

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNOUNCEMENT

CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES

ARMENIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

UNDER EXISTING

YouthPower 2 (YP2) Annual Program Statement

APS No.: 72011121APS00001

PLEASE NOTE: This is an addendum to an existing announcement. All interested organizations should carefully review both the Armenia Workforce Development Activity addendum AND the full announcement, which can be found here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=325906> . Important information contained in the full worldwide announcement is not repeated in the YP2LA Addendum.

This Activity is authorized in accordance with Part 1 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Through the Armenia Workforce Development Activity addendum to the FY 2020 YouthPower 2 (YP2) Annual Program Statement (APS) No. 72011121APS00001, USAID/Armenia seeks to empower youth and women to be actively engaged in the labor market through working with the private sector, Armenian government and education institutions, through evolving societal stereotypes and by transforming the policy regulatory environment.

The Armenia Workforce Development Activity addendum seeks to increase opportunities for youth and women to be prepared for formal wage employment. Subject to the availability of funds, USAID intends to make one award to an applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in Section E.2 this announcement subject to a risk assessment. Eligibility for this award is restricted to Local Entities and Locally Established Partners (LEP) in Armenia (see Section C.1 of this announcement for eligibility requirements). Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this announcement thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, concept note submission requirements and selection process.

Unless otherwise stated herein, all terms and conditions of the FY 2020 YP2 APS apply (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=325906>).

Table of Contents	Page
SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	A-1
A.1 INTRODUCTION	1
A.2 BACKGROUND	Error! Bookmark not defined.
A.3 PURPOSE	A-5
A.4 PROGRAMMATIC AND GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS	A-Error! Bookmark not defined.
A.5 APPLICATION PROCESS	A-10
SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
B.1 ESTIMATE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED	1
B.2 START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE FOR FEDERAL AWARD	B-Error! Bookmark not defined.
B.3 TYPE OF INSTRUMENT	B-Error! Bookmark not defined.
SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	1
C.1 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	C-Error! Bookmark not defined.
SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	1
D.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT	1
D.2 APPLICATION PROCESS	1
D.3 QUESTIONS	D-1
SECTION E: INFORMATION ON THE REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS	E-1
E.1 REVIEW OF CONCEPT NOTES	E-1
E.2 MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATIONS	E-1
E.3 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	E-3
SECTION F: INFORMATION ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL AWARDS	1
F.1 FEDERAL AWARD NOTICES	F-1
F.2 TYPE OF AWARD	F-1
F.3 AWARD DISCRETION	1
F.4 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON AWARD ADMINISTRATION	F-1
SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACT(S)	G-1

SECTION A - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

ARMENIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1 INTRODUCTION

The Armenia Workforce Development Activity will work to reduce the gap between the skills of the workforce and the needs of employers. In addition, the activity will promote efforts to address the significant labor market gaps and low levels of female and youth labor market participation. The activity will also focus on improving societal misconceptions about vocational education and employment; female labor market participation; and increase utilization of information to improve youth and female engagement in the labor market, including access to mentoring and internships.

USAID seeks to support an Applicant with a defined plan to achieve these outcomes to be further developed through co-creation and in consultation with USAID. USAID seeks to support an implementing partner(s) whose Concept Note reflects a Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach and who can independently identify and address new and impactful interventions with high relevance to the international development community. USAID encourages a successful partner to address and build on the current youth demographic trends and the results and lessons learned from previous USAID-funded activities. In addition, USAID encourages Applicants to leverage work being supported by other donors and stakeholders, as well as other USAID-funded activities.

In Armenia, certain sectors (such as agriculture, tourism, high tech) of the economy will need to be further developed in order for the country to achieve economic security and this will rely, in great part, on human capital. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, and recent conflict, citizens of Armenia, now more than ever, need to feel the positive benefits of gainful employment.

USAID's recent [youth assessment](#) highlighted that the priorities and aspirations of youth were remarkably similar across groups: the most critical value for all youth is financial security for themselves and their families. In the most recent USAID-funded International Republic Institute poll in Armenia, released in October 2019, respondents cited job creation (38 percent, up from 30 percent) and socio-economic issues (29 percent, up from 18 percent) as key priorities.¹ The top three things that citizens believe the current government must achieve in the next six months were: job creation, addressing socio-economic problems, and increased wages.² It is evident that the economic impact of the revolution is the top priority of the Armenian people and, correspondingly, of the Armenian government. Currently, it is more important than ever to prepare the workforce to ensure that youth are integrated into the labor market, especially those whose employment is impacted by the current COVID-19 crisis and those that participated in the

¹ International Republican Institute Poll, October 2019, page 8, https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/iri_poll_armenia_september-october_2019.pdf.

