USAID | DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

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Deadline for Question:	July 14, 2023, Midnight (EST)
Closing Date:	August 2, 2023
Closing Time:	8:00 am, Kinshasa, DRC Time (West Africa Standard Time Zone (GMT+1))
Subject:	**Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number: 72066023RFA00005**
Program Title:	Action to Reduce and Respond to Exploitation and Trafficking (ARRETE)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 98.001

Attention Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking an application for a cooperative agreement to implement "*Action to Reduce and Respond to Exploitation and Trafficking (ARRETE)"* program. This USAID funded activity aims to build the institutional capacity of key DRC institutions, expand access to multidisciplinary services for survivors of trafficking in persons, and transform the population's behavior towards this widespread human rights violation. This intervention will help establish the pillars necessary for more effective and long-term capacity to Countering Trafficking in Persons (C-TIP) across the DRC.

USAID intends to make one five-year counter-trafficking activity award to the Applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that they have the latest information pertaining to this NOFO and to ensure that the NOFO has been received in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from the transmission or conversion process.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.6.(g). The registration process may take many weeks to complete.

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Therefore, the applicant and all the proposed sub-recipients are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please send any questions concerning this NOFO submitted in writing via email to Michele Maximilien, at mmaximilien@usaid.gov; and kinshasaproposals@usaid.gov, with a copy to lgilpin@usaid.gov; and cjump@usaid.gov, no later than the date and time indicated above.

The issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the US Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. The application is submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Michele Maximilien Digitally signed by Michele Maximilien
Date: 2023.06.27 03:45:53 -04'00'

Michele Maximilien
Agreement Officer

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID's supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

I BACKGROUND

With 2.4 million square kilometers of territory and 7,000 kilometers of often porous borders with nine countries, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a source, transit, and destination country for various forms of human trafficking. In August 2022, the NORC at the University of Chicago assessment found several forms of trafficking in persons such as forced labor, child labor, forced begging, commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), forced marriage, and forced recruitment into illegal armed groups (both internally and across the borders). This human rights violation occurs to both nationals and foreigners. However, survivors in general have very limited reintegration options and lack access to services or funding for: legal support, mental health and psychosocial support, food, housing, healthcare, income generating activities, transport (or funds for transport to and from services), family reunification, financial education, judicial protection, protection from traffickers, socio-economic reintegration, and accompaniment. Most often, the victims are discriminated against and the community acceptance for reintegration is very low.

The study further points out a myriad of interrelated and overlapping risk factors and vulnerabilities that render individuals susceptible to human trafficking in DRC. These include socio-economic as well as demographic factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, migration status, and religion among other factors. This gross human rights violation threatens thousands of Congolese citizens' humanity and the country's democracy. As UNDP (2007) portrays it: "Human trafficking has a devastating impact on individual victims, who often suffer physical and emotional abuse, rape, threats against self and family, and even death. It is an economic problem, as the vast majority of (men and) women seeking to escape poverty are lured into trafficking by the false promise of economic gain. Trafficking is a health problem, as trafficked women and children are most at risk of HIV infection. It is a gender problem, as unequal power relations reinforce women's secondary status in society. Lastly, it is a legal problem, as its victims are stripped of their human rights.'' Thus, while undeniably large scale, the precise extent of human trafficking in the DRC remains unknown, given the extreme challenges in data collection.

The Government of DRC (GDRC) has made some genuine progress to address this major human rights challenge. In 2019, the GDRC created the Agency for the Prevention and the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons (APLTP), a national coordination body in the Office of the Presidency. This was a landmark event in terms of DRC's efforts to initiate an inter-ministerial mechanism to strategically tackle trafficking in persons. However, the Agency still lacked the logistical capacity, technical skills, adequate budget, and the ability to effectively coordinate, foster partnerships between key sectoral government institutions, local, and international organizations, and broaden the national landscape of Countering Trafficking in Persons (C-TIP) actions. (*NB*: In January 2021, the APLTP was dissolved, and oversight of C-TIP was incorporated into a new coordinating body under the presidency: *The Coordination for Youth, and the Fight against Sexual Violence and*

Trafficking in Persons.)

From 2021-2022, through USAID's support, the DRC achieved some major milestones, but faced significant challenges. For example, the GDRC is implementing its new victim identification and referral procedures in coordination with civil society in Kinshasa, but the implementation outside of the capital continues to be a challenge. The GDRC and civil society continue providing anti-trafficking training to law enforcement, judicial, and protection actors; however, there is still a critical need to establish permanent training programs. The GDRC provided some training, but the lack of resources and training along with corruption and complicity in trafficking crimes significantly impedes DRC's anti-trafficking efforts. In addition, the country's deteriorating security situation in the east exacerbates human trafficking vulnerabilities and limits the government's ability to respond. The GDRC also completed a mapping of service providers, created a national hotline, and conducted a DRC Trafficking in Persons (TIP) study in nine provinces which assessed prevalence and forms of TIP as well as assessed local capacity to address human trafficking. Of most significance, the GDRC promulgated the December 26, 2022, anti-trafficking law which amends and supplements the executive decree of January 30, 1940, colloquially titled "**Code pénal Congolais en matière de prévention et répression de la traite des personnes**" (Congolese penal code pertaining to prevention and repression of trafficking in persons). This law provides a unique opportunity to transform the TIP landscape in DRC. This legislation brings about a new dynamic that emphasizes judicial actors' duty to prosecute alleged perpetrators.

In line with this new law, the GDRC took the opportunity to initiate a key institutional reform by merging youth, gender-based violence, and counter-trafficking in persons under the same mandate. As per the presidential ordinance, the new structure is known as *The Coordination for Youth, and the Fight against Sexual Violence and Trafficking in Persons*, henceforth referred to as the Coordination. However, the GDRC is yet to adequately plan for the roll-out of the tools and normative frameworks for the Coordination. Due to a lack of resources, the Coordination lacks the capacity to effectively engage with DRC civil society organizations (CSOs) and coordinate its interventions at the national and provincial levels. For example, the Ministry of Social Affairs and its Child Protection division, the Ministry of Gender, the judicial personnel, and private services providers have yet to further develop their social service technical skills and judicial investigation skills, embed good C-TIP practices, or to effectively educate the population about the dangers of trafficking in persons. At this time, there are no effective systems in place to respond to TIP cases or to ensure that survivors have access to medical, psychosocial, legal, economic, and social resources needed to recover and live with a guarantee of non-repetition. Therefore, the new Coordination undoubtedly inherits a significant number of challenges and needs support to overcome them.

To address this need, USAID/DRC is currently supporting the Coordination to develop a clear formulated integrated national strategy for the three pillars (Youth, C-TIP, and SGBV) to include building the Coordination's capacity to update the National Counter-Trafficking (NCT) Strategy and Action Plan, engage with civil society, and properly disseminate, implement, and enforce existing and future anti-trafficking tools and instruments. This rapid response support will also aim to help ensure that the Coordination is able to deliver critical, immediate, and tangible results across the NCT Strategy and Action Plan, as well as roll out external and inter-governmental communications to build awareness and understanding of the Coordination's remit and new C-TIP legislation, especially among CSOs that work with communities across DRC. This rapid response support to the Coordination will last approximately seven months and will help lay the groundwork for *ARRETE*'s success.

It is important to remember that counter-trafficking programming is nascent in the DRC. In many cases, GDRC officials, service providers, religious leaders, community leaders, journalists, human and women's rights organizations, and ordinary citizens are unfamiliar with the concept and definition of trafficking in persons. This could suggest that millions of people may be complicit or unaware of these regular and gross human rights violations that occur in various settings of society. It is unclear if Congolese stakeholders have a clear understanding of the extent to which trafficking in persons intertwines with other crimes such as corruption, sexual and gender-based violence, and other human rights issues.

Overall, there is a lack of concerted effort to ensure that service providers and communities are educated and equipped with clear procedures to properly handle TIP. DRC has yet to put in place a collaborative system for effective prevention, protection of survivors, and prosecutions of perpetrators. As a result, a coordinated and systematic approach to monitor and analyze the problem is non-existent. Only a few survivors of trafficking understand that they are victims of a serious crime due to a low level of human rights-based education and mainstreaming efforts. Thus, the general population has yet to understand the different forms of trafficking in persons and can sometimes be complicit. Also, the systematic weaknesses within the criminal justice system coupled with corruption make it difficult to prosecute traffickers.

From the global side, DRC's efforts are being watched. As of 2022, DRC has been on the TIP Tier 2 watch list for three consecutive years and faces an automatic downgrade to Tier 3, if significant and measurable progress is not made for an upgrade to Tier 2. Falling to Tier 3 in 2023 would trigger immediate restrictions on USAID non-trade and non-humanitarian assistance beginning in FY 2024. USAID, through this proposed activity, aims to build upon past and current USG-funded interventions and further address the GDRC's weak institutional capacity to coordinate and implement counter-trafficking policies at the national and provincial levels.

II PURPOSE

The purpose of this counter-trafficking activity is to develop and implement a model that meets the needs of trafficking survivors and sets the tone towards creating an environment in DRC where trafficking in persons becomes a thing of the past. This program will help the GDRC develop strategies for crafting key steps to implementing the new C-TIP law.
The objectives for this activity are:

> <u>Objective 1</u>: Enhanced capacity of key institutions to effectively coordinate counter-trafficking in persons interventions at both the national and provincial levels.
>
> <u>Objective 2</u>: Expanded access to quality and multidisciplinary services for victims of trafficking in persons through referral and coordination networks.
>
> <u>Objective 3</u>: Improved knowledge and behavior towards trafficking in persons, policies, and

legislation.

Objective 4: Provide an Opportunity Fund to expand programming that addresses sexual and gender-based violence.

III INTRODUCTION

The proposed activity responds to the 2020 DRC Gender Analysis which recommended funding a project specifically on trafficking in persons to address issues related to the GBV and protection sector. This analysis also advocated for building the Government's capacity to decrease prevalence and protect people from trafficking. This is in line with the DRC Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS)'s goal: a more peaceful and prosperous DRC with improved opportunities for communities and individuals to thrive.

This activity particularly contributes to DO1: Responsiveness of public institutions to citizen's needs improved;

- IR.1.1 Effectiveness of public and private institutions to deliver health and other social services increased;
- IR.1.2 Citizens' empowerment to hold institutions accountable increased; and
- IR.2.2 Community structure's capacity strengthened.

More broadly, the proposed activity will advance the 2021 USAID Revised Counter Trafficking In Persons Policy which reflects the principles set forth in the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 and adheres to the standards of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. It is inspired by the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibiting slavery and involuntary servitude and reflects the standards of international anti-slavery law.

IV ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

This program will require effective leadership and coordination between civil society stakeholders and GDRC institutions. The other portion of the program will require familiarity with the concept of human rights. The core obligations (respect, protect, and fulfill) are key to claiming and making holistic support services available for at-risk groups and trafficking survivors. Therefore, this USG assistance will support the GDRC and non-state actors to transform the entire society to a place where every human being can enjoy safety, security, integrity, and agency.

