PRO-WASH and SCALE, seeks to investigate some of the gaps, difficulties or challenges in adopting MUS more broadly in the study areas, as well as to understand and communicate some of the ways in which RFSA partners are overcoming these difficulties. The focus is on applied research, ideally resulting in knowledge that can be put to use by RFSA partners as they work to improve WASH and water security.

For details on proposal submission guidelines, timing, subject areas, and review criteria, please see the RFA package included in this document and its attachments.

Sincerely,

Nicole Weber, Director, PRO-WASH Award

Kristin Lambert, Director, SCALE Award

A. Authority & Introduction

The purpose of this REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) is to solicit applications for a study of Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) in the Takunda and Amalima Loko implementation areas in the Republic of Zimbabwe. This study will provide actionable recommendations for interventions designed to increase the reliability, resilience and overall success of MUS in the implementation areas, as well as in other USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) -funded projects in other countries. Save the Children will fund one award under this RFA for up to \$200,000 USD for a study period of **up to six months** with an anticipated start date in early **March 2022**¹.

In order to be considered for this applied research sub-award, applicants shall submit a detailed proposal narrative outlining each applicant's understanding of the context and key challenges of the region and explaining the proposed approach to data collection for this MUS study. The proposal narrative should also provide a timeline for the completion of data collection, analysis, strategy development, peer review and socialization of findings in accordance with the sub-grant duration specified below. Supporting documents, listed in Section I, are also required. Applicants **MUST** have an organizational presence in Zimbabwe, and / or partner with an organization in Zimbabwe to be eligible to apply. Questions for this RFA will be received from invited applicants through **December 2, 2021** via email to prowash@savechildren.org.

Resourcing for this sub-award is provided through the PRO-WASH Award, with technical oversight from the [PRO-WASH](#) and [SCALE](#) Awards. Both Awards are five-year BHA-funded activities that aim to strengthen BHA-funded development and emergency food security activities. PRO-WASH works to improve the impact, sustainability, and scalability of BHA's programming in WASH through activities focused on knowledge sharing, capacity-strengthening, and capturing best practices in WASH programming. SCALE works to strengthen capacity in agriculture, livelihoods and the environment, in BHA-funded development and emergency food security activities.

Both the SCALE and PRO-WASH Awards also provide resourcing for small grants to support implementing partners to identify context-specific agriculture and WASH solutions that focus on improving service delivery for the ultra-poor. A crucial strategic objective of SCALE and PRO-WASH is to generate reliable and high-quality information that will improve the delivery of interventions for the beneficiaries across all USAID/BHA programming. This includes identifying solutions to delivering WASH and agricultural services in challenging contexts, such as those found in parts of Zimbabwe.

This RFA describes the objectives of this applied research; explains the key technical area of focus for this award; lists the expected activities; lists the qualifications of applying organizations; lists the criteria for evaluating applications; and provides information on funding, application format, and other relevant information.

The authority for these awards is found in the Food for Peace Act of 1954 (as amended) and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and is re-delegated to Save the Children Federation under its Cooperative Agreement No. 72DFFP18LA00005 with USAID.

¹ Unanticipated delays due to approvals, contracting and COVID-19 may affect the start date of this research.



B. Specific Programmatic Guidance

B1. Background

In the latter half of 2021 SCALE and PRO-WASH have worked with RFSAs and sector experts to understand some of the key issues that impact MUS sustainability. This work included an on-line survey of 42 RFSAs and MUS experts in eighteen countries around the world (see key results [here](#)). More than two thirds of the survey respondents either work for, or have worked for, a RFSa. About the same proportion of respondents are currently working on a program with an existing MUS activity that would benefit from partnering with a research entity to carry out further gap research into MUS. The on-line survey was followed up by more in-depth one-on-one interviews with approximately one in five of the on-line survey respondents, together with a review of relevant literature and a detailed analysis of the survey data.

These surveys and consultations revealed a large range of issues that impact the long-term success and sustainability of MUS, which can be grouped into three main areas:

1. Institutional configurations: Operation and maintenance, financial sustainability, partnerships, institutions, legal and organizational considerations;
2. Resource linked issues: hydrogeology, resource assessment, quality prediction, climate change;
3. Engineering and infrastructure choices: design, cost, innovation, energy source, capacity.

Frequently, problems in the latter two fields (resource-linked issues and engineering and infrastructure choices) could be traced to institutional choices and configurations, and for this reason the first area is of particular interest. For example, some countries provide specifications for community water point design in national policy or law. Resource assessment and management can also be a function of wider questions of organizational capacity and funding.

The importance of local context was emphasized by several survey respondents and interviewees, and therefore also the need to assess and understand this context. Fundamental water supply operating principles, such as the need for sound financial management, or appropriate O&M, naturally apply to MUS too. However, given the variations in local context, there is no simple strategy for success in installing and operating a MUS.

