



USAID | NICARAGUA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Issuance Date: March 12, 2010
Closing Date: April 12, 2010
Closing Time: 4:30 P.M. Nicaragua time

Subject: Request for Application (RFA) USAID Nicaragua No. 524-10-006 for the implementation of the Preventing Transmission of HIV/AIDS from High Risk Groups in Nicaragua (PrevenSida) activities.

The United States Government, as represented by the United States Agency for International Development Mission in Nicaragua (USAID/Nicaragua), is seeking applications (proposals for assistance funding) from qualified national and international organizations to participate in the Preventing Transmission of HIV/AIDS from High Risk Groups in Nicaragua Program (hereafter referred to as the Program), subject to the availability of funds as described in the following Request for Applications. This award is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

The Recipient will be responsible for ensuring achievement of the program objectives. Please refer to the Section I, Funding Opportunity Description for a complete statement of goals and expected results.

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.81, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the grant program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (22 CFR 226, OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organizations, OMB Circular A-21 for universities, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations), may be paid under the agreement when awarded.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID intends to provide a sum of approximately \$5.0 million in total USAID funding to be allocated over a five-year activity. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the application to be submitted.

This RFA is being issued and consists of this cover letter and the following:

1. Section I, Funding Opportunity Description;
2. Section II, Award Information;
3. Section III, Eligibility Information;
4. Section IV, Award and Administration Information;
5. Section V, Agency Contacts;
6. Section VI, Other Information;
7. Section VII, Application and Submission Information;
8. Section VIII, Application Review Information.

If you decide to submit an application, it should be received by the closing date and time indicated at the top of this cover letter via e-mail attachment at oaanicaragua@usaid.gov to the attention of Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltodano. Electronic technical and cost applications must be submitted on separate e-mails by the established date and time. Identify the application with the RFA number (524-10-006) and the name of your organization.

Any questions concerning this RFA must be submitted in writing to oaanicaragua@usaid.gov attention: Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltodano.

If it is determined that the answer to any question(s) is of sufficient importance to warrant notification to all prospective recipients, a Questions and Answer document, and/or if needed, an amendment to the RFA, will be issued. Therefore, questions should be submitted no later than March 26, 2010 at 4:30 P.M. Nicaragua time.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. In addition, final award of any resultant grant(s) cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicant is hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award. Application is submitted at the risk of the applicant; should circumstances prevent award of a cooperative agreement, all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Sincerely,

David Brown
Director
Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance
for Central America and Mexico

SECTION I- Funding Opportunity Description

A. Title

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement to implement a program entitled "Preventing Transmission of HIV/AIDS from High Risk Groups in Nicaragua (PrevenSida)."

B. Authorizing Legislation

The authority for the Request for Applications (RFA) is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

C. Award Administration

22 CFR 226, OMB Circulars, and the Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients will be applicable to the resulting Cooperative Agreement if it is awarded to a U.S. organization. OMB Circulars and the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients will be applicable to the resulting Cooperative Agreement if it is awarded to a non-U.S. organization. These documents may be accessed through the world-wide website at: <http://www.usaid.gov/business/regulations/>

D. Applicability of 22 CFR 226

The following provision will be included in any award to a U.S. entity resulting from this RFA:

APPLICABILITY OF 22 CFR PART 226 (May 2005)

a. All provisions of 22 CFR Part 226 and all Standard Provisions attached to this agreement are applicable to the recipient and to sub-recipients which meet the definition of "Recipient" in Part 226, unless a section specifically excludes a subrecipient from coverage. The recipient shall assure that sub-recipients have copies of all the attached standard provisions.

b. For any subawards made with Non-US sub-recipients the Recipient shall include the applicable "Standard Provisions for Non-US Nongovernmental Grantees." Recipients are required to ensure compliance with monitoring procedures in accordance with OMB Circular A-133.

E. Program Description

1) INTRODUCTION

USAID in Nicaragua seeks applications from qualified national and international organizations to participate in the Preventing Transmission of HIV/AIDS from High Risk Groups in Nicaragua Program (hereafter referred to as the Program). The purpose of the five-year Program will be to support the country efforts to slow the spread of HIV/AIDS in Nicaragua among most at risk populations (MARPS) to the broader population. Most at risk populations include men who have sex with men (MSM) and female sex workers (FSW), among others. Specifically, the Program will support activities designed to: strengthen institutional capacity of non governmental organizations (NGOs) providing HIV/AIDS

preventive services to MARPS, improve access to and quality of HIV/AIDS preventive services for MARPS and people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) from NGO service providers, promote the reduction of stigma and discrimination directed against MARPS and PLHIV, and increase the active participation of NGOs representing MARPS and PLHIV in the national response to HIV/AIDS.

The Program will contribute to the goal of USAID/Nicaragua's Assistance Objective (AO) 3: Investing in People: Healthier, better-educated people, directly contributing to the achievement of Intermediate Result 3.4 (IR): "HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases contained and impact mitigated." The recipient will be expected to coordinate with and complement USAID health services, logistic and community programs, other USG programs and with the Global Fund HIV/AIDS program (2009-2013).

The Program will focus in four (4) key programmatic areas:

1. Institutional Strengthening
2. Preventative Services
3. Stigma and Discrimination
4. Participation in the National Response

2) DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE/ PROBLEM STATEMENT

Some of Nicaragua's recent advances in health occurred in indicators such as reductions in infant mortality rates, fertility rates, chronic malnutrition, increased contraceptive and prevalence rates, accomplishments that are all the more remarkable given the country's continuing abject severe poverty. Many factors supported them, including the significant influx of donor assistance and sustained community participation and mobilization. There still are serious inequities in health status and access to services for the poorest population groups and rural population. In 2002, health and education were declared top priorities; however, because Nicaragua's own economic base is so small, the Government (GON) contribution remains too small, in absolute terms, to meet the country's basic needs. Nicaragua needs increased investment in the social sector and better management of resources to provide a healthy, better-educated population as the basis for development.

Despite recent advances on health indicators¹ and ambitious health plans², there is a significant gap of human, material and financial resources in order to achieve the goals of the national health policy -"provide free health services quality, with preferential attention to the poor and emphasis on prevention³." The GON acknowledges that in 2009 only 76% of the population had secure access to health services, 52 % had access to the public health services, only 16% were covered by social security and 6% attended military medical services. Recent living condition surveys (2005) showed that poor people usually have less access to health services. According to the last study of national accounts of health (2005), Nicaraguans are increasingly complementing governmental services with private and NGO sector services. The Ministry of Health (MOH) also recognizes the incomplete coverage for preventive and health promotion services.

¹ MINSA. Informe de gestión de enero a agosto de 2009. Octubre 2009.

² MINSA. Plan Institucional a Corto Plazo 2010 Orientado a Resultados. División General de Planificación y Desarrollo. Octubre, 2009.

³ MINSA. Política Nacional de Salud. Enero 2008.

HIV/AIDS is a preventable disease of increasing public health concern and consequence. Data from the Ministry of Health, United Nations AIDS Program (UNAIDS) and other sources indicate that the incidence of HIV in Nicaragua is rising, though prevalence remains relatively low in the general population (0.2%) and is disproportionately concentrated in high-risk groups (9%). While the lack of good prevalence data and second-level analysis prevents understanding of the magnitude of the HIV/AIDS problem in Nicaragua, experts agree that the infection rate is still growing despite previous and current efforts to arrest its progression. Even though significant improvements in HIV/AIDS prevention were made over the past decade, problems remain. There still are serious inequities in health care access for MARPS.

The USAID strategic approach to HIV/AIDS⁴ includes eight critical areas: prevention, care and support, treatment, strategic information, research, sustainability and system strengthening, multi-sectoral programs and international cooperation. Based on analysis of the country's health policy³, plans,^{5,6} HIV AIDS situation⁷ and MOH performance reports¹, and information provided at Nicaragua Health Sector Donors Group Meetings, USAID/ Nicaragua has found critical gaps in the country's response to HIV/AIDS prevention among MARPS in care and support, system strengthening (including supply chain management, human resources and community participation) and strategic information. Some of these priorities have been addressed by ongoing USAID or USG projects, ie: health system strengthening (PRONICASS), treatment, care and support (HCI), human resources in service training (HCI), strategic information (ENDESA-DHS, PASCA and CDC).

The regional/bilateral PSI/PASMO (Population Services International/ Pan-American Marketing Association) project (the bilateral portion ended in December 2009 and the regional portion will end within this fiscal year), has been supporting the "prevention among MARPS" component. While this project provided valuable support for NGO-managed prevention programs, it did not work to assist in institutional strengthening or to improve coordination among MARPS for a more effective national response. PSI/PASMO research findings⁸ in Nicaragua showed that the Behavior Change Communication (BCC) strategy had a positive impact on reducing the number of sexual partners, and on increasing the consistent condom use and the effective access to the HIV testing and counseling. USAID/ Nicaragua wants to continue with this strategy in a more sustainable way, including a new capacity building component.

In addition to USAID assistance with its primary focus on prevention, other donor assistance is available to address other aspects of the HIV/AIDS problem. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF) is by far the primary source of such assistance. The GF has launched a five-year grant in excess of \$60 million for Nicaragua, most of which is being used for non-prevention activities such as strategic information, and treatment and care of PLHIV. USAID collaborates closely with the GF and other donors through the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) and other coordinating structures to ensure that all external funding to combat HIV/AIDS is used wisely and with maximum impact. Taking into account the substantial cooperation that will be provided by GF Fund in the next five years, the current key gaps are: prevention among MARPS, NGO institutional strengthening and supply chain management. This proposal will address the first two gaps.

⁴ http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/TechAreas/index.html

⁵ MINSA/ Plan plurianual y marco de gasto institucional 2010-2013. Marco de gasto institucional de mediano plazo. Septiembre, 2009.

⁶ MINSA. Plan Estratégico. Sistema de Información en Salud 2010-2012. Julio 2009.

⁷ USAID. Diagnostico de Situación y Respuesta al VIH/SIDA en Nicaragua. Mayo 2009.

⁸ PSI PASMO. Estudios de Seguimiento TSF y HSH PASMO Nicaragua. 30 de enero 2009

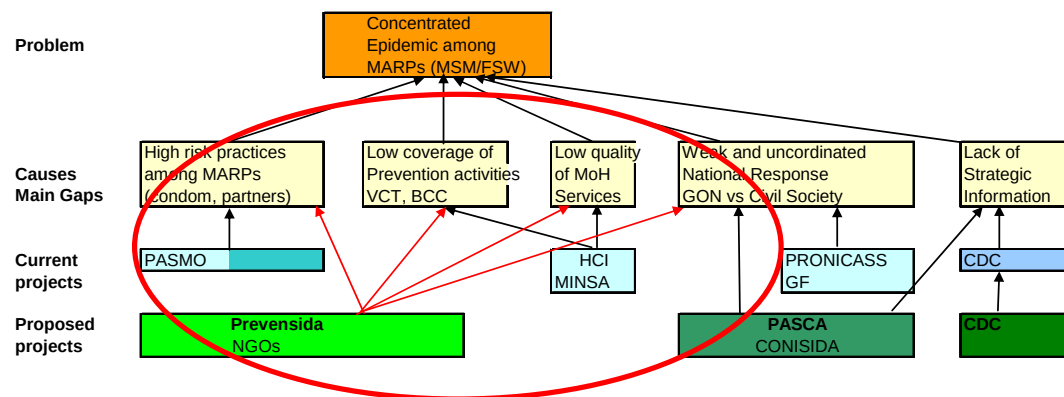
Prevention programs that result in behavior change among high risk groups so that they no longer transmit HIV are the most important activities needed to contain an HIV/AIDS epidemic. However, in general, the public sector and especially the MOH, is ill-equipped to carry out such programs. The MOH has still a curative approach and its limited community outreach efforts are broad-based and not directed at reaching MARPS. Moreover, MOH personnel often discriminate against and stigmatize MARPS, who do not feel comfortable in the MOH clinical environment.

The key to controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS is to create and support effective prevention programs carried out by NGOs who represent MARPS, PLHIV and other key groups and who potentially have access to many high risk individuals in their risk groups who often hide their risky behavior for fear of recrimination. Both NGO and governmental sectors are important to this effort to lay the foundation for preventing the spread of this epidemic.

Though NGOs are best positioned to reach MARPS, the number of persons regularly engaged in high-risk behaviors (e.g. bisexuals and “informal” sex workers) is not known and it is safe to assume that organized NGOs representing HIV/AIDS interest groups are vastly under representative of such individuals. Moreover, many of these NGOs suffer from organizational weaknesses and high turnover in membership and leadership.

Figure 1 summarizes the problem that USAID Nicaragua wants to address through this program description. With the conclusion of PSI/PASMO bilateral project, there is a need to continue in the prevention among MARPS component, and to develop a new approach to strengthen the NGOs working in this field. This last activity will be fundamental for sustainability.

