



## **PEPFAR Community Grants Program (PCGP) Voluntary Mentors: Role, responsibilities, opportunities**

PCGP applicants must identify a capable voluntary mentor organization (VMO) to help improve the overall quality and effectiveness of their PCGP project. The VMO does more than provide a reference letter. They may provide informal technical and management advice to guide the project from its conception, during planning and through project implementation following award of funds. The applicant should identify a specific individual within the VMO to serve as voluntary mentor. This person must have the clear permission of the VMO.

A VMO may be a Kenyan NGO, CBO or other organization working in the community, which may or may not be receiving direct funding by PEPFAR. The PCGP office is also available to provide guidance to applicants on identifying a mentor organization. The volunteer mentor organization's role is meant to be one of several supportive relationships that an applicant establishes among local stakeholders, such as Government of Kenya officials, NGOs, and other organizations working in their community.

A voluntary mentor organization may:

- Help develop an application
- Advise them after funds are awarded
- Help them to identify and use the Government of Kenya partnerships
- Talk with the PCGP office about the grantee's challenges and progress
- Refer the grantee to the PCGP office for assistance when challenges occur

VMOs are not responsible for developing, writing or submitting an application on behalf of the applicant.

Being a VMO is an opportunity for an organization and its staff to use their knowledge and skills to help a less experienced community-run group to become an effective contributor to Kenya's response to the HIV epidemic. VMO and PCGP applicants should know each other and, if possible, have worked together previously on community activities. Through this partnership a VMO can strengthen their community and at the same time develop and demonstrate their own leadership capacity.

PCGP estimates the time commitment for a volunteer mentor organization will be approximately 5-10 hours per month. It is expected that during the application process the VMO will help the applicant to identify a focused and sustainable project that addresses a gap in local HIV service delivery systems. When available, the VMO will also provide the PCGP with contextual information about the applicant and their proposed grant activity.