



Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
No. RFA-523-17-000001
Comunidades y Energías Renovables (CER)

Issue Date:	February 27, 2017
Deadline for Question/Clarifications:	March 17, 2017
Closing Date for Receipt of Concept Papers:	April 19, 2017
Closing Time:	12:00 noon (Mexico City time)

To whom it may concern:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) seeks applications from qualified Mexican organizations to fund an activity entitled *Comunidades y Energías Renovables (CER, Spanish acronym)*. Eligibility for this award is restricted to Mexican Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Please see Section C for eligibility requirements.

Subject to the availability of funds, an award will be made to a responsible applicant (s) whose application(s) best meets the eligibility criteria of this funding opportunity. One (1) award is anticipated as a result of this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO). USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The successful Applicant will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives.

For the purposes of this NOFO the term "Grant" is the same as "Cooperative Agreement" or "Fixed Amount Award"; "Grantee" is with the same as "Recipient"; and "Grant Officer" is the same as "Agreement Officer". Eligible organizations interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this funding opportunity thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements, and the eligibility process.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov and may be amended. Potential applicants should regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information regarding this NOFO.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the NOFO has been downloaded from the internet in its entirety as USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or the conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

Please send any questions to mexicoaa@usaid.gov. The deadline for questions is shown above.

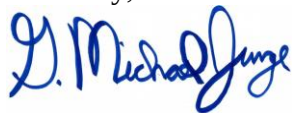
Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant and all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

NOTE: We have included a courtesy translation of this NOFO in Spanish. If there is a discrepancy between the versions, the English version will prevail.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,



Control Number: 2017-0044

G. Michael Junge
Agreement Officer
USAID/Mexico

SECTION A - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Expansion of renewable energy development in Mexico has experienced some delays and resistance, impeding it from remaining on target to meet its international commitments. Key factors contributing to these delays and resistance include misinformation, a regulatory process that is not widely understood or clear, and the inconsistent and often delayed involvement of local communities, including indigenous communities, throughout the process. These factors together create an environment where the different stakeholders experience asymmetries in knowledge and involvement, leading to conflict.

A.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of the three-year activity, called Comunidades y Energías Renovables (CER, Spanish acronym), is to encourage a transparent process for renewable energy development, build trust between stakeholders, reduce misinformation and enhance local community engagement and approval of renewable energy projects. The goal is to foster a process for renewable energy development that meaningfully, and in a timely manner, engages all stakeholders, including local communities, the Government of Mexico (GOM) (at all levels; federal, state, and municipalities), civil society, and the private sector. In particular, the activity will help ensure that local communities, especially indigenous communities, are informed early so that they can be included in the planning process. This will hopefully lessen sources of conflict, emphasize autonomy and enhance the right to self-determination.

A.3 BACKGROUND

Progress on Renewable Energy

Through its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions presented at the Conference of Parties in Paris in December 2015, GOM pledged by 2030 a 22 percent reduction in GHG emissions relative to business as usual, and pledged by 2024 that 35¹ percent of its energy would come from clean sources, such as renewable energy. To a large extent these ambitious goals will be implemented by the private sector, which has taken an increasingly large role in the electricity sector. With falling prices for wind and solar projects, USAID/Mexico anticipates the private sector will be developing a large number of renewable energy projects in areas determined well suited for wind or solar energy generation, which tend to be largely rural areas. Nevertheless, according to the Mexican chapter of Climate Transparency, current investment levels are only 28% of what is required for Mexico to meet its commitments. Should this trend continue, Mexico would have a hard time to reduce its emissions levels by 2030.

Social Conflict

With greater investment in renewable energy in Mexico, there have been incidents where communities' negative reaction to projects has led to resistance and even open conflict. In Oaxaca, a state of Mexico known for having strong winds, privately owned wind projects developed in the late 2000's. Soon

¹ Mexico, Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, available at <http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Mexico/1/MEXICO%20INDC%2003.30.2015.pdf>.

thereafter, community conflict began to emerge, the most famous being the Mareña Wind Project². In this example, some members from the San Dionisio del Mar community blocked access roads and took over the town hall to block the construction of the planned 396 megawatt project. There have also been instances of conflicts turning violent. In a protest against the 225MW Piedra Larga project³, further north in Oaxaca, a man was shot dead.

