



USAID | JORDAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

September 28, 2008

**Subject: USAID-Jordan-08-015-RFA
USAID Education Reform Support Program
Amendment #1**

The purpose of this Amendment is to:

1. Under Closing Date and Time for Electronic Copies, delete “October 31, 2008 Jordan time” and replace with “October 31, 2008 at 5 pm Washington DC time”;
2. Notify potential applicants that if a discrepancy exists between the applicant’s electronic and hard copies of the application, the hard copy will be the overriding document; and
3. Respond to questions received from potential applicants and upload 3 more attachments under this Amendment.

Question No. 1: The RFA establishes plug budget figures for Component 2, Objectives 2, 3, and 4. However, the purpose and nature of these plug budgets is unclear. Are they intended as a budget ceiling for these activities, a budget floor, or a complementary set-aside that is in addition to the designed program? The technical Program Description requests a comprehensive proposal for implementing these three activities, but it is unclear how the bidders should design and budget interventions given the plug budgets.

Answer No. 1: The plug figures for Component 2, Objectives 2, 3, and 4 are intended as budget floors. The Applicant should design a comprehensive proposal for implementing these activities that describes the activities and outcomes that will be achieved with a minimum funding equivalent to these plug figures.

Question No. 2: The RFA establishes a target of 270 KG classrooms to renovate and furnish consistent with the standards established in ESP1. It would be helpful for USAID to provide a plug figure for the budget estimate per classroom to limit unrealistic underbidding of these costs.

Answer No. 2: The estimated renovation cost per KG classroom is \$10,000. Age-appropriate furniture, learning materials and playground systems may cost an additional \$10,000. Total per classroom \$ 20,000.

Question No. 3: The draft RFA provided an estimated percentage allocation of project funding among the four components, but the final RFA did not include this guidance. Is it reasonable to assume that the percentages in the draft RFA represent approximate proportional allocation of project funds?

Answer No. 3: The percentages provided for the four components in the draft RFA represent approximate proportional allocations of project funds and include Component 1 (30%), Component 2 (20%), Component 3 (40%) and Component 4 (10%). These approximate allocations are meant to assist applicants by providing overall prioritization.

Question No. 4: In the Draft RFA on pages 8 and 9 the objectives had guidance regarding estimated level of effort, but were not given in the final RFA on the top of page I-7. Should we consider the guidance provided in the draft to still be valid?

Answer No. 4: See the response to Question 3.

Question No. 5: Closing Date and Time for Electronic Copies is stated to be October 31, 2008 Jordan time on the cover page of the RFA but no time has been provided. Can you please provide the time that the submission is due on that day?

Answer No. 5: The submission is due at 5:00 p.m. on October 31, 2008, Washington, DC time. Note the change from Jordan to Washington time for submission.

Question No. 6: The cover letter does not specify a closing time for electronic copies. Shall offerors assume the closing time for electronic copies is 12pm Jordan time, October 31, 2008?

Answer No. 6: See the response to question 5.

Question No. 7: On page I-7 first paragraph following the bullets it states: “*Several evaluation studies were conducted internally by ESP on the three main initiatives of the program: learning readiness (ECE); MIS Online; and, in-service teacher training (Attachment 4).*” Attachment 4 contained the “Interim Report on the Analysis of Professional Development of MIS Teachers in Jordan”. Is it possible to receive reports on all evaluations carried out by ESP across all activities?

Answer No. 7: The draft evaluations are available on the internet. To access them, please follow these steps:

1. On your internet explorer type <https://files.esp-jordan.org/webdav>
2. Type the username “webdav” and the password “webdav123”

The final evaluations should be available on this website by October 1, 2008.

- Question No. 8: On page I-9 item 1.b. states the following: “*Develop and implement a training plan for all 1st through 3rd Grade teachers...*” By all, is it all Grade 1 – 3 teachers in the Public Schools of the Kingdom of Jordan or just those in schools that have Kindergartens?
- Answer No. 8: By the end of the Program, it is expected that all teachers in Grades 1 -3 will have received training, independent of whether the public school has a kindergarten or not.**
- Question No. 9: On page I-9 under Objective 4 last bullet it states: “*Expanding appropriate elements of the parental involvement program to grades 1-3.*” Does that apply to all Grades 1-3 in the Kingdom of Jordan or only to those schools that have kindergartens in them?
- Answer No. 9: The Program is expected to expand parental involvement in a phased approach to all schools with grades 1-3, independent of whether they have a kindergarten or not.**
- Question No. 10: On page I-11 3rd bullet from the top “*The Recipient shall undertake an analytical study to trace graduates of MIS Stream enrollment to evaluate their performance at universities and in the job market.*” Are there defined desired outcomes from this study? How many years are these students expected to be traced?
- Answer No. 10: The tracer study will provide sufficient information to facilitate improvements to the MIS program in grades 11 and 12. Useful information might include: what work MIS graduates are undertaking; if studying, what subject they are studying; and qualitative information on what aspects of the program MIS graduates found most useful. The study is expected to trace a representative sample of students for several years.**
- Question No. 11: On page I-11 Objective 2 first paragraph, last sentence “*The focus of the program was students in grades 9, 10, and 11.*” Should School-To-Career Program include grade 12 students as well?
- Answer No. 11: The Recipient could include grade 12 students in the School-to-Career Program.**
- Question No. 12: On page I-12 Objective 3 last paragraph “*If rehabilitation of playing fields is determined to be important to achievement of students with life skills, the Recipient shall ensure that construction and rehabilitation includes the involvement of the school and local communities in the maintenance and preservation of the sports fields.*” Should we budget for cost of renovations and maintenance?

