



USAID | GUINEA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Date: September 20, 2023

To: Potential Applicants

From: Chitahka Floore, Director Regional Acquisition & Assistance Office

Reference: Citizen Observation for Democratic Elections (CODE) Activity
Notice of Funding Opportunity No.: 72067523RFA00003

Subject: Amendment No. 1

The purpose of this amendment is to **provide responses to questions received** by the due date of September 13, 2023. Questions and answers are found in Attachment A.

Except as provided herein, all terms and conditions of the original NOFO issued on September 1, 2023 remains unchanged and in full force and effect.

ATTACHMENT A

General Questions

Question # 1 - Do you confirm that the submission could combine both support to a coalition of domestic observers and the deployment of an International Elections Observation Mission (IEOM)?

USAID Response to Question # 1 - Please refer to Objective 1: Support data driven domestic long and short-term observation efforts that respect international standards and increase trust in electoral outcomes (page 11) and IR. 1.3. International Long- and short-term observers (ILTOs/ISTOs) are deployed. USAID encourages the recipient to support the deployment of ILTOs and ISTOs to the extent possible and within the budget, page 13 of the NOFO.

Question # 2 - Does USAID Guinea Conakry already have an established Citizen Network that could be the main beneficiary, or it is to be set?

USAID Response to Question # 2 - No. The Recipient is responsible for selecting the CSOs.

Question # 3 - Would USAID please provide applicants with the Guinea Local Compensation Plan?

USAID Response to Question # 3 -

Positions	Grades	Lower Limit Guinean Franc	Upper Limit Guinean Franc
Entry-Level Professionals (Administrative, Junior Officers, etc.)	1-6	48,432,160	163,108,479
Mid-Level Professionals	7-9	133,208,483	330,698,584
Senior-Level Professionals	10-12	300,147,811	739,880,763

Question # 4 - USAID has included a template as part of the solicitation (Attachment 1). Can USAID confirm that applicants may use their own templates, given that all of the applicants include all information as requested by the template?

USAID Response to Question # 4 -In order to have a harmonized budget, USAID/Guinea encourages Applicants to use the Attachment 1 Excel sheet template.

Section A – Program Description

Question #5 – Page 12, Section A.3.2. Description of Results and their Relationship to the

Objectives - Long-term observers can be deployed from between 3-6 months to six weeks ahead of an election, with the number of reports issued during varying depending on this period. How long is USAID anticipating such a long-term deployment as the NOFO states, 'The DLTOs should also serve as a mechanism to alert of issues as they arise for corrective measures to be taken for improvement as the process evolves'.

USAID Response to Question # 5 - USAID does not propose any time frame for DLTO. The Applicant should propose the DLTO timeframe that responds to the requirements of the NOFO. The NOFO page 12 states that *"The Recipient should describe the methodologies..."*.

Question #6 – Page 17, Section A.4.4. Human Rights – The NOFO states "The Recipient should use the Human Rights Alert System or early warning system for DLTOs to report human rights violations related to the elections in real time to allow for corrective and preventive measures to be advocated for and implemented throughout the electoral process." Will USAID please clarify what the "Human Rights Alert System" in Guinea is and who operates it?

USAID Response to Question # 6 - *The human rights alert system or early warning system" is any system or mechanism that USAID expects the Recipient to use or put in place "for DLTOs to report human rights violations related to the elections in real time to allow for corrective and preventive measures to be advocated for and implemented throughout the electoral process".*

Question #7 – The NOFO requests that the project tracks 'Number of observation recommendations implemented'. Can the mission confirm that these are the number of observations implemented throughout the pre-election period (based on DLTO reports) and after election day to the close of the project, as it may be that some observations are longer term and not implemented within the timeframe of the project?

USAID Response to Question # 7 - USAID does NOT envision controlling any observation elements produced beyond the CODE Activity period of performance as stated on p. 18 of the NOFO, Section B.3., or as stated on p. 80, Section F.3. B. *Performance Reporting*, or as might be directed by the Agreement Officer during the implementation.

Question #8 – Where it might be impossible for women to be deployed as STOs or LTOs across remote areas of the country and away from family due to cultural or other constraints, is USAID willing to cover the addition costs of a chaperone to accompany them in order to ensure women's equal participation across the project?

USAID Response to Question # 8 - USAID expects the Recipient to describe the methodologies and techniques (pp. 12-13). Please also refer to NOFO page 16, Section A.4.3. Gender and

social inclusion and page 18, Section B.1.: “Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide \$6M in total USAID funding over a three-year period”.

Section B – Federal Award Information

Question # 9 - Could you, please, tell us when you want the program to kick off?

USAID Response to Question # 9 -USAID/Guinea anticipates issuing an award on/about the second quarter of FY 2024.

Question #10—As the RFA indicates that the start date will be upon award signature, can USAID designate an illustrative start date for applicants to use for this program?

USAID Response to Question # 10—Please see answer to question # 9 above.

Section C – Eligibility Information

Question #11— Can USAID please request that all partnerships with local organizations be non-exclusive?

USAID Response to Question # 11 – Partnerships with local organizations should be limited to local CSOs that are not politically aligned and are credible and trusted in the communities as being neutral as stated on page 16 of the NOFO.

Section D – Application and Submission Information

Question #12 – Page 25, Section D.3. General Content and Form of Application – The NOFO states “Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer.” Could USAID please confirm that applicants may submit up to two pages for the cover letter?

USAID Response to Question # 12 -There is no page limitation for the cover letter which is different from the cover page. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria, as stated on page 25 of the NOFO.

Question #13 – Page 26, Section D.3. General Content and Form of Application – Would USAID please allow for applicants to use 10 pt. fonts for tables?

