

Questions for RFA 521-12-0050

1. For the Administrative and Financial Officer key personnel position, would USAID consider allowing a percentage of a position? Allowing for shared financial management responsibilities with other programs would present cost savings to USAID. Additionally, with shared responsibilities, would USAID consider this position non-key?

Answer: Given the wide geographic scope of this program, the dispersed nature of the interventions, the requirement for a decentralized approach and the resultant multiple cost centers, USAID believes a dedicated Administrative and Financial Officer is essential for appropriate levels of oversight and management. This should be considered a full-time senior management position that would not be shared with other programs.

2. The minimum qualifications for the Administrative and Financial Officer position indicate a high level of seniority; however the title of "Officer" suggests a more junior position. Does USAID see this position as managing the administrative and financial functions of this program including compliance to USAID rules and regulations? If so, this function is usually shared with other programs for efficiency and cost saving. Or does USAID see this position as servicing the program's financial accounting and reporting needs at an officer level? Or does USAID have a different vision for this position?

Answer: See above.

3. For the Administrative and Financial Officer key personnel position, if the function and level of the position are consistent with the requirements of USAID, can the recipient use a position title that is different than the one USAID is proposing and consistent with its internal standards?

Answer: Applicants may propose a different name for the position; however the qualifications and responsibility of the position are not changed. As indicated above this is a full-time Key Personnel position.

4. In the technical application section of the proposal, does USAID want two separate sections, one for past performance and one for organizational capability (page 25-26 of the RFA.)? Or given the strict page limitations, would USAID consider applications that combined these sections compliant with the RFA?

Answer: USAID views these criteria separately. Organizational capability is targeting the applicant's ability to manage a program of this geographic scope and complexity. Past Performance aims to bring out relevant programmatic experience.

5. Do the five "introductory pages" required as per page 23 of the RFA count against the 15 page limit for the technical application?

Answer: USAID has changed its page requirements by including the Table of Contents and Acronym pages in the Annex section as well as increasing the page limit of the Annex Section to 20 pages.

6. If we have understood the guidelines correctly, the page limitation for the technical narrative is 10 pages with 5 introductory pages. With these page limitations, we are concerned that USAID will not have adequate information to grade applications on the comprehensive grading criteria established in the RFA. Would USAID please consider allowing the introductory pages to be in addition to the 15 page limit?

Answer: See above.

7. Will USAID consider lowering the cost share requirement?

Answer: USAID will lower its cost share requirement from 20% to 10%.

8. The RFA is clear that the total award(s) will amount to \$12,000,000 and that 20% cost share is required. However we are not sure how to interpret the amount of cost share. Please clarify which of the interpretations below USAID considers compliant for this application: 1. Cost share calculated "in addition to USAID's contribution," meaning a total budget of \$14.2 million of which USAID would contribute \$12 million and the implementer would contribute 20% (\$2.4 million) of USAID's \$12 million contribution. 2. Cost share calculated "of the total budget," meaning on a \$12 million budget USAID would cover 80% (\$9.6 million) and the implementer would provide 20% cost share (\$2.4 million). 3. Cost share calculated as USAID's "share of the budget," meaning a total budget of \$15 million of which USAID would cover 80% (\$12 million) and implementer would be responsible for 20% (\$3 million).

Answer: Number one is correct. Please see above for the adjusted cost share percentage of 10%.

9. In reference to the required qualifications of the Nutrition Security Program Director (See Page 15 of the RFA): will USAID consider broadening its required qualifications for the Program Director to include agriculturalists with a desired number of years of experience in implementing USAID agricultural development programs in Haiti?

Answer: USAID will maintain the same qualification requirements for the Program Director position. Applicants are reminded of the Livelihoods component of the requirement. Additionally, agriculture experience may be considered in proposed non-key personnel.

10. Requiring that the Program Director hold a master's degree in a public health related field is unnecessarily restrictive and tends to constrain achievement of the program's agriculturally-related intermediate results.

Answer: See Question #9.

11. Given USAID's FTF goal of developing local competencies in development project management and implementation and given the emphasis of the Nutrition Security Program on improved, at-home (on-farm) food production and consumption, and off-farm marketing (IRs 1, 2, & 4) USAID should broaden the required qualifications for the Program Director to include agriculturalists.

Answer: See Question #9.

12. Pg 22 of the cost application template alludes to a budget template but a budget template was not part of the RFA package. Did the donor intend to include a budget template?

Answer: A budget template will be included as an attachment to Modification #1.

13. At several times during the narrative, malnutrition among children fewer than two is discussed and the need to focus on PLW and children under 2 in order to reduce chronic malnutrition. This is even suggested in IR1-IR3 in the illustrative indicators. The target population on p. 9 is listed as pregnant women and children under two. On p. 10, it states that the package of interventions should target pregnant women, mothers of children under two and children under two. Yet Objective 1 is to reduce the prevalence of underweight among children less than five years of age by 5% and objective 2 is to reduce the prevalence of anemia among women (as opposed to pregnant women). It may be interesting to get clarification from USAID if we need to target all children under five or focus on children under 2 and also whether we need to target all women or mainly pregnant and lactating women.

