

Attachment A: Questions and Answers

- 1) Page 35, History of Performance, “The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of their own performance and for all applicable cost-reimbursement or fixed price contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements, including any fixed amount awards involving similar or related programs, not to exceed 5 years or number of awards.” Page 65 states, “The Applicant must provide a list of all its contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs during the past three years”. Kindly clarify the number of past awards required as part of the history of performance.

[Answer:](#) Please include awards involving implementation of similar or related programs during the last five years. The instructions in Annex 3 on p.65 have been amended accordingly.

- 2) Please confirm that there is no page limit for the history of the performance section.

[Answer:](#) This is correct.

- 3) Page 49, section b states “An Initial Environmental Examination is approved for the Cooperative Agreement”. Please confirm if an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) has been completed and if it is publicly available kindly share the website address.

[Answer:](#) The IEE and amendments have been completed and are available at <https://ecd.usaid.gov/repository/pdf/56664.pdf> and https://ecd.usaid.gov/document.php?doc_id=62852

- 4) Annex 3 – Past Performance Information (PPI) Please clarify what USAID considers to be “Difficult,” and “Routine”.

[Answer:](#) USAID is seeking examples of complex projects as relevant PPI. Applicants should refer to the following as a general guidance to determine the complexity: “Difficult” - performance requires highly skilled personnel; a high degree of management effort is required to ensure accomplishment of contract

requirements. “Routine” - the contract requires services of a non-complex nature; highly skilled labor is not required in order to meet contract requirements.

- 5) Please clarify if the institutional capability statement counts towards the technical application page limit.

Answer: The Institutional Experience and Capability Statement counts towards the 15-page limit for the Technical Application.

- 6) Given holiday schedules, we kindly ask that USAID extend the proposal due date by one week to February 6, 2025.

Answer: The due date for submission of applications has been extended to February 14, 2025.

- 7) Page 28 states that a branding and marking plan is required as part of the cost section. However, page 37 states that “the apparently successful applicant must submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan after award.” Kindly clarify if a branding and marking plan is required as part of the proposal application.

Answer: Submission of the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan is not required at the application stage. The NOFO has been amended.

- 8) Page 28 states that a security plan must be included as part of the Cost Application. However, page 56 states “The Recipient must develop a Security Plan to safeguard all project operations. Security plans may be reviewed by USAID/DRC upon request.” Kindly clarify if a security plan must be included as part of the proposal application.

Answer: Submission of a Security Plan is not required at the application stage. The NOFO has been amended.

- 9) Page 23 states that “Technical Application (maximum 15 pages) must include the following sections: 1) the Technical Approach, **the Management Plan** and the Institutional Experience and Capability statement.” However, page 24 states, “Management and Staffing Plan must not exceed three (3) pages and is not included in the page limit for the technical application.” Kindly clarify if the

management and staffing plan requirements can be combined into one annex, which would not count against the 15-page technical application limit.

Answer: The Management Plan narrative counts towards the page limitation for the Technical Application section. The Staffing Plan should be submitted as an annex. The subject sentence is amended to read “The Staffing Plan annex should be submitted as an annex, and is not included in the page limit for the technical application.”

- 10) The technical application instructions on page 23 indicate that applicants should include a “clear theory of change”, and this is part of the stated evaluation criteria on page 45. Does USAID expect applicants to provide an additional/alternate theory of change to that presented on page 15?

Answer: Applicants may propose and justify modifications to the theory of change outlined in the NOFO if they believe it lacks key elements, provided these changes do not alter the ultimate goal: reducing the demand for and use of charcoal for cooking in the target urban and peri-urban areas while mitigating deforestation. If no changes are proposed, applicants should provide a qualitative model or interpretation of the existing theory of change, explaining how it supports the activity’s objectives.

- 11) In the results framework on page 17, IRs 1.1, 1.2, and 4.1 indicate increases by XXX. Does USAID have a specific percentage that applicants should use or are applicants intended to propose a percentage?

Answer: This target remains undefined as reference data must be collected to establish a final target, which will be discussed and validated by USAID. However, applicants are encouraged to propose a percentage based on their understanding of the technical area, local context, and the available budget, timeframe, and personnel for implementing the sub-activities.

