



August 30, 2022

**Subject: Request for Applications (RFA) Number: 72066422RFA00001
Civil Society Activity
Amendment #1**

The purpose of this Amendment is to:

1. NOFO, Page 21, Item 5. Application Submission Procedures, last paragraph, delete and replace with the following:

“There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/Tunisia cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. File size must not exceed 25 MB.”
2. NOFO, Page 24, Technical Application, Item 4. Personnel/Management Approach, (e) first paragraph, delete in its entirety and replace with the following:
“**To be included as an annex:** The applicant shall demonstrate proven ability to manage complex activities with multiple technical requirements, in particular covering multiple requests for field support and assembling high quality technical assistance teams, which reflect work similar to that required in Section A. The Applicant must provide the three (3) most recent contracts or grants for itself and proposed subawardees (with 20% or more of the total budget) received in the last three (3) years involving programs similar to the program proposed in Section A. Include the following for each award listed:”
3. NOFO, Page 41, 3. Reporting Requirements, Performance Reporting, (a) Annual Work Plan, delete in its entirety and replace with the following:

“The Recipient will submit its first annual implementation plan to the AOR for approval within 45 days of Award. The first iteration of the implementation plan will cover the period from the start date of the Award until the end of the inception period. After the inception period, the work plan will be updated to detail activities planned for the remainder of the first year. After the Recipient submits a draft, the AOR will provide comments within 10 working days to the Recipient and the Recipient will have 10 working days to respond and make all requested changes, after which the AOR will provide final approval within 10 working days.

All subsequent annual work plans will be submitted to the AOR no later than 45 days prior to the signature date of the award and will cover an entire year of implementation. All work plans must be developed in cooperation with the AOR. Work plans will be treated as a “living” document and updated throughout the course of the year as necessary.

4. Respond to questions received from potential applicants (Attachment 1)

A revised RFA is also attached to this Amendment, with changes highlighted, for ease of reference.

Sincerely,



Digitally signed by David Arnett
Date: 2022.08.30 11:14:24 +02'00'

David Arnett
Agreement Officer

Attachment 1

The following are questions received from potential applicants and answers provided:

Question No. 1: In the eligibility section, it is stated "The applicant shall demonstrate proven ability to manage complex activities with multiple technical requirements, in particular covering multiple requests for field support and assembling high quality technical assistance teams, which reflect work similar to that required in Section A. The Applicant must provide the three (3) most recent contracts or grants for itself and proposed subawardees received in the last three (3) years involving programs similar to the program proposed in Section A"
Is this requirement mandatory? Is it possible to demonstrate an organization's ability to manage complex activities in a different way, by presenting complex activities that were self financed)?

Answer No. 1: If an organization self-financed activities similar to the one proposed in Section A, it is acceptable to cite this experience.

Question No. 2: Page 11, Programming Approach - Refine And Implement/Inception Phase: Could USAID please clarify if the thematic issue selection process can begin during the initial five-month inception/refinement phase or if the implementer must wait until the end of the five-month phase to start the thematic issue selection process.

Answer No. 2: USAID anticipates that the initial thematic issue selection process will occur during the inception/refinement period. Over the course of the duration of the activity, we anticipate that thematic issues may evolve given the political, economic and other dynamics. Therefore, the discussion of thematic issues will be ongoing over the life of the activity.

Question No. 3: Could USAID please clarify whether it would expect the initial process for selecting and validating the initial thematic issue(s) to be completed during the five-month inception/refinement phase of the Activity described on pages 11-12 of the NOFO?

Answer No. 3: USAID anticipates that the initial thematic issue selection process will occur during the inception/refinement period. Over the course of the duration of the activity, we anticipate that thematic issues may evolve given the political, economic and other dynamics. Therefore, the discussion of thematic issues will be ongoing over the life of the activity.

Question No. 4: For the Phase 1 concept paper, USAID asks applicants to "describe the process, analyses, and criteria for selecting and validating the initial thematic issue." Could USAID clarify whether it expects the Recipient to initially select and validate just one of the five to ten thematic issues for the life of the project, or whether the

Recipient will be expected to select and validate more than one thematic issue initially?

Answer No. 4: **USAID does not expect the applicant to select the thematic issue, rather to explain the process for selecting and validating thematic issues over the life of the award.**

Question No. 5: Page 12, In light of the research and assessments that will be conducted during the five month inception phase, what would USAID consider the level of detail that applicants need to include in their budgets, particularly for program activities and subgrants?