Figure 1: HIV/AIDS priorities and USAID Nicaragua approach



The Program will help continue to reduce high risk practices among MARPS, increasing the coverage of prevention while also strengthening the civil society participation in the prevention and control of the epidemic. This initiative will address the major HIV/AIDS current gaps and will add to the impact of other activities to improve health, contribute to ensuring health services to reach vulnerable groups. Proposed new activities are also fully consistent with strategic recommendations contained in the April 2008 Nicaragua Health Evaluation which speaks to the need for USAID to focus on prevention among MARPS.

The primary beneficiaries of this project will be the MARPS who will improve their healthy behaviors as a result of the increased access to quality HIV/AIDS preventive services, the NGOs (institutions and personnel) who will be strengthened; and the health care professionals (from public and private sectors), government officials and policy makers who will be trained in reduction of stigma and discrimination and assisted in providing better services for MARPS and PLHIV, in updating policies, protocols, and preventive measures in accordance with the National HIV/AIDS strategy. The ultimate beneficiaries will be the general public, in particular vulnerable groups of the population.

3) PROGRAM OBJECTIVES/EXPECTED RESULTS:

USAID/Nicaragua seeks to contribute to country's efforts to contain and mitigate the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nicaragua. The specific objective of this Program will be to increase healthy behaviors in order to reduce the transmission of HIV/AIDS among MARPS and to the population at large. These healthy behaviors include increased condom use, reduced number of sexual partners and increased access to HIV testing and will be measured⁹ by the following indicators:

- Increase in 50% from baseline the consistent use of condoms among MARPS in all sexual contacts, including those with long-term partners, by the end of the Program.
- Decrease of 30% from baseline the number of multiple partners among MARPS by the end of the Program
- Increase of 60% from baseline in the use of HIV counseling and testing among MARPS by the end of the Program

The Program will support activities contributing to four expected results which will impact the desired health behaviors. It is envisioned that the prime implementer (a local organization with international support or a national-international consortium), will provide institutional strengthening to the NGOs network, to improve their capacity to provide preventive services, to work against stigma and discrimination and to participate actively in the HIV/AIDS national response. The Program will explicitly promote a sustainable local ownership by the NGOs.

Result 1: Strengthened institutional capacity of at least 20 NGOs to participate in the HIV/AIDS national response plans by building capacities and promoting the networking model.

The Program seeks to ensure the organizational development of the NGOs representing MARPS, PLHIVs and those providing services for the vulnerable groups. This component will ensure that the policies, structures, procedures and practices of these NGOs are in place to address the HIV/AIDS local and national response changing needs. Building the capacity of these NGOs may involve interventions in several areas such as policies, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, management change, procedures, resources and culture. Networking, by individuals and organizations at all levels is one way to operate more strategically and to improve the effectiveness of the NGOs activities.

⁹ It is expected that the proposal will include a base line survey and a final evaluation to measure the advances made by the Program in these impact indicators.

Result 2: *Improved access to and quality of HIV/AIDS preventive services for MARPS from NGO preventive service providers.*

Some of the NGOs working in HIV/AIDS are small scale preventive services providers. This component will ensure that NGOs skills development and material resources are available to improve their capacity to provide more equitable high quality preventive HIV/AIDS health services. The program will build a cadre of trained human resources able to implement an expansion of coverage of preventive services; counseling and testing, health education and promotion, condoms availability and basic supplies (reagent, equipment, condoms, educational materials, and appropriate logistics support).

Result 3: *Reduction of stigma and discrimination directed against MARPS and PLHIVs.*

Generating the willingness and the ability to respond to HIV/AIDS stigma and discrimination rests on an ongoing process of informing, training and sensitizing key stakeholders, decision makers, health sector service providers (both public and private), NGOs, MARPS, PLHIVs and the general population. This requires a clear and effective strategy and strong communication and education tools, directed to key personnel in different levels in order to improve the access and quality of the health services received by MARPS and PLHIV, as well to reduce barriers to their effective participation in national and local decision making settings. This will contribute to improve MARPS positive perceptions in reduction of stigma and discrimination in health services provision settings.

Result 4: *Improved participation of NGOs representing MARPS and PLHIV in the national response to HIV/AIDS.*

The Program will enable increased participation of NGOs representing MARPS and PLHIV in a coordinated and coherent response to the HIV/AIDS crisis in Nicaragua at all appropriate levels. Responding to the HIV/AIDS epidemic depends on the availability and accessibility to data that provides a clear understanding of the situation. Information is also needed about the effectiveness of policies and interventions to address the disease. The Program will help NGOs to improve their presence and the quality of their participation in the national, departmental and local coordination mechanisms.

Target Populations

The Program will concentrate activities on the following populations and the approximately 20 NGOs operating to serve these populations: PLHIV, transsexuals (Trans), MSM, FSM and others, including transportation workers and high-risk youth. A rough estimate of the at-risk population is about 155,000 persons, consisting mostly of MSM, followed by FSW and then fewer from groups such as transport and construction workers and high-risk youth.

The project will concentrate activities in geographic areas of highest HIV/AIDS transmission, especially in the department of Managua and Chinandega which account for the majority of HIV transmission as well as departments in the “AIDS corridor” of Nicaragua including Leon, Masaya, Granada, Rivas, Chontales and of the Atlantic Region (RAAN and RAAS)

4) TECHNICAL APPROACH AND CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

Local Capacity Building and Local Sub-Grants

Building local NGOs institutional capacity should be a central goal that underpins all program components and activities. Sub-awards in the form of grants to local NGOs should be used to encourage civil society participation in the HIV/AIDS national response. Strengthening the capacity of local NGOs is essential for ensuring sustainable impact and should remain a cross-cutting objective throughout the life of the Program.

Develop of a NGO Network for Program Implementation

Applicants should consider a technical approach which includes the developing of a local network which will implement the Program. Networking is a recognized strategy for a more effective and synergic response to HIV/AIDS. It is a process by which two or more organizations collaborate to achieve common goals. Known benefits are: accomplishment of something that the NGO could not accomplished alone, strengthen advocacy, reduce duplication efforts and wasting of resources, promote knowledge exchange, improve solidarity and mobilize financial resources.

Gender¹⁰

The Program must ensure that gender activities are mainstreamed into activities, reporting and indicators. The Program's training activities will aim to balance the participation of women and men and include topically tied gender modules, whenever possible. For information or services provision, opportunities will be gender-equitable. For education and advocacy activities communication efforts will be based on gender-disaggregated audience research and efforts will be taken to invite, educate and include women's NGOs.

USAID HIV/AIDS Strategic Approach¹¹

The recipients should propose projects and strategies which adhere to USAID HIV/AIDS technical and programmatic approach.

5) COORDINATION WITH OTHER USAID PROGRAMS

This Program is an integral part of the set of activities directed to achievement of USAID/Nicaragua's Strategic Objective 3: Investing in People: Healthier, better-educated people, directly contributing to the achievement of IR 3.4 HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases contained and impact mitigated." The recipient will be expected to coordinate with and complement bilateral USAID HIV/AIDS programs, HIV/AIDS regional activities (PASCA), other USG Agencies (Center for Disease Control, Peace Corps) and with the Global Fund HIV/AIDS program.

¹⁰ More information about Gender and USAID HIV programming:
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/TechAreas/prevention/gender.html

¹¹ More information about USAID HIV/AIDS technical approach
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/index.html#.

6) PROGRAM COMPONENTS

6.1) Institutional Strengthening

The objective of this program component is to strengthen institutional capacity of NGOs (PLHIV, MSMs, FSW, Trans, Alternative centers, among others) to participate in the HIV/AIDS national response plans by building capacities and promoting the networking model.

Local NGOs vary widely in the strength of their institutional capacity to participate in the national HIV/AIDS response, including their capacity to deliver HIV preventive services. Some will need little assistance in institution building from the Program while others will require a major investment of technical support before they are capable of managing project activities on their own. While there are several NGO interest groups representing MARPS, many of them lack staff and competent leadership, are underfinanced and experience high turnover, lack capacity to deliver services to their members and suffer from a variety of other institutional weaknesses. Membership is often amorphous; in addition to declared members, some NGOs may also lay claim to representing the interests of much larger groups of non-declared members of the same risk group who prefer to remain anonymous.

The Program seeks to strengthen the strategic, organizational and technical capacities of at least 20 NGOs who are and will be key actors in the HIV/AIDS local and national response. The NGO should be working at national level or at the departments of Managua, Chinandega, Leon, Masaya, Granada, Rivas, Chontales and the RAAN and RAAS. The selection of NGOs will include organizations from the following population groups;

- People living with AIDS
- Trans sexual and transgender population
- Men who have sex with men
- Alternate health services providers
- Others (youth in risk, transport sector, etc)

The process of NGO capacity building will be performed through the design of tailored training sessions (strategic and operational management, HIV/AIDS technical issues, advocacy and information management working in alliances and networks, etc.) designed to meet the NGO's specific needs. To graduate from the training program, the NGO personnel must attend the complete course, present and implement an institutional development plan, which includes a sustainability strategy, and become an active member of the proposed NGO network participating in the national response plan.

The applicant will be expected to propose a detailed phased NGO training plan for development of a NGO network, improving leadership and management and service delivery capacity development of project NGO partners selected for project support.

Illustrative Activities:

- Undertake a baseline analysis of existing NGOs based upon a variety of key criteria, among which should include relationship to high-risk groups and organizational mandate (e.g. a member organization representing a high-risk group such as MSM or PLHIV vs. other NGOs who may provide HIV/AIDS preventive services as one of a

variety of other social services to the community); potential influence and contribution of NGO to achieving project results; organizational strengths and weaknesses; size, current coverage and potential for program expansion.

- Help NGOs to initiate and organize a network for a more effective response to HIV/AIDS. This will include the following, but not limited to; preparing a statement of purpose, defining goals and objectives, creating an action plan, establishing ground rules, defining a decision making process, preparing a communication plan, defining an organizational structure and securing resources.
- Development of a comprehensive plan to increase selected NGO institutional capacity to effectively participate in the HIV/AIDS national response. Key factors such as NGO managerial and financial viability as well as readiness and absorptive capacity should be considered in the development of the plan. The plan should contain a description of the type and quantity of training, technical assistance and other inputs to be provided as well as measurable outcomes expected along with a timetable for implementation.
- Provide technical assistance to monitor and evaluate NGO institutional development plans.

Indicators:

- More than two hundred NGO personnel, from twenty NGOs, trained and provided with technical assistance for HIV-related institutional capacity building¹² by the end of the Program.
- At least twenty local organizations institutional capacity building plans developed and implemented yearly.
- A network of NGOs working with HIV/AIDS, initiated by the first year of the project, designing, implementing and evaluating plans from the second year to the end of the Program.

6.2) Preventive Services¹³

The objective of this program component is to improve the access to and quality of HIV/AIDS preventive services for MARPS delivered by NGO service providers.

An important focus of the Program will be to help increase access and quality of preventive services for MARPS and PLHIVs. USAID is a leader in developing, implementing, and monitoring communication strategies to change high-risk behaviors such as having multiple sexual partners and unprotected sex in high-risk groups. This Program will help to continue USAID's leadership in the cooperation offered to the country.

Applicants should describe how they will assist the NGO service providers to:

¹² Institutional capacity building includes strategic and operational management, HIV/AIDS technical issues, advocacy, strategic information, working in alliances and networks, among other key issues.

¹³ More information about USAID HIV/AIDS preventive approach:
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/TechAreas/prevention/index.html

- Utilize BCC to reach higher prevalence populations including, for example, counseling, mentoring and peer outreach.
- Propose to expand outreach in high-risk areas with MSM and FSW and how they will prioritize interventions and extend quality and comprehensive coverage to these hard-to-reach sub-groups including street walkers and sex workers (many self identified as “housewives”) and transactional sex workers, as well as bisexuals.
- Propose to reach transportation workers who appear to account for a significant proportion of HIV positive persons; what approaches they propose to use to increase risk perception and encourage partner reduction along with consistent condom use during high-risk and other sexual activity.
- Use targeted public mobilization activities to help positive changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices about sexual behavior.
- Employ new and innovative technologies, especially those that use cellular and internet based systems, to expand coverage to persons at risk.

The package of sustainable preventive services developed by the applicant should include free condom distribution (in collaboration with MOH). The Program will not provide sexually transmitted infection diagnosis and treatment. Instead the approach of the project will be to provide BCC and VCT information and services and to establish an effective referral system to MOH health facilities which are equipped to provide STI diagnosis and treatment.

Program services should also include counseling and access to rapid testing for HIV, also in coordination with MOH. Applicants should also propose concrete ways to link behavior change communications project activities with voluntary counseling and testing as well as family planning, antenatal, natal and post natal control, and sexually transmitted infection services available in MOH hospitals and health centers and other locations.