USAID Response to Question # 13 - Tables must comply with the 12-point Calibri font requirement.

Question #14– Page 26, Section D.3 General Content and Form of Application - Can USAID please confirm that offerors are able to use a font other than Calibri for graphs and charts?

USAID Response to Question # 14 - Calibri font can be used for graphs and charts but must remain legible without magnification.

Question #15– Pages 28-29, D.5. Technical Application Format - Would USAID please consider the addition of a one-page annex to allow for a full organizational chart in addition to the two-page staffing structure annex?

USAID Response to Question # 15 - The maximum page allowed under Annex Staffing Structure has been granted to 3 pages.

Question #16 – Page 29, Section D.5. Technical Application Format – The NOFO states “Applicants must designate Key Personnel positions and should include a brief description of their technical background and qualifications in accordance with the Program implementation requirements.” Can USAID please confirm that applicants are expected to propose up to two key personnel candidates?

USAID Response to Question # 16 - USAID/Guinea expects potential applicants to identify key personnel’s qualifications and positions that will be required in the implementation of their proposed activity approach. It’s USAID best practices that the number of Key Personnel designated for any award must not be more than five individuals.

Question #17 – Page 29, Section D.5. Technical Application Format – “Staffing Structure, no more than 2 pages, providing an overview of the staff proposed to manage the activity.” Can USAID please clarify the difference between the “Staffing Plan” required in the “Management Plan, Organizational Capacity, Staffing Plan and Key Personnel” section and the two page “Staffing Structure” required in the Annex? Does USAID intend for the “Staffing Structure” in the Annex to be an organizational chart?

USAID Response to Question # 17 - The pages in the Staffing Structure Annex are to allow the applicant to provide additional information (if needed) to supplement the staffing plan under “Management Plan, Organizational Capacity, Staffing Plan and Key Personnel”. Please see answer to question # 15.

Question #18 – Page 29, Section D.5. Technical Application Format – Can USAID please clarify the level of detail and the difference between the “Draft Year 1 Work Plan” and the “Draft Implementation Plan” required in the Annex?

USAID Response to Question # 18 - The draft Year 1 work plan will cover only the year 1 of activity implementation. The draft implementation plan will cover the entire three-year period of CODE performance.

Question #19 – Page 29, Section D.5. Technical Application Format – “Qualifications and resumes of key personnel with a signed statement of commitment (maximum 3 pages per key personnel).” Can USAID please confirm that the Statement of Commitment is included in the 3-page limit?

USAID Response to Question # 19 - The statement of commitment is excluded from the 3 pages limited to the qualifications, resumes and references of proposed key personnel.

Question #20 – Page 29, Section D.5. Technical Application Format – Can USAID please confirm that the signed statement of commitment is an additional page to the three-page qualifications, resume and references for each of the proposed key personnel positions?

USAID Response to Question # 20 - Please see answer to question # 19 above.

Question #21 –Section D.5. Technical Application Format – Can USAID please confirm that applicants should not submit past performance references as part of their application; they will only be requested by the apparently successful applicant, along with the branding and marking form?

USAID Response to Question # 21 – Please see pages 29 and 36 respectively of the NOFO. The past performance template and Branding Strategy and Marking Plan are to be submitted only by the Apparent Successful Applicant.

Question #22 – Section D.5. Technical Application Format – Can USAID please clarify the contents for the proposed Staffing Structure annex vis-a-vis the information to be provided in the Staffing Plan section of the technical proposal?

USAID Response to Question # 22 - Please see answer to questions # 15 and 17 above.

Question #23 –Section D.5. Technical Application Format – For the proposed key personnel positions, can USAID confirm that applicants only need to provide CVs (three page maximum), letters of commitment, and three references?

USAID Response to Question # 23 - Please see answer to question # 19 above.

Question #24 –Section D.5. Technical Application Format – As the NOFO currently does not specify the number of key personnel nor the specific positions required, do applicants have the

latitude to designate which positions are considered key personnel for this application, along with the number of key positions?

USAID Response to Question # 24 - Please see answer to question # 16 above.

Question #25 – Pages 31-33, Section D.6(d) - Budget and Budget Narrative - The solicitation includes a list of cost categories that does not align with the included budget template or the standard cost categories included on the SF-424A form. Can USAID confirm applicants should use the standard cost categories (Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Construction, Other Direct Costs, and Indirect Costs)?

USAID Response to Question # 25 -Confirmed. Please use the standard cost categories which match with the cost categories under the Excel sheet provided as Attachment 1.

Section F – Federal Award Administration Information

Question #26 – Section F.3.A. Financial Reporting notes that final financial reports are due within 90 calendar days after the agreement end date; however, 2 CFR 200.329(c)(1) now allows for 120 days. Could USAID kindly confirm if it will update to reflect this?

USAID Response to Question # 26 – Confirmed. As stated in 2 CFR 200.344, the final performance report is due 120 calendar days after the agreement end date.

Question #27 – Section F.3.B. Performance Reporting Table 1 notes that a draft final performance report is due 30 days after the activity completion date with the final submitted no later than 90 days post activity. However, 2 CFR 200.344 does not include any requirement for a draft final report to be submitted prior to the completion of the award, and 2 CFR 200.329(c)(1) now allows for 120 days to submit the final performance report. Could USAID kindly confirm if it will update to reflect this?

USAID Response to Question # 27 -USAID/Guinea requires that a draft performance report be submitted 30 days before the end of the award to allow the Agreement Officer's Representative to provide comments on the information. Under 2 CFR 200.344, the final performance report can be submitted not later than 120 calendar days after the end date of the award period of performance.