Given the economic and socio-cultural sensitivities around trafficking in persons in DRC, the implementing partner will be expected to conduct regular and ongoing analysis of the dynamics. This will guide the do-no-harm principles in targeted geographic areas and mitigate any potential negative outcomes produced by the activity.

Theory of Change:

If the counter-trafficking Agency increases its institutional capacity and develops strategic partnerships with other sectoral institutions and civil society stakeholders;

And the citizens have an increased awareness and change behavior towards trafficking in persons;

And referral mechanisms including a legal aid system are well established and effective throughout the targeted provinces,

THEN the GDRC will be able to effectively prevent, deter, and respond to trafficking in persons.

Anticipated Results and Illustrative Activities:

The Applicant is encouraged to explore innovative ways to implement activities that effectively address the objectives and interventions.

Objective I: Enhanced capacity of key institutions to effectively coordinate counter-trafficking in persons interventions at both the national and provincial levels.

The relevant GDRC institutions such as the Ministry of Gender, Family and Child, Directorate of Social Interventions for the Protection of the Child (DISPE), the Division of Social Affairs (DIVAS), the Ministry of Human Rights, the Coordination among others, remain constrained by a limited number of skilled personnel, weak organizational management capacities, and financial resources. They have yet to develop strategies to address their priorities both at the national and provincial levels. The *ARRETE* program aims to provide capacity building assistance to key GRDC institutions by encouraging them to conduct needs assessments and establish enduring counter-trafficking systems. This program will assist the Coordination to promote constructive engagement, information sharing, and coordination with various stakeholders such as donors, key sector institutions, civil society institutions, community networks, provincial and local entities. This strategic partnership will allow the new Coordination to improve its coverage strategies, establish deterrents, and effectively coordinate counter-trafficking policies, programs, and efforts. The *ARRETE* program will also build on the existing information management system including the recently established database and hotline to create an interactive coordination platform for all partners.

Illustrative Interventions:

- Improve capacities of key government institutions to partner and strategically engage CSOs in prevention, protection, and prosecution of trafficking in persons and SGBV.
- Enhance capacity of key GDRC institutions to plan, prioritize, fundraise, allocate resources, and measure performance.
- Improve information management systems (i.e., the hotline and database) to collect and analyze data on at-risk and survivors of trafficking and SGBV.
- Build capacity of GDRC targeted institutions to draft internal procedures and policies to prevent and respond to trafficking in persons and SGBV.
- Establish community and provincial level coordination and referral mechanisms that include active GDRC participation.

Illustrative Indicators:

- Number of USG supported national human rights commissions and other independent state institutions charged by law with protecting and promoting human rights that actively pursued allegations of human rights abuses during the year.
- Number of internal procedures and policies to prevent and respond to trafficking in persons and SGBV adopted or strengthened in GDRC targeted institutions.
- Number of key GDRC institutions with capacity to plan, prioritize, fundraise, allocate resources, and measure performance.
- Extent to which information management systems are strengthened (i.e. hotline and database) to collect and analyze data on at-risk and survivors of trafficking and SGBV.
- Number of community and provincial level coordination and referral mechanisms that include active GDRC participation.
- Number of victim identification and referral procedures (such as Standard Operating Procedures [SOPs] and/or a national or local referral mechanism) developed or strengthened through foreign assistance funds.

Objective 2: Expanded access to quality and multidisciplinary services for victims of trafficking in persons through referral and coordination networks.

The lack of financial resources and strong protective service providers in DRC negatively impacts the availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality of services for survivors of trafficking in persons. Survivors of trafficking in persons are sometimes discriminated against and refused access to services based on their physical appearances and gender. In many instances, service providers do not respect the integrity and confidentiality of survivors or possess the social service technical skills to identify TIP cases and assist without causing further harm to a victim. Multidisciplinary rehabilitative services remain insufficient, non-affordable, disproportionate, and are often located beyond a reasonable distance throughout the 26 provinces. The *ARRETE* program will further operationalize and institutionalize the recently developed SOPs and mapping of service providers. A cross-sectoral synergy will likely be an effective means to achieve a reliable referral mechanism that meets the needs of survivors while complying with internationally agreed-upon standards. Also, the availability of high-quality services may be expanded through small grants to provide funding, training, and technical assistance to Congolese NGOs that provide specialized services such as psychosocial and health care, legal assistance, advocacy, awareness raising, shelter, and socio-economic reintegration. The goal of a small grants program is to bring rehabilitation services closer to communities and ordinary citizens.

Illustrative Interventions:

- Reinforce victim referral mechanisms through the effective implementation of the SOPs.
- Strengthen capacities of urgent care/front-line workers (services) to provide high quality and timely medical, legal, and counseling services to survivors of trafficking.
- Provide direct service providers with enhanced protection/social service technical skills such as victim identification and assistance, casework, trauma-informed psychosocial care, shelter, and counseling.

- Assist service providers in implementing standard protocols for identifying and referring at-risk or survivors of trafficking in persons.
- Provide the GDRC personnel with enhanced protection/social service technical skills such as victim identification and assistance, psychosocial care, social work, victim-centered and trauma-informed services, human rights monitoring, and reporting skills.

Illustrative Indicators:

- Number of service providers that receive training, technical assistance, or capacity building in victim-centered and trauma-informed services.
- Number of survivors receiving services (medical, shelter, repatriation, legal, transportation, etc.).
- Number of new victim support services that are available for reintegration of TIP survivors.
- Number of stakeholders trained to use the national victim identification and referral mechanism.
- Number of survivors of trafficking who have gained sustainable livelihoods through USG foreign assistance.
- Number and percentage of target community members who have knowledge of referral systems and points of contacts.
- Number of police, border patrols, prosecutors, judges, and social workers trained on the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases.
- Number of survivors of human trafficking who have gained sustainable livelihoods through State and USAID foreign assistance.

Objective 3: Improved knowledge and behavior towards trafficking in persons, policies, and legislation.

Awareness raising and education is critical to TIP prevention. It is an effective means to help key DRC ministries and directorates identify the TIP risk factors, dangers, and vulnerabilities within their remits. As the NORC at the University of Chicago assessment recommended: "Leveraging relationships with individual ministries, as well as across ministries can be an effective model. A whole-of-government approach could ensure that government officials at both national and provincial levels are trained on: anti-trafficking law, type of services available, how to contribute reporting to support M&E efforts, knowledge of referral pathways, and identification of risk factors within their remit." This recommendation inspires interventions under this program component which will build on local assets to offset the general deficit of awareness and poor training of public authorities, civil society organizations including media personnel and service providers. Communication and advocacy campaigns, training, workshops, street art, student contests, mock trials and other creative tools constitute critical steps to improving the awareness gap, creating momentum, and seeking broad political support. This objective is important for constructive partnerships, collaboration, data collection and analysis, and information sharing between counter-trafficking officials, human rights defenders, and NGOs. Overall, the identification, prevention, and protection work rests upon improved awareness and familiarity with the various forms of trafficking.

Illustrative Interventions:

- Increase DRC stakeholders' capacity to identify and refer TIP cases to proper referral pathways.
- Promote community awareness of the dangers of trafficking in persons.
- Train judicial personnel on anti-Trafficking legislation and other related thematics such as anti-corruption, sexual and gender-based violence, investigation, and prosecution of perpetrator techniques.
- Improve media and journalists' power to provoke social change through investigation and reporting on crimes including human trafficking and SGBV.
- Support the new Coordination in establishing reliable community prevention mechanisms.
- Improve the national human rights commissions and other independent state institutions' capacity to promote and protect human rights.
- Strengthen the network of human rights defenders' capacity to advocate against trafficking in persons.
- Assist GDRC institutions in designing social and behavior change materials for C-TIP and SGBV.

Key Indicators:

- Number of stakeholders trained on anti-Trafficking legislation and other related thematics such as sexual and gender-based violence, investigation, and prosecution techniques.
- Number of mechanisms developed or enhanced to report and respond to potential TIP cases, including hotlines, community watch groups, or law enforcement authorities.
- Number of anti-corruption and anti-trafficking officials with improved capacity to prosecute alleged perpetrators.
- Number of human rights defenders trained and supported.
- Number of domestic NGOs engaged in monitoring and advocacy work on human rights receiving USG support.
- Number of unique awareness materials designed or adapted through foreign assistance.
- Number of final anti-TIP policies, laws, or international agreements passed, enacted, or amended.
- Number of people trained in prevention techniques.
- Number of first responders trained on victim identification.
- Percentage of trained community members who can demonstrate an understanding of trafficking and identify indicators that someone is/has been a victim of human trafficking.

Objective 4: Opportunity fund to expand programming that addresses sexual and gender-based violence.

Sexual and Gender-based violence (SGBV) in DRC is an important driver of human trafficking and a tool to further control women, children, and even men into sex work and forced labor across all forms of trafficking. Commercial sex exploitation, early and forced marriage, forced pregnancy, forced prostitution, and intimate partner violence are among the main forms of SGBV. This is further exacerbated with the enduring conflict in eastern Congo. Therefore, countering trafficking in persons and sexual and gender-based violence are of utmost importance for USAID.

With USAID's support, The Coordination for Youth, and the Fight against Gender-based Violence and Trafficking in Persons is developing an integrated strategic plan and recommendations on how to address these three interlocking issues through a synergistic and comprehensive approach. The *ARRETE* program will address the counter-trafficking component, with the parameters around C-SGBV to be defined during a six-month inception period under this award. As a result, the implementation of the *ARRETE* award will have two pillars, 1) Counter-trafficking in persons and 2) Counter-SGBV. At the time of activating the Opportunity Fund, the implementing partner will receive a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) with a full SGBV program description component for their response. During the six-month inception period, the IP will focus on SGBV activities at the national level as it aligns to C-TIP implementation. It is anticipated that the SGBV opportunity will include programming in one to three provinces based on initial findings during the inception period and alignment with USAID's PSO priorities for SGBV.

V COORDINATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY WITH BEST PRACTICES, POLICIES, AND ACTIVITIES

A. Policies

The following USAID policies, best practices and concepts are relevant to this activity. The Applicant should be familiar with these policies and concepts:

- USAID 2023 Gender Equality And Women's Empowerment Policy
- USAID Implementation Plan on Women Peace and Security - Fact Sheet
- USAID Counter Trafficking in Persons Policy
- U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence
- USAID Youth in Development Policy: Realizing the Demographic Opportunity
- USAID Disability Policy Paper
- USAID LGBT Vision for Action: Promoting and Supporting the Inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Individuals

B. Concepts

- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)** as a guiding principle along with cross cutting elements such as gender, youth, localization, etc. as part of the Program Description.