Although there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution to MUS, generic principles that make success more likely can be identified. For example, the wider political-economic context in which a MUS will operate is important, as it relates closely to the types and scale of economic activities that the MUS may be able to facilitate. Efforts to understand and document this context are likely to be fruitful. As one survey respondent put it: “The main issues vary based on the local geographic, WASH, regulatory, NGO, political, etc. contexts. What is clear from this survey is that successful MUS systems are designed with a clear understanding of the productive activities that communities would like to undertake, specific (multiple) water sources are linked with specific productive activities, the water committees/user associations have regular/consistent training support (from NGOs or government) with regards to both technical and managerial skills/knowledge, and consideration has been given to the sale of goods in local/regional markets (i.e., food supply networks are well developed).”

The SCALE and PRO-WASH teams realize that successful RFSa experience with MUS and similar systems presents a substantial body of knowledge that could be leveraged to improve conditions and “leap-frog” problems in other geographies and institutional contexts. However, in some cases this knowledge is

linked to the specific circumstances of local political economies, and may not always be easy to generalize. This PRO-WASH and SCALE research project aims to identify those innovative, context-specific strategies for improving MUS that can be documented and extrapolated to assist other projects and BHA partners.

B2. Focus & Subject Areas

The Republic of Zimbabwe is a land-locked southern African nation of approximately 15M people. Low incomes, lagging economic performance, and environmental challenges frequently mean hardships for a substantial proportion of the population, particularly those living in rural areas. Difficulties include lack of access to safe water supplies, and adequate, dignified sanitation. Precarious agricultural conditions contribute to inadequate food security and the constant threat of hunger and malnutrition, particularly for children and other vulnerable community members². USAID is working in Zimbabwe to improve water supplies and sanitation arrangements, boost food security, and reduce vulnerability through a range of projects and other initiatives.

Amalima Loko and Takunda are five-year (start date: October 1, 2020; end date: September 30, 2025) USAID BHA funded resilience food security activities (RFSAs) in Zimbabwe. Both RFSAs work closely with Government of Zimbabwe personnel, and within the national legal and policy framework as it relates to water supplies and sanitation, including MUS. Both RFSAs plan to consolidate and expand existing water sources that are currently used for multiple purposes.

Amalima Loko is implemented by a consortium led by CNFA and seeks to elevate the livelihoods of more than 67,000 vulnerable households across five Districts of Zimbabwe's Matabeleland North Province: Binga, Hwange, Lupane, Nkayi, and Tsholotsho. Amalima Loko builds on the legacy of its predecessor Amalima, a seven-year RFSa that worked to sustainably improve food security and nutrition for vulnerable Zimbabwean households.

Takunda is implemented by a consortium led by CARE and focuses on four vulnerable districts in Masvingo Province (Chivi and Zaka Districts) and Manicaland Province (Buhera and Mutare Districts), two provinces in Eastern Zimbabwe. Within these districts, Takunda selected 92 wards totaling 589,250 people, 131,000 households (including 27,000 extremely poor and 80,000 chronically vulnerable households), 114,000 women of reproductive age, and 173,000 youth (ages 15–35). Takunda is also operating in areas where the now closed [ENSURE](#) program took place.

Both the Takunda and Amalima Loko projects aim to improve food security and resilience through an integrated program of measures, including those focused on WASH and agriculture. Both projects have extensive experience working on improving water supplies in Zimbabwe, including water for multiple uses such as small-scale agriculture, stock watering, and small business use. The RFSAs have experienced staff members with many years of experience between them in MUS and related issues. Both RFSAs are currently rehabilitating and improving existing multiple-use water services, as well as installing new MUS (See Annex B).

² See the World Bank's data portal on Zimbabwe for demographic and income data on the country: [Zimbabwe | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#) and the Bank's Zimbabwe country overview at [Zimbabwe Overview: Development news, research, data | World Bank](#)



WASH specialists at both RFSAs agree that it is important to align and integrate water supply activities with wider national development frameworks, and in the context of national institutions, if they are to be successful. Smooth organizational and institutional³ collaboration or partnership between key actors including the non-profit sector, communities, the private sector, and the different levels of government is necessary.

Further research into the ways in which such organizational and institutional collaboration or partnerships occur and can be facilitated therefore promises to assist better roll-out and sustainability of MUS.

B3. Research Question, Project Objectives & Methodology

The broad research question posed here is “What are the institutional and organizational factors that are important in designing, implementing and sustaining MUS in Zimbabwe, and what promising interventions (based on the experiences of the Takunda and Amalima Loko RFSAs and their predecessors (ENSURE and Amalima) can be identified bearing in mind the timeframe, resources, and scope of RFSAs programs?”