The beneficiary population for this component will be adult population sexually active (155,000), approximately 100,000 MSM, 5,000 FSW, 40,000 FSW clients (frequent occupation: transport workers, construction workers) and 10,000 youth at risk.

Illustrative activities:

- Development and provision of training on HIV/AIDS preventive services for selected NGOs.
- Help the NGOs to develop and implement a package of cost-effective prevention interventions based on strategies with proven efficacy among core high risk groups, including interpersonal communication activities such as counseling, mentoring and peer outreach services as well as strategies to increased accessibility and use of high-quality counseling and testing services.
- Help the NGOs to develop strategies and plans to link BCC and VCT to related health services, (e.g. family planning and STI services) of the MOH and to collaborate with MOH in the development of more efficient, sensitive and user-friendly mechanisms for referral and treatment.

Indicators:

- At least 155,000 MARP individuals reached yearly through community outreach that promotes HIV/AIDS prevention
- At least 50,000 MARP individuals received counseling along with testing for HIV and received their test results according to national standards at the end of the Program.
- At least two hundred individuals from 20 NGOs trained in preventive services provision according to national and international standards at the end of the project.
- More than twenty organizations providing appropriate behavioral change communications, counseling and testing, condom provision and other preventive services to other members of high risk groups.

6.3) Stigma and Discrimination

The objective of this program component is to contribute to the reduction of stigma and discrimination through NGO involvement.

Stigma and discrimination of HIV-infected persons (or persons thought to be infected) by the general public and service providers pose formidable barriers to access to preventive and VCT services for many high risk groups such as MSM, transsexual and FSW. While the extent of stigma and discrimination and its impact as a barrier to access among MARPS is unknown, it is generally acknowledged that self-declared MSM (the largest high-risk group) are far fewer than the number of “hidden” MSM in the general population. Many, if not most of these hidden MSM can be assumed to be engaging in risky sexual behavior, and most will resist preventive care for fear of exposure. Among heterosexual risk groups such as FSW and their clients, this is also a problem, since many of these individuals will also resist VCT for fear of social opprobrium.

Applicants should examine more deeply the nature and extent of stigma and discrimination and its effect of prevention activities and propose concrete ways to overcome such barriers. In this effort, applicants should draw from the successful experience of the USAID/HCI project in helping the MOH reduce stigma and discrimination in the clinic setting, including collaboration on establishing user-friendly referral systems from NGOs to “stigma free” MOH health services.

Illustrative activities:

- Analysis of research findings and secondary data on stigma and discrimination in Nicaragua to ascertain the nature and extent of the problem followed by intervention/operational research to determine optimal methods of overcoming such barriers in prevention programs.
- Training and technical assistance for NGOs to design, implement and evaluate strategies addressing the problem of stigma and discrimination at different levels (inside their organizations, at health services level, municipality level and other decision making environments).

- Training of health service providers in how to implement activities to reduce stigma and discrimination in health services provision
- Identification of barriers to access to health services and development of concrete ways to overcome such barriers to care for high risk groups such as MSM, transvestites and CSW, including establishment of user-friendly referral networks along with sensitivity training for MOH staff.
- Advocacy to enable NGOs representing MARPS to participate in national efforts to reduce stigma and discrimination (example: Social Audit for the implementation of MINSA's decree regarding the discrimination of sexual minorities).

Indicators:

- At least one hundred individuals from key NGOs trained in strategies and educational tools to reduce stigma and discrimination at the end of the first year.
- More than twenty NGOs implementing and evaluating annual plans to reduce stigma and discrimination (inside their organizations, at health services level, municipality level and other decision making environments)
- At least 50% of MARPS will increase their positive perceptions in reduction of stigma and discrimination in health services provision settings following project interventions, at the end of the project compared to the baseline.

6.4) Participation in the National Response

The objective of this program component is to improve the participation of NGOs representing MARPS and PLHIV in the national response to HIV/AIDS.

An effective national response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic requires the full commitment of all major public and private sector interested parties. Creating such a response is especially difficult given the nature of the HIV/AIDS problem which, due to its low prevalence in Nicaragua, occupies a relatively low rung on the ladder of public consciousness. Moreover, given the shame, embarrassment and fear of discrimination associated with exposing one's HIV status, local HIV/AIDS advocacy groups tend to be weak, disorganized and underrepresented.

As previously stated, the Global Fund is making a major investment in public advocacy and the Program will attempt to support, not duplicate or supplement that more broad-based effort. Moreover, the USAID regional PASCA project will also be working at the national level with CONSIDA to provide that coordinating body with information useful for policy planning, development, and public advocacy. The focus of the Program will be more narrowly focused on assisting NGOs representing MARPS and PLHIV participate more actively and effectively with a stronger, more coordinated and coherent response to the HIV/AIDS crisis in Nicaragua at all appropriate levels.

Applications should propose how they will support the NGOs to improve their presence and the quality of their participation in the national, departmental and local coordination mechanisms.

Applicants should also propose how they will establish a vigorous program of strategic information¹⁴ for NGOs to inform decision-making on all key aspects of project and program planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Applicants should describe the nature and composition of the strategic information activity, including applied research, they will establish to meet this result, along with an illustrative list of research topics of relevance to this project. The main thrust should be to ensure that the implementation of activities represent the most empirically sound and cost-effective approaches to reaching high risk populations with prevention interventions that will reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS in Nicaragua. As such, most research activities will fall under the category of “applied”, “operations”, “intervention” or “tracking” research, in which target groups are engaged and participate in structured research designs that provide answers to operational issues in relatively short time frames: for example, identifying and surmounting barriers to adopting healthy behaviors in high-prevalence groups and their sub-groups. Research may also be required to identify the nature, size and location of target high risk groups prior to the development of program interventions.

The applicant should ensure that training in the use of applied research is included as an important element in capacity development of beneficiary NGOs. The applicant should also expect to participate in developing the HIV/AIDS module (which may include sero-prevalence testing) for the next Nicaraguan Demographic and Health Survey (ENDESA) and ensure that the extensive findings and second generation analysis are widely distributed among NGOs and other key partners and interest groups. Additionally, the applicant should describe how the results of research and program effectiveness will be used as an advocacy tool for expanded prevention services to MARPS by other institutions in the GON, NGOs and donor groups.

Illustrative activities:

- Develop a stakeholder map and implement an advocacy strategy for NGOs, helping them to define their role in every level of coordination in the Country Coordination Mechanism (CCM, National and Departmental CONISIDA, Municipal Health Councils, NGO Federations, etc.).
- Develop an information and evidence base strategy for NGOs, helping them to access key information, enabling active and informed participation in the country response.
- Based on an updated situation analysis of the HIV/AIDS situation in Nicaragua, development of a research plan that takes into account gaps in knowledge needed to properly construct plans and approaches to prevention programs and to better inform operational decision making.
- Identification of key policy and program barriers to effective implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention programs to MARPS through the private sector, and design of a coordinated plan for advocacy by NGOs as part of the national response to help overcome those barriers.
- Enable NGOs to develop organizational agendas for inclusion in the broader national agenda.

¹⁴ Strategic information is reliable HIV/AIDS data and information to make sound programmatic decisions. Guiding principles for USAID strategic information: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/TechAreas/multisectoral/strategic.html

Indicators:

- More than two hundred NGO personnel, from twenty NGOs, trained in effective participation techniques and strategies.
- Approximately twenty NGOs provided with technical assistance for HIV-related policy development
- Twenty NGOs participating in national and local coordinating mechanisms with CONSIDA, CCM and/or other national, regional or local entities in promoting HIV advocacy, coordination and policy.
- At least five applied research studies carried out and findings disseminated and used by key NGOs and MOH
- One advocacy plan developed and implemented for removal of barriers to implementation of MARPS prevention programs through NGOs network.

[END OF SECTION I]

SECTION II – AWARD INFORMATION

A. Estimate of Funds Available

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID intends to provide between \$4,000,000 to \$6,000,000 in total USAID funding for the life of the activity including a maximum of \$500,000 for sub-grants per year total. Cost sharing of 10% is highly encouraged. Additional leveraging of funding and resources is encouraged.

B. Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to award one (1) Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this RFA to the responsible applicant whose application conforming to this RFA offers the greatest value to the U.S. Government. The Government may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept other than the lowest cost application, (c) accept alternate applications, and (e) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

The Government may make an award on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions or negotiations. Therefore, each initial application should contain the applicant's best terms from a cost and technical standpoint. As part of its evaluation process, however, USAID may elect to discuss technical, cost or other pre-award issues with one or more applicants. Alternatively, USAID may proceed with award selection based on its evaluation of initial applications received and/or commence negotiations solely with one applicant.

C. Start Date and Period of Performance

The period of performance anticipated herein is five (5) years. The estimated start date is on or about May 28, 2010.

D. Type of Award

USAID plans to negotiate and award an assistance instrument known as a Cooperative Agreement with the selected applicant. A Cooperative Agreement implies a level of “substantial involvement” by USAID through the Agreement Officer Technical Representative (AOTR). The intended purpose of the AOTR involvement during the award is to assist the recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the agreement. The substantial involvement elements for this award are listed below:

- USAID’s review and approval of the work plan and the monitoring and evaluation plan, and involvement in monitoring of achievement of program objectives during the course of the Cooperative Agreement.
- Approval of Key Personnel by the Agreement Officer
- Approval of specified key personnel, such as
 - National Chief of Party
 - National Administrative Director
 - Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Specialist
- Approval of grants manual by the Agreement Officer

[END OF SECTION II]

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Qualified applicants may be U.S. private voluntary organizations (U.S. PVOs) and/or U.S. or non-U.S. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private, non-profit organizations (or for-profit companies willing to forego profits), including universities, research organizations, professional associations, and relevant special interest associations. Faith-based and community organizations are also eligible for award. In support of the Agency's interest in fostering a larger assistance base and expanding the number and sustainability of development partners, USAID encourages applications from potential new partners.

In addition, for organizations to be deemed eligible, authorized officials from applicant organizations must complete the requisite United States Government Representations and Certifications attached at Annex A.

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. All potential awardees will be subject to a responsibility determination (pre-award audit) issued by a warranted Agreements Officer in USAID.

B. Cost Sharing

A cost share, set at 10% of the total project, is highly encouraged for participation in this program. In addition to USAID funds, applicants are to contribute resources from own, private or local sources for the implementation of this program. Contributions can be either cash or in kind and can include contributions from the applicant, local counterpart organizations, project clients, or other donors (not other USG funding sources). This may be from program generated funds such as client savings, interest and fees in accordance with USAID standard provisions on cost sharing. Applications must show any cost sharing proposed. Required criteria for cost-sharing contributions are in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 226.23.

The cost-sharing portion of the project should include funding that third-parties (non U.S. Government sources) will bring to this activity. The recipient shall present a plan and budget for cost-sharing to spend funds from non-U.S. Government sources. The proposal should provide a break-down of the financial (cash) and in-kind contributions (services, properties, donated goods/services, equipment, etc) involved in the development of this project.

[END OF SECTION III]

SECTION IV – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Notice of Award signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorizing document, which shall be transmitted to the Recipient for countersignature to the authorized agent of the successful organization electronically, to be followed by original copies for execution.

A. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The recipient shall be responsible to USAID/Nicaragua for all matters related to the execution of the agreement. Specifically, the recipient shall report to the USAID Agreement Officer Technical Representative (AOTR) located within the Health and Education Office (HE). The AOTR will be designated through a separate letter which will be sent to the recipient.

B. ANNUAL WORKPLANS AND REPORTING

Results Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Applicants must develop a results monitoring plan, which will serve as a draft proposal of indicators that may be used to track results as part of on-going project management and reporting and will be updated annually.

The Performance Results Monitoring Plan should include at least the recommended indicators to track progress toward each result. For each indicator proposed, the Applicant shall address how the indicator measures achievement of the result or progress towards it. The plan for collecting, evaluating and validating data should be included in the Results Monitoring Plan. Further, USAID will conduct an independent mid-term evaluation to assess progress on each of the results, achievement of indicators and overall objective of the Program plus identify lessons learned and recommendations for mid-course changes. The PMP will be updated annually.

Annual Implementation Plan/Work Plan

The award recipient will be responsible for developing implementation plans/work plans in collaboration with the AOTR and other appropriate partners for the 5-year period of the Agreement. An illustrative work plan for the first year must be submitted as part of the application. Within 30 days of award of the Grant Agreement, a final work plan for the first year must be submitted to USAID, including key activities and milestones and how all baseline and indicator targets will be set within the first 30 days. All Annual Implementation plan/Work Plan documents should be submitted in English.

The work plan shall include at a minimum: Proposed accomplishments and expected progress towards achieving results and performance measures in the Performance Monitoring Plan; Timeline for implementation, including milestones and target completion dates; Information on how activities will be implemented; Any equipment or commodities to be procured; Management Plan and Detailed budget.