Answer No. 5: **Applicants are expected to provide a sufficient level of detail in their budgets for program activities and subgrants for USAID to determine costs fair and reasonable. Please see 2 CFR 200 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. The subrecipient budgets must align with the same requirements as the applicant's budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.**

Question No. 6: Page 14: Does USAID intend to specify the titles or requirements for the three key personnel referenced under the section 4.2 The Approval of Specified Key Personnel?

Answer No. 6: **Applicants have the full flexibility to propose the titles and requirements of up to three key personnel to fit their applications.**

Question No. 7: NOFO page 14 Section B: Federal Award Funding 4.2 Approval of Specified Key Personnel provides three blank spaces to be filled with Key Personnel titles and names. NOFO page 23 Section D: Application and Submission Information Technical Application 4. Personnel/Management Approach states “(a) Key Personnel (not to exceed 3)”

1. Could USAID kindly confirm that Offerors are able to propose fewer than three Key Personnel positions?
2. Can USAID please confirm that “(not to exceed 3)” is referring to the number of Key Personnel positions.

Answer No. 7: **1. Offerors are able to propose fewer than three Key Personnel positions.
2. This is to confirm that “not to exceed” refers to the number of Key Personnel positions.**

Question No. 8: Page 15, Section B. Federal Award Information, 4. Substantial Involvement, Sub-section 4.4 Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation, item 2 “Communication with GOT officials”, states: “The AOR must be present in all meetings with specified government officials, namely Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, and Directors at respective ministries. All communication with the above specified GOT officials must be made by the Chief of Party and coordinated

in advance with the USAID AOR. Exceptions may be granted but must be in writing and made prior to any meeting/communication.”

Question: Can USAID please confirm that this does not apply to meetings with civil society organizations and GOT officials?

Answer No. 8: Correct.

Question No. 9: Article 4.4, Agency and Recipient Joint Collaboration and Joint Participation number (2) and (3) discuss USAID’s involvement in the recipient’s communications with the GOT and also state that thematic issues can change through joint agreement throughout the course of the project. Could USAID confirm whether the recipient will be allowed to make budget adjustments if the budget is impacted by changing thematic issues and will the changes be reflected in formal amendments to the PD during implementation?

Answer No. 9: Thematic issues will likely be addressed in the annual work plan, which as a “living” document, can be updated as needed based on mutual agreement between the partner and AOR. USAID does not envision having to make revisions to the PD if thematic issues are changed. Any necessary budget revisions will be made in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700.

Question No. 10: Regarding Article 4.4(3), could USAID kindly clarify if changing the thematic issues during the implementation of the award is anticipated to be documented through cooperative agreement modifications to revise the budget and program description?

Answer No. 10: USAID envisions documenting thematic issues within the annual work plan. The work plan is a “living” document and can be altered as necessary based on mutual agreement between the AOR and implementing partner.

Question No. 11: Page 17: In section 1. Eligible Applicants, the NOFO states: “All applicants must be able to legally work in Tunisia. This includes having obtained any necessary registrations and permits to operate in Tunisia.” Is it required that the applicants should be legally registered in Tunisia at the time of proposal submission, or, is pending registration (i.e., registration documents submitted, but not yet approved) sufficient?

Answer No. 11: USAID will accept applications from organizations whose registration is in a “pending” status, but will not make an award to any organization who isn’t fully registered to work in Tunisia. If a non-registered applicant wishes to apply for this funding opportunity, USAID recommends they provide proof their application is pending and as assurance that it will be finalized by December 2022.

Question No. 12: Page 19, General Content and Form of Application: Given the estimated program start date of January 6, 2023, could USAID provide more details on when applicants can expect to be notified of their pass or fail rating?

Answer No. 12: Applicants can expect to be notified of their Phase I pass or fail rating sometime between early and mid-October.

Question No. 13: Page 19, Section D. Application and Submission Information, Subsection 3. General Content and Form of Application, Phase II: Full Application states: “Applicants who received a rating of “pass” from Phase I, will be invited to submit a full technical and cost application. Part of the Phase II submission will be an oral presentation as described below.” Page 24 Section D, Subsection 5. Application Submission Procedures, “Phase II: Full Application”, under the Technical Application states “Additionally, applicants at Phase II will be expected to deliver an Oral Presentation describing the Year 1 illustrative work plan.” Page 25 goes on to state “Applicants moving to Phase II will be notified promptly of the date of their scheduled presentation. They should expect two-week’s notice.”
Question a: Can USAID provide further information on the anticipated timeline for the review of concepts and communication of pass/fail grades to proposal applicants?
Question b: Can USAID please clarify the steps within Phase II: Full Application? Specifically, if the oral presentation is expected to take place prior to or following the submission of the full application?