² International Republican Institute Poll, October 2019, page 8, https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/iri_poll_armenia_september-october_2019.pdf.

recent conflict. Through involvement in the training sessions, capacity building exercises, and other planned AWDA interventions, the activity will create opportunities for people with disabilities, people affected by and who participated in the recent conflict, to make them more competitive, facilitate their integration in the labor market, and contribute to their professional growth and employability.

This activity is expected to leverage the existing platforms of YouthPower and YouthLead, as well as relevant YouthPower communities of practice. USAID encourages coordination and collaboration with other relevant donor-funded initiatives.

A.2 BACKGROUND

Currently in Armenia, there is a mismatch in the labor market between labor supply and demand. It is important to understand the concrete needs of the private sector and to match the training and education of the workforce with the private sector's labor needs. This is evident from USAID's consultations and the Armenian government's forthcoming Education Strategy. It is also important to have a clear picture of the sectors that are growing and/or are projected to grow and identify the occupations that are more accessible to youth and women.

Economic Reality

Indeed, one barrier to inclusive economic growth has been the underutilization of youth and women in the labor market. Youth unemployment is high with a rate of 33 percent male youth unemployment and 45 percent female youth unemployment.³ Compounding these stark statistics, the Central Bank of Armenia issued in spring 2020 new forecasts that indicated a sharp reduction in economic growth expectations for 2020 – down from 5.3 percent to only 0.7 percent.⁴ The macroeconomic situation is now even more uncertain following the continued pandemic, the difficult conflict, and the large-scale mobilization of youth into the army. Employment for these youth, including those wounded in the fighting, is even more critical to the future success of Armenia's economic reforms. According to experts, "No other economic priority is more important than to build a competitive workforce and ensure a high level of employment."⁵

While USAID has been working to create jobs in key sectors such as high tech, tourism, and agriculture, there is still a lack of jobs in the country. Armenia's small, isolated market limits the country's ability to achieve economies of scale and attract investment. As such, the private sector continues to be constrained by human capital deficiencies and unemployment rates for unskilled labor are high. This will continue to impede Armenia's economic security and growth potential. Polling, from prior to the conflict, indicates that citizens have high expectations for seeing economic benefits after the peaceful political transition in 2018. In the aftermath of the conflict, citizen demands for economic opportunities are even higher.

Hard Skills

³ USAID/Armenia, [Armenia Youth Situational Analysis](#), Youth Power, September 2019, page 16.

⁴ News.AM, April 2020, <https://news.am/eng/news/570018.html>.

⁵ EV Consulting, National Competitiveness Report of Armenia 2019, page 5.

The lack of applied and practical learning was the most common and most critical gap that participants in USAID/Armenia’s youth assessment noted.⁶ They stated that the current GOAM technical and vocational education and training (TVET) curricula does not support work-based learning (i.e. practical learning) approaches. Educational institutions frequently lack the physical infrastructure, connections with employers, and financing to support practical learning. An international best practice for ensuring that the workforce is able to obtain the necessary skills to meet the needs of employers is through a dual TVET approach. Dual TVET is responsive to the job market and is jointly designed by the state, the business sector, and civil society.

Hands on Experience

USAID/Armenia’s youth assessment also highlighted the fact that very few young people have the opportunity to complete an effective internship and that there is not a widely adopted culture of apprenticeships or internships in Armenia. Existing internship opportunities include a few local Information Technology (IT) companies that are setting up train-to-hire pipelines, select multinationals with global programs, and some civil society organizations are starting to offer internship programs. . Many young people reported that their internships with local companies did not provide them with sufficient knowledge, skills, or abilities to prepare them for their first professional job. In addition, it has been reported that hiring managers are often skeptical about the truthfulness of claims of experience gained through internships.⁷

Soft Skills

In addition to technical skills, employers have identified soft skills (also called universal skills, 21st century skills, or transversal skills) as a major gap in youth and ones that are essential for professional success and employability.⁸ Youth in USAID/Armenia’s youth assessment also identified soft skills as an asset that they were missing: “Quickly following critiques about the lack of applied learning opportunities came discussions around the lack of soft skills or transversal skills⁹ among Armenian youths.”¹⁰ The youth assessment identified that the main skills youth felt they were missing were communication, teamwork, critical thinking, decision-making, and leadership.