The causes for the conflicts are numerous and complicated, but some key factors include the following: (1) a perceived lack of community consultation and involvement in project planning, design, and execution; (2) a perceived inequitable distribution of benefits associated with projects; (3) misinformation or a lack of information regarding renewable energy technology and its impacts; and, (4) lack of a clear regulatory framework regarding permitting, urban and rural development planning, and consultations with indigenous communities.

Having learned from the missteps of early energy projects, many stakeholders, including the Government of Mexico, now agree that: (a) communities must be consulted early in the process, though precisely when is still an issue of contention, and this consultation should continue throughout the project implementation; (b) communities must be provided accurate information regarding the projects and its potential impacts; and (c) both rent payments for landowners and benefits for the entire community must be carefully negotiated and worked into the project budget, as early as possible.

A.4 STAKEHOLDERS

Multiple stakeholders have interests in this topic and would all benefit from a more transparent, clear and equitable process. The GOM is the prime actor responsible for governance and clean energy targets for Mexico, and has already made some progress to address social risks. It has mandated that all energy projects conduct Social Impact Assessments (SIAs), accompanied by a Social Management Plan to mitigate and address impacts, in addition to the previously required Environmental Impact Assessment. The Energy Ministry (SENER, acronym in Spanish) is charged with reviewing the SIAs, and, where indigenous populations are identified, conducting indigenous consultations. Since the SIA policies are new, and as only a handful of indigenous consultations have been conducted, SENER could benefit from additional support, as it deepens its implementation of these new mandates.

However, there are other stakeholders who are indispensable when trying to address this problem and they also need to be considered when developing an activity. The private sector has invested millions of dollars in projects and would greatly benefit from a more transparent process. They would also benefit through the institution and adoption of clear guidelines based on international best practices on how to engage with communities. With a clear understanding of all the steps required and how to best engage with local communities, they could lower risks associated with their investment by securing greater acceptance from the local communities. Communities are also a key stakeholder and they would benefit from early and transparent participation as they would be able to better negotiate for more equitable benefits and positive economic growth for their communities. NGOs are mostly involved in the monitoring of projects and advocacy of minority groups. By including NGOs, it will help ensure that they are better informed to ensure more accurate monitoring and advocacy. Each stakeholder must be included and involved in the CER activity as they all have specific interests and play key, unique roles. No solution would be complete

² Howe, Cymene, "Anthropocenic Ecoauthority: The Winds of Oaxaca." *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 87, No. 2, p. 381-404

³ <http://www.windpowermonthly.com/article/1142894/dealing-conflict>

without including all stakeholders and, in fact, success would be undermined if certain stakeholder groups were left out.

A.5 OBJECTIVES AND INTENDED RESULTS

The purpose of the three-year activity entitled *Comunidades y Energías Renovables (CER)* is to encourage a transparent process for renewable energy development, build trust between stakeholders, reduce misinformation and enhance local community engagement and approval of renewable energy projects. The expected outcome of CER is that an open and transparent process for local communities to participate with government, private sector and NGOs in the planning of renewable energy investment is established, and asymmetries in information among stakeholder groups are corrected, so that the communities have greater control over the decision-making processes and fully realize their right to self-determination.

Attainments of this outcome will be measured by:

- i. Number of communities participating in early planning stages of renewable energy projects with an increased respect for their communities' rights, including self-determination (participants disaggregated by gender);
- ii. Number of private sector companies which have adopted international best practices in indigenous consultations, community engagement, social benefit arrangements and cultural sensitivity;
- iii. Number civil society members (NGOs and/or communities) more knowledgeable about renewable energy development so that misinformation is reduced to enable better monitoring and advocacy for positive development outcomes.
- iv. Number of renewable energy projects in a specific geographical area meeting operational deadlines, tracked and compared over time,
- v. Number of GOM policies and/procedures adopted or strengthened to increase transparency.

Applicants can, and are encouraged, to propose alternative sources for measuring program outcomes if appropriate.