  USAID promotes a nondiscriminatory, inclusive, and integrated development approach that ensures that all people, including those who face discrimination and thus may have limited access to a country's benefits, legal protections, or social participation are fully included and can actively participate in and benefit from development processes and activities. For the *ARRETE* activity, USAID seeks to support DEIA in technical programming, management, and staffing of the activity.

  To facilitate inclusiveness, USAID seeks applicants who utilize participatory methods, particularly with beneficiaries, to design, implement, and monitor activities and uses this approach to promote local capacity building, ownership, and sustainability.

VI DONOR AND INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

Since the inception of the Counter-Trafficking Agency in 2019, and subsequently the new Coordination, there have been limited donor contributions. Three years later, in December 2022, the GDRC promulgated the new counter-trafficking law. As a result, DRC has a window of opportunity to engage other donors in C-TIP programming. USAID recommends the creation of a Financial and Technical Partner Working Group that could be composed of, but not limited to USAID, the European Union, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), UNICEF, IOM, Sweden's Government Agency for Development, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, the Coordination, and domestic human rights organizations. The purpose of this working group is to avoid duplication, leverage past and current efforts, and maximize opportunities for successes.

While this Working Group is being contemplated, USAID has already envisioned a close collaboration with a few activities:

- The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) works with DRC law enforcement authorities. Working closely in tandem with INL will help leverage both their financial and technical resources, and bolster efforts in terms of anti-corruption and anti-trafficking in persons, investigation, and prosecution training. INL is also exploring the parameters of a new activity and willing to work with USAID to identify key C-TIP elements.

- The DRG Office and the implementer will stay abreast with the Health Office, the Peace and Security Office (PSO), the Bureau for Humanitarian Affairs (BHA), the Economic Growth Office, and the Education Office to identify areas of synergies and leverage resources that can help address the root causes of vulnerability to TIP.

  For example, the bulk of Health programming occurs at the community and provincial levels through community-based health workers which may serve as an entry point to train community health workers to recognize signs of trafficking in persons, raise community-level awareness of TIP, support behavior change communication approaches for the prevention of TIP, and foster peer-to-peer exchanges and mentoring around C-TIP.

  The USAID/Peace and Security Office's work with the peace committees in Haut-Uele may serve as a good vehicle for community-based prevention and referral mechanisms for the fight against trafficking in persons. Wherever it is feasible, the *ARRETE* activity will also build on the PSO Counter Gender-Based Violence Project implemented by Interchurch Medical Assistance, which is a comprehensive activity that supports communities to prevent and respond to Trafficking in Persons in Walikale, Karisimbi, Nyangezi, Katana and Bunyakiri Health Zones in North and South Kivu in the eastern part of DRC. PSO is also designing a new cross-border initiative which may offer opportunities for collaboration.

- The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has funded a vocational education program with the National Institute for Vocational Training. Marginalized people including victims of trafficking in persons will be targeted as beneficiaries.

- GiveDirectly is implementing a cash mobile program in partnership with the GDRC Social Funds (*Fond Social*, in French). This organization is eager to facilitate a memorandum of understanding between the new Coordination and the Fond Social.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

The Applicant will be required to develop a comprehensive Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP), which includes an adaptive management approach to track tangible and measurable progress toward the expected results under this program description. The AMELP should contain metrics for the sustainability of successful interventions. An illustrative abridged AMELP is to be included in the technical application with the final version submitted to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) within 30 days of the Award. The AMELP will help track and report on progress against jointly agreed-upon quarter, annual, and end-of-program performance targets and benchmarks. Additionally, the awardee will demonstrate how the interventions built the organizational and institutional capacity of service providers, NGOs, key GDRC institutions, and other key stakeholders. All performance indicators and targets should be disaggregated by sex wherever relevant.

The AMELP should include a final list of indicators which will be confirmed in collaboration with USAID after award and should include context indicators and also look beyond indicators to incorporate other monitoring approaches. The indicator summary should identify all performance indicators that come from the Project MEL plan, the Mission's Performance Management Plan (PMP) or the annual performance plan and report (PPR). Also, Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) must be completed for all indicators reported to USAID.

The Applicant is expected to propose alternative or additional activities, outcomes, and indicators based on their expertise and strengths. Overarching indicators and targets will be determined and agreed upon as part of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning plan after the awarding of the Activity. The Applicant will provide indicators and approaches for measuring progress across *ARRETE* target communities/provinces in addition to custom indicators and targets to accommodate the DRC country context. The applicant should present a tier of outputs, outcomes, and high-level indicators to capture progress and to help USAID to better tell its stories. Overall, the Applicant is expected to provide a draft Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning plan that is flexible enough to foster collaboration and adaptive management as needed.

USAID/DRC may require *ARRETE* to track and report on additional performance indicators depending on the Agency guidance and/or the requirements of specific funding sources and the Mission's own Performance Management Plan. Notwithstanding the quarterly and yearly reporting, the awardee must immediately notify USAID of any developments that have a significant impact on the award-supported activities. Notification must be given in the case of problems, delays, or adverse conditions, which materially impair the ability to meet the objectives. These notifications must include a statement of the actions taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation as such a program may require USAID or the

US Embassy's facilitation at the highest level.

USAID/DRC is very committed to enabling and sharing lessons learned that advances the practice of Counter-trafficking in Persons to USAID staff, local partners, and the development community. Finally, USAID will complement the learning process wherever feasible by conducting an independent mid-term or end-of-project evaluation, if needed, to document progress and lessons learned, and identify potential areas for mid-course corrections or follow-on activities.

Geographic Targeting

The *ARRETE* activity will provide support to national and provincial level counter-trafficking structures. At the national level, the program will focus on strengthening national counter-trafficking systems by providing organizational and technical capacity building and supporting strategic partnership-building for the effective implementation of key public policy documents or guidelines. *ARRETE* will train key actors, disseminate the new TIP law, and other critical policies. However, given the size of the country and the budget limitations, *ARRETE* will select a few provinces, in collaboration with USAID and the Coordination, where the bulk of services-related activities will be piloted. The geographic targeting will follow the path of place-specific trafficking trends identified through the NORC assessment (Haut-Katanga, Haut-Uele, Kasai, Kinshasa, Kongo Central, Lualaba, Mongala, North Kivu, and South Kivu) and other USG-funded interventions to leverage past, current, and upcoming efforts to address the structural causes of human exploitation. Ideally, *ARRETE* should strategically cover the eastern, southern, western, and central provinces of DRC.

Project Management and Staffing Plan

The Applicant's program management approach will be critical to coordinating USAID's substantial involvement and providing joint direction in the implementation of the ARRETE activity. Furthermore, collaboration with other donors, GDRC key institutions, and civil society actors will require a team of professionals dedicated to advancing human rights and the objectives laid out in this Program Description. Therefore, thoughtful consideration should guide potential applicants in the staffing process. USAID recommends applicants to focus on solid technical expertise and the ability to manage in the context of complex crises and conflicts. USAID also encourages the participation of local civil society institutions and service providers to the maximum extent possible.

Key Personnel

The Applicant should include a staffing pattern that is clearly in line with the anticipated results under this Program Description. The team structure and an organizational chart must be included in the application with the names, positions and resumes of proposed key personnel. The Applicant should fully set forth its proposed methodology for allocating staffing and other operating costs between the various components. Curricula vitae for all proposed senior professional staff should be provided, including language skills and developing country experience. Key staff proposed by the Applicant should have extensive experience and expertise in designing, implementing, and evaluating activities similar to those described in the Program Description. The use of local rather than international personnel for both short-term and permanent positions should be maximized as much as possible to assure appropriate institutionalization and sustainability. USAID has designated 3 key personnel positions for *ARRETE*:

a) Chief of Party

The Chief of Party (CoP) will oversee all aspects of the program implementation. The individual will be the principal liaison with both the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and other U.S. Government officials as required as well as with key representatives of the GDRC. S/he will coordinate and provide technical and administrative leadership to the program.

Ideally, the COP would have accumulated at least 10 years of progressively responsible experience in project management, preferably with USAID-funded activities. S/he would also possess a solid understanding and experience in human rights and Counter-Trafficking in Persons issues, especially those related to assistance to key sector institutions, including national counter-trafficking agencies, ministries of justice, gender, and social affairs, judicial councils, and other important actors usually involved in the fight against trafficking in persons.

The minimum qualifications for the Chief of Party are:

- A Master's Degree in social sciences, such as human rights, international development, social work, public policy, or other areas directly related to understanding and providing services to vulnerable populations, or equivalent experience. At least ten years of progressively responsible experience in international development.
- Project management, with at least ten years of experience working in human rights, child protection, sexual and gender-based violence, legal reform and policy advocacy, survivor-driven service delivery, private sector partnerships, and/or monitoring & evaluation (of trafficking in persons programs).
- Demonstrated ability to establish productive relationships with senior government officials, the private sector community, civil society, and international donors.
- Sound understanding of development, political, and human rights issues in DRC; knowledge of DRC counterparts and organizations active in human rights issues is highly desirable.
- Excellent networking and alliance building skills.
- Professional fluency in spoken and written French and English; fluency in local languages is desirable, but not required.

b) Senior Counter-Trafficking Advisor

This individual will provide overall direction and guidance to all aspects of the program's work focused on human rights and counter-trafficking in particular. S/he will lead the development of sustainable strategies to implement activities across the four Ps – Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, and Partnership to combat trafficking.

The minimum qualifications for the Senior Counter-Trafficking Advisor are:

- A Master's Degree or equivalent, in social sciences, such as international development, social work, public policy, human rights or other areas directly related to providing services to vulnerable populations, or equivalent experience.
- At least ten (10) years of experience in the field of child protection, human rights and/or the protection of vulnerable groups, at least some of which was in a development context.
- Experience in DRC or in similar contexts is highly desirable.
- Sound understanding of DRC development needs and political environment.
- Fluency in written and spoken French; professional fluency in English is highly desirable.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, and the ability to develop excellent relations with DRC counterparts and donor representatives.
- Previous experience working with international development implementing partners is strongly encouraged.

c) Senior Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist

The Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist will be primarily responsible for providing leadership on activities related to SGBV, gender integration, social inclusion, and marginalized groups included but not limited to youth and people with disabilities (PWD). The Specialist will lead ongoing gender analysis and advise on ways to bridge gender gaps that lead to trafficking across the gender spectrum in DRC. S/he will work with the team to identify the different risks for men, women, and other groups vulnerable to GBV and trafficking in DRC. S/he will work with the COP and the Senior Counter-trafficking Advisor to identify the range of reintegration opportunities and support services needed by survivors of trafficking and describe how gender considerations will be integrated into program implementation and monitoring and evaluation. In addition, the Gender and Social Inclusion specialist will be responsible for linking efforts to promote youth and counter SGBV and TIP. As part of the implementation team, s/he supports ongoing gender and discrimination analysis and develops tools to effectively integrate gender equality and social inclusion principles into the *ARRETE* objectives and strategies, work plans, M&E plan, and more. The Specialist is expected to engage with organizations focusing on children, youth, indigenous people, people with disabilities and LGBT issues, and help define ways to develop their capacity to reduce TIP and GBV vulnerabilities among these marginalized groups.