Potential sub-questions, linked to this broad research question, include the following:

1. Given the important role of local government in regulating MUS, providing resources, and ensuring that economic initiatives attached to MUS are effectively linked into the wider political economy, how can local government be better integrated into MUS planning and operation in RFSAs projects, and what are the gaps and challenges with local government integration?
2. A successful MUS is often a partnership between stakeholders, who may include NGOs, community members, traditional leaders, local government representatives, and the private sector. These stakeholders must negotiate tariffs, roles and responsibilities, accountability frameworks, and other key issues if the MUS is to be successful and sustainable. What are the institutional mechanisms or principles that can be shown to be successful in uniting MUS stakeholders on RFSAs projects, and that have potential to be rolled out more widely?
3. MUS financial sustainability includes tariff collection, rate setting, and coping with both routine costs and larger one-off costs. Larger MUS systems may employ more complex technologies with higher energy demand, and this can mean higher costs than domestic-only systems. The benefits of a MUS may not accrue to all stakeholders equally, and returns on investment may arrive at different times and in different forms for different stakeholder groups. To some extent, MUS cost and payment structures must take all of this into account in a way that stakeholders feel is fair. What principles can be derived from existing and successful MUS financial configurations, and what steps are needed to make them more widely applied?

³ Institutions are defined as patterns of interaction that govern and constrain the relationships of individuals, either informally as customs or habits, or formally as written laws or codes. Organizations consist of specific groups of individuals pursuing a mix of common and individual goals through partially coordinated behavior. A water law or the custom of sharing a spring protection between community members are institutions; whereas USAID or a state water department are organizations, for example. (See e.g. North, Douglass. 1990: *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, Cambridge University Press for more information).

The **objectives of the research project**, “Successful partnerships for Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) in the Takunda and Amalima Loko intervention areas of Zimbabwe” are as follows:

1. To provide an introduction to Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS), including a brief summary of the contemporary literature on organizational and institutional collaboration in MUS, and an overall assessment of the current state of policy and practice in Zimbabwe;
2. To study the work being done in Zimbabwe on MUS, particularly that of the Takunda and Amalima Loko RFSAs, but also including an overview of other organizations working on MUS to identify areas of intersectionality and coordination with other RFSAs ;
3. To identify key institutional and organizational issues that impact on the long-term viability or sustainability of MUS, and to investigate and discuss these issues with reference to successful strategies in Zimbabwe and their applicability to other countries and institutional contexts;
4. To make recommendations for improving MUS operation, access, reliability and sustainability for BHA partners and other stakeholders.

Gender and social inclusion are cross cutting issues that should be explored across these research questions.

The exact **research methodology** chosen will depend on the selected applicant and on the evidence collected, but is expected to include the following:

1. Literature review taking into account published material, as well as unpublished reports or other documents where available. This must take into account the regulatory, legal and policy framework that applies to MUS in Zimbabwe; It should also take into account any available documentation on MUS under ENSURE and Amalima RFSAs (projects now closed)
2. Interviews with MUS practitioners, MUS specialists, MUS users, community members, public sector regulators, private sector actors, and other key people involved with MUS provision, use, maintenance and sustainability. It is expected that members of the research team will personally visit (if COVID-19 and other travel/security restrictions permit) government offices, NGO offices, communities and private sector operators in Zimbabwe as part of this phase, and that fieldwork undertaken in Zimbabwe will last at least four person-weeks. Interviews should be designed to generate consistent and rigorous data and objective analysis, and may include semi-structured components, questionnaires, or other mechanisms to allow for objective analysis. Significant interviews should be envisaged. Researchers should visit and take account of 10-15 MUS in each RFSa project area (i.e. at least 20 MUS in total). Interviews should either be recorded, or backed by extensive notes, or both;
3. Structured observations at MUS sites, at government and RFSa offices, and elsewhere. These should include the ways in which gender considerations impact MUS;
4. Water quality testing, using reliable field equipment and / or accredited laboratories, and basic measurements of physical hydrological parameters such as groundwater levels and flow volumes where applicable and appropriate to the research;



5. Assessment of rainfall, recharge volumes, and other physical parameters that would support simple water balances to inform physical MUS sustainability;
6. Other data collection as necessary, including at least an appraisal or analysis of MUS finances, an assessment of community incomes from MUS activities, and a scoping appraisal of possible economic activities that could be enabled by better MUS in the RFSAs project areas. Note that most MUS in Zimbabwe are used for WASH, for improving agricultural productivity, and for other economic activities such as brewing, light manufacturing, etc.;
7. Sound analysis leading to conclusions and recommendations supported by demonstrable evidence.