A.6 LINKAGES WITH USAID/MEXICO'S COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION STRATEGY

In furtherance of the US Government's Global Climate Change Initiative, USAID/Mexico's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) identifies the reduction of GHG emissions in targeted key sectors as a Development Objective. Expanding renewable energy generation to replace fossil-based generation reduces GHG emissions; however, emerging conflicts threaten to impede or slow the expansion of renewable energy and USAID would like to support the GOM in mitigating these conflicts.

USAID would not only like to contribute to establishing an environment conducive to expanding renewable energy generation, but would also like to ensure that the expansion is done so in the most inclusive, equitable and fair way possible, with the respect to human rights, including the right of indigenous people to self-determination. Empowering communities to meaningfully engage with key actors around wind and/or solar energy investments should reduce the risk of resistance or conflict, and also strengthen policy implementation and institutional capacity-building, in line with USAID's CDCS.

A.7 GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS AND TARGET COMMUNITIES

The work will focus on one or more geographical areas, and should provide a model or lessons learned for other states.

A.8 GENDER

This project must pay particular attention to gender and ensure that all segments of communities are included and impacted equitably. Activities involving renewable energy development could impact men and women differently and this needs to be carefully analyzed and addressed. This activity's aim is to improve stakeholder collaboration, especially in local communities. Applicants must actively identify opportunities for increasing women's involvement in decision making and expanding the distribution of benefits from renewable energy development. For example, meetings and trainings with the local communities must be held at convenient times and places and in languages that are conducive to broad participation by women and marginalized groups. Any gender disparities must be identified and analyzed and the applicant must develop a plan in order to actively address any disparities.

A.9 SUSTAINABILITY

With regards to sustainability, this activity seeks to make the system, i.e. legal, regulatory, and compliance, more inclusive and transparent. By instituting systemic change, sustainability is achieved as the system continues after the life of the project. Tools created by the project should continue to be used after the life of the project. Additionally, this project seeks to work in specific communities at the grassroots level. If successful, this activity can be used as a model of best practices when engaging and working with the communities with the hope that this model can be applied and replicated in other states in Mexico. This grassroots engagement will also provide lessons learned and these lessons will be documented and shared with all stakeholders to maximize learning and sustainability.

A.10 AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION

The authorizing legislation is the Foreign Affairs Act of 1961, as amended. The award will be subject to 2 CFR 700 and 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

SECTION B - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 ESTIMATE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED

Subject to funding availability, USAID intends to provide one award with a maximum ceiling of \$1,825,000 over a three-year period. Actual funding amounts are subject to availability of funds.

USAID intends to award one (1) cooperative agreement or Fixed Amount Award pursuant to this NOFO. USAID reserves the right to fund any one or none of the applications submitted.

B.2 START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE FOR FEDERAL AWARDS

The period of performance anticipated herein is three (3) years. The estimated start date will be upon the signature of the award.

B.3 SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

In the case of a Cooperative Agreement, USAID will be substantially involved in the program and management performance of any awarded Cooperative Agreement through technical collaboration on specified program interventions. Examples of USAID responsibilities are as follows. USAID (including the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) for a cooperative agreement provided through USAID) might provide:

- a) Approval of the recipient's implementation plans
- b) Approval of specified key personnel
- c) Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation, such as, involvement in selection of advisory committee members; concurrence of substantive provisions of sub-awards; approval of the recipient's monitoring and evaluation plans; or monitoring specified kinds of directions or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects.

B.4 TITLE TO PROPERTY

Property title under the resulting agreement shall vest with the recipient in accordance with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.313.

B.5 AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE

The authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services under this award is 937. Code 937 is defined as the United States, the cooperating/recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, and excluding prohibited sources.

B.6 PURPOSE OF THE AWARD

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the activity entitled Comunidades y Energías Renovables (CER), which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be

responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices.

The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. The Recipient using its own unique combination of staff, facilities, and experience, has the primary responsibility for employing whatever form of sound organization and management techniques may be necessary in order to assure proper and efficient administration of the resulting award.