The minimum qualifications for the Senior Counter-Trafficking Advisor are:

- A Master's Degree or equivalent, in social sciences such as international development, gender studies, social work, public policy, human rights or other areas directly related to providing services to vulnerable populations, or equivalent experience.
- At least ten (10) years of experience in the field of gender, disability, youth and/or the protection of other vulnerable groups.
- Experience in DRC or in similar contexts is highly desirable.
- Sound understanding of DRC development needs and gender gaps.
- Fluency in written and spoken French; professional working English level is desirable.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, and the ability to develop excellent relations with DRC counterparts and donor representatives.
- Previous experience working with international development implementing partners is strongly encouraged.

[END OF SECTION A]

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide up to $18 million (USD) in total USAID funding for a 5-year period. It is anticipated that up to $15 million (USD) will support the countering trafficking in persons portion of the program, and up to $3 million (USD) may be made available for SGBV programming as part of the Opportunity Fund.

2. Expected Performance Indicators, Targets, Baseline Data, and Data Collection

The following program areas and elements are relevant to the *ARRETE* Activity:

PROGRAM AREA PS.5:	**Trafficking in Persons**
Program Element PS.5.1:	Protection
Program Element PS.5.2:	Prosecution
Program Element PS.5.3:	Prevention

PROGRAM AREA PS.6:	**Conflict Mitigation and Stabilization**
Program Element PS.6.1:	Conflict Early Warning, Mitigation and Peace Building
Program Element PS.6.2:	Peace and Reconciliation Processes

The applicants must align with these program areas and include the below performance indicators. The Applicant may propose other relevant indicators which should be included in the submitted AMELP. The AMELP is a living document and can be finalized in discussion with USAID after award.

<u>Indicators</u>

Program Element PS.5.1: Protection

1. P.S.5.1-24 - Number of service providers that receive training, technical assistance, or capacity building in victim-centered and trauma-informed services
2. P.S.5.1-25 - Number of victims receiving services (medical, repatriation, legal, transportation, etc.)
3. P.S.5.1-26 - Number of victim identification and referral procedures (such as Standard Operating Procedures and/or a National or local Referral Mechanism) updated or finalized through foreign assistance funds to ensure all relevant service providers and identification stakeholders are included.
4. C-TIP.1 - Number of first responders trained on victim identification.
5. C-TIP.2 - Number of TIP victims referred for protection services.

Program Element PS.5.2: Prosecution

1. P.S.5.2-22 - Number of police, border patrols, prosecutors, and judges trained on the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases
2. C-TIP.1 - Number of TIP cases filed and prosecuted

Program Element PS.5.3: Prevention

1. P.S.5.3-15 - Number of people trained in prevention
2. P.S.5.3-16 - Number of unique awareness materials designed or adapted through foreign assistance
3. C-TIP.1 - Number of people reached through public campaign

Program Element PS.6.2: Peace and Reconciliation Processes

1. PS.6.2-1 - Number of new groups or initiatives created through USG funding, dedicated to resolving the conflict or the drivers of the conflict
2. PS.6.2-2 - Number of USG-funded events, trainings, or activities designed to build support for peace or reconciliation on a mass scale
3. PS.6.2-3 - Number of USG supported events, trainings, or activities designed to build support for peace or reconciliation among key actors to the conflict
4. PS.6.2-4 - Number of people participating in USG-supported events, trainings, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation

3. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The anticipated period of performance is five (5) years. The estimated start date is **TBD**. (The specific dates will be provided at award.)

4. Substantial Involvement

Consistent with ADS 303.3.11, USAID/DRC will be substantially involved in the implementation of the *Action to Reduce and Respond to Exploitation and Trafficking (ARRETE)*. The intended purpose of the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) involvement during the implementation of the activity is to assist the recipient(s) in achieving the supported objectives. Substantial involvement will cover the following areas:

a. Approval of Specified Key Personnel as concurred by the AOR and approved by the Agreement Officer (AO): USAID will approve Key Personnel and future changes.

1) Chief of Party
2) Senior Counter-Trafficking Advisor
3) Senior Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist

b. Approval of the Recipient's Implementation Plans by the Agreement Officer's

Representative (AOR): USAID will approve: (1) annual work plans, (2) any significant adaptations to the work plan or AMELP plan, for example changes based on coordination efforts or the evolving security situation, and (3) reports.

c. Agency and Recipient Collaboration:

1) Concurrence on the substantive provisions of sub- awards. 2 CFR 200.308 requires the Recipient to obtain the Agreement Officer's prior approval for the subaward, transfer, or contracting out of any work under an award. This is generally limited to approving work by a third party under the agreement. USAID also reserves further approval rights for sub-awards or contracts, specifically, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the subawards.

2) Approval of the Recipient's Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (AMELP) by the AOR and

3) Monitoring by the AOR to authorize specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects. USAID monitoring will be required throughout the period of performance to continually facilitate its funding with that of other donors and activities.

d. Agency Authority to Immediately Halt a Construction Activity: The Agreement Officer reserves the right to halt construction activities under the award, if applicable.

5. Subaward posting

The recipient will be required to post their competitive subaward and contract opportunities on workwithusaid.org under the "sub-opportunities" tab reasonably in advance to allow local and new entities to work under USAID funded activities."

6. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this program is **937**, defined as the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source.
Procurement of vehicles and pharmaceuticals and other restricted commodities are subject to the limitations in 22 CFR 228, ADS 312, and ADS 310 and may require a waiver or AO's approval. For accurate identification of prohibited sources, please refer to 22 CFR 228 and Automated Directive System (ADS) 310 entitled "Source and Nationality Requirements for Procurement of Commodities and Services Financed by USAID.

7. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Recipient

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the USAID's ***Action to Reduce and Respond to Exploitation and Trafficking (ARRETE),*** which is authorized by Federal statute. The Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

[END OF SECTION B]

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SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicant

Eligibility for this Notice of Funding Opportunity is open all qualified applicants.

The Application and the Eligibility Certification form (**Annex 4**) should be submitted to: mmaximilien@usaid.gov with a copy to lgilpin@usaid.gov and cjump@usaid.gov. Letters of support from potential partner organizations and/or sub-recipients are also authorized to be attached as supporting documentation.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

USAID has established a recipient cost share **minimum of 10%** in partnership with this award. Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities or private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level. This may include contribution of staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient and is subject to audit. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306, including, but not limited to allowable costs under the applicable USG cost principles.

[END OF SECTION C]

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SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Agency Point of Contact

a) Michele Maximilien
Agreement Officer
USAID/DRC/OAA
E-mail Address: mmaximilien@usaid.gov

b) Lauralea Gilpin
Senior A&A Specialist
USAID/DRC/OAA
E-mail Address: lgilpin@usaid.gov

And

c) Chadwick Jump
A&A Specialist
USAID/DRC/OAA
E-mail: cjump@usaid.gov copying KinshasaProposals@usaid.gov

2. Questions and Answers

Questions should be submitted no later than the date indicated in the cover page of this NOFO, to provide sufficient time to address the questions so the applicant can incorporate the responses into the application. Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted electronically to Michele Maximilien, Agreement Officer, at mmaximilien@usaid.gov, Lauralea Gilpin, Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist at lgilpin@usaid.gov and Chadwick Jump, Acquisition and Assistance Specialist at cjump@usaid.gov. When submitting questions and requests for clarification please make reference to the specific NOFO in the subject line of the email as follows: "*Questions* ***72066023RFA00005****, ARRETE*". Under no circumstances will verbal queries be accepted, and no verbal responses will be provided. Responses to questions received as a result of this NOFO will also be provided in writing by the Agreement Officer.

3. General Content and Form of Application

The applicant is expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this NOFO, and must furnish the information required by this NOFO.

Preparation of Applications (Technical and Cost):

The applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. The application must be submitted in two separate parts: (a) the Technical Application and (b) the Business (Cost) Application. This subsection addresses general content requirements applying to the full application. Please see subsections 5 and 6, below, for information on the content specific to the Technical and Business (Cost) applications. The Technical application must address technical aspects. The Business (Cost) Application must present the costs, and address risk and other related issues.

a) Both the Technical and Business (Cost) Application must include a cover page containing the following information:
    - Name of the Prime Organization submitting the application.
    - Identification and signature of the primary contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address) and the identification of the alternate contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address);
    - UEI and EIN Number for the Prime and Partner Organizations;
    - Program name;
    - Notice of Funding Opportunity number; and
    - Name of any proposed sub-recipients or partnerships (identify if any of the organizations are local organizations, per USAID's definition of 'local entity' under ADS 303.

b) Any changes to the application must be initialed by the person signing the application. An application signed by an agent on behalf of the applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

c) The following requirements apply to all documents submitted in response to this NOFO:
    - USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that the application complies with the page limitations.
    - Written in English.
    - Use standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12-point Calibri font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant's name.
    - 10-point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables, however, must comply with the 12-point Calibri requirement.
    - Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats, except budget files which must be submitted in Microsoft Excel.
    - Budget amounts must be detailed in U.S. Dollars (USD.)
    - The technical application must be a searchable and editable Word or PDF format as appropriate.
    - The Cost Schedule must include an Excel spreadsheet with all cells unlocked and no hidden formulas or sheets. A PDF version of the Excel spreadsheet may be submitted in addition to the Excel version at the applicant's discretion, however, the official cost application submission is the unlocked Excel version.

The applicant should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for the record.

4. Application Submission Procedures

The application in response to this NOFO must be submitted no later than the closing date and time indicated on the cover letter. The applicant must retain proof of timely delivery in the form of system generated documentation of delivery receipt date and time/confirmation.

The application must be submitted via email to the AO, Michele Maximilien, at mmaximillien@usaid.gov, kinshasaproposals@usaid.gov, with a copy to lgilpin@usaid.gov and cjump@usaid.gov no later than the due date and time provided in the cover letter. Email submissions must include the NOFO number and applicant's name in the subject line heading. In addition, the application must state in the subject line whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of the emails and their attachments (e.g., No. 1 of 4, etc.). For example, if your cost application is being send in two emails, the first email should have a subject line that states:

72066023RFA00005, [organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2.

USAID's preference is that the technical application and the cost application each be submitted as consolidated email attachments. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear.

After submitting an application electronically, the applicant should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If the applicant discovers an error in transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

The applicant is reminded that email is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, the applicant is requested to send the application ahead of the deadline. For this NOFO, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, the applicant is discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/DRC/OAA cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. File size must not exceed 25MB.

