April 21, 2021

Subject: Responses to Questions on NOFO# 72061321RFA00008

Dear Potential Applicants,

Thank you for your interest in working with USAID. Please find below the responses to the questions submitted in response to the subject NOFO for an Adolescent Girls and Young Women Reaching their Dreams Activity. These responses are a supplement to the NOFO.

Question 1: I understand that when the original DREAMS programme was designed and started it was noticed that some groups of adolescent girls and young women in Zimbabwe and some approaches were missed out, so the DREAMS Innovation was called for. Nzeve Deaf Centre was successful in the DREAMS Innovation call and was funded for 2 years by Johnson and Johnson. Nearly 200, profoundly deaf young women and girls and their families, in Mutare, Makoni, Chipinge and Bulawayo were reached through this programme with personal development, business training and HIV education. We continue to be concerned for the inclusion of profoundly deaf young women and girls in the DREAMS activities and HIV programming.

Profoundly deaf young women are often semi-literate, dependent on sign language for communication and lacking in a lot of the information necessary to protect themselves from HIV. Most have had limited education, exposure, and life experience, making them particularly vulnerable to HIV infection. Profound deafness is a low incidence disability and a disability affecting communication, so bringing the girls together in one place in "camps" was effective but does not fit in with the general DREAMS programme.
We are concerned that without a DREAMS innovation programme, the Deaf community will be ignored in this new programme Adolescent Girls and Young Women Reaching their Dreams. Will there be another call for innovative programmes to run alongside Adolescent Girls and Young Women Reaching their Dreams?

Response:

AGYW are enrolled into DREAMS based on the evidence base of vulnerability and risk criteria for HIV infection. AGYW are assigned into a cohort with a mentor/facilitator where they learn and practice soft skills, receive HIV and violence prevention education, and build their social network. These 'safe spaces' are a central component of DREAMS.

S/GAC led and managed the DREAMS Innovation Fund which concluded. Innovation in current DREAMS implementation is important and valued, though must still be within parameters of the DREAMS Guidance and Core Package of Services.

Question 2: Which other organisations were part of the first phase of the DREAMS project that we can approach to partner if we decide to apply?

Response: *FHI360 is the prime organization that implemented the first DREAMS project.*

Question 3: The NOFO makes reference to a USAID/PEPFAR DREAMS Program Review whose outcomes they summarise on page 7 of the NOFO, we are requesting if USAID can share the Zim Program Review Document to inform our design.

Response: *Summary findings from the program review are contained within the NOFO.*

Question 4: Since the DREAMS programming review identified the need for common benchmarks to assess AGYW progress in the ES layer, does USAID anticipate identifying common benchmarks to be used by this and other activities once awarded? Or is there an expectation that the offeror should propose benchmarks specific to this activity?

Response: *An inter-agency process is currently underway to review the ES component in DREAMS and develop standardized benchmark. The Applicant is not required to propose benchmarks as part of the application process.*

Question 5: The NOFO notes a review of approaches for delivery of evidence-based curricula under review by SGAC? When will this be completed?

Response: *PEPFAR requires that curricula utilized in DREAMS be evidence-based. If the DREAMS implementing partner would like to use a curriculum that is not referenced in the DREAMS guidance, it will need to undergo a review process facilitated by the PEPFAR DREAMS technical team.*

Question 6: Does USAID have a perspective on differentiation in the types of income-generating activities DREAMS participants might undertake at the age groups of 15-19 years and 20-24 years?

Response: *The Applicant should propose an economic strengthening strategy which is appropriate for the age groups targeted in the DREAMS program as well as the Zimbabwean context.*

Question 7: Could USAID clarify if there is a required structure or model around economic strengthening as prescribed by OGAC that the applicant will need to choose from and follow?

