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Request for Applications # RFA-641-14-000004 – Amendment No. 02

RFA Title:	USAID Partnership for Education: Learning
Amendment No. 02 Issuance Date:	July 03, 2014
Issued by:	Yves Kore, Regional Agreement Officer

The purpose of Amendment No. 02 is to:

1) Extend the Closing date for receipt of applications from **July 14, 2014 to July 16, 2014.**

2) Provide clarifications and responses to follow up questions received from applicants after the posting of previous Amendment No.1, as fully detailed in the following pages.

I. Specific Changes to the RFA

Specific changes made to the RFA as a result of Amendment No. 02 are as follows:

1. Cover Letter, **DELETE**: "July 14, 2014 – 16:00 Accra Time" and **REPLACE** with "July 16, 2014 – 16:00 Accra, Ghana Time".

II. Follow up Questions and Answers

Q.1: Can USAID provide a copy of the PFMRAF stage 1 and stage 2 assessment tools used to determine the risk and capacity of Ghanaian government institutions to receive direct USAID funding?

A.1: See attached PFMRAF Stage 1 and 2 Assessment tools.

Q.2: The logic tree for the Ghana Partnership for Education appears in places to contradict the responses to the questions on the Learning RFA. Can USAID provide this logic tree at the results level, to clarify the different expectations of the implementing partners?

A.2: The Logic Tree is the foundation for the Partnership for Education Logical Framework, currently in draft form. Per ADS 201.3.11.2. The Logical Framework will be shared and finalized in collaboration with the Partnership for Education partners after award.

Q.3: Point 2.2.3 on the logic tree indicates that the Testing awardee will "Develop & implement a plan for classroom-level teacher supported EGRA/EGMAs," while pages 19-20 in the RFA and the responses to questions 32 and 33 indicate that it is the Learning partner that must "building on the EGRA model ... include step-by-step instructions a typical teacher will use for assessing pupil learning." Please clarify whether Learning should include a budget for development of EGRA-referenced classroom-level assessment, and if so, clarify the different expectations of the Testing and Learning classroom assessment activities.

A.3: Testing is responsible for the EGRA-referenced classroom assessments. As per the RFA, the Learning Applicant will propose any pupil assessment “building on the EGRA model.”

Q.4: Please clarify the difference between the RFA assertion that the Learning awardee should “work closely with the MOE and GES to monitor the implementation of the DRGs and the achievement of planned results” and the logic tree’s assignment of responsibility to the Funding awardee for “auditing MOE/GES financial returns.” Will the Funding award conduct the financial monitoring of the DRGs or should Learning include that function in its budget?

A.4: Learning should not include the financial monitoring function in their budget. The Funding activity will be responsible for conducting required assessments as per ADS 220/22 to determine the financial and programmatic risk and capacity of Ghanaian government institutions and local organizations to receive direct government-to-government funding from USAID. Funding will also support the provision of financial services related to fund use and liquidations, including financial monitoring. Learning will be responsible for providing technical assistance on financial management and other relevant areas, based on the findings of the assessments and financial monitoring activities conducted through Funding.

Q.5: If support is to be provided to all Colleges of Education, is there also an obligation to provide support for distance education for Basic Teachers, including the Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education (UTDBE)?

A.5: The Learning Recipient is not requested to support UTDBE.

Q.6: In the response to Question #11, USAID provided funding estimates. Can we consider these plug figures, and can USAID provide additional details of how these figures were determined?

A.6: These are USAID estimates.

Q.7: On page 56, the RFA states: “USAID anticipates that at least half of the planned resources for the *USAID Partnership for Education: Learning* will be allocated over the first and second year for activities to be implemented, based on the availability of funds.” The response to Question #42 further states:“USAID confirms (a) at least 35.9 million (appr. half of total award) should be allocated in Year 1 and 2.” The funding to the government entities in Years 1 and 2, as noted in response to Question #11, totals over $38 million -- already exceeding “half of the award.” This does not include any costs for implementing partner staffing, travel, operating and other activity costs. Can USAID please clarify?

A.7: Yes, at least half should go into years one and two. As per the RFA, Applicants will develop and propose a management plan based on their technical approach.

Q.8: Given the large percent of the project budget that USAID has requested be passed to the government of Ghana under Learning, will USAID allow the required 10% match to be calculated against the remaining budget after all grants to government institutions (as outlined in the response to question 11) have been excluded?

A.8: Applicant to propose a minimum of 10% cost share on overall total estimated cost.

Q.9: The work of the M+E contractors (both the M+E and Evaluating Systems contractors), as well as that of Testing, seem to be potentially duplicative of work to be done under Learning, particularly in the areas of data-driven decision making and building the capacity of the Ministry's/GES' systems.

A.9: Evaluating Systems and M&E Support are intended to support USAID efforts, whether through implementing partners or direct funding, towards achieving DO4 and related GOG goals, priorities and objectives.