SECTION C - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

This NOFO is limited to local Mexican organizations only and therefore, only Mexican non-governmental organizations may submit applications under this NOFO. USAID defines a local Mexican organization as one that:

- Is organized under the laws of Mexico
- Is not a governmental entity
- Has its principal place of business in Mexico
- Is majority-owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Mexico or is managed by the governing body, the majority of whose members are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Mexico, and
- Is not controlled by a foreign entity or by an individual or individuals who are not citizens or permanent residents of Mexico

The term “control” or controlled by” in the above definition means having a majority ownership or beneficial interest, or the power, either directly or indirectly, whether exercised or exercisable, to control the election, appointment, or tenure of the organization’s managers or a majority of the organization’s governing body by any means, e.g., ownership, contract, or operation of law. The term “Foreign Entity” means an organization that fails to meet any part of the “local organization” definition.

USAID welcomes applications from organizations which have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The Recipient must be a responsible entity. The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to conduct an examination that will determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. The successful applicant(s) will be subject to a responsibility determination assessment (Non-U.S. Organization Pre-Award Survey (NUPAS))

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303sam.pdf>) by the Agreement Officer (AO).

NOTE: If the successful offeror will be partnering or subcontracting any part of the work, it must only be with other Mexican organizations.

Participation of Faith-Based and Community Organizations

In accordance with [Executive Order 13279, Equal Protection for the Laws for Faith-Based and Community Organizations](#), and [22 CFR 205, Participation by Religious Organizations in USAID Programs](#), these organizations are eligible to participate in USAID programs as long as they carry out eligible activities in accordance with all program requirements and other applicable requirements

governing the conduct of USAID-funded activities, including those prohibiting the use of direct financial assistance from USAID to engage in inherently religious activities (see [22 CFR 205.1\(f\)](#)).

C.2 COST SHARE CONTRIBUTION

Cost share refers to the resources a Recipient contributes to the total cost of a cooperative agreement, which may be cash or in-kind contributions. Such contributions may be mobilized from the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to the implementation of activities at the country level. Applicants are encouraged to leverage other resources for the project, and the type, amount, and source should be described in the Concept Paper, as the amount proposed for cost share will be assessed in the Concept Paper phase of the NFO (Phase 1). In this NFO, cost share is encouraged, but not required. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements, see 2 CFR 200.306. Please note that the Recipient will be legally liable to comply with the cost share contribution established in the resulting cooperative agreement.

C.3 LIMITATION ON SUBMISSIONS

Multiple concept papers may be submitted by an organization.

C.4 OTHER

More information on how to work with USAID may be found at:
[https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/trainings-how-work-usaid/es\(Spanish\)](https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/trainings-how-work-usaid/es(Spanish)).

SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 AGENCY POINTS OF CONTACT

USAID/Mexico

G. Michael Junge, Agreement Officer

Ingrid Rangel, Acquisition & Assistance Specialist

Email: mexicoaa@usaid.gov

Questions and Answers: All questions regarding this NOFO must be submitted in writing no later than the date and time specified on the front page of the NOFO. All responses to questions will be provided as an amendment to this NOFO on grants.gov.

D.2 INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS

USAID/Mexico seeks applications that best meet the requirements of this solicitation (see Section A for requirements and Section E for evaluation criteria). Applicants are asked to propose specific and creative solutions to the challenges as described in Section A. Because of the possible complex nature of the work whereby many local organizations will not have all of the required skills, it is likely that the organization will need to form a partnership between the NGO and another entity. For example, an organization may have skills in working with local communities but they do not have specific skills in developing tools which can be used as a model for the private sector to use to negotiate with communities. In this case, applicants must identify specific partners (for profit companies or nongovernmental organizations) who have the complementary specializations with whom the applicant will collaborate. Unless the applicant can demonstrate skill in all areas of the work proposed, USAID will more favorably view those applications with partnerships with different stakeholder groups (i.e. partnerships between NGOs and the private sector).

To be considered for this opportunity, applicants must submit a concept paper with specific activities described, specific indicators proposed on how to measure the outputs, a management plan (including key staff and CV of partner entities), and past performance (maximum of 8 pages – with an expectation that 1 page will be the cover letter, 3 pages will be devoted to describing the concept, and 3 pages for a management plan and past performance and 1 page will be for budget/cost share summary).

D.3 THE APPLICATION PROCESS

USAID will follow a three-tier selection process as follows:

- Phase 1: Concept paper (s) - due date specified on the cover page of this NOFO.
- Phase 2: Selected Concept paper (s) will be invited to provide an oral presentation.
- Phase 3: Full application – Once USAID/Mexico has selected a concept paper which it believes accomplishes the requirements of this solicitation as stated in Sections A and E, the evaluation criteria, USAID/Mexico will provide further instructions on how to complete a full application.