5. Technical Application Format

5.1.1. Content of Technical Application

The technical application should be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The application must demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this activity. The application should take into account the requirements of the program and merit review criteria found in this NOFO.

5.1.2. Organization of Technical Application

(a) Cover Page (**1 page** - not included in the page limitations).

(b) Table of Contents (**1 page** – not included in the page limit). Include major sections and page numbering to easily cross-reference and identify merit review criteria.

(c) Acronym List (**1 page** – not included in the page limit).

(d) Executive Summary (**1 page** – not included in the page limit). The Executive Summary must provide a high-level overview of key elements of the Technical Application.

(e) Technical Approach (<u>maximum 20 pages)</u>

The extent to which the proposed technical approach convincingly demonstrates the Applicant's ability to effectively and feasibly achieve the planned outcomes and ensure the geographical coverage stated under this NOFO. The technical approach must demonstrate the Applicant's understanding of the local economic and socio-political context as it pertains to C-TIP and C-SGBV, and the risks and opportunities related to achieving the objectives outlined in this activity description. The technical approach should include the following information:

(1) A description of the Applicant's mission, history, current activities, organizational structure, and resources that support its capacity to achieve the objectives of the program. Similar information should be provided for proposed partner organizations.

(2) A strategy that fosters collaboration with other donor-funded development programs, USG implementing partners, and other interventions. The Applicant will clearly state the extent to which the application provides details on how the Applicant will utilize partnerships to leverage existing efforts in the DRC, and the feasibility of building upon such endeavors to advance the goal and objectives of the *ARRETE* Activity.

(3) A sustainable systems-strengthening approach that reflects a commitment to local systems strengthening and greater sustainability both at the central and provincial levels. In practical terms, adequate funding should be allocated to local sub-grantees (local organizations and services providers) to ensure that the outcomes, results, and impacts, as well as any activities that need to continue beyond the duration of the *ARRETE* will be sustainable without continued USAID funding or involvement after the award ends.

(4) A flexible and iterative approach that responds to the Opportunity Fund through programming that addresses sexual and gender-based violence. The Applicant is expected to develop an inception period methodology and activities designed based on an extensive review of lessons learned from previous GBV programming in DRC, relevant public policy documents, consultations with the Ministry of Gender and Social Affairs, and/or stakeholder workshops. The Applicant should describe the processes leading to

the core inception deliverables including a work plan addendum for the GBV component. The likely parameters for these inception period deliverables will likely include the provision of support at the national level on GBV policy alignment as well as the design of a pilot GBV program in Ituri province.

(f) Staffing and Management plan (maximum 8 pages)

The extent to which the Applicant proposes an institutional organization and staffing plan that demonstrates the skills and tools needed to achieve the expected results and program outcomes outlined in the NOFO. This plan shall include a roster of skilled, experienced, and diverse staff including key personnel who possess relevant technical skills including but not limited to human rights, countering trafficking in persons, and SGBV. A strategy to hire and integrate Congolese nationals in the project team and implementation should also be presented.

The Applicant should describe its implementation and management plan by including the following:

(1) Overall management approach. This must be flexible, adaptable, and responsive to fast-changing social and political contexts over the period of performance. Flexibility and adaptability relate to the ability to make decisions and activity adjustments in the short, medium, and long-term, as well as course corrections when opportunities, issues, insecurity, or conflict arise. Responsiveness ensures that the activity continually assesses whether the timing, selected approach, participants, location, and any components therein are still appropriate, effective, and achieving the expected goal and results over the period of performance. The Applicant should include a rapid start-up plan for the first three months of the project and a draft Work Plan for the first six months of the project. This section should also include information about the Applicant's ability to quickly start-up activities in complex environments, and details about maintaining a strong and sustained field presence, including how the Applicant will ensure the Kinshasa based staff have access to communities where activities are being implemented.

(2) Clarity of management and organizational plan. This includes the roles and responsibilities of each personnel, sub-recipient and/or partner, if any, including the lines of authority and communication to show efficiency and the best use of the technical expertise and strengths of each one throughout the implementation.

(3) Staffing. The Applicant has the responsibility for determining the appropriate staffing pattern in support of its technical approach. The requirements such as qualifications, experience, and expertise set forth under this section should serve as guiding principles when putting together the team and the applicant should articulate how the proposed staffing pattern, including short and long-term positions, will lead to a successful implementation. The Applicant shall present, through an organizational chart, the proposed program management structure. The staffing plan should be consistent with the Applicant's technical approach, and sufficient for management of the technical components proposed in the Application.

(g) Past Performance:

The Applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed 5 years (see Annex 3).

The applicant must also provide information regarding recent history of performance for its sub partners whose cost will exceed $500,000.

USAID reserves the right to obtain relevant information concerning an Applicant's history of performance from any sources and may consider such information in its review of the Applicant's risk. The Agency may request additional information and conduct a pre-award survey in it determines that it is necessary to inform the risk assessment.

(h) Business (Cost) Application Format

The Business (Cost) Application must be submitted separately from the Technical Application. While no page limit exists for the full cost application, the applicant is encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.

Prior to award, the applicant may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant's risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.205. The applicant should **not** submit any additional information with the initial application.

1) Format and Presentation

The Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement). The Applicant must structure their cost applications in the following order:

(a) Cover Page;
(b) Standard Forms (SF) - 424, 424A and 424B;
(c) Required Certifications and Assurances;
(d) Summary Budget, Detailed Budget, and Budget Narrative;
(e) Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407 as applicable;
(f) Approval of Subawards, Request as applicable;
(g) Dun and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements;
(i) Security Plan;
(j) Branding Strategy and Marking Plan;
(k) Funding Restrictions; and
(m) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term.

(a) Cover Page

(b) SF 424 Form(s)

The applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the SF-424 series. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov or using the following links:

Instructions for SF-424	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html

Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424A	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html
Budget Information (SF-424A)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424B	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html
Assurances (SF-424B)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html

Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application.

(c) Required Certifications and Assurances

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with the application:

(1) "Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient" ADS 303mav document found at https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/references-chapter/303mav
(2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
(3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

(d) Summary Budget, Detailed Budget, and Budget Narrative

1. The budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and must be broken out by project year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time for review and may result in a rejection of the

cost application.

2. The budget narrative must contain sufficient detail to allow USAID to understand the proposed costs. The applicant must ensure the budgeted costs address any additional requirements identified in Section F, such as Branding and Marking. The budget narrative must be thorough, including sources for costs to support USAID's determination that the proposed costs are fair and reasonable.

3. The budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:

   - Summary budget, inclusive of all program costs (federal and non-federal), broken out by major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the entire period of the program. (See Annex 1 for Summary Budget Template)
   - Detailed budget, including a breakdown by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
   - Detailed budgets for each sub-recipient, with a subaward valued over $500,000, for all federal funding, and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the project with a budget narrative.
   - For subawards valued $499,999.99 and less, the Applicant must submit a summary as follows:

     1) Description and justification for the technical work to be implemented by the sub-awardees outlining activities at a high level, the geographic focus, and describing how the proposed grant fits within the Applicant's technical approach.
     2) Identification of and justification for the type of sub-awards to be used.
     3) Principal reasons for selecting the proposed sub-grantee.
     4) Identification of the proposed sub-grantee and determination of responsibility.

        a. Results of Excluded Parties List System (sam.gov), UN Sanctions Committee for Al Qaeda, OFAC, and Specially Designated Nationals

        b. Discuss the elements of responsibility mentioned below:
           i. The recipient must determine that the sub-grantee possesses the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed award, taking into consideration the sub-recipient's integrity, record of past performance, financial and technical resources, and accessibility to other necessary resources.

     5) Proposed sub-award summary budget and period of performance.
     6) Principal cost elements of the proposed sub-award (e.g., the main cost elements that influenced the final proposed budget).

7) A list of standard provisions to be included in the award.

- The detailed budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

  1) **Salaries**– Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. The Applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. The applicant must explain all assumptions in the budget narrative. The budget narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. The Applicant must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the Applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the budget narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.

  2) **Fringe Benefits** – If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the budget narrative must include a detailed breakdown of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

  3) **Travel, Transportation, & Per Diem** – Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant's normal travel policies. When appropriate, please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the budget narrative.

  4) **Equipment & Supplies** – Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The budget narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The budget narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.

  5) **Subawards** – Specify the budget for the portion of the program to be passed through to any subawards. See 2 CFR 200 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a sub awardee or contractor. The subaward budgets must align with the same requirements as the Applicant's budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.

6) **Opportunity Fund** – $3,000,000 reserved specify for the SGBV opportunity.

7) **Other Direct Costs** – This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The Applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.

8) **Indirect Costs** – The Applicant must indicate if proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200. The application must submit a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) for itself and for its sub partners.

9) **Cost Sharing** – either financial and/or in-kind from non-U.S. federal sources, is required and must equal at least **10%** of the total amount requested from USAID. Cost share is subject to audit and must be tracked. Cost Share must be clearly delineated in the Budget by cost category. The Applicant should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting:

(e) Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407

Inclusion of an item of cost in the detailed application budget does not satisfy any requirements for prior approval by the Agency. If the Applicant would like the award to reflect approval of any cost elements for which prior written approval is specifically required for allowability, the Applicant must specify and justify that cost. See 2 CFR 200.407 for information regarding which cost elements require prior written approval.

(f) Approval of Subawards

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization;
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number;
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list;
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM);
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list;
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred;
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.331(b); and
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for

mitigation.

(g) UEI and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (UEI number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid UEI number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients;
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient (https://sam.gov/content/home).
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, the applicant is encouraged to begin the process early. If the applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

SAM registration: https://sam.gov/content/home

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on https://sam.gov/content/home, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

(h) Security Plan

The applicant must submit a Security Plan as part of their application. The Security Plan must be based on a credible threat analysis and risk assessment and provide a coherent, integrated security plan, which demonstrates that the applicant has undertaken a thoughtful review of their security needs and includes analysis of the various elements of a security system showing how threats will be mitigated.

The Security Plan must include a point of contact to answer questions or provide clarifications regarding security throughout the life of the program. The applicant is encouraged to acquire professional advice from an expert to assist in establishing an overall security plan/system. The security plan accompanied by the budget and budget narrative will be reviewed together with the technical and cost applications and must demonstrate that the security needs to successfully implement the program description as presented in the applicant's technical approach have been addressed/considered.

(i) Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

The Applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer and incorporated into any resulting award

1. Branding Strategy

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Branding Strategy," describing how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens.

b. The request for a Branding Strategy, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

The Branding Strategy must include, at a minimum, include all the following:

(1) All estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth.

(2) The intended name of the program, project, or activity.

(i) USAID requires the applicant to use the "*USAID Identity*," comprised of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "*from the American people*" as found on the USAID Web site at http://www.usaid.gov/branding, unless Section VI of the RFA or APS states that the USAID Administrator has approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

(ii) USAID prefers local language translations of the phrase "*made possible by (or with) the generous support of the American People*" next to the USAID Identity when acknowledging contributions.