**Answer No. 13: a. The anticipated completion date of finalizing Phase I evaluation is sometime between early and mid-October.
b. The oral presentations will take place after receiving the full applications. As of now, USAID expects oral presentations to take place in late November.**

Question No. 14: Could USAID provide an estimate of when applicants will be notified if they are invited to submit a (Phase 2) full application, and the approximate timeframe for the oral presentations?

Answer No. 14: See Answer No. 13.

Question No. 15: NOFO page 21 Section D: Application and Submission Information 5) Application Submission Procedures Phase 1 – Concept Paper requests that Offerors “describe the process, analyses, and criteria for selecting and validating the initial thematic issue, and how these will be applied over the life of the project.” Will USAID confirm, consistent with its requested participatory design approach and Inception Phase, that the offeror is not required to select an initial thematic issue during the concept paper phase or the full technical application phase?

Answer No. 15: In Phase I, USAID is interested in understanding the process by which the applicant would select the thematic issues. Applicants do not have to select an initial thematic issue during Phase I or Phase II. Applicants may use examples of possible themes they are considering.

Question No. 16: NOFO page 21 Section D: Application and Submission Information 5) Application Submission Procedures states: “There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/{insert Mission/office} cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. File size must not exceed {insert max file size}.” Can USAID kindly clarify if there is a maximum file size that must not be exceeded?

Answer No. 16: The maximum file size is 25 MB.

Question No. 17: Page 21, Section D: Application and Submission Information, Subsection 5. Application Submission Procedures, Phase I: Concept Paper states: “For Phase I, Applicants must submit a Concept Paper not to exceed 10 pages that addresses the following: Describe the process, analyses, and criteria for selecting and validating the initial thematic issue, and how these will be applied over the life of the project. Using a hypothetical example of improving transportation security for women agricultural workers, please summarize how you would address the three objectives set forth in the PD.”
Question: Considering the limitations of articulating a project-approach within a 10-page document, does USAID hold any expectations as to the amount of focus the applicant should devote to the illustrative example of women’s transportation issues in the agricultural sector? For example, should the applicant devote significant time to analyzing the problem and providing background; or should the applicant simply demonstrate how the elements of our approach would apply to such an issue like the one USAID has provided? We worry that overtreatment of the agricultural/women’s issue could limit the space to accurately spell out our approach to tackle the overall challenge of improving the outcomes of civil society to boost civic contribution and trust?

Answer No. 17: USAID will not be prescriptive in defining how the offerors should manage the development of the concept papers. We are interested in learning about how offerors would address the three objectives in the PD.

Question No. 18: Page 23, Section D: Application and Submission Information, Subsection 5. Application Submission Procedures, Phase II: Full Application, under the Technical Application, Item 4 - “4. Personnel/Management Approach” indicates that Key Personnel should “not exceed three”.
Question: Can USAID confirm that an applicant may put forward less than three key personnel positions in its application?

Answer No. 18: Applicants may propose less than three key personnel.

Question No. 19: Page 24, Section D: Application and Submission Information, Subsection 5. Application Submission Procedures, Phase II: Full Application, under the Technical Application states: “All proposed Key Personnel must be present for the Oral Presentations and the proposed Chief of Party must lead the presentation. No more than three members of the applicant’s team may attend the presentation.” Question: If an applicant has fewer than three key personnel, can additional (non-key personnel) staff participate in the oral presentation, as long as the total number of participants does not exceed three?

Answer No. 19: Yes.

Question No. 20: Page 24, Section D: Application and Submission Information, Subsection 5. Application Submission Procedures, Phase II: Full Application states: Additionally, applicants at Phase II will be expected to deliver an Oral Presentation describing the Year 1 illustrative work plan. In the Year 1 illustrative work plan, the applicant must provide a detailed plan for how it intends to carry out the first year’s interventions including the inception/refinement phase of this activity. The applicant shall include a PowerPoint presentation to accompany the in-person presentation. Question: Can USAID please clarify if the Powerpoint presentation mentioned for the oral presentation should be submitted as an annex to the full technical application (Phase II)?

Answer No. 20: Applicants shall not submit the Powerpoint presentation with the full technical application (Phase II). Applicants will be notified when to send the Powerpoint presentation.

Question No. 21: Per Section D.5 (p. 24), would USAID accept recent contracts and grants that were implemented within the past three years, but which were originally received (or awarded) prior to September 2019? This will allow applicants to include projects that are further along in implementation.