Concept papers must be submitted by the established date and time indicated in this NOFO. If a concept paper is not received by USAID by the specified date and time, it may be excluded from further consideration.

a. Concept Papers

Applicants must first submit a concept paper electronically to the following e-mail account: mexicoaa@usaid.gov. The concept paper must not exceed eight (8) pages (including cover page and summary budget). The concept paper must be submitted in Microsoft Word 2010 format. The e-mail must have the following subject: "USAID/Mexico NOFO No. RFA-523-17-000001".

The concept paper must give USAID a clear understanding of the proposed project. It is not intended to provide budget detail, staffing plans, organization background, or similar detailed information. The concept paper is to be about the project concept itself, concisely describing the purpose of the project, the geographic locations where the activities will be conducted, the timeframe for implementation, the number and description of the people or organization (s) that will benefit from this project, a general statement of the approach and expected results, and an outline of expected management arrangements. Please note that the amount of funds requested, including any expected cost share resources, must be stated in a separate page. The concept paper is extremely important as competition will be achieved once a concept paper has been selected.

Concept paper format:

A sample concept paper template is provided in Attachment 1 to this NOFO. Applicants are encouraged to utilize the attached templates when submitting a concept paper to USAID. Concept papers may be submitted in Spanish or English. The concept paper will be reviewed by a panel of USAID experts who will determine whether the concept has sufficient technical merit to warrant selection. Generally, concept papers will be reviewed primarily on technical merit, specifically the degree to which they contribute the achievement of objectives outlined in the NOFO. Concept papers will also be reviewed on the basis of whether they include public-private partnership and cost/in-kind contributions. USAID will also review the degree to which they comply with the geographic location, cross-cutting practices, and budget parameters as stated in the NOFO. Multiple concept papers may be submitted by an organization.

b. Full Application:

If the Concept Paper is selected by USAID, the USAID Agreement Officer will provide specific written requirements and instructions for submitting a full application, including submission of an SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance", mandatory certifications, and a pre-award responsibility decision by the Agreement Officer. Only the selected organization will receive these instructions.

D.4 FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

USAID policy is not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost principle under 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. of the Uniform Administrative Requirements may be paid under the anticipated award.

D.5 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/CROSS CUTTING PRACTICES

Environmental Procedures

Awards are subject to an initial environmental examination before final approval. Further information may be found at 22 CFR 216.

Controlling Language

It is USAID policy that English is the official language of all award documents because a translation may not convey the full meaning of the original. Therefore, any resulting awards under this NOFO will be in English only.

Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of the NOFO.

SECTION E - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 EVALUATION OF CONCEPT PAPERS

Evaluation of concept papers will be made in three steps. The first step will check for adherence of the following mandatory requirements:

First Step:

1. Submission received prior to the end date of the solicitation. Late submissions may be rejected.
2. Submission has a maximum of 8 pages. Proposals that exceed 8 pages can either be rejected, or only the first 8 pages will be accepted (Agreement Officer's discretion).
3. Included in 8 pages is a Cover Letter, a Concept Outline, a Management Plan and Past Performance, and a Budget/Cost Share summary.
4. Documents are submitted in Word (1 page budget can be submitted in Excel)
5. Documents are submitted in Times New Roman font 12.

Second Step:

Applications that meet the above criteria will then be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria shown in descending order of importance:

These criteria should serve the applicant to: (a) identify the significant matters which applicants must address in their submission and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

The criteria listed below are presented by major category, so that applicants will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of the submission. To be selected for the award, the application must contain, at a minimum, these elements.

Third Step:

The most successful concept papers will be invited to present their concepts to USAID/Mexico from which a successful offeror will be selected.