(iii) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.

(iv) If branding in the above manner is inappropriate or not possible, the applicant must explain how USAID's involvement will be showcased during publicity for the program or project.

(v) USAID prefers to fund projects that do not have a separate logo or identity that competes with the USAID Identity. If there is a plan to develop a separate logo to consistently identify this program, the applicant must attach a copy of the proposed logos. Section VI of the NOFO or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

(3) The intended primary and secondary audiences for this project or program, including direct beneficiaries and any special target segments.

(4) Planned communication or program materials used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries.

(i) Describe the main program message.

(ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcements, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.

(iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this program or project to host country citizens, such as media releases, press conferences, public events, and so forth. Applicant must incorporate the USAID Identity and the message, "*USAID is from the American People.*"

(iv) Provide any additional ideas to increase awareness that the American people support this project or program.

(5) Information on any direct involvement from the host-country government or ministry, including any planned acknowledgement of the host-country government.

(6) Any other groups whose logo or identity the applicant will use on program materials and related materials. Indicate if they are a donor or why they will be visibly acknowledged, and if they will receive the same prominence as USAID.

➢ The Agreement Officer will review the Branding Strategy to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

- If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Branding Strategy will be 4 included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement.

2. Marking Plan– Assistance (June 2012)

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a “Marking Plan,” detailing the public communications, commodities, and program materials, and other items that will visibly bear the “USAID Identity,” which comprises of the USAID logo and brand mark, with the tagline “from the American people.” The USAID Identity is the official marking for the Agency and is found on the USAID Web site at http://www.usaid.gov/branding. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

b. The request for a Marking Plan, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

e. The Marking Plan must include all the following:

(1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the applicant plans to produce, and which will bear the USAID Identity as part of the award, including:

(i) Program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other sites physical in nature;

(ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audiovisual productions, public service announcements, Web

sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;

(iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs; and

(iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.

(v) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.

(2) A table on the program deliverables with the following details:

(i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the USAID Identity;

(ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;

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

(iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity, and (v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.

(3) Any requests for an exemption from USAID marking requirements, and an explanation of why the exemption would apply. The applicant may request an exemption if USAID marking requirements would:

(i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for which an exemption is sought.

(ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent.

The applicant must explain why each particular deliverable must be seen as credible.

(iii) Undercut host-country government "ownership" of constitutions, 6 laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each item or product is better positioned as a host-country government item or product.

(iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or commodity would impair its functionality.

(v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost beneficial or practical.

(vi) Offend local cultural or social norms or be considered inappropriate. The applicant must identify the relevant norm and explain why marking would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.

(vii) Conflict with international law. The applicant must identify the applicable international law violated by the marking.

f. The Agreement Officer will consider the Marking Plan's adequacy and reasonableness and will approve or disapprove any exemption requests. The Marking Plan will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Marking Plan, including any approved exemptions, will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement, and will apply for the term of the award unless provided otherwise.

(j) Funding Restrictions

1. Profit is not allowable for recipient or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.330 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

2. Construction will not be authorized under this award.

3. USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer.

4. Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services

that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.5 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

(k) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term (August 2018)

Personal Conflict of Interest

1. An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.

2. The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424.Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

Organizational Conflict of Interest

The Applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.

[END OF SECTION D]

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Merit Review Criteria

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. The Applicant should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters discussed above which the Applicant should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which the application will be evaluated.

Technical and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Technical Application Format. The Technical Application will be scored by a Selection Committee (SC) using the criteria described in this section.

Review and Selection Process

USAID will conduct a merit review of the application received in compliance with the instructions in this NOFO.

The Application will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria shown in descending order of importance:

a) Technical Approach
b) Staffing and Management Plan
c) Past Performance

Evaluation Criteria #1: Technical Approach: The extent to which the proposed technical approach convincingly demonstrates the Applicant's ability to effectively and feasibly achieve the planned outcomes and ensure the geographical coverage stated under this NOFO. The technical approach must demonstrate the Applicant's understanding of the local economic and socio-political context as it pertains to C-TIP and C-SGBV, and the risks and opportunities related to achieving the objectives outlined in this activity description. The description should include the mission, history, current activities, organizational structure, and resources to achieve the program objectives. This should include a strategy that fosters collaboration with other donor-funded development programs, USG implementing partners, and other interventions with a sustainable systems-strengthening approach that reflects a commitment to local systems strengthening and greater sustainability both at the central and provincial levels. The approach should describe the processes leading to the sexual and gender-based violence core inception deliverables including a work plan addendum for the GBV component.

Evaluation Criteria #2: Staffing and Management Plan: The extent to which the Applicant proposes an institutional organization and appropriate staffing plan that demonstrates the skills and tools needed to achieve the expected results and successful program outcomes outlined in the NOFO. This plan must include a roster of skilled, experienced, and diverse staff including key personnel (with long-term and short-term positions) who possess relevant technical skills including but not limited to human rights, countering trafficking in persons, and SGBV. A strategy to hire and integrate Congolese nationals in the project team and implementation should also be presented as well as a rapid start up plan and draft six-month work plan.

Evaluation Criteria #3: Past Performance: The Selection Committee (SC) will consider how well the Applicant performed previously on similar projects. The Selection Committee will focus on the quality of performance and successful performance relative to the Program Description, size, complexity, and duration of the work described in the NOFO. The SC will consider the following past performance factors: (1) Ability to implement and manage results-oriented activities. (2) History and key results of counter-trafficking activities implemented in similar contexts. (3) History and key results of SGBV policy and programming activities implemented in similar contexts.

Rating

The Selection Committee will assign each criterion an adjective rating for the first two evaluation criteria using the following scale:

Adjective	**Merit Review Criteria Description**
High Confidence	The Government has ***high confidence*** that the Applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performance the award with **little or no** Government intervention.
Some Confidence	The Government has ***some confidence*** that the Applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performance the award with **some** Government intervention.
Low Confidence	The Government has ***low confidence*** that the Applicant understands the requirement, proposes a sound approach, and will be successful in performance the award **even with** Government intervention.

For the Past Performance, the Selection Committee will use the Confidence Rating system below:

Confidence Rating	**Description**
Substantial Confidence	Based on the Applicant's recent/relevant performance record, the Government has a **high expectation that the Applicant will successfully perform** the required effort. It is unlikely that the Government interventions will be needed in order to obtain the required service.
Satisfactory Confidence	Based on the Applicant's recent/relevant performance record, the Government has a **reasonable expectation that the Applicant will successfully perform** the required effort. It is unlikely that the Government interventions will be needed in order to obtain the required service.
Unknown Confidence (Neutral)	**No recent/relevant performance record is available, or** the Applicant's performance record is so **sparse** that no meaningful confidence assessment rating can be reasonably assigned.
Limited Confidence	Based on the Applicant's recent/relevant performance record, the Government has a **low expectation that the Applicant will successfully perform** the required effort. Some Government interventions will be needed in order to obtain the required service.

No Confidence	Based on the Applicant’s recent/relevant performance record, substantial doubt exists that the **Applicant will be able to successfully perform** the required service.

Business (Cost) Review

The USAID will utilize a Highest Technically Rated with Fair and Reasonable Price and Realistic Cost (HTR) process for award. The review process is described below:

1) Applications are reviewed by a Selection Committee (SC). The merit review will assign confidence ratings, as described above. Any adverse past performance that an Applicant has not had an opportunity to address will be dealt with at this stage.
2) The Selection Committee as part of the documentation, will determine a ranking of applications from highest to lowest technically rated based on the review.
3) USAID will review the supporting narrative provided by the Applicant and conduct an analysis of cost/price to first determine the highest rated Applicants’ price as fair and reasonable. As a result of the merit criteria review to determine whether the costs are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

Other considerations are the completeness of the application, adequacy of budget detail and consistency with elements of the technical application. Proposed costs may be adjusted, for purposes of evaluation, based on results of the cost analysis and its assessment of reasonableness, completeness, and credibility.

The Agency will also consider (1) the extent of the applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested; (2) whether the applicant's plans will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency; and (3) whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

Proposed cost share, will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

The AO will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.206). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.208).

Besides the Technical Evaluation Criteria, the application will be assessed for cost effectiveness and realism and must therefore address the following:

a. Cost Effectiveness and Realism: The proposed costs must be realistic, reasonable, complete, and allowable. The costs must be realistic for the effort and consistent with the technical components of the application

b. Adequacy of Budget Detail and Financial Feasibility: The proposed budget must be sufficient to support the proposed activities, and all proposed costs must be adequately supported by notes highlighting the key assumptions used in their determination. USAID reserves the right to the resulting level of funding for the Cooperative Agreement.

[END OF SECTION E]

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SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, the applicant is hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award.

The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before the receipt of either a fully executed agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations.

- For US organizations: ADS 303, 2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, and Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental organizations.

See Annex 2, for a list of the Standard Provisions that will be applicable to the award resulting from this NOFO.

The award will be administered by USAID/DRC Democracy and Governance Office. The AO will designate an Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) to review, concur and/or approve certain items; please see the Substantial Involvement information of this NOFO and subsequent Award document.

3. Reporting Requirements

a. General Requirements

The Recipient will comply with the Standard Provisions entitled "Marking and Public Communications Under USAID-Funded Assistance (December 2014)." All reports must be submitted in both French and English languages. At a minimum, all documents must be provided in MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint or PDF (unlocked) formats.

All reporting and data must be synchronized with the USG fiscal year. Quarterly reports are due within 15 days of the close of each quarter. In other words, they are due on January 15, April 15, July 15 and October 15 respectively. The second quarterly report, due on April 15, must include semi-annual progress reporting (October – March) on the USAID indicators against the targets for

that period. This must also include an explanation for any indicator values falling above or below target.

The Recipient must adhere to all reporting requirements listed below. Documents must be submitted electronically by email. All reports must be submitted by the due date for review by the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) with a copy to the designated Agreement Officer (AO) and Acquisition and Assistance Specialist. The Recipient will consult the AOR on the format and expected content of reports prior to submission. against the targets for that period. This must also include an explanation for any indicator values falling above or below target.

b. Specific Reporting Requirements

- **Financial Reporting:**

(1) Reporting of Expenditures

Financial reporting requirements must be in accordance with 2 CFR 700.7 and 2 CFR 200.327 regarding advance payments. Standard Form (SF) –270 or SF-1034 must be used to Request Advance payments. Either paper copies or electronic copies (scanned PDF document) may be submitted, but not both.

i. SF-425 shall be used to report actual expenditures and shall be submitted within 15 calendar days from the end of each quarter, except that the final report shall be submitted within 90 calendar days from the estimated completion date of this Agreement. The Recipient shall submit the SF-425 form in the following manner:

- An original copy to the Payment Office;
- A copy to the AOR; and,
- A copy to the Agreement Officer.

ii. Electronic copies of the SF-425 can be found at: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html#sortby=1

(2) Reporting of Foreign Taxes

The Recipient must comply with the Standard Provision set forth in the resulting Agreement entitled "Reporting of Host Government Taxes."

