

ADDENDUM-001-72036725APS00001 USAID INCLUSIVE POLITICAL OUTREACH
Clarification Questions and Answers

- 1. Currently, we are considering two options: 1. Submitting as a prime applicant, leading the initiative. 2. Joining a consortium as a co-lead, invited by another local nonprofit. Could you kindly confirm if it is permissible for our organization to apply as a prime applicant while also participating in a consortium for this program? Your guidance will greatly help us determine the next steps.**

USAID Response: Section 3.3 of the Addendum-001 states that "All eligible interested organizations are restricted to submitting only one Concept Note as the Prime Applicant" and Section 3.4 states that "Applicants may serve as sub-awardees or supporting partners on multiple Concept Notes under this Addendum." Hence, an applicant may apply as a prime applicant in only one application whereas the same applicant can apply as subawardee or subpartner in multiple/other applications.

- 2. (i) Can an international company/contractor act as a technical support subcontractor under the prime contractor of a local institution?**

USAID Response: As per Section C(4) of the USAID Nepal Localization APS under which this addendum is issued, eligibility for the prime applicant is restricted to local Nepali entities. Eligibility is not restricted for subawardees. Prime applicants are encouraged to propose appropriate sub-partners that enables them to best meet the activity requirements and that adheres to the laws and regulations of the Government of Nepal.

(ii) What are the conditions or limitations for such alignment, particularly in terms of project compliance, regulatory considerations, or funding source requirements?

USAID Response:

- At least 50% of the cost of award performance incurred for personnel must be expended for employees of the prime/local entity.
- The prime applicant is responsible for adhering to the laws and regulations of the Government of Nepal.
- The prime organization is the only entity that will be communicating directly with USAID.
- USAID funds will be disbursed to the Prime organization only.

- 3. Are subcontractors also required to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and register in the System for Award Management (SAM), or is this obligation limited to the prime contractor? Could there be any exceptions or conditional circumstances where subcontractors might bypass this requirement? Furthermore, what are the implications for eligibility or compliance if a subcontractor does not meet these registration requirements?**

USAID Response: As per Section 3.2 of Addendum-001, "Entities submitting a concept paper are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM at the time of submission. If the concept paper is selected for a potential award, the applicant must obtain a UEI and fully register in SAM prior to submission of a Full Application, to proceed with the award process."

Subrecipients are not required to fully register (only login access required) in SAM.gov to receive a subaward; however, first-tier subrecipient must obtain UEI to receive a subaward. Subrecipients cannot bypass the requirement of obtaining UEI and funds cannot be disbursed to subrecipient who do not have a UEI.

- 4. Are a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration mandatory for subcontractors, or do these requirements apply exclusively to the prime contractor?**

USAID Response: First-tier subrecipients are required to obtain a UEI in order to receive a subaward; however, subrecipients are not required to fully register (only login access required) in SAM.gov. Obtaining a UEI is mandatory for first-tier subrecipients.

- 5. Does the Primary applicant need to include/ disclose potential provincial level organizations' partners in the initial concept paper submission ?**

USAID Response: Since one of the evaluation factors in Phase 1 is based on the institutional capacity and past experience of the prime applicant and its proposed subawardees, it is beneficial to include subpartners at the concept note stage. Any subawardees mentioned in the Phase 1 application cannot be removed in Phase 2 or 3; however, applicants may add subpartners as the selection process moves forward.

- 6. Does USAID have a recommended range of allocation split between prime and sub awardees?**

USAID Response: No, there is no recommended allocation of split between the prime and subrecipients. However, if the subrecipients are non-local entities, the following restriction applies: At least fifty (50) percent of the cost of award performance incurred for personnel must be expended for employees of the prime/local entity.

- 7. Can we get the pre-application conference presentation?**

USAID Response: Yes, the presentation will be provided when USAID posts the Amendment to the Addendum on grants.gov.

- 8. Can a consulting company apply?**

USAID Response: Yes, as long as the company meets the local entity eligibility requirements defined in Section C(1) of the USAID Nepal Localization APS under which this addendum is issued.

- 9. Can an Organization which has its head office in Kathmandu and has provincial offices in all 7 provinces apply ?**

USAID Response: Yes, as long as the organization meets the local entity eligibility requirements defined in Section C(1) of the USAID Nepal Localization APS under which this addendum is issued.

- 10. Are there any particular rules related to forming a consortium with Nepali organizations? Such as having one lead and others as sub partners?**

USAID Response: Yes, there can only be one prime applicant while the others can be subpartners. Another option is that organizations may choose to create a new legal entity together with multiple organizations and apply.

11. Can we apply both as prime and sub in separate applications?

USAID Response: Yes. You can apply only once as a prime applicant, but there are no restrictions to serving as a subawardee to multiple different prime applicants for this same opportunity. Refer to Sections 3.3 and 3.4 of the Addendum.

12. How many organizations shall be shortlisted from Phase 1?

USAID Response: There is not a set number. Concept Papers will be evaluated based on the evaluation factor noted in Section 6 of the Addendum, and only green lit applicants will be shortlisted to participate in Phase 2. Please review Section 6 of the Addendum for further details.

13. Are organizations outside of Lumbini and Madhesh province able to submit applications and will it be ok to propose activities in other provinces besides the two mentioned in the document?

USAID Response: Yes, as long as the organization meets the local entity eligibility requirements defined in Section C(1) of the USAID Nepal Localization APS under which this addendum is issued.

As per Section 1.C of the Addendum, the geographic focus is in Madhesh and Lumbini provinces for sub-national activities, and Kathmandu for federal level activities. However, an applicant may propose implementation of some activities in other provinces if strong justification is provided.