Response:

SGAC has approved 5 models that can be implemented in DREAMS:

- *ELA, developed by BRAC*
- *Siyahka, developed by Bantwana*
- *WINGS+, developed by AVSI*
- *Vusha Girls, developed by ACWICT*
- *PI Training, developed by Leuphana University*

Country teams may propose a different model, but it must be approved by Agencies and SGAC and, at a minimum, respond to the following:

To educate and support AGYW (out of school in older age bands (15-24 year olds), consistent with local labor laws) on both self-employment/entrepreneurship and wage employment pathways, the following 5 components should be implemented as part of a comprehensive economic strengthening program:

- Market assessment to explore opportunities that can build resilient and economically empowered communities, guide skill development and training, and identify opportunities for program linkages related to labor, with a focus on growing industries and traditionally male-dominated sectors;

- Gender-specific training to develop financial literacy, marketable skills, and an entrepreneurial mindset (i.e. coping strategies for resilience to setbacks);

- Start-up support (post-training): i.e. starter packs or other support for self-employment and/or access to paid internships/jobs for wage employment;

- Savings groups (if/when AGYW have access to income); and

- Ongoing coaching/mentoring and facilitating access to, and acceptance in, social and business networks.

Question 8: *Please confirm that a MEL Plan is not required at time of submission or should we include it in the Annexes?*

Response: *Please refer to section D5 for the Technical Application requirements. There is no requirement for a MEL Plan at the time of application. The MEL plan will be required as part of the Reporting Requirements, see section F3.*

Question 9: Please confirm if Letters of support can also be included in the Annexes?

Response: *Please refer to Section D5 (d) 1. Organizational Capacity - "If partners/sub-awards are proposed, describe their organizational history and experience and provide letters of support, indicating they have been consulted and have agreed to participate in the proposed activities. Letters of support do not count toward the 25 page maximum." If included, the letters of support are part of the annexes.*

Question 10: Does the Annexes have any page limitations?

Response: *There are no page limits on annexes.*

Question 11: Page 10 of the NOFO states that this award is limited to local partners. Can USAID please confirm that international organizations may be part of a consortium led by a local partner?

Response: *Yes - According to ADS 303: Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations, RAA 27 [Limitations on Subawards to Non -Local entities (July 2014)]; It is permissible that an International organization can provide technical support to the local prime and may be included as a sub- applicant, however the International organization must understand that at least 50% of all funds spent on personnel (salaries/fringe) must be for the prime. Please refer to RAA27. LIMITATION ON SUBAWARDS TO NON-LOCAL ENTITIES (JULY 2014) on page 59 of the NOFO.*

Question 12: Can an organization prime one application and also be a sub-partner on another consortium's application?

Response: *Yes an organization can submit an application as a prime and be a sub-partner to another prime applicant.*

Question 13: Two different page limits are given on page 28. Is the correct total page limit for the technical approach 30 or 25 pages (not including the cover page, table of contents, acronym page, executive summary, and appendices)?

Response: *The technical application must not exceed 25 pages. Please disregard the reference to 30 pages.*

Question 14: Please provide the Summary Budget Template referenced for Section H, Annex 1.

Response: *A summary budget template has been uploaded to the NOFO (please see RELATED DOCUMENTS section on the NOFO on Grants.gov).*

Question 15: From the first paragraph on page 18, we infer that the implementing partner will be responsible for delivering secondary package interventions (economic strengthening, GBV response, parenting for caregivers, and combination socio-economic approaches) only in selected districts where other PEPFAR partners are not providing those services.

a. Is that correct and can you clarify if the implementing partner is expected to track completion of those services delivered by other partners?

b. For planning and budgeting purposes, can USAID provide a list of districts where these services will be provided by other partners?

Response to question 15 a and b: *The Applicant will be responsible for providing selected secondary services where there are currently no other USAID DREAMS partners. DREAMS is planned and budgeted for on an annual basis. Geographic focus may change due to funding levels, saturation estimates, need in other districts, presence of other investments (e.g. Global Fund), PEPFAR COP guidance among other considerations. Therefore, a nimble approach to planning and implementation will be important. The table below is still Draft for COP21 and subject to change. 'X' indicates the districts where the Applicant will be expected to implement different DREAMS components.*