Management and Staffing Plan

The Proposal shall include a management plan describing the organization's capacity to work effectively with relevant host country institutions, non-governmental organizations, and other donors in achieving project results. The management plan shall describe the organization's plan for capacity building of local institutions promoting a sustainable local ownership by the NGOs network, based on their experience in similar impoverished, complex and changing environments. The management plan shall also describe how the applicant will provide institutional strengthening to the NGOs network, to improve their capacity to provide preventive services, to work against stigma and discrimination and to participate actively in the HIV/AIDS national response. It will also describe challenges faced by the organization with respect to carrying out project activities that may require particular attention, and how the organization intends to monitor and address these challenges. Finally the plan shall include a proposed organizational chart, with a brief statement of the management approach, roles and responsibilities for all staff, home office personnel, local advisors, long and short term advisors. The management plan shall include a statement on the extent to which progress achieved during the project period is expected to be sustained after the end of the project.

Quarterly Progress Reports

The recipient will submit an original and one copy (in English) of a quarterly performance report on activities. The quarterly performance report will briefly present the information on all activities carried out during the quarter, progress made and plans for the next quarter. The quarterly report must also specify any problems encountered and indicate resolutions of propose corrective actions.

The final performance report will follow the same format as the quarterly reports, but focus on accomplishments. The Recipient will also ensure that best practices and lessons learned are shared with USAID staff and present those in the final report at the conclusion of the project.

Quarterly Financial Reports

The recipient shall provide USAID with quarterly financial reports through Standard Form 269, 270 or 1034 based on the approved payment method in the award and in accordance with 22 CFR 226.52 *Financial Reporting*.

The recipient will submit quarterly accruals electronically no later than the 15th day of the month and shall be presented using a format to be provided by USAID.

Final Agreement Completion Report

The recipient shall prepare and submit a final/completion report to the AOTR which summarizes the accomplishments of this agreement, lessons learned, budget and disbursement activity, and recommendations regarding unfinished work and/or program continuation. The final/completion report shall also contain an index of all reports and information products produced under this agreement. The final report shall be submitted no later than 90 days after the estimated completion date of this agreement.

Annual Reports

To facilitate the Mission's preparation of its Annual Report to USAID/Washington, the recipient will be asked to provide an Annual Report based on the U.S. Government's fiscal year (October 1 – September 30). This report will be provided in lieu of a quarterly report o/a November 1 of each year of implementation. Progress on performance data should be presented for the preceding quarter and also cumulatively. Annual Reports must be submitted in English.

[END OF SECTION IV]

SECTION V – AGENCY CONTACTS

The A&A Specialist for this Award is:

Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltodano
A&A Specialist
USAID/Nicaragua
Embajada Americana
Kilometro 5.5 Carretera Sur
Frente al Parque “Las Piedrecitas”
Managua, Nicaragua

Tel: +505 2252-7233

Fax: +505 2252-7285

Questions under this RFA must be submitted in writing to Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltodano, A&A Specialist or Ms. Mappy Cortez, A&A Assistant via Internet at oaanicaragua@usaid.gov no later than March 26, 2010, at 4: 30 pm.

[END OF SECTION V]

SECTION VI – OTHER INFORMATION

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ADS/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. Offeror environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this RFA.

In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

No activity funded under this Cooperative Agreement will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as "approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.")

As part of its initial Work Plan, and thereafter, all Annual Work Plans, the recipient, in collaboration with the USAID Cognizant Technical Officer, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this CA to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

If the recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

USAID anticipates that environmental compliance and achieving optimal development outcomes for the proposed activities will require environmental management expertise. Respondents to the RFA should therefore include as part of their application their approach to achieving environmental compliance and management, to include:

The respondent's approach to developing and implementing an [IEE or EA or environmental review process for a grant fund and/or an EMMP].

The respondent's approach to providing necessary environmental management expertise, including examples of past experience of environmental management of similar activities.

The respondent's illustrative budget for implementing the environmental compliance activities.

BRANDING STRATEGY - ASSISTANCE (December 2005)

(a) Definitions:

Branding Strategy means a strategy that is submitted at the specific request of a USAID Agreement Officer by an Apparently Successful Applicant after evaluation of an application for USAID funding, describing how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens. It identifies all donors and explains how they will be acknowledged.

Apparently Successful Applicant(s) means the applicant(s) for USAID funding recommended for an award after evaluation, but who has not yet been awarded a grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance award by the Agreement Officer. The Agreement Officer will request that the Apparently Successful Applicants submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. Apparently Successful Applicant status confers no right and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

USAID Identity (Identity) means the official marking for the Agency, comprised of the USAID logo and new brandmark, which clearly communicates that our assistance is from the American people. The USAID Identity is available on the USAID website and is provided without royalty, license, or other fee to recipients of USAID-funded grants or cooperative agreements or other assistance awards or subawards.

(b) Submission. The Apparently Successful Applicant, upon request of the Agreement Officer, will submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy. The Branding Strategy will be included in and made a part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement. The Branding Strategy will be negotiated within the time that the Agreement Officer specifies. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy will make the applicant ineligible for award of a grant or cooperative agreement. The Apparently Successful Applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events and materials, and the like.

(c) Submission Requirements

At a minimum, the Apparently Successful Applicant's Branding Strategy will address the following:

(1) Positioning

What is the intended name of this program, project, or activity?

Guidelines: USAID prefers to have the USAID Identity included as part of the program or project name, such as a "title sponsor," if possible and appropriate. It is acceptable to "co-brand" the title with USAID's and the Apparently Successful Applicant's identities. For example: "The USAID and [Apparently Successful Applicant] Health Center."

If it would be inappropriate or is not possible to "brand" the project this way, such as when rehabilitating a structure that already exists or if there are multiple donors, please explain and

indicate how you intend to showcase USAID's involvement in publicizing the program or project. For example: School #123, rehabilitated by USAID and [Apparently Successful Applicant]/ [other donors]. Note: the Agency prefers "made possible by (or with) the generous support of the American People" next to the USAID Identity in acknowledging our contribution, instead of the phrase "funded by." USAID prefers local language translations.

Will a program logo be developed and used consistently to identify this program? If yes, please attach a copy of the proposed program logo.

Note: USAID prefers to fund projects that do NOT have a separate logo or identity that competes with the USAID Identity.

(2) Program Communications and Publicity

Who are the primary and secondary audiences for this project or program?

Guidelines: Please include direct beneficiaries and any special target segments or influencers. For Example: Primary audience: schoolgirls age 8-12, Secondary audience: teachers and parents—specifically mothers.

What communications or program materials will be used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries?

Guidelines: These include training materials, posters, pamphlets, Public Service Announcements, billboards, websites, and so forth.

What is the main program message(s)?

Guidelines: For example: "Be tested for HIV-AIDS" or "Have your child inoculated." Please indicate if you also plan to incorporate USAID's primary message – this aid is "from the American people" – into the narrative of program materials. This is optional; however, marking with the USAID Identity is required.

Will the recipient announce and promote publicly this program or project to host country citizens? If yes, what press and promotional activities are planned?

Guidelines: These may include media releases, press conferences, public events, and so forth. Note: incorporating the message, "USAID from the American People", and the USAID Identity is required.

Please provide any additional ideas about how to increase awareness that the American people support this project or program.

Guidelines: One of our goals is to ensure that both beneficiaries and host-country citizens know that the aid the Agency is providing is "from the American people." Please provide any initial ideas on how to further this goal.

(3) Acknowledgements

Will there be any direct involvement from a host-country government ministry? If yes, please indicate which one or ones. Will the recipient acknowledge the ministry as an additional co-sponsor?

Note: it is perfectly acceptable and often encouraged for USAID to "co-brand" programs with government ministries.

Please indicate if there are any other groups whose logo or identity the recipient will use on program materials and related communications.

Guidelines: Please indicate if they are also a donor or why they will be visibly acknowledged, and if they will receive the same prominence as USAID.

(d) Award Criteria. The Agreement Officer will review the Branding Strategy for adequacy, ensuring that it contains the required information on naming and positioning the USAID-funded program, project, or activity, and promoting and communicating it to cooperating country beneficiaries and citizens. The Agreement Officer also will evaluate this information to ensure that it is consistent with the stated objectives of the award; with the Apparently Successful Applicant's cost data submissions; with the Apparently Successful Applicant's project, activity, or program performance plan; and with the regulatory requirements set out in 22 CFR 226.91. The Agreement Officer may obtain advice and recommendations from technical experts while performing the evaluation.

MARKING PLAN – ASSISTANCE (December 2005)

(a) Definitions

Marking Plan means a plan that the Apparently Successful Applicant submits at the specific request of a USAID Agreement Officer after evaluation of an application for USAID funding, detailing the public communications, commodities, and program materials and other items that will visibly bear the USAID Identity. Recipients may request approval of Presumptive Exceptions to marking requirements in the Marking Plan.

Apparently Successful Applicant(s) means the applicant(s) for USAID funding recommended for an award after evaluation, but who has not yet been awarded a grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance award by the Agreement Officer. The Agreement Officer will request that Apparently Successful Applicants submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. Apparently Successful Applicant status confers no right and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award, which the Agreement Officer must still obligate.

USAID Identity (Identity) means the official marking for the Agency, comprised of the USAID logo and new brandmark, which clearly communicates that our assistance is from the American people. The USAID Identity is available on the USAID website and USAID provides it without royalty, license, or other fee to recipients of USAID funded grants, cooperative agreements, or other assistance awards or subawards.

A Presumptive Exception exempts the applicant from the general marking requirements for a particular USAID-funded public communication, commodity, program material or other deliverable, or a category of USAID-funded public communications, commodities, program materials or other deliverables that would otherwise be required to visibly bear the USAID Identity. The Presumptive Exceptions are:

Presumptive Exception (i). USAID marking requirements may not apply if they would compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials, such as election monitoring or ballots, and voter information literature; political party support or public policy advocacy or reform; independent media, such as television and radio broadcasts, newspaper articles and editorials; and public service announcements or public opinion polls and surveys (22 C.F.R. 226.91(h)(1)).

Presumptive Exception (ii). USAID marking requirements may not apply if they would diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent (22 C.F.R. 226.91(h)(2)).

Presumptive Exception (iii). USAID marking requirements may not apply if they would undercut host-country government “ownership” of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications better positioned as “by” or “from” a cooperating country ministry or government official (22 C.F.R. 226.91(h)(3)).

Presumptive Exception (iv). USAID marking requirements may not apply if they would impair the functionality of an item, such as sterilized equipment or spare parts (22 C.F.R. 226.91(h)(4)).

Presumptive Exception (v). USAID marking requirements may not apply if they would incur substantial costs or be impractical, such as items too small or otherwise unsuited for individual marking, such as food in bulk (22 C.F.R. 226.91(h)(5)).

Presumptive Exception (vi). USAID marking requirements may not apply if they would offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate on such items as condoms, toilets, bed pans, or similar commodities (22 C.F.R. 226.91(h)(6)).

Presumptive Exception (vii). USAID marking requirements may not apply if they would conflict with international law (22 C.F.R. 226.91(h)(7)).

(b) Submission. The Apparently Successful Applicant, upon the request of the Agreement Officer, will submit and negotiate a Marking Plan that addresses the details of the public communications, commodities, program materials that will visibly bear the USAID Identity. The marking plan will be customized for the particular program, project, or activity under the resultant grant or cooperative agreement. The plan will be included in and made a part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement. USAID and the Apparently Successful Applicant will negotiate the Marking Plan within the time specified by the Agreement Officer. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan will make the applicant ineligible for award of a grant or cooperative agreement. The applicant must include an estimate of all costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, labels, banners, press events, promotional materials, and so forth in the budget portion of its application. These costs are subject to revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer upon submission of the Marking Plan and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

(c) Submission Requirements. The Marking Plan will include the following:

(1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the recipient will be produced as a part of the grant or cooperative agreement and which will visibly bear the USAID Identity. These include:

- (i) program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other programs, projects, or activities that are physical in nature;
- (ii) technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audio-visual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities and other promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;
- (iii) events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences, and other public activities; and (iv) all commodities financed by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs, and all other equipment, supplies and other materials funded by USAID, and their export packaging.

(2) A table specifying:

- (i) the program deliverables that the recipient will mark with the USAID Identity,
- (ii) the type of marking and what materials the applicant will be used to mark the program deliverables with the USAID Identity, and
- (iii) when in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking.

(3) A table specifying:

- (i) what program deliverables will not be marked with the USAID Identity, and
- (ii) the rationale for not marking these program deliverables.

(d) Presumptive Exceptions.