14. Can annex be included in the concept note? or do we need to send annexes separately?

USAID Response: If applicants choose to include an annex, it will count towards the page limit.

15. Can an applicant apply only for one Province e.g.,only Madhesh or only for Lumbini?

USAID Response: Applicants are required to apply to implement a complete project considering Federal level activities and sub-national activities in both of the provinces as described in Section 1 of the Addendum.

16. Relevant experiences needed, can we keep as much as we can or is there a limit on this aspect? Can we put links in the application?

USAID Response: There is no limit to how many past experiences you cite; however, it's important to be mindful of the Concept Paper's 7-page limit. All relevant information must be written into the Concept Paper, and links will not be opened nor considered in the evaluation of the concept note. Only information provided in those 7 pages will be considered.

17. Can we include community empowerment and Local Government support activities in the concept note?

USAID Response: It is up to the applicant to determine and propose relevant and appropriate

activities.

18. Could you please provide a brief explanation of the scope and relevance to USAID's Inclusive Political Outreach?

USAID Response: The scope and relevance of USAID Inclusive Political Outreach are provided in Section 1 of the Addendum.

19. Can we know the weightage of each evaluation criteria?

USAID Response: There is only one evaluation factor in Phase 1 (Concept Paper phase) as stated in Section 6 of the Addendum. There is no separate weightage for elements under the factor.

20. Is there any possibility to extend or announce in other provinces too?

USAID Response: As per Section 1.C of the Addendum, the geographic focus is in Madhesh and Lumbini provinces for sub-national activities, and Kathmandu for federal level activities. However, an applicant may propose implementation of some activities in other provinces if strong justification is provided.

21. Is agreement between the prime and sub needed or not ?

USAID Response: Before the award, that is up to the organizations to decide. After an award is made, the prime is required to have subagreements with subpartners.

22. In how many applications can we apply as sub?

USAID Response: There is no limitation on the number of applications when applying as subawardee as stated in Section 3.4 of the Addendum.

23. You mentioned that the program needs to be implemented according to government rules. Does it mean compliance with financial rules of the government of Nepal?

USAID Response: The recipient must ensure compliance with their own organizational policies, USAID regulations that will be incorporated into the cooperative agreement, and any relevant Government of Nepal regulations/laws.

24. Will it be necessary to comply with the procurement laws of Nepal?

USAID Response: The recipient must ensure compliance with their own organizational policies, USAID regulations that will be incorporated into the cooperative agreement, and any relevant Government of Nepal regulations/laws.

25. Do we have a template for a Concept note?

USAID Response: No, please follow the instructions in Section 5 of the Addendum when submitting the concept note.

26. Is there a marking criteria in the utilization of funding in the past?

USAID Response: There is no separate marking criteria for utilization of funds.

27. Just a concern, can anyone become the part of more than one application as the sub-partner ?

USAID Response: Yes. As per Section 3.4 of the Addendum, an organization can be part of more than one application as a sub-partner.

28. Can we charge SWC cost for this activity?

USAID Response: As per the Assistance Agreement between the Government of Nepal (GoN) and USAID/Nepal, USAID programs are exempt from any taxes imposed on the recipient. Therefore, at this time, SWC monitoring fees are not considered allowable costs. USAID/Nepal will also provide an Implementation Letter to the Ministry of Finance for the implementation of this activity.

29. Should an organization apply to both the provinces or can they select only one province?

USAID Response: Applicants are required to apply to implement a complete project considering Federal level activities and sub-national activities in both of the provinces as described in Section 1 of the Addendum.

30. (i) During implementation of the program, we need to do procurement. For this, do we need to follow the procurement law of Nepal government ?

USAID Response: Organizations must follow their own organizational procurement policies, applicable local regulations, and relevant USAID requirements that will be incorporated into the cooperative agreement. USAID will conduct a pre-award survey of the apparently successful applicant to ensure they have the systems and processes in place to follow USAID's regulations.

(ii) We need to pay staff and experts, do we need to make it at the rate of the government of Nepal or can we make it at a competitive market rate?

USAID Response: If the question is about making payments to staff and experts of the Government of Nepal, in that case, the recipient cannot pay salary supplements to GoN staff and to experts. USAID-funded activities are prohibited from paying these types of salary supplements to host country government employees (this includes employees of parastatal entities).

If the question is about paying the recipient's own staff and experts, in that case, the organization must follow their own personnel policies and salary scales. These policies and salary scales should be fair and reasonable, and the organization's standard salary scale must be applied for all staff irrespective of the donor or funding source.

31. Institutional Capacity and Past Experience in tabular form. Which extent do we explain given the limitations of pages?

USAID Response: Please use your judgement to provide the most relevant experience given the objectives of the activity and the seven-page limit.

32. Do we integrate only the topics in the instructions or do we also present a logic model/theory of change?

USAID Response: A logic model and theory of change are not required as part of the concept note. Please carefully follow the instructions in Section 5 of the Addendum.

33. When will the implementation start ?

USAID Response: The tentative plan as of today is to award this by mid August 2025; however, this is dependent upon the duration of different processes and could be awarded earlier or later than this date.

34. Is it possible to submit our concept note without having attended the pre-application information session and would it be possible for you to share the recording of the information session.

USAID Response: Absolutely. Attending the pre-application conference is not a prerequisite for submitting the concept note for ADDENDUM-001-72036725APS00001 USAID Inclusive Political Outreach. The pre-application conference was not recorded; however, we will post the copy of slides in the addendum itself through an amendment.