District	Primary package in-school, out-of-school	Sex viol. prev: IMPOWER	Primary package, young women selling sex	Comp Econ. Strength	Education assistance	Caregiver interventions: parenting, sex viol. prev, economic strength	Community norms change	Public sector TA: post violence care, ASRH, PrEP	GBV Response: community	ASRH, HTS, PrEP-Community
Beitbridge	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Bulawayo	X	X		X			X			
Bulilima	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Chipinge	X			X			X			
Gwanda	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Gweru	X	X		X			X			
Insiza	X	X		X			X			
Makoni	X			X			X			
Mangwe	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Matobo	X	X		X			X			
Mazowe	X	X		X			X			
Mutare	X			X			X			

The Applicant is not required to deliver or report on services provided by another DREAMS implementing partner. However, as the enrolling partner and provider of the primary package,

the Applicant will be responsible for monitoring the completion status of AGYW enrolled in DREAMS and engaging with other partners to ensure, to the extent possible, that AGYW receive the secondary services they need.

Question 16: Can USAID provide estimated targets for the 6 maintenance and 6 newer districts by age band?

Response: *Targets for DREAMS are set on an annual basis and factor in district specific vulnerability and saturation estimates. See below for the Draft DREAMS estimates and AGYW_PREV targets for COP21 (FY22). Please note that COP21 targets are still in draft form and are subject to change.*

District	Age Group	# Vulnerabl	Estimated saturation	AGYW_PREV target
Beitbridge	10-14	6,421	0%	3,050
Beitbridge	15-19	6,374	0%	3,983
Beitbridge	20-24	5,865	0%	2,933
Bulawayo	10-14	20,543	53%	12,069
Bulawayo	15-19	22,876	Saturated	5,719
Bulawayo	20-24	25,648	Saturated	6,412
Bulilima	10-14	5,413	0%	2,774
Bulilima	15-19	5,727	0%	3,579
Bulilima	20-24	3,345	0%	1,672
Chipinge	10-14	14,788	35%	12,016
Chipinge	15-19	16,189	Saturated	4,047
Chipinge	20-24	11,797	Saturated	2,949
Gwanda	10-14	7,983	0%	3,991
Gwanda	15-19	7,603	0%	4,752
Gwanda	20-24	4,502	0%	2,251
Gweru	10-14	9,227	51%	5,651
Gweru	15-19	13,488	Saturated	3,372
Gweru	20-24	8,538	Saturated	2,134
Insiza	10-14	7,015	0%	3,420
Insiza	15-19	6,393	0%	3,996
Insiza	20-24	3,892	0%	1,946
Makoni	10-14	13,287	42%	9,633
Makoni	15-19	16,303	86%	4,076
Makoni	20-24	9,324	Saturated	2,331
Mangwe	10-14	4,620	0%	2,657
Mangwe	15-19	4,842	0%	3,026
Mangwe	20-24	1,843	0%	921
Matobo	10-14	5,504	0%	2,683
Matobo	15-19	5,294	0%	3,309
Matobo	20-24	2,409	0%	1,204
Mazowe	10-14	14,065	28%	12,659
Mazowe	15-19	14,051	80%	3,513
Mazowe	20-24	10,533	Saturated	2,633
Mutare	10-14	16,915	37%	13,321
Mutare	15-19	21,063	Saturated	5,266
Mutare	20-24	17,203	Saturated	4,301

Question 17: Referencing Section E: Application Review Information, please confirm that the most heavily weighted/important section is Organizational Capacity, followed by the Technical Approach, and then Management and Staffing.

a. Can USAID provide an approximate weight for scoring each section?

Response: *All three evaluation factors are important and are listed in descending order of importance. There is no approximate weight as USAID will assess the degree to which each factor is responsive to the NOFO.*

Question 18: In terms of the scoring and evaluation criteria, Org Capacity, Tech and Management is laid out in this priority order. Can USAID please confirm that the Technical section will still have the bulk of the 25 page count? And that the rating criteria is based on the quality content and not necessarily the quantity of page allocations.

Response: *All three evaluation factors are important and are listed in descending order of importance. There is no approximate weight as USAID will assess the degree to which each factor is responsive to the NOFO.*

Sincerely,

J Zeb Simpson

J. Zeb Simpson
Agreement Officer