- **Performance Reporting**

The Applicant will provide a copy of Quarterly, Annual, and Final Performance reports to the AOR in accordance with 2 CFR 200.328. Reports shall include:

1. Annual Work/Implementation Plan and Budget

Within 45 days following the award effective date, following a joint work planning workshop with USAID, the awardee must submit the first annual work plan with details of the implementation processes and schedules, projected results, indicators and targets and project costs associated with the activities.

Subsequent Annual Implementation Plans and Budgets will be submitted within 30 calendar days after the end of the previous Fiscal Year.

2. Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP)

Within 45 days of the effective date of the award, the Recipient will be required to submit for approval a final AMELP. The AMELP will cover the full period of the Cooperative Agreement and should be revised as needed in response to changes in the activity or context that occur during the life of the activity. The AMELP submitted by the Recipient must include proposed process indicators for measuring progress against each IR included in its activity. The AMELP must include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Outline of the program's development hypothesis and results framework/logical framework which establishes and tracks a set of required, standard, and custom indicators to be used to measure the achievement of the results.
- Baseline data for the indicators and yearly targets to measure performance annually and at the end of the program, with yearly targets for each indicator.
- Description of how data will be collected, stored, and analyzed.
- Description of how the Recipient will monitor program interventions, measure results, ensure data quality, and use data to inform ongoing activities, providing a plan for evaluation.
- Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) Plan that outlines actions and a framework for how the Recipient will effectively collaborate and work with stakeholders to share knowledge and reduce duplication of effort, learn from program implementation, systematically draw on evidence from a variety of sources, take time to reflect on implementation, and apply learning by adapting intentionally to improve program results.

USAID staff, including Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialists, will review and approve the Recipient's AMELP to ensure that it is appropriate for the activities to be undertaken as part of the Cooperative Agreement and for compliance with the M&E guidance established by USAID or other guidance otherwise applicable to this Cooperative Agreement.

USAID will provide written comments and suggestions on the MEL Plan to the Recipient within 14 days of receipt, and the Recipient shall finalize the plan no later than 14 days from receipt of Mission comments and suggestions.

3. Gender Strategy

Within 60 calendar days of the project award, the Recipient must submit a Gender Strategy to the AOR for approval. The Gender Strategy should demonstrate how women and other marginalized groups will be included in all Activity interventions, empowered, and play a key role in peacebuilding processes. A minimum of 30 percent of women should be considered in all peace and community structures that will be supported by the Activity. The Gender Strategy should outline how women will not only participate in peace and community structures but also occupy important positions in those structures. The Gender Strategy must be grounded in the required Gender Analysis (Section A.8.A) and demonstrate how the impact of the Activity contributes to reducing gender gaps, preventing gender-based violence, and empowering women. Key findings and recommendations of the Gender Analysis should be integrated and operationalized at all levels of project implementation including in the objectives, results, monitoring, evaluation, learning, and reporting. The Gender Strategy must clearly describe actions that the project will consider in order to combat all types of discrimination and promote equality.

4. Demobilization Plan for Close-Out

Six (6) months prior to the completion date of the Cooperative Agreement, a Close - Out/Demobilization Plan, including the proposed disposition of unused supplies of $5,000 or more in aggregate and equipment with a per-unit fair-market value greater than $5,000, will be submitted to USAID/DRC The plan must include:

- Current financial status report with a thorough pipeline analysis to ensure that there are sufficient funds available to finalize activities and complete all requirements;
- Final Financial Status Report timeline
- A final inventory of residual non-expendable property, which was acquired or furnished under the Cooperative Agreement
- A disposition plan for residual non-expendable property under the Cooperative Agreement, including when equipment will be transferred to other project/partners
- A request for disposition instructions for any property acquired or furnished by the U.S. government under the activity
- Contractor/subgrantee/partnership phase-out plan
- Status of all program audit reports per the Cooperative Agreement's provisions
- Final audit report timeline
- Personnel phase-out timeline (who is expected to serve until when)
- Personnel phase-out plan (to include severance pay plan)
- Job descriptions for personnel anticipated to serve through to the completion date of the activity
- Projected costs.

5. Progress/Performance Monitoring Reports

The applicant will provide a copy of Quarterly, Annual, and Final Performance reports to the AOR in accordance with 2 CFR 200.328. Reports shall include:

Quarterly performance reports shall be submitted 15 calendar days after the end of the quarter. Fourth quarter performance reports will be included in the annual reports. Quarterly performance reports will present progress on all activities and will include the following information at a minimum:

- Progress on major activities by intermediate result (IR) during the performed period (to include any high-level meetings held and field visits)
- Any implementation problems and proposed remedial actions, as appropriate.
- Progress and/or issues on gender, youth, and sustainability, describing efforts and progress achieved with activities to advance these three areas.
- Environmental compliance: A statement explaining that all reported activities have been implemented subject to the IEE conditions and/or a description of environmental compliance activities undertaken
- Progress on performance indicators in the AMELP.
- Additional pertinent information including, when appropriate, statutory or Congressional reporting requirements, analysis, and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs reported in financial reports
- List of all documentation submitted to the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) during the quarter
- Certification that all participant training information has been entered in the TraiNet database for in-country, third country, and U.S based learning activity
- As an annex, at least one success story with information on the project's outcomes, results, and/or impact during the reporting period, beginning with the third quarterly reporting period (USAID can provide a template)
- List of upcoming events with dates (e.g., program launch, data dissemination, high -level site visit), particularly those in which the recipient requires USAID/DRC participation
- Planned activities for each expected IR for the next quarter
- Progress toward implementation of CLA Plan and any relevant research.

The Recipient must immediately notify USAID/DRC of developments that have a significant impact on the award. Also, the Recipient must give notification immediately in the case of problems, delays, or adverse conditions which materially impair the ability to meet the objectives of the Cooperative Agreement. This notification must include a statement of the action taken or contemplated and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.

6. Quarterly Financial Reporting:

Quarterly financial reports will be submitted 15 calendar days after the end of the fiscal quarter to USAID. They should be disaggregated by element level and contain, at a minimum:

- Total funds awarded to date by USAID into the award;

- Total funds previously reported as expended by the awardee by main line items;
- Total funds expended in the current quarter by the awardee by main line items;
- Total unliquidated obligations by main line items;
- List of the significant expenses incurred during the period; and
- Projected expenditures for next quarter (pipeline analysis).

7. Quarterly Accrual Report:

Quarterly accrual reports will be submitted 10 calendar days before the end of the quarter to USAID that will provide contractual information pertaining to the following information:

- Total Estimated Cost remaining in the award;
- Unliquidated balance in the award;
- Accrual amount; and
- Estimated Pipeline amount.

8. Final Report

A draft final report shall be provided not less than thirty (30) days prior to the end of the award period. USAID will provide written comments concerning the accuracy and completeness of the report to the Recipient. The Recipient will revise and submit the final report no later than 15 days after receipt of comments.

The Recipient must submit a final report to the AOR, with copies to the AO; the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC), at e-mail: DocSubmit@usaid.gov. The final report must be submitted no later than 30 calendar days after the expiration or termination of the award. The final report will consolidate activities and analyses of all partners, if applicable, into one document that includes their activities and progress towards results. The final performance report must contain the following information:

- A comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives established for the period, the findings of the investigator, or both. Whenever appropriate and the output of programs or activities can be readily quantified, such quantitative data must be related to cost data for computation of unit costs.
- Final data, compared to baseline data, for all indicators included in the monitoring and evaluation plan award activities. This section must include disaggregated data by gender, historically disenfranchised groups and other relevant groups identified.
- A summary of problems/obstacles encountered during the implementation, and how those obstacles were addressed and overcome if appropriate.
- Reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate.
- Other pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.
- Significance of these activities for overall elections and political processes development worldwide.

- Lessons learned best practices, and other findings along with recommendations for future programming under each of the program result.

c. Other Reporting Requirements

- **Development Experience Clearinghouse requirements**

For information concerning submission requirements of copies of reports and other information to USAID's DEC, refer to the Standard Provisions entitled "Submissions to the Development Experience Clearinghouse and Publications (June 2012)" for U.S. NGOs and "Submission to the Development Experience Clearinghouse and Data Rights (June 2012)" for Non-U.S. NGOs.

- **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.

The Applicant's environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this NOFO.

In addition, the applicant must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between the host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

No activity funded under the 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 all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the Recipient, in collaboration with the AOR and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under the Cooperative Agreement 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.

Activities under this NOFO are covered by USAID/DRC's Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Office. If any interventions are categorized as negative determinations with conditions, an Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (EMMP) will be created and followed during implementation.

a) Sub-Grants

A provision for sub-grants is included under this award; therefore, the recipient will be required to use an Environmental Review Form (ERF) or Environmental Review (ER) checklist using impact assessment tools to screen grant proposals to ensure the funded proposals will result in no adverse environmental impact, to develop mitigation measures, as necessary, and to specify monitoring and reporting. Use of the ERF or ER checklist is called for when the nature of the grant proposals to be funded is not well enough known to make an informed decision about their potential environmental impacts, yet due to the type and extent of activities to be funded, any adverse impacts are expected to be easily mitigated. Implementation of sub-grant activities cannot go forward until the ERF or ER checklist is completed and approved by USAID. Recipient is responsible for ensuring that mitigation measures specified by the ERF or ER checklist process are implemented.

- **SECURITY REPORTING**

As part of the overall security requirements, the Recipient shall report any security threats and/or incidents verbally/by telephone, immediately to the following USAID/DRC representatives:

- Executive Officer (EXO);
- AOR or Alternate AOR in the AOR's absence

Subsequently, a written report shall be submitted in accordance with approved procedures delineated below. The Recipient shall develop a list of specific steps to track any potential/identified threats, which will be part of its overall security system. All sub awardees will be required by the Recipient to report any threats/incidents to the Recipient, who will immediately after, notify the above listed USAID/DRC representatives.

Security Reporting Responsibilities

USAID requires appropriate security reports be submitted to the USAID/DRC/ Executive Office; AOR; and other USAID/DRC officials as directed by the USAID Executive Office. The type and frequency of these reports may vary with the project scope, location, and criticality.

The Recipient shall report an Initial Threat Assessment and subsequent changes as often as the situation requires (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly etc.). The recipient is also required to notify USAID of any security related incident in a timely manner according to the following guidelines:

Incident Reporting
There are various types of Incident Reporting: Serious Incident Report (SIR); Incident Report (IR); Situation Report (SITREP); and any other security related report that may be required by USAID.