Answer No. 12: **The Recipient is not expected to finance ongoing renovation and maintenance of playing fields.**

Question No. 13: On page I-13 Component Three it states: *“In an attempt to improve teachers’ skills and performance, the MOE has recently developed the National Teacher Professional Standards and is working on having all of its 60,000 teachers meet these standards.... The MOE has also recently started elaborating on the concept of establishing a National Teacher Training Institute (or “Academy”) that would be responsible for managing and delivering teacher training and also certifying both the new teachers as well as the ones who are already in the system”* Is the Recipient of this award expected to train all 60,000 teachers, and if so, should that cover all content areas (Math, Science, History, etc.), if so, can you provide a list of all the content areas we should cover?

Answer No. 13: **USAID does not expect the Recipient to replace or supplant the MOE Training Department in upgrading the skills of its 60,000 teachers. Instead, USAID expects the Recipient to establish a system of ongoing professional development and to build the capacity of central and field directorate staff to train and upgrade teachers. The MOE training plan and system would include subject specific as well as pedagogic skills training.**

Question No. 14: On page I-13 last bullet *“Develop... The plan and implementation shall also consider the need for provision of any necessary equipment and other resources to support the concerned Ministries in carrying-out the program.”* Are we to budget for these provisions of necessary equipment and other resources? If so, is there a plug in amount for this?

Answer No. 14: **The Program will assist the MOE in designing the National Institute for Education and will be responsive to the priorities and requests, including those for equipment and other resources, that may arise from the Ministry of Education. USAID has not provided a plug figure.**

Question No. 15: Attachment 5 “Concept Paper Preparation for ERfKE II document, page 6 bullet 5 it states: *“Ensures, before the summer of 2008, of a series of Preparation Studies that survey and report on the current status, projected needs and potential plans for key identified areas for action in the next five years.”* Have these preparation studies been completed? If so, can copies be made available?

Answer No. 15: **The draft documents have not been finalized by the consultants or approved by the MOE.**

Question No. 16: On Page IV-7 under bullet (j) plug figures are given for Component 2 objectives 2, 3, and 4. No plug figure was provided for objective 1. The text below the first table indicates that *“A line item called “Component Two” must be added in the budget for \$1 million each year for a total of \$5 million over the life of the project.”* Is the \$1 million per year plug figure for Component 2 inclusive of objective 1? If not, is there a plug figure for objection 1, or is that left to the discretion of the recipient?

Answer No. 16: **The \$1 million per year plug figure for Component Two is not inclusive of Objective One. The budget for Component Two, Objective One is left to the discretion of the Recipient.**

Question No. 17: Does USAID have a plug figure or other estimate for the construction and rehabilitation of schools and playgrounds in Components One and Two?

Answer No. 17: **Please refer to question 2 for the estimated cost for renovating a KG classroom and cost for furniture, learning materials and playground systems.**
For Component 2: Please refer to question 16.

Question No. 18: Also, under the plug figure for Component 2, there is no mention of Objective 1 in the cost. Is there a plug figure in mind that the applicant should use for Objective 1?

Answer No. 18: **See the response to question 16.**

Question No. 19: Section IV, page 7 refers to plug figures for component two with specific amounts for objectives 2, 3 and 4 with an overall component plug figure of \$5 million over 5 years. This figure does not appear to include activities under objective 1 of component 2. Shall bidders assume that costing for objective 1 under this component is separate?

Answer No. 19: **See the response to Question 16.**

Question No. 20: Is the plug figure given for Component 2 intended to cover all costs for the component, including labor?

Answer No. 20: **Yes. The plug figure for Component 2 is inclusive of labor for objectives 2, 3 and 4.**

Question No. 21: Is it permissible to reallocate the \$5 million plug figure for Component 2 in a different annual allocation that may be more consistent with the applicant's proposed technical approach?

Answer No. 21: **Yes.**

Question No. 22: Please advise on the authorized geographic code for this procurement.