Answer No. 21: Yes

Question No. 22: In the technical application instructions in Section D.5 (p. 24), the NOFO states that “the Applicant must provide the three (3) most recent contracts or grants for itself and proposed subawardees received in the last three (3) years involving programs similar to the program proposed in Section A.” Can USAID please clarify whether applicants should include the requested information for each and all of its named subawardees, regardless of the size of each proposed subaward? Can USAID please also clarify whether the prime applicant and subawardees should *each* submit information on their three most relevant and recent (received in past 3 years) projects (e.g., totaling 6 if there is a prime and one subawardees)?

Answer No. 22: This is to confirm that the prime applicant and only subawardees with 20% or more of the total budget, should each submit information on their three most relevant and recent projects. This is now reflected in the NOFO.

Question No. 23: Page 25, Technical Application: USAID states, “At this time, USAID anticipates such Oral Presentations to take place virtually or in Frankfurt, Germany, though this is subject to change.” Has USAID made a decision on the venue for the oral presentations?

Answer No. 23: Applicants will be notified once a decision is made regarding the venue of the oral presentations.

Question No. 24: Does USAID have any suggested allocations for the use of project funds among the three project objectives, i.e. 30% for objective 1, 40% for objective 2, etc., or do applicants have the latitude to make such decisions as part of their proposed plan for the project? Likewise, does USAID have any suggested allocations for the volume of subgrants to local organizations under the three objectives?

Answer No. 24: Applicants have the latitude to propose the proportion of project funding amounts across the three project objectives. In terms of the volume of subgrants, USAID expects this to be a significant component of the activity, but does not have a suggested funding allocation.

Question No. 25: NOFO Page 24: USAID has noted that “All proposed Key Personnel must be present for the Oral Presentations and the proposed Chief of Party must lead the presentation. No more than three members of the applicant’s team may attend the presentation.” Will USAID consider increasing the oral presentation team to include one or more non-key personnel in the presentation? USAID/Kenya, USAID/Jamaica, and USAID/Senegal, for example, have conducted similar oral sessions and allowed five or more participants from selected offerors.

Answer No. 25: USAID expects all key personnel to participate in the oral presentations, and that the total number of people presenting will be three.

Question No. 26: NOFO page 24 Section D: Application and Submission Information Technical Application 4. Personnel/Management Approach states “(e) The applicant shall demonstrate proven ability to manage complex activities with multiple requirements, in particular covering multiple requests for field support and assembling high quality technical assistance teams, which reflect work similar to that required Section A. The Applicant must provide the three (3) most recent contracts or grants for itself and proposed subawardees received in the last three (3) years involving programs similar to the program proposed in Section A.”

1. Can USAID please confirm that Offerors should include past performance in an Annex to the cost application?

2. Will USAID also confirm that this annex will not be included in the overall page count?
3. Further, could USAID please confirm that the Offeror may submit up to three (3) recent contracts or grants for itself and up to three (3) recent contracts or grants for each subawardee with a significant role in program implementation?

Answer No. 26:

- 1. Offers may include past performance in an Annex to the Technical Application.**
- 2. This is to confirm that the past performance Annex will not count towards the page limit.**
- 3. This is to confirm that the offeror must submit up to three (3) recent contracts or grants for itself and up to three (3) recent contracts or grants for each subawardee with a 20% or more of the total budget.**

Question No. 27:

NOFO page 24 Section D: Application and Submission Information Technical Application 4. Personnel/Management Approach states: “Additionally, applicants at Phase II will be expected to deliver an Oral Presentation describing the Year 1 illustrative work plan. In the Year 1 illustrative work plan, the applicant must provide a detailed plan for how it intends to carry out the first year’s interventions including the inception/refinement phase of this activity.” Will USAID confirm that applicants are not required to submit a Year 1 Illustrative Work Plan during the submission of the Phase II Full Technical Application, and will only be required to present it during the Oral Presentation?

Answer No. 27:

Confirmed. A Year 1 Illustrative Work Plan is only required at the Oral Presentation stage.

Question No. 28:

Section (e), page 25 of the NOFO states that “The Applicant must provide three (3) most recent contracts or grants for itself and proposed subawardees received in the last three (3) years involving programs similar to the program proposed in Section A.” However, section f) History of Performance, page 31, states that “If requested, the applicant shall 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...” a. Would USAID please clarify whether the selected applicant(s) will be required or specifically requested by USAID to provide history of performance? b. Please clarify if it is going to be three recent contracts or grants, or five? c. Please clarify if the applicant must provide the same number of contracts or grants for all proposed subawardees? d. Would USAID also consider removing the requirement for similar contracts and grants “received in the last three (3) years” as it significantly limits the number of eligible applicants?