Answer: The objectives for this program are Feed the Future and Global Health Initiative high level targets/goals for addressing nutrition issues. On an operational level, the focus of this program is indeed on PLW and all children under two. There exists complementary USAID programming in health service provision for the population writ large in the program areas; this program draws a tighter focus on a more vulnerable segment of the population.

14. Page 6 of the RFA references the USAID/Haiti Gender Assessment. Please confirm that the most recent assessment is the one dated June 2006.

Answer: That is correct. The USAID/Haiti Gender Assessment will be included as an attachment to Modification #1.

15. Does USAID have a standard template for the Performance M&E Plan?

Answer: Yes. A template for the Performance M&E Plan will be included as an attachment to Modification #1.

16. Does USAID require that a baseline survey be included in the project?

Answer: USAID is currently undertaking a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning for Development (MELD) in the program areas that will provide a baseline for a number of critical indicators relevant for this program such as wasting, stunting, underweight, exclusive breastfeeding, minimal acceptable diet, women's dietary diversity, and detailed household expenditures as a proxy for income. This survey will be undertaken again every two years. The applicants may choose to include a baseline to capture additional information that is not covered by the MELD.

17. Does USAID require mid-term and final evaluations for this project? If yes, can they be conducted by the implementing agency, or must they be done by external consultants?

Answer: Yes, mid and final evaluations are required, and are to be conducted by an external entity.

18. Does USAID consider working closely with health facilities as a means of local partnership and/or does USAID have specific expectations for the involvement of local Haitian NGOs?

Answer: USAID strongly encourages close collaboration both with Government of Haiti institutions in the area, as well as the involvement where possible of local organizations.

19. Based on this RFA, would USAID permit and/or expect the local procurement of iron, deworming or other products as part of the budget and/or would USAID expect collaboration with multi-lateral donors (e.g., UNICEF)?

Answer: Applicants are encouraged to explore the possibilities of collaboration with other health service providers that are active in the area. USAID is not adverse to input provisions of this nature, with the exception of Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF).

20. Does USAID have expectations regarding funding allocations across the corridors? Or should applicants assume an even split (\$4M/ corridor)?

Answer: USAID does not have specific funding allocations across corridors. It is up to the applicants to propose expenditures across the corridors.

21. Are the annexes limited to the three annexes as outlined in the RFA, or may applicants provided additional annexes as long as they do not surpass the 15 page limit?

Answer: Annexes are limited to the three annexes outlined in the RFA and are subject to the 15 page limit.

22. Within section B. Planning Monitoring and Reporting, "The applicant will clearly and completely present their planning, monitoring and reporting processes. The applicant will prepare a draft Performance M&E Plan that is feasible and will monitor project progress, output and impact." I understand this to mean that under section B the applicant provides an outline or overview of the planning, monitoring and reporting processes including purpose and objectives of the MERP as well as the stakeholders for whom the MERP is conducted. Then, a full, detailed Performance M&E plan is included in ANNEX I.

Answer: That is correct.

23. Can ANNEX II include the organizational chart?

Answer: Yes.

24. In addition to the "Reference data and contact information shall be included in Annex III", for an organization with significant experience in Haiti, can ANNEX III include some of the "Information on past performance in working effectively with and building the capacity of local organizations, and experience implementing programs in the Haiti or similar development contexts". Or does all of that have to be included under D. Past Performance.

Answer: This information should be included in the Past Performance section and not in Annex III.

25. I have a query concerning the Geographic Focus of the RFA No. USAID HAITI-521-12-0050. In the Request for Applications it is mentioned "The regions of focus will be the three USG focus development corridors, encompassing selected Communes within the West, Artibonite, North and Northeast Departments." Are the Communes of Anse a Galets et Point a Raquette, on the island of La Gonave, West Department, included in the selected Communes?

Answer: No, the Communes of La Gonave are *not* included in this program

26. I just wanted to ask for a small correction to the Eligible Applicants listed on the synopsis page of the Nutrition Security Program in Haiti Program RFA on grants.gov. The synopsis excludes institutions of higher education from application but it appears that they are eligible to compete. If possible, I'd like for this to reflect this so that potential new partners are not deterred before reviewing the full RFA.

Answer: Noted. Higher Education Institutions will be allowed to compete for the RFA. Modification #1 on www.grants.gov will indicate this.

27. I write to inquire as to whether this opportunity is a limited submission application. In other words, can each applicant submit one application only to this program?
Thank you.

Answer: Each applicant can only submit one application to this program. Applicants are expected to separate their proposals into the three corridors as specified in the modification #1 of the solicitation.