Q.10: The assignment to the Textbook and Learning Materials Program of the task of "Print & distribute KG1-P3 learning materials in … literacy & numeracy" overlaps with Learning's mandate. How is that work to be coordinated with the printing and distribution of the literacy materials through GES under Learning?

A.10: TLMP activity ended in June 2014. The work is to be coordinated through GES under Learning.

Q.11: On page 37, the RFA states, "USAID Partnership for Education Learning will have the lead technical assistance role for the MOE/GES and manage disbursement of funds to MOE, GES, NTB, NTC, NCCA and other local education organizations."

a) Does USAID mean disbursement as defined in the ADS Glossary:
"Payments made by the Agency to other parties using cash, check, or electronic transfer"

A.11: a) Applicants are to propose disbursement mechanism based on their technical approach. Once USAID direct agreements are made, Learning will still have a lead technical assistance role as per the RFA to accompany the use of government to government funding.

b) Is it the Mission's intent to have the recipient write lump sum checks to the respective targeted education entities in accordance with the provided chart or for the recipient to enter into subawards for the amounts indicated in the provided chart to cover interventions/activities in the first two years per the chart's year 1 and year 2 estimates, or instead are these amounts meant to be distributed over the life of the project?

A.11: b) See above

c) Will the disbursements be tied to conditions precedent? If so, are these conditions precedent those that can be found in the Mission's DOAG with the targeted education entities?

A.11: c) See above.

d) Is the Mission expecting the recipient to establish a Project Management Unit (PMU) to manage these funds?

A.11: d) See above

e) In accordance with ADS 350.3.5, host governments must contribute a minimum of 25% to obligations made under bilateral agreements. In light of this will the Mission reduce the cost share base to exclude amounts disbursed directly to the targeted education entities?

A.11: e) The ADS 350.3.5 is relevant to host governments cost share and does not affect the IP. See response A.8 for Applicant's cost share minimum.

Q.12: USAID Ghana provides a table that shows proposed grant allocations to Government of Ghana institutions (e.g. MOE/GES, UCC/UEW). Based on the chart, the estimated total amount expected to be disbursed in the first two years of the Ghana Learning is $38,426,628.

From USAID's response, it is not clear if the $38,426,628 is for direct disbursements by the Recipient to the government institutions identified in A11. Please clarify your earlier response.

If the estimated $38,426,628 is for direct disbursements, please confirm that the balance of $33,373,372 is what remains for Ghana Learning program activities to be implemented by the Recipient, excluding the disbursement grants.

A.12: Barring any unforeseen circumstances, the current estimated amount for activity areas in the table is what USAID foresees as estimates for those entities, followed by direct agreements to these entities by USAID. Likewise, the overall Learning TEC is an estimate. Applicants should confirm with GOG for costs per area if possible. USAID has not directed the Applicants in a particular modality for channeling or using implementation funds, as the modality used should depend on the technical approach proposed and management structure associated with it. Applicant cost applications are to be prepared as per the Cost/Business application instructions provided in the RFA and are expected to derive from their proposed technical approach.

Q.13: Please clarify if Recipients will be contractually and financially responsible for any findings that might result from audits or financial reviews of the expenditure of funds that are made directly by the Recipient to Ghanaian government institutions?

A.13: Audit findings and recommendations can be made pertaining to IPs, USAID and host governments. Recipients, USAID and host government are expected to exercise due care and take responsibility for compliance with the applicable terms and provisions of the agreement, including those applicable to sub-awards. Responsibility for resolution of any particular finding would depend on the nature of the finding.

Q.14: Please clarify if the encouraged 10% cost share is a percentage based on only the $33,373,372 portion of the award that would be directly implemented by the Recipient, and not on the total value of the award which includes the pass through grant portion of $38,426,628.

A.14: See response provided in A.8.

Q.15: If it is confirmed by USAID that $38,426,628 of the full value of the award is to be disbursed by the Recipient to Ghanaian government institutions, please clarify how the Recipient would apply indirect costs for the disbursed fund? Would they be applied to the $38,426,628 thus effectively reducing the amount disbursed, or would indirect costs be applied to the remaining funds available for direct spending by the Recipient?

A.15: Indirect costs should be applied in accordance with the applicant's Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA).

Q.16: While specific guidance is given on the District Reading Grants (i.e. expected outcomes, expected outputs and illustrative activities), none are provided for Government of Ghana institutional grant schedule that was shared in the RFA clarifications. Rather than assume which sub-component under which this falls and also expected outcomes, outputs and activities, would USAID kindly provide more specific guidance as this will inform the monitoring and evaluation too.

A.16: The RFA clearly lays out expected outcomes, expected outputs and illustrative activities for all work. We look forward to Applicants proposing their best technical and cost applications based on their best reading and understanding of the RFA, as per the evaluation criteria.

Note: The above USAID clarifications conclude the round of questions related to the above referenced RFA. USAID/Ghana will not be answering further questions.

[END OF AMENDMENT No. 02]