Applicants will need to take into consideration the following:

1. Logistical implications of carrying out this research in Zimbabwe, including for example the viability of travel in more remote areas, the availability of any specialist equipment (e.g. water testing meters, water level dip-meters) required, etc.;
2. Government and other requirements that may apply to researchers or research organizations in Zimbabwe, including work permits, visas, travel insurance, etc.;
3. Due to the ongoing work commitments of Takunda and Amalima Loko, these RFSAs will not always be available to assist with the research or provide advice, although they will support the process where they can (see indicative list below). The successful researcher or research organization is expected to liaise closely with the RFSAs and design e.g. field interviews or visits accordingly. The research firm will be responsible for reasonable costs incurred as a direct result such as accommodation, meals, transport, etc., and as far as possible no extra financial burden should be placed on RFSAs;
4. Applicants should also consider as part of their response to application the impacts travel-related restrictions related to COVID-19 and propose potential mitigation strategies for carrying out this work within the given timeline.

Amalima Loko and Takunda will collaborate with the appointed researcher or research organization as follows:

- Make experienced team members available for interviews by the appointed researcher or research organization;
- Assist the researcher or research organization with practical advice, including advice on processes, study locations, key informants, hydrological details, etc.;
- Share data and information with the researcher (e.g. studies, databases, and reports);
- Where necessary provide limited practical support, such as allowing the researcher or research organization to accompany WASH teams on field visits, facilitating introductions to community members and government counterparts, recommending accommodation and logistical arrangements, etc.

At a minimum, the anticipated activities / outputs under this sub-award are:

- a. Kick-off meetings (in-person and/or remote) for all relevant stakeholders (to include at least BHA, USAID Mission staff, PRO-WASH, SCALE, Takunda and Amalima Loko) to review timeline and expected activities and/or deliverables;
- b. Roles and Responsibilities document. This document will outline timelines and responsibilities across the awardee, PRO-WASH, SCALE, and Takunda and Amalima Loko teams. The document should include clear communication protocols across all relevant points of contact for the subward;
- c. Inception report. This will be a report detailing the proposed strategy and updated work plan, taking into consideration any issues related to travel restriction or safety related to COVID-19 and data collection methodology. This strategy will include the validation of the proposed research questions with partners;
- d. A literature review of relevant MUS literature, leading to a description of the current legal and policy framework relevant to MUS in Zimbabwe;
- e. Development and review of research protocol and tools that incorporate feedback based on input from PRO-WASH, SCALE, BHA, Takunda and Amalima Loko;
- f. Where possible, appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals as needed;
- g. Midpoint update presentation on the status of the research;
- h. Draft comprehensive report and executive summary;
- i. Validation workshop with the Amalima Loko and Takunda teams, including any relevant stakeholders from the USAID Mission and/or Government of Zimbabwe as identified by project staff;
- j. Final report and executive summary that incorporates in feedback from the validation workshop;
- k. A final debrief with USAID, a final results webinar, and a short learning brief that shares out key results and challenges from the study;
- l. A resource document providing practical recommendations and guidance for implementing partners on MUS best practices and sustainability, drawn from research findings;
- m. If feasible, a draft journal article submitted to a relevant open-access journal such as Water Alternatives, Water SA, or similar. Work on the journal article should not prevent timely release of data or results, nor delay or compromise other work;
- n. Availability of research team members in activities such as webinars, on-line discussions or meetings to discuss, disseminate and publicize the results of the study;
- o. Regular, short progress reports every two weeks and update meetings as required, to the Takunda and Amalima Loko project teams, PRO-WASH, SCALE, USAID/BHA and other relevant stakeholders.

B4. Type and Duration of Applied WASH Sub-Award

PRO-WASH plans to award one award under this RFA. The duration of the sub-award provided under this RFA is anticipated to be for six months from the date of the award. Save the Children Federation, Inc. (which leads PRO-WASH) reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Save the Children Federation Inc., or USAID, nor does it Save the Children Federation, Inc. or USAID to pay for the costs incurred in the



submission of an application. Save the Children Federation, Inc. reserves the right to reject any or all submissions received and to negotiate separately with an applicant, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of Save the Children Federation, Inc., PRO-WASH or USAID.

An indicative timeline for this research is as follows:

- Months 1 and 2: Startup, literature review, research and fieldwork planning
- Months 3, 4 and 5: Fieldwork in Zimbabwe, including interviews, observations, sampling, etc.
- Months 5 and 6: Analysis of results, reporting, dissemination, and project close.

B5. Sub-Award Management

The sub-award will be jointly managed by team members from the PRO-WASH and SCALE teams, working closely with the Amalima Loko and Takunda RFSA project leadership. PRO-WASH will lead the overall management of this sub-award. It is expected that the successful applicant will coordinate closely with SCALE, PRO-WASH, and the Takunda and Amalima Loko program staff. This coordination will help to ensure that the final study design is responsive to the needs of all beneficiaries in implementation areas and that recommendations are developed where possible in alignment with Amalima Loko and Takunda's agriculture and WASH program approaches. It will also help to ensure that the successful applicant is supported while carrying out the research.