Serious Incident Report (SIR)

- An incident that involves the death, injury, kidnapping of IP personnel and/or damage to IP property.
- An incident that has critically damaged the funded program, such as fire, catastrophic flood, etc.
- Initial SIR must be reported verbally immediately and within 4 hours of the incident occurrence/discovered.
- A Complete SIR must be filed in writing / email within 24 hours of the incident.
- Updated written SIR will continue to be filed on a timely basis (daily, weekly) as long as the situation exists. The timeline will be adjusted as required by the USAID/Mali/PSLU.
- Final Report SIR will summarize the incident, subsequent events, and the final resolution.

Incident Report (IR)

- An incident involving accidents, potential harm, suspicious persons or acts, threats or harassing actions against personnel or the program.
- IR should be initially reported by phone immediately, follow up with a written report filed as soon as possible (within 24 hours). After the incident is evaluated, a complete detailed written report must be submitted to USAID-DRC, not later than 72 hours after the incident.

Situation Report (SITREP)

- A report that a significant, but not critical action or activity, has taken place that has impacted or may have impact on the well-being of the personnel or the success of the program.
- This report may describe trends and/or secondhand information that may have bearing on the project or impact on future operations.
- There is no predetermined reporting timeline. The report will be issued as needed and required by the USAID/DRC/Executive Office.

Telephonic communication is the preferred method to provide the initial information of an incident. A written report by e-mail must follow as soon as possible within the above-described guidelines and it shall be as detailed as possible. The report shall follow the format approved in the original Security Plan but at a minimum it shall contain the name of the company, name of the victim(s), date, time, a description of what happened, where the incident occurred, and any other relevant details surrounding the incident. If this is an ongoing incident, progress reports should be submitted in accordance with the guidelines provided in order to keep USAID/DRC Executive Office personnel apprised of the situation.

Security Conditions

The Recipient must be aware of security conditions in DRC and assumes full responsibility for the safety of its employees. Prior to commencing work, the Recipient shall ensure that it has adequate procedures in place to advise its employees of situations or changed conditions that could adversely affect their security. In order to keep abreast of security conditions in DRC, the Recipient shall seek information from all available sources, including the USAID/ DRC EXO, for all areas in which its employees work or travel. Recipient acknowledges that security conditions are subject to change at any moment, that USAID cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information that it may provide to the Recipient and that USAID assumes no responsibility for the reliability of such information. The Recipient has sole responsibility for approving all travel plans for its employees and her/his dependents traveling to post if allowed by the Recipient's personnel internal policies. The Recipient is also responsible for immediately notifying USAID/DRC and the U.S. Embassy American Citizen Services section in the event a U.S. citizen employee does not return from travel as expected or does not report to work. In the event that USAID requests the Recipient to do so, the Recipient's Chief of Party (COP) shall assume responsibility for contacting all of its employees. The Recipient shall provide to the USAID/DRC EXO the name, current address, and current home and/or cellular telephone number of the COP and of an alternate designated employee. The Recipient is responsible for ensuring that the information on file in the USAID/DRC EXO is up-to-date so that in case of emergency, the COP or alternate representative can be reached immediately and he/she can rapidly contact all other affected employees.

Security Protocol

The Recipient should develop a security plan to safeguard all project operations. Security plans may be reviewed by USAID upon request .

Plans should generally include:

- Procedures for reporting and addressing security threats.
- Procedures for reporting any deaths related to the project.
- Procedures for reporting and addressing any persons missing or kidnapping incidents.
- Name and contact information of the security contact person for the head office and regional office(s).
- An internal "cascade" list for communicating with staff, with updated and maintained contact information for staff.

Life Support and Security Services

The Implementing Partner is responsible for maintaining the security of its personnel, materials, and equipment. All employees must meet the requirements of their work-site, which may include, but not limited to background checks, security/restricted area clearances, drug-free workplace, safety training and/or any other company safety and security requirements.

- **VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT)**

USAID has bilateral agreement with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo which allows for the exemption of the incurrence of identifiable customs duties and taxes (including value added taxes "VAT") in development programming. Implementing Partners are exempted from VAT payment. Once the cooperative agreement is awarded, the Mission issues a letter of exemption to be used by the Implementing Partner. Details will be provided during the post-award meeting.

- **ELECTRONIC PAYMENT**

1. Definitions:

a. "Cash Payment System" means a payment system that generates any transfer of funds through a transaction originated by cash, check, or similar paper instrument. This includes electronic payments to a financial institution or clearing house that subsequently issues cash, check, or similar paper instrument to the designated payee.

b. "Electronic Payment System" means a payment system that generates any transfer of funds, other than a transaction originated by cash, check, or similar paper instrument that is initiated through an electronic terminal, telephone, mobile phone, computer, or magnetic tape, for the purpose of ordering, instructing or authorizing a financial institution to debit or credit an account. The term includes debit cards, wire transfers, transfers made at automatic teller machines, and point-of-sale terminals.

2. The recipient agrees to use an electronic payment system for any payments under this award to beneficiaries, sub recipients, or contractors.

3. Exceptions. Recipients are allowed the following exceptions, provided the recipient documents its files with the appropriate justification:

   a. Cash payments made while establishing electronic payment systems, provided that this exception is not used for more than six months from the effective date of this award.

   b. Cash payments made to payees where the recipient does not expect to make payments to the same payee on a regular, recurring basis, and payment through an electronic payment system is not reasonably available.

   c. Cash payments to vendors below $3000, when payment through an electronic payment system is not reasonably available.

   d. The Recipient has received a written exception from the Agreement Officer that a specific payment or all cash payments are authorized based on the Recipient's written justification, which provides a basis and cost analysis for the requested exception.

4. More information about how to establish, implement, and manage electronic payment methods is available to recipients at [Http://solutionscenter.nethope.org/programs/c2e-toolkit.](Http://solutionscenter.nethope.org/programs/c2e-toolkit)

[END OF SECTION F]

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SECTION G: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID Rights

USAID reserves the right to fund or not the application submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

Application with Proprietary Data

If the applicant include data that it does not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation's purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

> "This application includes data that must not be disclosed, duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. 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 {insert sheet numbers}."

Additionally, the applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

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

ADS 303.3.35.2 - Covered Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Equipment or Services

Effective Date: 07/01/2022 - A recipient may not procure covered telecommunication equipment or services for the implementation of their program using award funds. 2 CFR 200.216, applicable to US organizations, and the standard provision "Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment" applicable to non-US NGOs, implement Section 889(b) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. 115-232) that prohibits the use of award funds, including direct and indirect costs, cost share and program income, to procure covered telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment. The statute covers certain telecommunications equipment and services produced or provided by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities). Unless otherwise authorized in a special award requirement or standard provision in the award, such covered telecommunication equipment or services are unallowable costs as specified in 2 CFR 200.471. As such, the recipient must not use any award funds for such costs, including direct or indirect costs, cost share, or program income generated under the award for covered telecommunications equipment or services as specified in 2 CFR 200.216. The Section 889 prohibitions do not apply to awards made prior to August 13, 2020.

[END OF SECTION G]

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ANNEX 1 - SUMMARY BUDGET TEMPLATE

Cost Category	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Year 4**	**Year 5**	**Cost Share**	**Category Total**
Salaries							
Fringe Benefits							
Travel, Transportation, and Per Diem							
Equipment & Supplies							
Subawards							
Opportunity Fund							
Other Direct Costs							
Subtotal Direct Costs							
Indirect Costs							
Total Costs							

ANNEX 2 - STANDARD PROVISIONS

(Note: the full text of these provisions may be found at: https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa. The award will include the latest Mandatory Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations**.** The award will also contain the following "required as applicable" Standard Provisions:

Please note that the resulting award will include all standard provisions (both mandatory and required as applicable) in full text.

REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
X		RAA1. NEGOTIATED INDIRECTCOST RATES - PREDETERMINED (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA2. NEGOTIATED INDIRECTCOST RATES - PROVISIONAL (Nonprofit) (DECEMBER 2014)
	X	RAA3. NEGOTIATED INDIRECTCOST RATE - PROVISIONAL (Profit) (DECEMBER 2014)
	X	RAA4. INDIRECTCOSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (MAY 2020)
X		RAA5. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA6. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
	X	RAA7. PROTECTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT (APRIL 1998)
	X	RAA8. CARE OF LABORATORY ANIMALS (MARCH 2004)
	X	RAA9. TITLE TO AND CARE OF PROPERTY (COOPERATING COUNTRY TITLE) (NOVEMBER 1985)
X		RAA10. COST SHARING (MATCHING) (FEBRUARY 2012)
X		RAA11. PROHIBITION OF ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS (JUNE 1999)
	X	RAA12. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
X		RAA13. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA14. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA15. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
	X	RAA16. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
X		RAA17. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
X		RAA18. USAID DISABILITY POLICY - ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2004)
	X	RAA19. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
	X	RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)

	X	RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA23. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (July 2015)
X		RAA24. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVECOMPENSATION (DECEMBER 2014)
	X	RAA25. PATENT REPORTING PROCEDURES (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA26. ACCESS TO USAID FACILITIES AND USAID'S INFORMATION SYSTEMS (AUGUST 2013)
X		RAA27. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA28. AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
	X	RAA29. PROTECTING LIFE IN GLOBAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE (MAY 2017)
X		RAA30. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
X		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACTWITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

ANNEX 3 – PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION (PPI)

The applicant must provide a list of all its contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs during the past three years. The reference information for each of the awards must include the performance location, award number (if available), a brief description of the work performed, and a point of contact with current telephone numbers.

1. Award Number:
2. Contractor/Recipient (Name and Address):
3. Type of Award:
4. Complexity of Work: Difficult _______________Routine _________________
5. Description, Location, and Relevancy of Work:
6. Dollar Value of Work: ____________________Status: Active________Completed_________
7. Date of Award: ___________________________ **Award Completion Date (including extensions): __________________________**
8. Type and Extent of Subawards:
9. Name, Address, Telephone Number, and E-Mail Address of the Awarding Contracting/Agreement Officer and/or Contracting/Agreement Officer's Representative (and other references as applicable):

ANNEX 4 – CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF THE RECIPIENT

PART I – Certifications and Assurances

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

(This assurance applies to Non-U.S. organizations, if any part of the program will be undertaken in the U.S.)

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.

(a) 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.

2. 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.”

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 must 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 subnational 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 acts 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. CERTIFICATION OF RECIPIENT

By signing below the recipient provides certifications and assurances for (1) the Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs, (2) the Certification Regarding Lobbying, (3) the Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206) and (4) the Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224 above.

These certifications and assurances are 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 these assurances, and that the United States will have the right to seek judicial enforcement of these assurances. These assurances are binding on the recipient, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and the person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign these assurances on behalf of the recipient.

As applicable:

Application No.: ____

Date of Application: ____

Name of Recipient: ____

Typed Name and Title: ____

Signature: ____

Date: ____