(1) The Apparently Successful Applicant may request a Presumptive Exception as part of the overall Marking Plan submission. To request a Presumptive Exception, the Apparently Successful Applicant must identify which Presumptive Exception applies, and state why, in light of the Apparently Successful Applicant's technical proposal and in the context of the program description or program statement in the USAID Request For Application or Annual Program Statement, marking requirements should not be required.

(2) Specific guidelines for addressing each Presumptive Exception are:

- (i) For Presumptive Exception (i), identify the USAID Strategic Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why the program, project, activity, commodity, or communication is 'intrinsically neutral.' Identify, by category or deliverable item, examples of program materials funded under the award for which you are seeking exception 1.

(ii) For Presumptive Exception (ii), state what data, studies, or other deliverables will be produced under the USAID funded award, and explain why the data, studies, or deliverables must be seen as credible.

(iii) For Presumptive Exception (iii), identify the item or media product produced under the USAID funded award, and explain why each item or product, or category of item and product, is better positioned as an item or product produced by the cooperating country government.

(iv) For Presumptive Exception (iv), identify the item or commodity to be marked, or categories of items or commodities, and explain how marking would impair the item's or commodity's functionality.

(v) For Presumptive Exception (v), explain why marking would not be cost-beneficial or practical.

(vi) For Presumptive Exception (vi), identify the relevant cultural or social norm, and explain why marking would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.

(vii) For Presumptive Exception (vii), identify the applicable international law violated by marking.

(3) The Agreement Officer will review the request for adequacy and reasonableness. In consultation with the Cognizant Technical Officer and other agency personnel as necessary, the Agreement Officer will approve or disapprove the requested Presumptive Exception. Approved exceptions will be made part of the approved Marking Plan, and will apply for the term of the award, unless provided otherwise.

(e) Award Criteria: The Agreement Officer will review the Marking Plan for adequacy and reasonableness, ensuring that it contains sufficient detail and information concerning public communications, commodities, and program materials that will visibly bear the USAID Identity. The Agreement Officer will evaluate the plan to ensure that it is consistent with the stated objectives of the award; with the applicant's cost data submissions; with the applicant's actual project, activity, or program performance plan; and with the regulatory requirements of 22 C.F.R. 226.91. The Agreement Officer will approve or disapprove any requested Presumptive Exceptions (see paragraph (d)) on the basis of adequacy and reasonableness. The Agreement Officer may obtain advice and recommendations from technical experts while performing the evaluation.

MARKING UNDER USAID-FUNDED ASSISTANCE INSTRUMENTS (December 2005)

(a) Definitions

Commodities mean any material, article, supply, goods or equipment, excluding recipient offices, vehicles, and non-deliverable items for recipient's internal use, in administration of the USAID funded grant, cooperative agreement, or other agreement or sub agreement.

Principal Officer means the most senior officer in a USAID Operating Unit in the field, e.g., USAID Mission Director or USAID Representative. For global programs managed from Washington but executed across many countries, such as disaster relief and assistance to internally displaced persons, humanitarian emergencies or immediate post conflict and political crisis response, the cognizant Principal Officer may be an Office Director, for

example, the Directors of USAID/W/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and Office of Transition Initiatives. For non-presence countries, the cognizant Principal Officer is the Senior USAID officer in a regional USAID Operating Unit responsible for the non-presence country, or in the absence of such a responsible operating unit, the Principal U.S Diplomatic Officer in the non-presence country exercising delegated authority from USAID.

Programs mean an organized set of activities and allocation of resources directed toward a common purpose, objective, or goal undertaken or proposed by an organization to carry out the responsibilities assigned to it.

Projects include all the marginal costs of inputs (including the proposed investment) technically required to produce a discrete marketable output or a desired result (for example, services from a fully functional water/sewage treatment facility).

Public communications are documents and messages intended for distribution to audiences external to the recipient's organization. They include, but are not limited to, correspondence, publications, studies, reports, audio visual productions, and other informational products; applications, forms, press and promotional materials used in connection with USAID funded programs, projects or activities, including signage and plaques; Web sites/Internet activities; and events such as training courses, conferences, seminars, press conferences and so forth.

Sub recipient means any person or government (including cooperating country government) department, agency, establishment, or for profit or nonprofit organization that receives a USAID sub award, as defined in 22 C.F.R. 226.2.

Technical Assistance means the provision of funds, goods, services, or other foreign assistance, such as loan guarantees or food for work, to developing countries and other USAID recipients, and through such recipients to sub recipients, in direct support of a development objective – as opposed to the internal management of the foreign assistance program.

USAID Identity (Identity) means the official marking for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), comprised of the USAID logo or seal and new landmark, with the tagline that clearly communicates that our assistance is “from the American people.” The USAID Identity is available on the USAID website at www.usaid.gov/branding and USAID provides it without royalty, license, or other fee to recipients of USAID-funded grants, or cooperative agreements, or other assistance awards.

(b) Marking of Program Deliverables

- (1) All recipients must mark appropriately all overseas programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities partially or fully funded by a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub award with the USAID Identity, of a size and prominence equivalent to or greater than the recipient's, other donor's, or any other third party's identity or logo.
- (2) The Recipient will mark all program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects (for example, roads, bridges, buildings) or other programs, projects, or activities that are physical in nature (for example, agriculture, forestry, water management) with the USAID Identity. The Recipient should erect temporary signs or plaques early in the construction or implementation

phase. When construction or implementation is complete, the Recipient must install a permanent, durable sign, plaque or other marking.

(3) The Recipient will mark technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audio-visual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities and other promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID with the USAID Identity.

(4) The Recipient will appropriately mark events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities, with the USAID Identity. Unless directly prohibited and as appropriate to the surroundings, recipients should display additional materials, such as signs and banners, with the USAID Identity. In circumstances in which the USAID Identity cannot be displayed visually, the recipient is encouraged otherwise to acknowledge USAID and the American people's support.

(5) The Recipient will mark all commodities financed by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs, and all other equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, and their export packaging with the USAID Identity.

(6) The Agreement Officer may require the USAID Identity to be larger and more prominent if it is the majority donor, or to require that a cooperating country government's identity be larger and more prominent if circumstances warrant, and as appropriate depending on the audience, program goals, and materials produced.

(7) The Agreement Officer may require marking with the USAID Identity in the event that the recipient does not choose to mark with its own identity or logo.

(8) The Agreement Officer may require a pre-production review of USAID-funded public communications and program materials for compliance with the approved Marking Plan.

(9) Sub recipients. To ensure that the marking requirements "flow down" to sub recipients of sub awards, recipients of USAID funded grants and cooperative agreements or other assistance awards will include the USAID-approved marking provision in any USAID funded sub award, as follows:

"As a condition of receipt of this sub award, marking with the USAID Identity of a size and prominence equivalent to or greater than the recipient's, sub recipient's, other donor's or third party's is required. In the event the recipient chooses not to require marking with its own identity or logo by the sub recipient, USAID may, at its discretion, require marking by the sub recipient with the USAID Identity."

(10) Any 'public communications', as defined in 22 C.F.R. 226.2, funded by USAID, in which the content has not been approved by USAID, must contain the following disclaimer:

"This study/report/audio/visual/other information/media product (specify) 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

[insert recipient name] and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.”

(11) The recipient will provide the Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) or other USAID personnel designated in the grant or cooperative agreement with two copies of all program and communications materials produced under the award. In addition, the recipient will submit one electronic or one hard copy of all final documents to USAID’s Development Experience Clearinghouse.

(c) Implementation of marking requirements.

(1) When the grant or cooperative agreement contains an approved Marking Plan, the recipient will implement the requirements of this provision following the approved Marking Plan.

(2) When the grant or cooperative agreement does not contain an approved Marking Plan, the recipient will propose and submit a plan for implementing the requirements of this provision within [Agreement Officer fill-in] days after the effective date of this provision. The plan will include:

(i) A description of the program deliverables specified in paragraph (b) of this provision that the recipient will produce as a part of the grant or cooperative agreement and which will visibly bear the USAID Identity.

(ii) the type of marking and what materials the applicant uses to mark the program deliverables with the USAID Identity,

(iii) when in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking,

(3) The recipient may request program deliverables not be marked with the USAID Identity by identifying the program deliverables and providing a rationale for not marking these program deliverables. Program deliverables may be exempted from USAID marking requirements when:

(i) USAID marking requirements would compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials;

(ii) USAID marking requirements would diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent;

(iii) USAID marking requirements would undercut host-country government “ownership” of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications better positioned as “by” or “from” a cooperating country ministry or government official;

(iv) USAID marking requirements would impair the functionality of an item;

- (v) USAID marking requirements would incur substantial costs or be impractical;
 - (vi) USAID marking requirements would offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate;
 - (vii) USAID marking requirements would conflict with international law.
- (4) The proposed plan for implementing the requirements of this provision, including any proposed exemptions, will be negotiated within the time specified by the Agreement Officer after receipt of the proposed plan. Failure to negotiate an approved plan with the time specified by the Agreement Officer may be considered as noncompliance with the requirements is provision.
- (d) Waivers.
- (1) The recipient may request a waiver of the Marking Plan or of the marking requirements of this provision, in whole or in part, for each program, project, activity, public communication or commodity, or, in exceptional circumstances, for a region or country, when USAID required marking would pose compelling political, safety, or security concerns, or when marking would have an adverse impact in the cooperating country. The recipient will submit the request through the Cognizant Technical Officer. The Principal Officer is responsible for approvals or disapprovals of waiver requests.
 - (2) The request will describe the compelling political, safety, security concerns, or adverse impact that require a waiver, detail the circumstances and rationale for the waiver, detail the specific requirements to be waived, the specific portion of the Marking Plan to be waived, or specific marking to be waived, and include a description of how program materials will be marked (if at all) if the USAID Identity is removed. The request should also provide a rationale for any use of recipient's own identity/logo or that of a third party on materials that will be subject to the waiver.
 - (3) Approved waivers are not limited in duration but are subject to Principal Officer review at any time, due to changed circumstances.
 - (4) Approved waivers "flow down" to recipients of subawards unless specified otherwise. The waiver may also include the removal of USAID markings already affixed, if circumstances warrant.
 - (5) Determinations regarding waiver requests are subject to appeal to the Principal Officer's cognizant Assistant Administrator. The recipient may appeal by submitting a written request to reconsider the Principal Officer's waiver determination to the cognizant Assistant Administrator.
- (e) Non-retroactivity. The requirements of this provision do not apply to any materials, events, or commodities produced prior to January 2, 2006. The requirements of this provision do not apply to program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects (for example, roads, bridges, buildings) or other programs, projects, or activities that are physical in nature (for example, agriculture, forestry, water management) where the construction and implementation of these are complete prior to January 2, 2006 and the period of the grant does not extend past January 2, 2006.

USAID Disability Policy - Assistance (December 2004)

(a) The objectives of the USAID Disability Policy are:

(1) to enhance the attainment of United States foreign assistance program goals by promoting the participation and equalization of opportunities of individuals with disabilities in USAID policy, country and sector strategies, activity designs and implementation;

(2) to increase awareness of issues of people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries;

(3) to engage other U.S. government agencies, host country counterparts, governments, implementing organizations and other donors in fostering a climate of nondiscrimination against people with disabilities; and

(4) to support international advocacy for people with disabilities. The full text of the policy paper can be found at the following

website: <http://www.usaid.gov/about/disability/DISABPOL.FIN.html>.

(b) USAID therefore requires that the recipient not discriminate against people with disabilities in the implementation of USAID funded programs and that it make every effort to comply with the objectives of the USAID Disability Policy in performing the program under this grant or cooperative agreement. To that end and to the extent it can accomplish this goal within the scope of the program objectives, the recipient should demonstrate a comprehensive and consistent approach for including men, women and children with disabilities.”

APPLICABILITY OF 22 CFR PART 226 (May 2005)

(a) All provisions of 22 CFR Part 226 and all Standard Provisions attached to this agreement are applicable to the recipient and to subrecipients which meet the definition of "Recipient" in Part 226, unless a section specifically excludes a subrecipient from coverage. The recipient shall assure that subrecipients have copies of all the attached standard provisions.

(b) For any subawards made with Non-US subrecipients the Recipient shall include the applicable "Standard Provisions for Non-US Nongovernmental.

Grantees." Recipients are required to ensure compliance with subrecipient monitoring procedures in accordance with OMB Circular A-133.

PROHIBITIONS ON TRANSACTIONS WITH INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANIZATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH TERRORISM:

The Contractor/Recipient is reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the contractor/recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws. This provision must be included in all subcontracts/sub awards issued under this contract/agreement.