Following the submission of the final report, the successful applicant is expected to work with PRO-WASH, SCALE, USAID/BHA, Takunda, and Amalima Loko to answer any questions on the final study findings, and hold a webinar to share the final results with the larger audience of USAID/BHA stakeholders, and to collaborate in disseminating results.

All products, materials and data produced under this award are subject to the approved PRO-WASH branding strategy which allows Save the Children and Mercy Corps, along with Amalima Loko and Takunda as the award co-managers, to reproduce, translate and publish any results not first produced or prepared by "the Provider" in the performance of this Agreement. As per 2CFR 200.315, USAID also reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work for Federal purposes, and to authorize others to do so. Any resulting data collected using funding provided through this sub-award will be considered open-source and made publicly available via the Development Data Library (DDL) and Development Evaluation Clearinghouse (DEC).

Takunda and Amalima Loko are key partners in ensuring the successful implementation of this sub-award. As such, applicants are asked to acknowledge the intellectual and administrative contributions of these RFSA's, including any key staff members, as part of outputs resulting from this sub-award. Further, SCALE, PRO-WASH, Amalima Loko and Takunda request that the final grantee include their logos in any presentation, publication or materials derived from research conducted as part completion of the final strategy, as well as informing the team of any future products resulting from this sub-award.

B6. Funding Availability

Final funding levels for each award will depend on content and needs of the proposed activity, with a ceiling of \$200,000 USD.

B7. Authorized Geographic Code

The authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services under this RFA is 937. Restricted goods per 22CFR228 are not eligible for reimbursement under this award. Restricted goods are defined as agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, used equipment, U.S. Government-owned excess property, and fertilizer.

B8. Reporting Requirements

2. Financial Reports
 - a. The awardee is expected to submit monthly financial reports in a format that will be provided by PRO-WASH in the award agreement
 - b. The awardee will submit a final financial report upon the completion of the activity
3. Programmatic Reports
 - a. Roles and responsibilities document;
 - b. Bi-weekly reports include a description of progress and plans for the next two weeks. Justification must be provided for any deviations from the original research plan;
 - c. Inception report detailing the proposed strategy and updated work plan;
 - d. Final literature review of relevant MUS literature. A literature review / summary of relevant MUS literature, leading to a description of the current legal and policy framework relevant to MUS in Zimbabwe;
 - e. Final research tools, study protocols that incorporate in stakeholder input from PRO-WASH, SCALE, Takunda, and Amalima Loko, and submissions (if relevant) for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval;
 - f. Midpoint update presentation on the status of the research;
 - g. Draft comprehensive report and executive summary. This report will include at least an introduction and summary of relevant literature, a description and analysis of the institutional and organizational frameworks applying to MUS in Zimbabwe, an assessment of the enabling and constraining factors on improved MUS in Zimbabwe based on the fieldwork and other evidence, an argument backed by evidence for recommended adjustments to the institutional and organizational framework, a set of recommendations for policy and practice in Zimbabwe, an appraisal of the applicability of these recommendations for other countries in Sub Saharan Africa, and clear conclusions.
 - h. Final comprehensive report and executive summary that incorporates feedback from stakeholders including PRO-WASH, BHA, Takunda and Amalima Loko and partners.
 - i. A resource document providing practical recommendations and guidance for implementing partners on MUS best practices and sustainability, drawn from research findings;
 - j. A final results USAID debrief, external webinar slides and a short learning brief that shares out key results and challenges from the study, aimed at USAID RFSA partners;

B9. Payment

Payment shall be issued for properly invoiced amounts within 30 days of approval of monthly financial reports and progress updates by PRO-WASH and SCALE. Payment will be made in United States dollars (USD).



C. Applicant Eligibility

SCALE and PRO-WASH will not accept applications from individuals. All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. Applicants must comply with all applicable Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Applicants are not required to have a DUNS number at the time of application but must have a DUNS number at the time of the award. Hence, applicants should be in the process of receiving a DUNS number to avoid any delays in the award process. Applicants must have completed all required steps (if any) with the host government to legally operate their program.

Applicants MUST have an organizational presence in Zimbabwe, and / or partner with an organization in Zimbabwe. Applicants with previous experience of qualitative or mixed-methods research are particularly encouraged to apply.

Organizations are welcome to propose collaborative efforts, but each proposal must identify one organization that will be the lead/prime recipient of funding and be responsible for program requirements. The lead/prime organization also will be responsible for coordinating efforts with other partners. All collaborative efforts must be clearly identified and described in the proposal.