Evaluation Criteria

The apparent successful applicant whose concept paper is selected for submission of a full application will be evaluated in accordance with the following evaluation criteria which are described in descending order of importance:

- a. Technical Approach:** Demonstrated approach that it is feasible, innovative and appropriate. USAID will review the extent to which the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended results in a specific timeframe. This include reviewing the relevance of the approach to the problem to be addressed, whether the proposed activities are consistent with the objectives sought, how the activities are interrelated, and the proposed approach for monitoring, tracking, and reporting activities and results. USAID will review

specifically for the degree of innovation proposed in the technical approach and the extent to which the applicant has considered innovative partnerships. USAID will review the effectiveness of the applicant's approach to gender issues related to the proposed activities. For applications with a focus on sustaining activities or organizational capacity beyond the life of the award, USAID will review the extent to which the proposed activity promotes, strengthens, and is supported by sustainable local organizations that can champion sound concepts, innovative practices, and changes beyond the life of the award.

Specifically, the applicant must present a clear understanding of the current context of renewable energy development and propose thoughtful, logical, comprehensive and realistic activities which can achieve the intended results listed in Section A (Program Description). Applicants are expected to:

- Give a concise description of the causes of social conflicts between stakeholders related to wind and/or solar energy investments, and barriers to mitigating or addressing these conflicts.
- Specifically identify and describe activities applicant intends to carryout in order to achieve objectives. The Applicant must justify how and why the proposed activities will effectively work with communities to meaningfully engage with key actors regarding wind and/or solar energy investments;
- Discuss the feasibility, sustainability, and scalability of the proposed activities;
- Propose geographic locations applicant intends to work and a justification for their selection; Applicants must propose target communities in specific geographical areas in Mexico with justification of why they were chosen. Chosen communities should be those touched by some early stage of the renewable energy investment process, i.e. initiation, design, planning.
- Select data applicant intends to track to measure outcome;
- Identification of particular challenges related to women, or disadvantaged groups and how the proposed activities will contribute to safeguarding and promoting the interests of these groups.

- b. Management and Staffing Plan:** USAID will review the effectiveness of the approach in terms of internal organizational capability, including technical, administrative and financial management, and proposed staffing. USAID will strongly consider the ability and commitment to rapidly mobilize and start work. Partnerships are strongly encourage and if partnerships are proposed, USAID will review the degree to which roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Applicant must clearly describe each role of each partner and how the project will work together as a whole.

Applicant must identify key personnel and each partner organization with which it intends to work. Applicant must clearly describe each role of each partner and how the project will work together as a whole. Identity of potential program partners from civil society, academia, GOM, local communities, and/or private sector that may assist with implementing the program, as well as any resource contributions partners may provide. Preference will be given to those Applications that include partnerships with private sector actors involved in siting, constructing, or operating solar and wind energy projects. Applicant must describe their and their partners' past performance and include references (minimum of 3 for similar type work). Past performance in the area of conflict management, working with indigenous communities and/or working with private sector in social impacts is highly valued.

- c. **Sustainability:** USAID will review a concise sustainability plan that demonstrates the activity's ability to be self-sufficient or replicable without the necessity of USAID further intervention in the medium and long term. USAID will review the extent to which strengthening of local organizational capacity, leveraging of private sector resources, and/or cost-share commitments are incorporated to enhance the activity's sustainability.
- d. **Past Performance:** USAID will review past performance relative to demonstrated relevant technical experience and successful past performance in activities of similar technical content and scope in developing countries, preferably in Latin America.

Cost Evaluation

While Cost is less important than technical and is not weighted, however, the cost applications of the apparently successful technical application will be evaluated for cost effectiveness including the level of proposed cost share. Other considerations are the completeness of the application, adequacy of budget detail and consistency with elements of the technical application. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability, to be measured for a responsibility determination.

The application with the lowest estimated cost may not be selected if award to a higher priced technical application offers a greater overall benefit for the program. All evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined, are significantly more important than cost. However, estimated cost is an important factor and the estimated cost to the Government increases in importance as competing applications approach equivalence and may become the deciding factor when technical applications are approximately equivalent in merit.

Cost estimates will be analyzed as part of the application evaluation process. Proposed costs may be adjusted, for purposes of evaluation, based on results of the cost analysis and its assessment of reasonableness, completeness, and credibility.