Answer No. 22: 000 (United States)

Question No. 23: What is the geographic code for procurement under this cooperative agreement?

Answer No. 23: See the response to Question 22.

Question No. 24: If the geographic code is 000, will blanket waivers to allow local procurement of vehicles and IT equipment be issued?

Answer No. 24: Waivers can be issued on a case-by-case basis.

Question No. 25: Can USAID provide the total number of schools in which the recipient will be providing services?

Answer No. 25: USAID encourages the Recipient to reach as many schools as possible within the financial and technical resource constraints.

Question No. 26: Must all public schools in Jordan be directly served by the project?

Answer No. 26: See the response to question 25.

Question No. 27: Do the MOE and USAID have a preference in terms of the governorates in which services will be delivered, or in terms of the order in which they will be reached by expanded services?

Answer No. 27: USAID looks to the Recipient to propose a technically feasible phased approach.

Question No. 28: What is the intended relationship between the project's efforts to support the development of a pre-service teachers' academy and those currently being led by Teachers College/Columbia University?

Answer No. 28: The Queen Rania Teachers Academy (QRTA) supported by Teachers College/Columbia University is an important stakeholder in an evolving program that will strengthen Jordan's pre-service teacher training. QRTA has already made progress in developing a number of teacher training curricula and will continue to play a vital role in pre-service teacher training. USAID encourages the Recipient to work closely and collaboratively with the Queen Rania Teachers Academy (QRTA) supported by Teachers College/Columbia University. USAID and MOE will facilitate this relationship.

Question No. 29: What is the intended relationship between the project's in-service training models and the Queen Rania Teachers' Academy?

Answer No. 29: Similar to the question on pre-service teacher training above, USAID encourages the Recipient to work closely and collaboratively with the Queen Rania Teachers Academy (QRTA) and will facilitate this relationship.

Question No. 30: Given that the 12th grade year is primarily dedicated to preparing for the tawjihi exams, would it be more practical to focus MIS stream development on further improving the 11th grade program?

Answer No. 30: A logical phasing might focus initially on further improving and taking to scale the 11th grade MIS program. However, the Recipient is also expected to improve the 12th grade MIS stream consistent with the final year's emphasis on the Tawjihi.

Question No. 31: On page I-13, it is stated that "the recipient shall support the MOE with the development and implementation of a comprehensive professional development program and shall adopt a two-pronged approach of both technical assistance **and infrastructure** that complements the GOJ inputs." Does USAID expect the recipient to reserve funds from its budget to support the construction, renovation, and/or equipping of teacher professional development facilities? If so, can you please provide a plug figure for that infrastructure?

Answer No. 31: USAID hesitates to limit the flexibility offered to Recipients by providing a plug figure. Instead, USAID encourages the Recipient to evaluate options and propose an approach that will achieve the greatest results.

Question No. 32: What is the status of the infrastructure support to schools related to the MIS? E.g., what is the number of schools that have been equipped with interactive rooms; the number of established professional development rooms in schools; and the number of teachers provided with laptops and data shows?

Answer No. 32: USAID has equipped 19 MIS schools with furniture, data shows and laptops and has established nine professional development rooms (one in Petra, four in Tafilah, and four in Karak). The above-mentioned laptops have been provided to schools and not directly to teachers.

Question No. 33: Will USAID release the FSN scale for Jordan to inform project planning?

Answer No. 33: Please see "Attachment 22 – Local Compensation Plan" which is uploaded with this Amendment.

Question No. 34: Could USAID please confirm that only the Past Performance Report Short-forms and key long-term personnel chart are required?

Answer No. 34: a) Please use the Past Performance Report Short-Form for the prime and all major subs. The form is being uploaded with this Amendment as “Attachment 23 – Past Performance Report Short-Form”.
b) Please note that a key long-person personnel chart is not required, however a staffing pattern is required. Please refer to Section IV (8) Personnel of the RFA.
c) Resumes for key personnel, not to exceed 2 pages each, are required. Past performance, staffing pattern and resumes of key personnel are not included in the 40 page limit.

Question No. 35: Does USAID consider the discussion of Staffing to be a part of the 40 pages?

Answer No. 35: The staffing will be considered part of the “Management” criterion (Section IV (4) and is included in the 40 page limit. Please note that the staffing pattern (Section IV (8) is not included in the 40 page limit.

Question No. 36: Could USAID please clarify p. V-2, 3b “Innovative plan for attracting and retaining sub-partners” under the Management Evaluation Criteria.

Answer No. 36: The prime is expected to seek partners of special expertise and experience to achieve certain objectives under this program. The prime is requested to submit a plan with specific milestones on how those partners will be sought, achieved and retained. If there are specific examples of partners they should be mentioned with the objectives they are to work towards.