The following are **not** eligible to apply for grants under this RFA:

- Individuals
- Government entities, including ministries
- Multilateral organizations
- Firms operating as commercial companies or other organizations (including nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations) that are wholly or partially owned by foreign governments or agencies

Eligible entities include NGOs, universities, nonprofits and for-profit entities not owned in-full or in-part by foreign governments⁴. In their cost application, organizations should indicate whether they have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with USAID. Organizations or institutions that do not have a NICRA are eligible for grants under this RFA either by using a de-minimus indirect cost rate (if requirements of 2 CFR 200.414(f) are met) or by direct charging all costs using a documented cost allocation methodology.

D. Selection Process & Schedule

D1. Selection Process

⁴ As per USAID ADS Guidance 2 CFR 200.400 the non-Federal entity may not earn or keep any profit resulting from Federal financial assistance, unless explicitly authorized by the terms and conditions of the Federal award

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set forth in **Section F**, below. After evaluation of the applications, either award(s) will be made or, if deemed necessary or desirable by PRO-WASH and SCALE, written discussions/negotiations will be conducted with applicants who submit the most-highly rated applications. PRO-WASH reserves the right to conduct subsequent rounds of discussions/negotiations and/or request a revised application. PRO-WASH also may limit the number of applicants with whom such subsequent discussions/negotiations would be conducted or from whom revised applications are requested.

D2. Schedule

This Successful Partnerships for Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) in the Takunda and Amalima Loko intervention areas of Zimbabwe REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS is open from the date of issue.

Submissions are due by December 23, 2021. PRO-WASH and SCALE, in close coordination with Amalima Loko and Takunda, reserve the right to amend this RFA at any time.

D3. Questions

The point of contact concerning this RFA is Nicole Weber, Director, PRO-WASH, nweber@savechildren.org. Questions on this RFA may be submitted in writing before **December 2, 2021** with 'Successful Partnerships for MUS' in the subject line and should be emailed to prowash@savechildren.org. Answers to submitted questions will be posted to the FSN Network website (www.fsnnetwork.org) by **December 9, 2021**.

E. General Guidance

E1. Content of Applications

Applicants must submit applications in compliance with the guidelines under **Sections E2** and **E3** of this RFAD. Applications that do not adhere to those guidelines will not be considered for funding. Applications must be in English.

E2. Successful partnerships for Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) in the Takunda and Amalima Loko intervention areas of Zimbabwe Proposal Format

Applications shall be submitted in accordance with the Proposal Submission Package of this RFA, included as **Attachments 1–4**.

E3. Application Submission

Applications (to include proposal and detailed budget) must be submitted **electronically** to: prowash@savechildren.org.

E4. Program Branding and Marketing Guidelines

As a condition of receipt of the PRO-WASH applied research sub-award, adherence to the SCALE and PRO-WASH Associate Award Branding and Marking Guidelines is required. The guidelines will be sent to applicants whose proposals are selected for further review or at the time of the award.



F. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation process set forth below. Awards will be made to the responsible applicant whose application best meets the aforementioned requirements of the Save the Children Federation, Inc./PRO-WASH Successful partnerships for Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS) in the Takunda and Amalima Loko intervention areas of Zimbabwe. The PRO-WASH RFA Evaluation Committee (REC) will evaluate and rank all applications independently and uniformly in writing, based on the selection criteria of this RFA.

PRO-WASH reserves the right to determine the resulting level of funding for the award(s).

Applicants must demonstrate operational presence and/or established partnerships in Zimbabwe or the proposal will not be evaluated. If working with a partner organization a letter of commitment is required.

F1. Evaluation Criteria (Maximum 100 points)

1.) Understanding of the context/challenge (15 points)

- Demonstrate understanding of the various challenges of executing MUS, WASH and agriculture interventions in the specific context of Zimbabwe and/or southern Africa;
- Demonstrate understanding of the specific social and cultural factors underlying certain WASH behaviors in Zimbabwe and/or southern Africa
- Demonstrate an understanding of the nature/history of public and/or private sector involvement in Zimbabwe/Southern Africa
- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the target population in Zimbabwe's WASH and agriculture needs (social, economic, health, convenience)
- Demonstrate the ability to deliver products on time.