Cost Sharing

Even though cost share contributions are not required, these are highly encouraged; therefore, a slight preference will be given to those applicants who can identify and bring cost share to the project. Non-USAID resources from private firms and institutions (such as equipment, training, level of effort and any in-kind contributions) may be considered part of cost share. Cost sharing may be also demonstrated either through direct funding, beneficiary contributions, in-kind assistance, or a combination thereof. USAID shall make the final determination and assess whether or not the Applicants cost share contributions (e.g. categories or items) meet the standards set in 2 CFR 200.

Review and Selection Process

A review panel established under the direction of the Agreement Officer will evaluate all technical applications. Prior to negotiating an actual award, the Agreement Officer will review the apparently successful applicant's budget to ensure that costs are in compliance with 2 CFR 200 and USAID policies. The costs proposed must be determined to be reasonable, based on the cost application and other

information provided, before an award can be made. Award will be made to the responsible applicant whose application is determined to be the best based on technical and cost factors specified in this NFO.

Cost applications will be evaluated based on cost fairness, completeness and reasonableness. Cost realism is defined as the Applicant's ability to project costs which as realistic to the work to be performed, reflect a clear understanding of the requirements; and are consistent with the Applicant's technical approach. Administrative and management costs will be carefully scrutinized to determine if financial resources are maximized too support the project approach.

Proposed costs may be adjusted, for purposes of evaluation, based on results of the cost analysis, including an assessment of reasonableness, completeness, and realism.

SECTION F - FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 FEDERAL AWARD NOTICES

Upon completion of the evaluation process, the AO may notify the apparently successful awardee that they are being further considered for an award. This notice will be sent electronically to the authorized representatives of the apparent successful applicant. In addition, USAID may provide electronic debriefings to unsuccessful applicants following the procedures included in ADS 303.3.7.2.

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

F.2 ADMINISTRATIVE & NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Any resulting award shall be made and administered in accordance with the following which may be found at <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303>:

- For US organizations in accordance with 2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, and the applicable Standard Provisions.
 - For Non-US Nongovernmental Organizations in accordance with 2 CFR 200 the Standard Provisions for Non-US Non-Governmental Organizations.
 - Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Part 31 for profit organizations
 - ADS 303
-

SECTION G - FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

G. Michael Junge, Agreement Officer
Ingrid Rangel, Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
USAID/Mexico
Email: mexicoaa@usaid.gov

SECTION H - OTHER INFORMATION

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Concept Paper Format

Attachment 1A

Concept Paper Format

(Not to exceed five pages)

Proposed Activity Name:

Timeframe proposed (Estimated Start/End Date):

Applicant Name:

Applicant's Contact Person:

Applicant's Address:

Telephone Number:

Email:

Type of Organization: (Confirm that your organization is a Mexican local organization}

Purpose

[Concisely describe the Activity Purpose/what development problem/issue will be addressed]

Goals and Objectives

[Explain the goals of the activity describing what is the activity trying to achieve]

General Approach

[Include strategy and specific activities]

Geographic Location

[Describe where the activities will be carried out and where they are expected to have an impact.]

Gender and Sustainability

Expected Intended results and Indicators

[Summarize the main expected outputs and outcomes from the activity]

Organizational Capacity

[Describe your organizations technical and administrative capacity.]

Partnership Arrangements

[Describe any expected partnership arrangements in detail, with the names of the partner organizations and their specific role in the activity and contributions.]

History of Performance

[Provide a list of contracts, grants, etc. involving similar or related activities during the past three years. The reference information for these awards must include the performance location, award number (if applicable), a brief description of the work performed, and a point of contact names with current telephone numbers]

Cost Share

Attachment 1B

Cost Information Format

(Submit this page separate from the other sections of the concept paper)

BUDGET LINE ITEMS	TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED FROM USAID (A)	TOTAL COST SHARE PROPOSED (B)	TOTAL COST OF THE PROJECT (A + B)
1. PERSONNEL (SALARIES)			
2. FRINGE BENEFITS			
3. TRAVEL, TRANSPORTATION, AND PERDIEM			
4. EQUIPMENT			
5. SUPPLIES			
6. CONTRACTUAL (SUB-CONTRACTS, SUB-AWARDS)			
7. OTHER DIRECT COSTS			
8. TOTAL COSTS (SUM OF 1-7)			
9. INDIRECT CHARGES			
10. TOTAL (SUM OF 8-9)			