ATTACHMENTS AND ANNEXES

- Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient (May 2006)
- Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants

[END OF SECTION VI]

SECTION VII- APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Point of Contact

Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltodano
USAID/Nicaragua
Office of Acquisition and Assistance

Embajada Americana
Kilometro 5.5 Carretera Sur
Frente al Parque “Las Piedrecitas”
Managua, Nicaragua

Any questions concerning this RFA must be submitted in writing to Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltodano, A&A Specialist or Ms. Mappy Cortez, A&A Assistant via Internet at oaanicaragua@usaid.gov by 4:30 p.m. (Nicaragua time) no later than March 26, 2010. Oral explanations or instructions given before award will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this RFA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment of this RFA, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicants.

B. Required Forms

Applicants must submit the application using the SF-424 series, which includes the:

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance,
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Nonconstruction Programs, and
- SF-424B, Assurances – Nonconstruction Programs.

These forms are not included in this RFA but can be found at the following website:
http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp

C. PRE-AWARD CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF THE RECIPIENT

In addition to the certifications that are included in the SF 424, organizations must provide the following certifications, assurances and other statements. Complete copies of these Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements may be found as an attachment to this RFA.

- a. A signed copy of the mandatory reference, Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs;
- b. A signed copy of the certification and disclosure forms for “Restrictions on Lobbying” (see 22 CFR 227);
- c. A signed copy of the “Certification Regarding Terrorist Funding” required by the Internal Mandatory Reference AAPD 04-14; and

- d. All applicants must provide a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.
- e. US applicants must submit their Tax Identification Number (TIN) number.

D. APPLICATION PREPARATION GUIDELINES

USAID will accept applications from eligible applicants per Section III A of this RFA. Application may be submitted by institutions individually or in group. In the case of a group, the application must include only one prime applicant, which shall enter into sub-agreements or contracts with partnering institutions. In this case, the Prime Applicant(s) will be responsible for establishing and maintaining sub-agreements and/or contracting relationships with proposed partners. For the purposes of this RFA, the term “applicant” is used to refer to the prime and any proposed partners.

Application received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the application format. Section V addresses the technical evaluation procedures for the applications. Applications which are incomplete are not directly responsive to the terms, conditions; specifications and provisions of this RFA may be categorized as non-responsive and eliminated from further consideration.

The technical and cost portions of the application should be submitted as an attachment to an electronic mail. Electronic technical and cost proposals must be submitted on separate e-mails. The technical application must be in Microsoft Word format while the cost application must have text in Microsoft Word and with budgets/spreadsheets in Microsoft Excel format. Electronic delivery shall be made to the following e-mail address:

Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltodano (Technical and Cost Application)
Internet Address: oaanicaragua@usaid.gov

In addition to the electronic application, two (2) hard copy applications shall be submitted in two separate volumes: (a) technical and (b) cost or business application. The technical and cost or business application must be separately placed in sealed envelopes clearly marked on the outside with the following words "RFA No. 524-10-006 Technical or Cost/Business (as appropriate) Application." These individual envelopes must then be bundled to be received as one complete package. The package should be sent to the address stated below within three working days after the due date and time of receipt of electronic applications. Application should be sent to the following address:

Embajada Americana
Kilometro 5.5 Carretera Sur
Frente al Parque “Las Piedrecitas”
Managua, Nicaragua

Attention: Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltodano,
Office of Acquisition and Assistance, USAID

Telephone (505) 2252-7233

The application should be prepared according to the structural format set forth below. Applications must be submitted no later than the date and time indicated on the cover page of

this RFA. Applications shall be prepared in English. Applications in any other language shall be treated as non-responsive and eliminated from further consideration.

Applicants should retain for their records one copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany their application. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person signing the application. To facilitate the competitive review of the applications, USAID will consider only applications conforming to the format prescribed below.

Application that are submitted late, incomplete or are considered to be non-responsive to this RFA may be eliminated from further consideration.

E. TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORMAT

The Technical Application shall contain the following sections:

- (1) Cover Page;
- (2) An Application Executive Summary;
- (3) A Program Narrative;
- (4) Illustrative Implementation Plan
- (5) A Management and Staffing Plan;
- (6) A Results Monitoring and Evaluation Plan;
- (7) Institutional Capability and Past Performance information;
- (8) The Attachments (Resumes & Letters of Commitment) and
- (9) The information required on annexes A and B.

Page limitations are specified below for each section; applications must be on letter paper (8-1/2 by 11 inch), single spaced, 12 pitch type or larger, and have at least one inch margins on the top, bottom and both sides.

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purposes, should:

- (a) Mark the title page with the following legend:

"This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed - in whole or in part - for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this applicant as a result of - or in connection with - the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets _____; and

- (b) Mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following legend:

"Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application."

E.1 Cover Page: A single page with the names of the organization submitting the proposed application. The Cover Page should include information about a contact person for the prime applicant, including this individual's name (both typed and his/her signature), title or position

with the organization/institution, address, e-mail address and telephone and fax numbers. Also state whether the contact person is the person with authority to contract for the applicant, and if not, that person should also be listed.

E.2 Application Executive Summary: A two page brief description of proposed activities, goals, and anticipated results (both quantitative and qualitative). Briefly describe technical and managerial resources of your organization. Describe how the overall program will be managed. State the bottom line funding request from USAID and the bottom line funding secured from other sources (state sources and amounts) for the proposed program.

E.3 Program Narrative: In thirty (30) pages or less, please describe your proposed strategy and approach and the experience and personnel capabilities of the Applicant, excluding bio-data and other attachments. The narrative should provide a clear description of what the Applicant proposes to do and application's structure should reflect the evaluation criteria. The following sections should be included:

E.4 Implementation Plan/Work Plan: Provide an illustrative 1-year project implementation plan including main activities of the project. For more information on the Implementation/Plan/Work Plan refer to Section VI.

E.5 Results Monitoring and Evaluation Plan: A maximum three (3) page plan that will reliably quantify program progress and impact and demonstrate accountability for monitoring progress.

E.6 Organizational Experience: In five (5) pages or less, include a description of all contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements which the applicant has implemented involving similar or related programs over the past four years with USAID or with other organizations (both commercial, governmental, and NGO). Include the following:

(a) Name and address of organization for which the work was performed;

(b) Current telephone number of responsible representative of the organization for which the work was performed;

(c) Agreement (or grant/contract) name and number (if any), annual amount received for each of the last four years, and beginning and ending dates; and

(d) Brief description of the project/assistance activity and a summary of results achieved.

E.7 Annex:

Resumes and Letters of Commitment

Applicants are to include in this Annex the resumes and letters of commitment for each individual who will work at least 75% of his/her time on the program. The resumes must be no more than two pages each, and the letters of commitment must not exceed a single page each.

F. COST/BUSINESS APPLICATION FORMAT

The Cost or Business Application is to be submitted under separate cover from the technical application. Certain documents are required to be submitted by an applicant in order for a

Agreements Officer to make a determination of responsibility. However, it is USAID policy not to burden applicants with undue reporting requirements if that information is readily available through other sources.

The following sections describe the documentation that applicants for Assistance award must submit to USAID prior to award. While there is no page limit for this portion, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary details.

1. The Cost/Business application must be completely separate from the applicant's technical application. The application must be submitted using SF-424 and SF-424A "Application for Federal Assistance."
2. The cost application should be for a period of up to 24 months using the budget format shown in the SF-424A. If there are any training costs to be charged to this Agreement, they must be clearly identified.
3. The budget to be presented under Cost/Business Application should relate to results while also showing the inputs (see item 10, below) for each result as well as overall. A matrix format will probably be most suitable.
4. In the case of a joint application, the Cost/Business application must include a copy of the legal relationship between the prime applicant and its partners. The application document should include a full discussion of the relationship between the applicant and its partners, including identification of the applicant with which USAID will treat for purposes of Agreement administration, identity of the applicant which will have accounting responsibility, how Agreement effort will be allocated and the express Agreement of the principals thereto to be held jointly and severally liable for the acts or omissions of the other.
5. The required Certifications should be included with the cost proposal.
6. The proposed budget should provide cost estimates for the management of the program (including program monitoring). Applicants should minimize their administrative and support costs for managing the project to maximize the funds available for project activities. Accordingly, those applications with minimal administrative costs may be deemed to offer a "greater value" than those with higher costs for program administration. Additionally, those applications with a greater proportion of cost share may be deemed to offer a "greater value."

Include a chart containing the main activities of the program. List on the vertical axis the activities, and on the horizontal axis the following information: (a) name of implementers; and (b) time frame, noting estimated dates of completion; and (c) the respective cost. Note that this is a similar chart to the one requested under the Technical Application, but also including cost.

7. The cost/business portion of the application should describe headquarters and field procedures for financial reporting. Discuss the management information procedure you will employ to ensure accountability for the use of U.S. Government funds. Describe program budgeting, financial and related program reporting procedures.

8. To support the costs proposed, please provide detailed budget notes/narrative for all costs that explain how the costs were derived. The following section provides guidance on line items.
9. In addition to providing summary cost data in the SF-424A format noted above, applicants are required to summarize cost data using development-focused budgeting (DFB) in cost applications submitted in response to this solicitation. DFB is a customer-based, performance-driven, results-oriented budget system underpinned by outcome management and tied to the approved Operational Plan Program Elements authorized for this activity. Outcome management is a management approach that focuses on the development results achieved by providing a service.

DFB involves summarizing cost data to corresponding development results/outcomes. Cost data must be summarized in both the SF-424A and DFB categories. If an input serves multiple development results, the applicant must allocate the input across the corresponding results and provide a rationale in the budget narrative for the method used for each allocated input.

Cost applications must also include all supporting input-based budgeting for both summary formats and comply with other instructions for cost applications (e.g., breakout of costs at the country versus headquarters level) contained elsewhere in this solicitation.

Budget Notes: an accompanying budget narrative by line item which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the program and achieving results your organization is proposing per year. The budget narrative must adequately and sufficiently explain the calculation for all proposed costs. Please ensure that the information provided is sufficient to provide a basis for USAID to determine that the costs proposed are reasonable and realistic.

Salary and Wages - Direct salaries and wages should be proposed in accordance with the applicant's personnel policies. The Proposed Level of Effort should be reflected in the budget detail as number of person days for each labor category proposed, as applicable.

Fringe Benefits - If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate that has been approved by an agency of the Government, such rate should be used and evidence of its approval should be provided. If a fringe benefit rate has not been so approved, the application should propose a rate and explain how the rate was determined. If the latter is used, the narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

Travel and Transportation - The application should indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, and the estimated costs. Specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, duration of travel, and number of individuals traveling. Per diem should be based on the applicant's normal travel policies (applicants may choose to refer to the Federal Standardized Travel Regulations for cost estimates).

Other Direct Costs - This includes communications, report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than

insurance included in the applicant's fringe benefits), equipment (procurement plan for commodities), office rent abroad, etc. The narrative should provide a breakdown and support for all and each other direct costs.

Indirect Costs – The applicant should support the proposed indirect cost rate with a letter from a cognizant U.S. Government audit agency or with sufficient information for USAID to determine the reasonableness of the rates. (For example, a breakdown of labor bases and overhead pools, the method of determining the rate, etc.).

Local Institutions usually do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter with the US Government. Therefore no indirect costs should be included in the cost/business application submitted by local NGOs. Local institutions submitting applications should treat all indirect costs as direct costs.

Seminars and Conferences - The applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs.

Foreign Government Delegations to International Conferences: Funds in this agreement may not be used to finance the travel, per diem, hotel expenses, meals, conference fees or other conference costs for any member of a foreign government's delegation to an international conference sponsored by a public international organization, except as provided in ADS Mandatory Reference "Guidance on Funding Foreign Government Delegations to International Conferences or as approved by the CTO [<http://www.info.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/refindx3.htm>].

Source and Origin Requirements - Goods and services provided by the Recipients under this USAID-financed award shall have their source and origin in the United States (000).

10. Please include information on the organization's financial status and management, including:
 - (a) Audited financial statements for the past three years,
 - (b) Organization chart, by-laws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable,
 - (c) If the applicant has made a certification to USAID that its personnel, procurement and travel policies are compliant with applicable OMB circular and other applicable USAID and Federal regulations, a copy of the certification should be included with the application. If the certification has not been made to USAID/Washington, the applicant should submit a copy of its personnel (especially regarding salary and wage scales, merit increases, promotions, leave, differentials, etc.), travel and procurement policies, and indicate whether personnel and travel policies and procedures have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the Federal Government. If so, provide the name, address, and phone number of the cognizant reviewing official.
 - (d) If applicable, approval of the organization's accounting system by a U. S. Government agency including the name, addresses, and telephone number of the cognizant auditor.
11. The application should include information that substantiates that the applicant:

- (a) Have adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the Agreement.
- (b) Has the ability to comply with the Agreement conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, non-governmental and governmental.
- (c) Has a satisfactory record of performance. In the absence of evidence to the contrary or circumstances properly beyond the control of the applicant, applicants who are or have been deficient in current or recent performance (when the number of grants, contracts, and Cooperative agreements, and the extent of any deficiency of each, are considered) shall be presumed to be unable to meet this requirement. Past unsatisfactory performance will ordinarily be sufficient to justify a determination of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance. The Agreement Officer will collect and evaluate data on past performance of applicants using information from sources provided in accordance with Paragraph 10 above.
- (d) Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics.
- (e) Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a Cooperative Agreement under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO).