2.) Proposed Approach to Data Collection and Analysis (30 points)

- Describe the overall approach to data collection and how it is suited to the project areas in Zimbabwe and the time and resources that are available;
- Describe a study design that it is feasible to complete within the required timeline of six months;
- Describe how the approach to data collection and analysis can be adapted to COVID-19 related travel restrictions and safety precautions for the study team, Amalima Loko, Takunda, and study participants;
- Demonstrate capacity to conduct research in a context similar to Zimbabwe including the applicants ability to conduct fieldwork (and if necessary recruit enumerators) in rural, developing contexts within the **required timeline**;
- Demonstrate qualitative research expertise including in data collection, analysis and reporting
- Detailed methods for analyzing and validating the final recommendations with implementing partners and government stakeholders, aligned where possible with planned MUS activities;

3.) Proposed Approach to Sensitization of Findings (20 points)

- Describe the strategy for working efficiently with Amalima Loko, Takunda, USAID Mission and relevant government stakeholders throughout the sub-award to sensitize the research design, findings and final recommendations;
 - Demonstrate a clear plan for how the final analysis can be used to provide actionable, context specific guidance for the Takunda and Amalima Loko projects;
 - Demonstrate a clear plan for developing a resource document providing practical recommendations and guidance for implementing partners on MUS best practices and sustainability, drawn from research findings;
- 4.) Pre-Existing Experience Working in Country Context & Sector (25 points)
- Describe any previous experience working within the region, country or specific context conducting similarly-focused MUS, WASH and agriculture research;
 - Demonstrate capacity in producing reports, materials and information products for a range of audiences that are accepted within the sector;
 - Identify and articulate strategies for dealing with any foreseeable challenges to quick start and successful completion of this sub-award;
- 5.) Cost Proposal (10 points)
- The applicant should ensure costs in the budget are detailed, realistic, reasonable, allowable and allocable.

See **Attachment 2: Budget Template** and **Attachment 3: Budget Narrative Template**. For the purposes of this RFA, technical considerations are more important than cost. Proposed costs will be analyzed for cost realism, reasonableness, completeness, effectiveness, and allocability. Applications will be assessed to determine if the overall costs proposed are realistic for the work to be performed, if the costs reflect the applicant's understanding of the requirements, and if the costs are consistent with the technical application. Applications that do not meet these criteria may risk not being considered for award. Applications that have more efficient operational systems that reduce operation costs will be more favorably considered. As technical scores converge, applications that maximize direct activity costs and that minimize administrative costs will be more favorably considered. It is important to note that where applications are found to be technically equal, cost will become the determining factor for award. Applications will be assessed to determine if the overall costs proposed are realistic for the work to be performed, if the costs reflect the applicant's understanding of the requirements, and if the costs are consistent with the technical application.

As noted in Attachment 2, applicants should estimate as part of a separate line item the breakdown of costs related to sample collection and laboratory testing (if the research team decides to undertake water quality sampling). Note, that additional costs related to journal publication or conference fees are not allowable as part of resourcing provided under this sub-award.

G. Intellectual Property



Any materials developed under this award relating to intangible property such as intellectual property or patents are subject to applicable rules under 2 CFR 200.315, “Intangible Property.”⁵ If applicants have intangible property developed previously under non-federal awards and are planning to use the intangible property in this award, clearly identify the intangible property and its anticipated use in the application. Applicants must also specify if the proposals include any proprietary information and must also mark as proprietary, if applicable.

H. Other Applicable USAID Regulations

Awards will be administered in accordance with USAID policies and procedures. Awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, the applicable OMB Circulars, and USAID Standard Provisions. Pursuant to standard provision “Submission of Datasets to the Development Data Library,” the awardee must submit all datasets and intellectual work generated in the course of the research. The awardee is responsible for removing any Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from the data before submission.

Awards to non-U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with the cost principles contained in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E and USAID Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations. Please refer to **Attachment 4** and **Attachment 5** for applicable USAID regulations.

I. Attachments

Applications shall be submitted as per the following proposal submission package:

- Attachment 1: Program Narrative Template
- Attachment 2: Budget Template
- Attachment 3: Budget Narrative Template
- Attachment 4: Applicable USAID Regulations (US NGOs)
- Attachment 5: Applicable USAID Regulations (Non US NGOs)

⁵ In 2 CFR 200.315, “The applicant may copyright any work subject to a copyright that was developed under a Federal award. The federal government has the right to: (1) obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data under a Federal award; and (2) Authorize other to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes.” For more details, see 2 CFR 200.315 and e-CFR 401 “Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights.”

Annex A: Amalima Loko and Takunda implementation areas

Takunda works in two districts of Masvingo province (Chivi and Zaka) and two districts in Manicaland province (Buhera and Mutare). Takunda's head office is in Mutare (capital of Manicaland Province), and it has four district offices headed by district supervisors, and four dedicated WASH staff within each district.

Amalima Loko works across five Districts of Zimbabwe's Matabeleland North Province: Binga, Hwange, Lupane, Nkayi, and Tsholotsho. It is headquartered in Bulawayo.