- 12) D (2.2) Page 24 of the NOFO states “Management and Staffing Plan must not exceed three (3) pages and is not included in the page limit for the technical application”. However, Subsection F of 2.2 Organization of Technical Application,

currently lists the Staffing Plan as a technical application annex, which is not subject to page limits. Could USAID please clarify the page limit for the Staffing Plan?

[Answer: Please see response to Question #9.](#)

- 13) D (4.A) Page 27. Could USAID please clarify needs and expectations for the "Approval of Subawards" requirement listed under Subsection A "Format and Presentation" of Section 4, since details about this requirement are not provided elsewhere in the solicitation?

[Answer: Subsection “f\) Approval of Subawards, Request as applicable, has been added.”](#)

- 14) D (4.A) Page 27-28. Can USAID please clarify what cost proposal information is needed from sub awardee partners? Specifically, are sub awardees also required to submit Standard Forms (424, 424A, and 424 B), certs and performances, NICRAs, or History of Performance (or PPIs)?

[Answer: Please see the third and fourth bullets under D.4.A.d\)\(3\). Support for indirect costs is required for all cost-reimbursable subrecipients \(e.g. a copy of the NICRA. Completion by subrecipients of SF-424 forms is not required. Also, see 2 CFR 200.332 Requirements for pass-through entities.](#)

- 15) G, Page 35. The subsection titled "History of Performance" on page 35 provides a list of information that USAID asks the applicant to provide for relevant activities "not to exceed 5 years or number of awards". However, the Past Performance Information (Annex 3, page 65) states that "the Applicant must provide a list of all its contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs during the past three years" and provides a different list of requested information. Can USAID please clarify how it would like to receive information on past performance and for how long/how many projects offerors are expected to provide?

[Answer: Please see response to Question #1.](#)

- 16) G, Page 35. Is the "History of Performance" section/ Past Performance Information tables only required for the prime applicant, or is this information required for sub awardees as well?

[Answer: History of Performance is required for the prime applicant only.](#)

- 17) C, Page 27, subsection A states “Applicants must structure their cost application in the following order.”. When USAID is referring to “applicants” plurally here and throughout the rest of the solicitation, is USAID only referring to the prime offeror, or are sub awardees/partners considered “applicants’ as well?

[Answer:](#) The reference is to prime applicants. Nevertheless, when presenting subrecipients’s information, prime applicants should use the same structure.

- 18) Annex 1, Page 59. The SF 424A budget form has equipment and supplies listed as two separate line items, but on the NOFO annex budget equipment and supplies are combined into one line item. Would USAID prefer that equipment and supplies be represented on separate line items or one combined line item in the budget and budget narrative?

[Answer:](#) Please present Equipment and Supplies separately.

- 19) Under the section that discusses IR-4 on page 17, there are two Sub-IRs listed as Sub-IR 4.2. Can USAID please confirm that these should be interpreted as two separate Sub-IRs?

[Answer:](#) This was a typographical error. The last Sub-IR or IR 4 should be read as indicated in the Results Framework: Sub-IR.4.3 The proportion of sustainably produced charcoal on the local market is increasing. The NOFO has been amended.

- 20) Is the application of a coalition, consortium acceptable?

[Answer:](#) Consortia are eligible to apply. However please note that one applicant must be the ‘Prime’ applicant for the purposes of the application and award, and other consortium members must be subawardees or contractors.

- 21) If an applicant is headquartered in one province of the DRC can the application include consortium members from other provinces as co-applicants?

[Answer:](#) Yes, local organizations may apply. However, please note the response to Question #20 regarding prime and sub-level applicants.

- 22) How can the application of an organization that has not yet worked with USAID be processed?

[Answer:](#) The requirements of the solicitation apply to all applicants including organizations that have not yet worked with USAID. All applicants and

subawardees/contractors must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) unless an exception in 2 CFR 25.110 applies. In addition to other requirements listed in the solicitation, any successful applicant will be subject to a pre-award risk assessment which is described in detail in Section B of the solicitation.