Applicant may submit any additional evidence of responsibility considered necessary in order for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. Please note that a positive responsibility determination is a requirement for award, and all organization shall be subject to a pre-award survey to verify the information provided and substantiate the determination.

- 12. Cost Sharing: Cost sharing, set at 10% of the total cost of the project, is an important element of the USAID' recipient relationship. In addition to USAID funds, the applicant is encouraged to contribute resources from own, private or local sources for the implementation of this program. Contributions can be either cash or in kind and can include contributions from the NGO, local counterpart organizations, project clients, the Government and other donors (not other USG funding sources). This may be from program generated funds such as client savings, interest and fees in line with USAID standard provisions on cost sharing.
- 13. Unnecessarily elaborate applications: unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective application in response to this RFA are not desired and may be construed as an indication of the applicant's lack of cost consciousness. Elaborate artwork, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

[END OF SECTION VII]

SECTION VIII – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this particular RFA. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which applicants should address in their applications and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

The technical applications will be evaluated in accordance with the Technical Evaluation Criteria set forth below. Cost applications will be evaluated for general reasonableness, allowability, and allocability. Award will be made to the responsible applicant(s) whose application offers the greatest value to the US Government.

An USAID/Nicaragua Technical Evaluation Committee will review submitted applications and a final decision to fund will be based on a technical and financial review of the applications received. Applications will be reviewed by USAID/Nicaragua, based on full and open competition and in accordance with evaluation criteria specified below. Other USG agencies and USAID consultants may also be invited to review applications and provide feedback.

The final award decision is made by the Agreement Officer, with consideration of the Technical Evaluation Committee recommendations.

The evaluation criteria are listed in descending order of importance. Tech Approach is the most important factor, followed by Cost, Management and Staffing Plan, Results Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Organizational Experience. The non-cost factors, when combined are significantly more important than cost.

I. EVALUATION CRITERION

The page limit for proposals is 30 pages for the technical approach document, excluding attachments.

1. Technical Approach

- Comprehensive knowledge of constraints and challenges of national technical cooperation, HIV/AIDS situation analysis and local policy context environment
- Adequacy and realism of approach in meeting expected results
- Knowledge and integration of USAID HIV/AIDS approach
- Viability, quality and adequacy of proposed networking model for NGOs and NGO training plan
- Quality and adequacy of preventive and stigma and discrimination activities
- Quality and adequacy of sub grants mechanism
- Plan for gender and knowledge management integration and reporting
- Plan for coordination with USAID, USG and other donors projects
- Use of technology in programmatic approach

2. Management and Staffing Plan

- Adequacy of the proposed staffing plan to facilitate leadership, management and sustainability by a local organization.
- Adequacy of targeted technical assistance to prime implementers by international advisors.

- Adequacy of key personnel
 - The following key personnel will be evaluated based on their relevant prior experience directly related to the proposed positions and work to be carried out, including technical qualifications, professional competence, relevant political party development and/or elections background, language ability, and demonstrated experience.
 - National Chief of Party
 - National Administrative Director
 - Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Specialist
- Clear and appropriate delineation of responsibilities for staff to managing for results

3. Results Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

- Adequacy of proposed indicators for measuring progress toward expected results
- Realism of proposed targets
- Plan for collecting, evaluating and validating data, including baseline survey
- Adequacy of plan for conducting periodic independent evaluations

4. Organizational Experience

- Successful experience building sustainability in local organizations
- Demonstrated relevant technical experience and quality of performance in programs of similar technical content and scope in Nicaragua.
- Capacity to work in partnership with USAID and local actors in a changing complex political and technical environment
- Effective working relationships with USAID Missions where implementing similar work
- Grant compliance where implementing similar work
- Achievement of documented results in similar activities

Information on past performance must be provided in accordance with the following table. USAID/El Salvador and/or USAID/Nicaragua may contact the individual(s) indicated as well as others.

Instrument Number

Instrument Number	Name of Organization	Contact (Name, phone, fax, email)	Funding Amount	Period of Performance	Place of Performance	Brief Description of Work

COST/BUSINESS EVALUATION:

Cost/Business Applications will be reviewed for cost realism. Cost has not been assigned a weight but will be evaluated for general reasonableness, allocability, allowability, cost-effectiveness and realism, adequacy of budget detail and financial feasibility and cost sharing. While cost may be a determining factor in the final award decision, especially between closely ranked applicants, the technical merit of applications is substantially more important under this RFA.

USAID estimates that multiple sub-grants should be awarded through the life of the project up to a maximum of US\$500,000 per year total.

EVALUATION SYSTEM

The following adjectival scoring system will be used by the technical evaluation committee to assess each of the technical criteria and the technical proposal as a whole:

“Outstanding”	O Very significantly exceeds most or all solicitation requirements. Response exceeds a “Better” rating. The Offeror has clearly demonstrated an understanding of all aspects of the requirements to the extent that timely and highest quality performance is anticipated.
“Better”	B Fully meets all solicitation requirements and significantly exceeds many of the solicitation requirements. Response exceeds an “Acceptable” rating. The areas in which the Offeror exceeds the requirements are anticipated to result in a high level of efficiency or productivity or quality.
“Acceptable”	A Meets all solicitation requirements. Complete, comprehensive, and exemplifies an understanding of the scope and depth of the task requirements as well as the Offeror’s understanding of the Government’s requirements.
“Marginal”	M Less than “Acceptable.” There are some deficiencies in the technical proposal. However, given the opportunity for discussions, the technical proposal has a reasonable chance of becoming at least “Acceptable.” (Areas of a technical proposal which remain to be “Marginal” after “Final Proposal Revision” offers shall not be subject to further discussion or revision.) If award is made on the initial offers, there will not be an opportunity for discussions nor a chance to become at least “Acceptable.”
“Unacceptable”	U Technical proposal has many deficiencies and/or gross omissions: Failure to understand much of the scope of work necessary to perform the required tasks; failure to provide a reasonable, logical approach to fulfilling much of the Government’s requirements; failure to meet many personnel requirements of the solicitation. (When applying this adjective to the technical proposal as a whole, the technical proposal must be so unacceptable in one or more areas that it would have to be significantly revised to attempt to make it other than acceptable.)

BRANDING STRATEGY AND MARKING PLAN

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub award, must be

marked appropriately overseas with the USAID Identity. See Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended; 22 CFR 226.91.

Under the regulation, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan, but only by the “apparent successful applicant,” as defined in the regulation. The apparent successful applicant’s proposed Marking Plan may include a request for approval of one or more exceptions to marking requirements established in 22 CFR 226.91. The Agreement Officer is responsible for evaluating and approving the Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan (including any request for exceptions) of the apparently successful applicant, consistent with the provisions “Branding Strategy,” “Marking Plan,” and “Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards” contained in AAPD 05-11 and in 22 CFR 226.91. Please note that in contrast to “exceptions” to marking requirements, waivers based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by Mission Directors or other USAID Principal Officers, see 22 CFR 226.91(j). The acceptability of the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan from the apparently successful applicant will be a determining factor of award eligibility. If the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan are not approved, USAID reserves the right to eliminate the apparently successful applicant from further consideration and proceed with award to the next eligible, highly ranked applicant for award.

See Section VI.

AWARD

Award will be made to the responsible applicant whose application offers the best value, cost and other factors considered. The final award decision is made, while considering the recommendations of the Technical Evaluation Committee, by the Agreement Officer.

The Agreement Officer’s decision about the funding of an award is final and not subject to review. Any information that may impact the Agreement Officer’s decision shall be directed to the Agreement Officer.

Authority to obligate the Government: the Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either an Agreement signed by the Agreement Officer or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

[END OF SECTION VIII]

ANNEX A

**CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF THE
RECIPIENT (MAY 2006)**

U.S. Agency for International Development

NOTE: [1] When these Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of Recipient are used for cooperative agreements, the term "Grant" means "Cooperative Agreement". [2] The recipient must obtain from each identified sub-grantee and (sub) contractor, and submit with its application/proposal, the Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion -- Lower Tier Transactions, set forth in Attachment A hereto. The recipient should reproduce additional copies as necessary.

Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements of the Recipient (May 2006)

<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303sad.pdf>

PART I

CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

1. ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING NON-DISCRIMINATION IN FEDERALLY ASSISTED PROGRAMS

(a) The recipient hereby assures that no person in the United States shall, on the bases set forth below, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving financial assistance from USAID, and that with respect to the grant for which application is being made, it will comply with the requirements of:

(1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352, 42 U.S.C. 2000-d) , which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(3) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (Pub. L. 95-478), which prohibits discrimination based on age in the delivery of services and benefits supported with Federal funds;

(4) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681, et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance (whether or not the programs or activities are offered or sponsored by an educational institution); and

(5) USAID regulations implementing the above nondiscrimination laws set forth in Chapter II of Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) If the recipient is an institution of higher education, the Assurances given herein extend to admission practices and to all other practices relating to the treatment of students or clients of the institution, or relating to the opportunity to participate in the provision of services or other benefits to such individuals, and shall be applicable to the entire institution unless the recipient establishes to the satisfaction of the USAID Administrator that the institution's practices in designated parts or programs of the institution will in no way affect its practices in the program of the institution for which financial assistance is sought, or the beneficiaries of, or participants in, such programs.

(c) This assurance is given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal grants, loans, contracts, property, discounts, or other Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the recipient by the Agency, including installment payments after such date on account of applications for Federal financial assistance which was approved before such date. The recipient recognizes and agrees that such Federal financial assistance will be extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in this Assurance,

and that the United States shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this Assurance. This Assurance is binding on the recipient, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and the person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign this Assurance on behalf of the recipient.

1. CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub-grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub-recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, United States Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

2. Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

"The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure."

3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206)

USAID reserves the right to terminate this Agreement, to demand a refund or take other appropriate measures if the Grantee is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140. The undersigned shall review USAID ADS 206 to determine if any certifications are required for Key Individuals or Covered Participants.

If there are COVERED PARTICIPANTS: USAID reserves the right to terminate assistance to or take other appropriate measures with respect to, any participant approved by USAID who is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140

4. CERTIFICATION REGARDING TERRORIST FINANCING IMPLEMENTING EXECUTIVE ORDER 13224

By signing and submitting this application, the prospective recipient provides the certification set out below:

1. The Recipient, to the best of its current knowledge, did not provide, within the previous ten years, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated, or participated in terrorist acts, as that term is defined in paragraph 3.
2. The following steps may enable the Recipient to comply with its obligations under paragraph 1:
 - a. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will verify that the individual or entity does not (i) appear on the master list of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons, which list is maintained by the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and is available online at OFAC's website: <http://www.treas.gov/offices/eotffc/ofac/sdn/t11sdn.pdf>, or (ii) is not included in any supplementary information concerning prohibited individuals or entities that may be provided by USAID to the Recipient.
 - b. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient also will verify that the individual or entity has not been designated by the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the "1267 Committee") [individuals and entities linked to the Taliban, Usama bin Laden, or the Al Qaida Organization]. To determine whether there has been a published designation of an individual or entity by the 1267 Committee, the Recipient should refer to the consolidated list available online at the Committee's website: <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/1267ListEng.htm>.
 - c. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will consider all information about that individual or entity of which it is aware and all public information that is reasonably available to it or of which it should be aware.
 - d. The Recipient also will implement reasonable monitoring and oversight procedures to safeguard against assistance being diverted to support terrorist activity.
3. For purposes of this Certification-
 - a. "Material support and resources" means currency or monetary instruments or financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, safehouses, false documentation or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel, transportation, and other physical assets, except medicine or religious materials."
 - b. "Terrorist act" means-
 - (i) an act prohibited pursuant to one of the 12 United Nations Conventions and Protocols related to terrorism (see UN terrorism conventions Internet site: <http://untreaty.un.org/English/Terrorism.asp>); or
 - (ii) an act of premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub national groups or clandestine agents; or
 - (iii) any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or

to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

- c. “Entity” means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group or subgroup.
- d. References in this Certification to the provision of material support and resources shall not be deemed to include the furnishing of USAID funds or USAID-financed commodities to the ultimate beneficiaries of USAID assistance, such as recipients of food, medical care, micro-enterprise loans, shelter, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that one or more of these beneficiaries commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.
- e. The Recipient’s obligations under paragraph 1 are not applicable to the procurement of goods and/or services by the Recipient that are acquired in the ordinary course of business through contract or purchase, e.g., utilities, rents, office supplies, gasoline, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that a vendor or supplier of such goods and services commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.