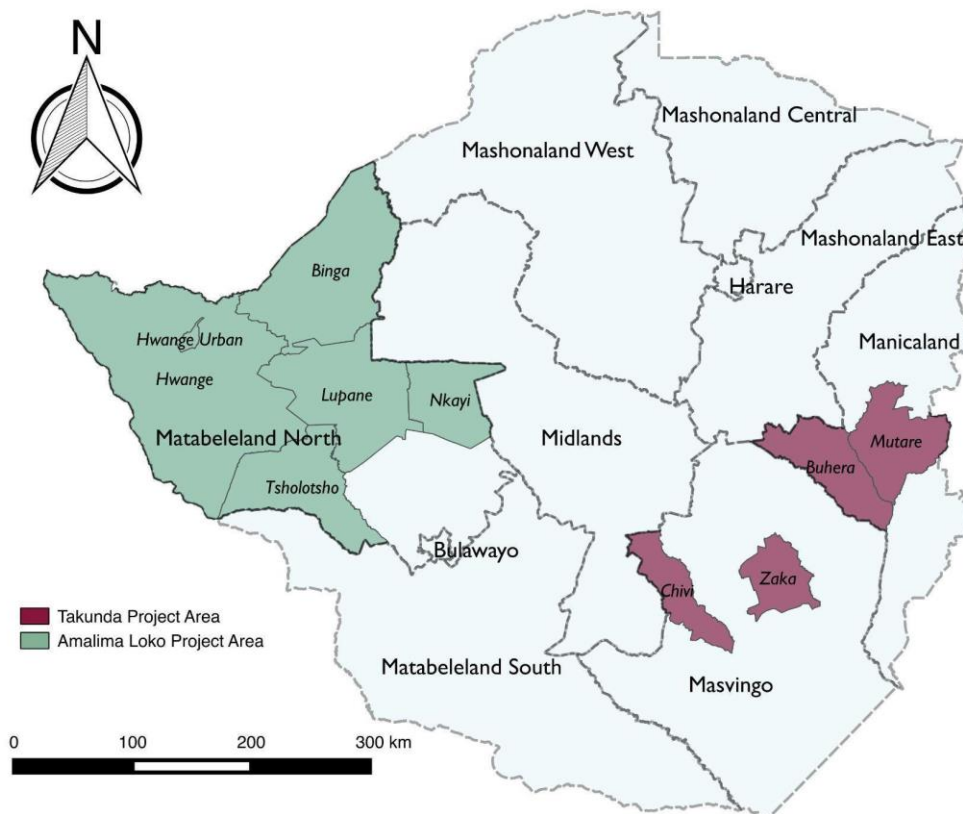


Figure 1: The ten provinces of the Republic of Zimbabwe and the RFSa project districts



Annex B: Outline of Takunda and Amalima Loko ongoing MUS activities

Both Takunda and Amalima Loko are working on improving and rehabilitating water supply schemes from previous projects (many of which are multi-use), as well as installing new water points and integrating these into other aspects of the program including social and economic development.

Amalima Loko

The Amalima Loko program is in its inception year and currently doing R&I studies as well as Technical Assessments to determine the number of new MUS that will be implemented during the Life of the Award. Existing MUS in the Amalima Loko project area include the following:

- 19 Irrigation Schemes (water from sand rivers for both irrigation and domestic use);
- 4 Boreholes equipped with Solar Systems(domestic use, livestock watering , backyard gardens);
- 10 Boreholes with Bush Pumps for domestic use and livestock watering.

Issues that Amalima Loko has identified as essential to MUS operation include the following:

- Sustainable financing mechanisms for Community MUS Operations and Maintenance (O&M);
- Barriers and Motivators towards Community based management of MUS;
- Engaging Private Public Partnerships (PPPs) in MUS systems (feasibility, benefits and drawbacks).

Takunda

Takunda has a number of existing MUS that it is either monitoring or rehabilitating, dating from the previous Ensure program. Important issues include operation and maintenance considerations, and knowledge of water use prioritization. These types of MUS include:

1. Community Weir Dams (open water supply systems), used for livestock watering and water supply for dip tanks, domestic water, irrigation purposes, and other activities such as brick molding, fisheries;
2. Solar powered borehole piped water systems used for potable water, other domestic use, livestock, irrigation purposes, and other activities such as brick molding;
3. Manual borehole systems used for potable water, other domestic use, livestock, irrigation purposes, and other activities such as brick molding;
4. Springs used for potable water, domestic use, irrigation, livestock watering, cultural beliefs, and other activities such as brick molding;
5. Homestead wells used for potable water, other domestic uses, and garden watering.

Currently, The Takunda program is targeting a total 113 MUS, which break down as follows:

- Solar Powered Piped Water Systems for irrigation and other uses - 82
- Solar Powered Piped Water System for Domestic and other uses - 6
- Dams -10
- Borehole Rehabilitation - 5
- Borehole Repairs - 10