

Answers to Questions Asked during the Pre-application Conference

Question No. 1: Who will identify the target population for this project? For example, are call center agents and seafarers included as target population for this project?

Answer: The purpose of this project is to strengthen a supportive policy and financing environment for maternal, newborn, child health and nutrition (MNCHN), family planning (FP) and tuberculosis (TB) to enable the Philippines to achieve its millennium development goals (MDGs) in health as well as expand and sustain its universal health care initiative (page 10). The scope of this project will be limited to those health areas which demonstrably expand and improve services in FP, MNCHN and TB, especially in poor localities, including the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) (page 10). The applicant should determine how to strengthen the policy and financing environment and which populations will benefit from improved and/or new policies.

Question No. 2: Is a certification from the Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC) a requirement upon submission of the application or only when the certification is available?

Answer: We understand that not all non-profit organizations are PCNC certified. Under this RFA, a PCNC certification is not a required eligibility document. However, if a non-profit organization applicant is PCNC certified, it is encouraged to submit the certification along with its application.

Question No. 3: If the applicant is a consortium, will the eligibility requirements apply to the entire consortium or just the prime (lead) applicant?

Answer: Most times when organizations talk about a consortium they mean a “teaming arrangement”, not a “joint venture”. In a teaming arrangement, one organization takes the lead as the prime with subs they agree to team up with. A joint venture is when two or more organizations agree to establish a separate organization – the joint venture – for the purpose of performing the project under one prime. The assumption is that the question here is about a typical consortium. In that case, whichever entity is proposed as the prime must fit the definition of local organization and has to meet all conditions stated in Section III, Eligibility Information, of the RFA. The others will be sub-awards.

Question No. 4: For key personnel, can we just indicate the positions and have criteria for those positions, but not name the persons? For the League of Cities, personnel change every election.

Answer: No. All key personnel must be named in the application and indicate their availability to work for the project for its entire duration of five years.

Question No. 5: An electronic copy of the application is also to be submitted. Is the deadline for submission of the electronic copy the same as the deadline for the hard copy submission?

Answer: Yes. Both electronic and hard copies of the application must be received by the Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance, USAID/Philippines by 3:00 pm Manila local time on August 8, 2012.

Question No. 6: Will a pre-award responsibility determination (pre-award survey) be done for entities which have already been recipients of previous USAID grants/contracts in the last five years?

Answer: USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) 303.3.9 provides guidance on pre-award responsibility determination. To make a responsibility determination for a local organization that has been previously determined responsible, the Agreement Officer may rely on their previous audits and past performance. However, the Agreement Officer, reserves the right, if necessary and appropriate, to conduct a pre-award survey to determine the organization's responsibility.

Question No. 7: What are the different payment scenarios available for this project?

Under this RFA, payment methods available are cost reimbursement and cash advance.

-- To qualify for the cash advance payment method, the organization needs to have an acceptable financial management system in place—determined during the pre-award survey stage.

-- If an organization does not have acceptable financial management system, payment shall only be made on an incurred cost reimbursement basis.

Question No. 8: Has USAID determined the appropriate mechanism for synchronization and integration?

Answer: In implementing USAID's health strategy, we will adopt a synchronized and integrated approach, recognizing that achievement of the core outcome indicators reflected in the results framework (Annex A of the RFA) will not depend on one project alone. There are some mechanisms already in place such as inter-project technical working groups, monthly Chiefs of Party meetings, joint work-planning, and joint site visits. As new projects come on board, the existing mechanisms will be reviewed and appropriate mechanisms will be determined based on a consensus among the projects.

Question No. 9: Will the institutional platform mentioned in Component 1 (page 11) be an entity within the Department of Health (DOH) or outside the DOH?

Answer: The applicant should describe its proposed approach to delivering the results called for in Component 1. The technical approach should include a recommendation for the focus of the institutional platform.

Question No. 10: Is there a page limitation on the cost proposal?

Answer: There is no page limit for the cost proposal. However, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary details.

Question No. 11: When will the announcement of the award be to the successful applicant?

Answer: The estimated award date is end of September 2012.