Question No. 37: Attachment 14, the Operations Plan for Queen Rania Center (QRC) includes plans for the School Technology Innovation Center and the Knowledge Economy Center, both of which include component activities to be supported as part of ESP, with coordination activities and capacity building activities to be physically housed on the 3rd floor of the QRC.

According to page 8, Personnel section, third paragraph: as of April 2007, plans include 8 spaces for the MIS Instructional Systems Design Unit (4 ISD for training [including COP] and 4 ISD for curriculum). Additional spaces are planned for Learning Resources specialists, the School-to-Career Unit and joint space for project collaboration including USAID/ESP. Are these plans still current? If so, what should be assumed in terms of number of spaces available to ERSP?

Answer No. 37: The Queen Rania Center’s main function was defined and articulated as providing support education and innovation. The plan to affiliate all 12

governorate level Learning Resources Centers to the central QRC and perform many of its technical functions is in the process of being reviewed and approved.

Question No. 38: The Synthesis Report of the JEI evaluation includes recommendations made to JEI earlier in 2008. However, there is no documentation provided as to the actual workplans, strategies and program priorities for JEI over the next phase of activity. Is such documentation available, such as the program decisions from the update meeting convened by JEI in Amman on July 1, 2008.

Answer No. 38: Please see “Attachment 24 – Education Strategy Report” which is uploaded with this Amendment.

Question No. 39: The plans for the School Technology Innovation Centre (STIC) described in Section 5 of the Operations Plan for the QRC appears to overlap substantially with the scope and mandate for the JEI. Is it expected that the STIC will be developed separately from the JEI or is it expected that the JEI will have as one of its core functions the support of the STIC? Or, are these relationships and responsibilities not yet fully decided?

Answer No. 39: The relationship and responsibilities between JEI and STIC have not been fully decided. Both have similar aims and will continue to receive support from the MOE, private sector, and international donors.

Question No. 40: There is no Team Leader assigned to Component 4 in the RFA. In terms of program implementation, is there a rationale for this staffing decision that applicants should be aware of?

Answer No. 40: Component 4 should only comprise approximately 10% of projects allocations of funds and effort. The management plan should include how the Component will be managed, but does not necessarily have to have its own Team Leader.

Question No. 41: The RFA emphasizes expansion and intensification of past efforts, including geographic expansion. What regions and governorates in Jordan have been reached and impacted in past efforts, and are there areas of higher priority in terms of the new project?

Answer No. 41: The past efforts worked throughout the country and the only emphasis was the South region (which included Aqaba, Ma'an and Tafilah). For the new project, there are no specific geographic areas that are of more importance or higher priority than others. The activities should be in response to needs and gaps identified throughout Jordan and across the public education system.

Question No. 42: The description in the RFA of the USAID-funded evaluation of JEI that has already been carried out and that of the evaluation that falls under Component Two-Objective 4 of the new project are very similar. How is the latter one different?

Answer No. 42: The evaluation that will be conducted by the applicant should focus heavily on the link between the provision of technology and achieving the educational goals under the vision of JEI and those under the National Education Strategy. The evaluation should attempt at assessing whether the investment in ICT is bringing about considerable returns in education.

Question No. 43: Are biodata sheets required for submission in the Cost proposal?

Answer No. 43: No. Biodata sheets are not required. However, salary history for proposed personnel is required for the past three years per page IV-6 of the RFA.

Question No. 44: Please confirm that a detailed budget is not required for any partner that does qualify as a major subrecipient.

Answer No. 44: A detailed budget is not required for any partner that does not qualify as a major subrecipient.

Question No. 45: Would the Mission consider offering guidance as to the geographic focus of ERSP?

Answer No. 45: For the new project, there are no specific geographic areas that are of more importance or higher priority than others. The activities should be in response to needs and gaps identified throughout Jordan and across the public education system.

Question No. 46: Section IV, page 1 requires that for e-mailed electronic submissions, "Each email has a limit of up to 10 attachments (5 MB limit)." Does the 5MB limit refer to each individual attachment, or each email message?

Answer No. 46: The 5MB limit refers to each email message.

Question No. 47: Are offerors permitted to submit the technical application in PDF format, in order to ensure correct pagination and reduce file size?

Answer No. 47: Offerors are required to submit the technical application in Word, text accessible format. However, if you wish to submit the technical application in PDF format in addition to the Word format, that is acceptable.

Question No. 48: Section IV, (2) Cost Application Format, item b, states that “Applicants may also choose to submit the budget and budget narrative in PDF format.” Are offerors also permitted to submit items IV (2) c through j, the cost application supporting documents, in PDF format?

Answer No. 48: Applicants must submit proposals and attachments in the formats specified in the RFA. If applicants choose to submit the required documents in formats other than specified, in addition to the specified formats, that is acceptable. If no formats are specified for specific documents in the RFA, applicants may use any format they choose.