This Certification is an express term and condition of any agreement issued as a result of this application, and any violation of it shall be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by USAID prior to the end of its term.

5. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING (ASSISTANCE) (JUNE 2005)

(a) The U.S. Government is opposed to prostitution and related activities, which are inherently harmful and dehumanizing, and contribute to the phenomenon of trafficking in persons. None of the funds made available under this agreement may be used to promote or advocate the legalization or practice of prostitution or sex trafficking. Nothing in the preceding sentence shall be construed to preclude the provision to individuals of palliative care, treatment, or post-exposure pharmaceutical prophylaxis, and necessary pharmaceuticals and commodities, including test kits, condoms, and, when proven effective, microbicides.

(b) Except as noted in the second sentence of this paragraph, as a condition of entering into this agreement or any subagreement, a non-governmental organization or public international organization recipient/subrecipient must have a policy explicitly opposing prostitution and sex trafficking. The following organizations are exempt from this paragraph: the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; the World Health Organization; the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative; and any United Nations agency.

(c) The following definition applies for purposes of this provision:

Sex trafficking means the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act. 22 U.S.C. 7102(9).

(d) The recipient shall insert this provision, which is a standard provision, in all subagreements.

(e) This provision includes express terms and conditions of the agreement and any violation of it shall be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by USAID prior to the end of its term.

(End of Provision)

Certification

“_____ certifies compliance as applicable with the standard provisions entitled “Condoms” and “Prohibition on the Promotion or Advocacy of the Legalization or Practice of Prostitution or Sex Trafficking” included in the referenced agreement.”

6. CERTIFICATION OF RECIPIENT

By signing below the recipient provides certifications and assurances for (1) the Certification Regarding Lobbying, (2) the Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224 and (3) Prohibition on Promotion or Advocacy of the Legislation and Practice of Prostitution and Sex Trafficking – Assistance - above:

As applicable:

RFA/APS No.: _____

Application: _____

Date of Application: _____

Name of Recipient: _____

Typed Name and Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

SUPPORTING USAID’S DISABILITY POLICY IN CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS (AAPD 04-07, DECEMBER 2004)

(a) The objectives of the USAID Disability Policy are (1) to enhance the attainment of United States foreign assistance program goals by promoting the participation and equalization of opportunities of individuals with disabilities in USAID policy, country and sector strategies, activity designs and implementation; (2) to increase awareness of issues of people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries; (3) to engage other U.S. Government agencies, host country counterparts, governments, implementing organizations and other donors in fostering a climate of nondiscrimination against people with disabilities; and (4) to support international advocacy for people with disabilities. The full text of the policy paper can be found at the following website: <http://www.usaid.gov/about/disability/DISABPOL.FIN.html>

(b) USAID therefore requires that the recipient not discriminate against people with disabilities in the implementation of USAID-funded programs and that it make every effort to comply with the objectives of the USAID Disability Policy in performing the program under this grant or cooperative agreement. To that end and to the extent it can accomplish this goal with the scope of the program objectives, the recipient should demonstrate a comprehensive and consistent approach for including men, women and children with disabilities. Questions about USAID’s Disability Policy can be directed to Lynne Schaberg, PPC/P at 202-712-1891 or Lloyd Feinberg, DCHA/DG, 202-712-5725. USAID encourages Recipients to follow this policy to the maximum extent possible. By signing below, the Recipient acknowledges that it is aware of this policy and will apply it to the maximum extent practicable.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Per AAPD 02-04, dated March 20, 2002; it is mandatory to incorporate the following Standard Provision in all solicitations and awards:

Part IV – Certification of Compliance with the Standard Provisions Entitled “Condoms” and “Prohibition on the Promotion or Advocacy of the Legalization or Practice of Prostitution or Sex Trafficking.”

Applicability: This certification requirement only applies to the prime recipient. Before a U.S. or non-U.S. non-governmental organization receives FY04-FY08 HIV/AIDS funds under a grant or cooperative agreement, such recipient must provide to the Agreement Officer a certification substantially as follows:

“[Recipient's name] certifies compliance as applicable with the standard provisions entitled “Condoms” and “Prohibition on the Promotion or Advocacy of the Legalization or Practice of Prostitution or Sex Trafficking” included in the referenced agreement.”

RFA/APS No. _____

Application No. _____

Date of Application _____

Name of Applicant/Subgrantee _____

Typed Name and Title _____

Signature _____

PART V- SURVEY ON ENSURING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR APPLICANTS

Applicability: All RFA’s must include the attached Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants as an attachment to the RFA package. Applicants under unsolicited applications are also to be provided the survey. (While inclusion of the survey by Agreement Officers in RFA packages is required, the applicant’s completion of the survey is voluntary, and must not be a requirement of the RFA. The absence of a completed survey in an application may not be a basis upon which the application is determined incomplete or non-responsive. Applicants who volunteer to complete and submit the survey under a competitive or non-competitive action are instructed within the text of the survey to submit it as part of the application process.)

PLEASE REFER TO AAPD 04-08 - “Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Faith-Based and Community Organizations” At The Following Website:

http://www.usaid.gov/business/business_opportunities/cib/pdf/aapd04_08.pdf

PART VI

OTHER STATEMENTS OF RECIPIENT

1. AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS

The recipient represents that the following persons are authorized to negotiate on its behalf with the Government and to bind the recipient in connection with this application or grant:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>	<u>Facsimile Number</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

2. TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (TIN)

If the recipient is a U.S. organization, or a foreign organization which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., please indicate the applicant's/grantee's TIN:

TIN: _____

3. DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER

(a) In the space provided at the end of this provision, the recipient should supply the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number applicable to that name and address. Recipients should take care to report the number that identifies the recipient's name and address exactly as stated in the proposal.

(b) The DUNS is a 9-digit number assigned by Dun and Bradstreet Information Services. If the recipient does not have a DUNS number, the recipient should call Dun and Bradstreet directly at 1- 800-333-0505. A DUNS number will be provided immediately by telephone at no charge to the recipient. The recipient should be prepared to provide the following information:

- (1) Recipient's name.
- (2) Recipient's address.
- (3) Recipient's telephone number.
- (4) Line of business.
- (5) Chief executive officer/key manager.
- (6) Date the organization was started.
- (7) Number of people employed by the recipient.
- (8) Company affiliation.

(c) Recipients located outside the United States may obtain the location and phone number of the local Dun and Bradstreet Information Services office from the Internet Home Page at <http://www.dbisna.com/dbis/customer/custlist.htm>. If an offeror is unable to locate a local service center, it may send an e-mail to Dun and Bradstreet at globalinfo@dbisma.com.

The DUNS system is distinct from the Federal Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) system.

DUNS: _____

4. LETTER OF CREDIT (LOC) NUMBER

If the recipient has an existing Letter of Credit (LOC) with USAID, please indicate the LOC number.

LOC: _____

5. TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

The recipient, by checking the applicable box, represents that -

(a) If the recipient is a U.S. entity, it operates as ☐ a corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of _____, ☐ an individual ☐ a partnership, ☐ a non-governmental nonprofit organization, ☐ a state or local governmental organization, ☐ a private college or university, ☐ a public college or university, ☐ an international organization, or ☐ a joint venture; or

(b) If the recipient is a U.S. entity, it ☐ is, ☐ is not a Gray Amendment entity, as defined below.

(c) If the recipient is a Gray Amendment Entity, it is ☐ a business concerns (as defined in 48 CFR 19.001) owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (as defined in 48 CFR 726.101), ☐ an institution designated by the Secretary of Education, pursuant to 34 CFR 608.2, as a historically black college or university (HBCU), ☐ a college or university having a student body in which more than 40% of the students are Hispanic American, or ☐ a private voluntary organization which is controlled by individuals who are socially and economically disadvantaged (as defined in 48 CFR 726.101).

(d) If the recipient is a non-U.S. entity, it operates as ☐ a corporation organized under the laws of _____ (country), ☐ an individual, ☐ a partnership, ☐ a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, ☐ a nongovernmental educational institution, ☐ a governmental organization, ☐ an international organization, or ☐ a joint venture.

6. PROCUREMENT INFORMATION

(a) Applicability. This applies to the procurement of goods and services planned by the recipient (i.e., contracts, purchase orders, etc.) from a supplier of goods or services for the direct use or benefit of the recipient in conducting the program supported by the grant, and not to assistance provided by the recipient (i.e., a sub-grant or sub-agreement) to a sub-grantee or sub-recipient in support of the sub-grantee's or sub-recipient's program. Provision by the recipient of the requested information does not, in and of itself, constitute USAID approval.

(b) Amount of Procurement. Please indicate the total estimated dollar amount of goods and services which the recipient plans to purchase under the grant: \$_____

(c) Nonexpendable Property. If the recipient plans to purchase nonexpendable equipment, which would require the approval of the Agreement Officer, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types, quantities of each, and estimated unit costs. Non-expendable equipment for which the Agreement Officer's approval to purchase is required is any article of nonexpendable tangible personal property charged directly to the grant. having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

<u>Type/Description (Generic)</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Estimated Unit Cost</u>

(d) Source, Origin, and Component of Goods. If the recipient plans to purchase any goods/commodities which are not of U.S. source and/or U.S. origin, and/or does not contain at least 50% component entry which are not at least 50% U.S. source and origin, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, and probable source and/or origin, to include the probable source and/or origin of the components if less than 50% U.S. components will be contained in the commodity. "Source" means the country from which a commodity is shipped to the cooperating country or the cooperating country itself if the commodity is located therein at the time of purchase. However, where a commodity is shipped from a free port or bonded warehouse in the form in which received therein, "source" means the country from which the commodity was shipped to the free port or bonded warehouse. Any commodity whose source is a non-Free World country is ineligible for USAID financing. The "origin" of a commodity is the country or area in which a commodity is mined, grown, or produced. A commodity is produced when, through manufacturing, processing, or substantial and major assembling of components, a commercially recognized new commodity results, which is substantially different in basic characteristics or in purpose or utility from its components. Merely packaging various items together for a particular procurement or relabeling items does not constitute production of a commodity. Any commodity whose origin is a non-Free World country is ineligible for USAID financing. "Components" are the goods which go directly into the production of a produced commodity. Any component from a non-Free World country makes the commodity ineligible for USAID financing.

<u>Type/Description</u> <u>(Generic)</u> <u>Components</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>Quantity</u>	<u>Probable</u> <u>Unit Cost</u>	<u>Source of</u> <u>Goods</u>	<u>Probable Origin of</u> <u>Components</u>	<u>Goods</u>
--	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	----------------------------------	--	--------------

(e) Restricted Goods. If the recipient plans to purchase any restricted goods, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, intended use, and probable source and/or origin. Restricted goods are Agricultural Commodities, Motor Vehicles, Pharmaceuticals, Pesticides, Rubber Compounding Chemicals and Plasticizers, Used Equipment, U.S. Government-Owned Excess Property, and Fertilizer.

<u>Type/Description</u> <u>(Generic)</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>Quantity</u>	<u>Probable</u> <u>Unit Cost</u>	<u>Probable</u> <u>Intended Use</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Origin</u>
---	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--	---------------	---------------

(f) Supplier Nationality. If the recipient plans to purchase any goods or services from suppliers of goods and services whose nationality is not in the U.S., please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each good or service, estimated costs of each, probable nationality of each non-U.S. supplier of each good or service, and the rationale for purchasing from a non-U.S. supplier. Any supplier whose nationality is a non-Free World country is ineligible for USAID financing.

<u>Type/Description</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Probable Supplier Nationality</u>	<u>Rationale</u>
-------------------------	------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------

<u>(Generic)</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Unit Cost</u>	<u>(Non-U.S. Only)</u>	<u>for Non-U.S.</u>

(g) Proposed Disposition. If the recipient plans to purchase any nonexpendable equipment with a unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the proposed disposition of each such item. Generally, the recipient may either retain the property for other uses and make compensation to USAID (computed by applying the percentage of federal participation in the cost of the original program to the current fair market value of the property), or sell the property and reimburse USAID an amount computed by applying to the sales proceeds the percentage of federal participation in the cost of the original program (except that the recipient may deduct from the federal share \$500 or 10% of the proceeds, whichever is greater, for selling and handling expenses), or donate the property to a host country institution, or otherwise dispose of the property as instructed by USAID.

<u>Type/Description (Generic)</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Estimated Unit Cost</u>	<u>Proposed Disposition</u>

Estimated Costs of Communications Products

The following are the estimate(s) of the cost of each separate communications product (i.e., any printed material [other than non- color photocopy material], photographic services, or video production services) which is anticipated under the grant. Each estimate must include all the costs associated with preparation and execution of the product. Use a continuation page as necessary.

END OF CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF RECIPIENT

Name and Title: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Date: _____