Answer No. 28: Please note that these are two different requests. The first one on page 24 is for applicants to provide three (3) most recent contracts or grants for itself and proposed subawardees (with a 20% or more of the total budget) received in the last three (3) years involving programs similar to the program proposed in Section A. This will be used during the technical evaluation and specifically for evaluation Criteria #3 Experience and Institutional Capacity detailed on page 39. However, for section f, History of Performance, USAID may request the information from applicants if/when needed to conduct a responsibility determination. The requirement for contracts/grants within the last three years remains unchanged.

Question No. 29: NOFO page 31 Section D: Application and Submission Information Business (Cost) Application f) History of Performance requires that the applicant “provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all cost-reimbursed contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed 5”. Can USAID please confirm that these 5 History of Performance references are in addition to the past performance information required under the Management/Personnel approach of the technical application?

Answer No. 29: NOFO page 31 Section D, f) History of Performance states: “In order to perform a responsibility determination and risk assessment, the Agreement Officer may ask for additional performance history on top of what is requested in Section D. If requested, the applicant shall 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”. So to confirm, yes these 5 Histories of Performance references are in addition to the past performance information required under the Management/Personnel approach, but Applicants must not submit these until asked.

Question No. 30: On page 41, the NOFO states that the Recipient’s first implementation plan (due 45 days after award) will cover only the period from the start date of the award to the end of the inception period. However, p. 24 states that “applicants at Phase II will be expected to deliver an Oral Presentation describing the Year 1 illustrative work plan. In the Year 1 illustrative work plan, the applicant must provide a detailed plan for how it intends to carry out the first year’s interventions including the inception/refinement phase of this activity.” As the inception/refinement phase will inform the subsequent implementation plan, would USAID consider having Applicants present only their inception/refinement phase work plan in the Oral Presentation?

Answer No. 30: The Year 1 illustrative work plan for Phase II must cover the inception/refinement phase AND the rest of planned activities for Year 1. After an award is made, the cooperative agreement will require the partner to

submit a work plan covering just the inception period. Then, after the inception period, the work plan will be revised to cover the rest of year 1 taking into account what was learned during the inception period.

Oral presentations must cover the entirety of each organization's year 1 work plan (inception period and remainder of year 1).

Question No. 31: Will USAID kindly provide an updated link to the required Certifications and Assurances?

Answer No. 31: **This is the link:**
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mav.pdf>.

Question No. 32: Would USAID release any notes or a copy of the presentation delivered during the Industry Day organized on June 30, 2022 in Tunis?

Answer No. 32: **Please note that the notes were posted on GRANTS.gov. You can check the following link for the Industry Day notes:**
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=340784>
 then select Related Documents.

Question No. 33: Will USAID provide a 2022 Local Compensation Plan for Tunisia?

Answer No. 33: **Based on US Mission Local Compensation Plan dated September 26, 2021**

FSN Levels	Example Position Titles	Low	High
		Annual Rate	Annual Rate
Grade 12	Chief of Party, Deputy Chief of Party, Financial Controller, Senior Project Management Specialist	94,777	146,905
Grade 11	Chief Accountant, Sr. Project Management Specialist, Senior Accountant; Finance Manager, Head Field Coordinator	69,893	108,353
Grade 10	Project Mgt. Specialist; Computer Management; Accountant; Field Coordinator	63,476	98,396
Grade 9	Supervisory Administrative Asst.; Procurement Agent; Office	49,355	76,475

	Manager; Marketing Specialists; Accounting Specialist		
Grade 8	Interpreter/Translator; Maintenance Supervisor, Computer Technician; Other Technical Professionals	43,225	67,009
Grade 7	Senior Administrative Assistant; Accounting Technician; Travel Assistant; Information Specialists	30,019	46,531
Grade 6	Warehouse Storekeeper; Senior Office Secretary; Expendables Storekeeper; Motor Pool Supervisor	25,034	38,810
Grade 5	Secretary, Personnel Clerk, Jr. Administrative Assistants; Jr. Interpreters	22,779	35,319
Grade 4	Electrician; Carpenter; Plumber; Receptionist, Other Skilled Labor	20,526	31,806
Grade 3	Chauffeur, Drivers	18,317	28,361
Grade 2	Maintenance Assistant	15,381	23,853
Grade 1	Janitor; Cook	12,516	19,416

Note: All rates are in TND. The rates are exclusive of allowances and bonuses.