Perceptions Matter for Vocational Fields

It is also important for perceptions and societal attitudes around key workforce issues to be transformed. There is still a perception that technical vocations are not as lucrative or prestigious and at times there is a sense of shame around pursuing a vocational profession. In addition, there is the common perception that jobs in the agriculture industry largely involve base-level production. In reality, there are also many highly technical jobs that could provide career advancement through productivity enhancement, value addition, and export management, yet these are poorly understood by youth.¹¹ As such, young people express little interest in pursuing professions in the agricultural sector even though approximately 37 percent of the total

⁶ USAID/Armenia, Armenia Youth Situational Analysis, Youth Power, September 2019, page 10.

⁷ USAID/Armenia, Armenia Youth Situational Analysis, Youth Power, September 2019, page 10.

⁸ USAID/Armenia, Armenia Youth Situational Analysis, Youth Power, September 2019, page 11.

⁹ For more information about the importance of soft skills, see [Soft Skills for Positive Youth Development](#).

¹⁰ USAID/Armenia, Armenia Youth Situational Analysis, Youth Power, September 2019, page 11.

¹¹ USAID/Armenia, Armenia Youth Situational Analysis, Youth Power, September 2019, page 19.

workforce is employed by the sector and it produces roughly 15 percent of the GDP.¹² The Agribusiness Training Center has a 90 percent job placement rate of its graduates, reflecting that there is high employability in the sector and that there are numerous, lucrative job opportunities beyond being a subsistence-level farmer.¹³

Career Counseling

In addition to the need to transform societal perceptions around vocational education and training, there is also a need to ensure that youth, parents, and teachers are better informed about career options, job opportunities, and skills requirements to make decisions about education and training opportunities. According to USAID/Armenia's youth assessment, current information about careers and occupations (including the physicality and typical work environments of some) is insufficient and receiving information about careers is one of youth's main concerns. The quality of current career counseling is not sufficient for preparing youth to make educational, career and life decisions.

Women's Participation in the Armenian Workforce

Another key issue is the under-utilization of women in the workforce. The country could annually increase its GDP by 14 percent if women were allowed to enter the labor market at the rate they wanted to¹⁴. According to the World Bank, "more than a third of women with advanced educational attainment and half of women with intermediate educational attainment are not active in the labor force; their marriage and motherhood status is associated with labor force participation."¹⁵ A recent survey of Armenian youth found that a large share of economically inactive youth (65.2 percent) are women who possess the education and skills needed to join the labor force, but who do not seek employment due to family responsibilities.¹⁶ In addition, when women do enter the labor market, they are often relegated to feminized sectors or positions, which have lower status, upward mobility, and salary. Women's earnings amount to only 66.4 percent of men's earnings.¹⁷

Also, according to the USAID/Armenia gender assessment, sexual harassment can lead to higher business costs due to reduced productivity, higher employee turnover, and increased absences.¹⁸ The assessment continues: "Legal protections have not been adopted to address sexual violence or sexual harassment in public places in Armenia. Nor is there any legal mandate to address sexual harassment policy in the workplace. Moreover, there is lack of awareness of the existence of sexual harassment as many common manifestations (e.g., the expectation that a woman should make coffee for her male counterparts in the workplace) are not viewed as such."¹⁹

¹² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/armenia/fao-in-armenia/armenia-at-a-glance/en/>.

¹³ Agribusiness Training Center, <https://anau.am/en/education/agribusiness-teaching-center>.

¹⁴ International Monetary Fund, Republic of Armenia Selected Issues, June 2019, page 27.

¹⁵ World Bank, South Caucasus in Motion, January 2019, page 73, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/614351556553124178/South-Caucasus-in-Motion>.

¹⁶ The country-wide survey was conducted in 2018 and included a quantitative survey of 850 persons aged 18 to 30 yrs. Source: Media-Model LLC. Youth-Focused and Gender-Sensitive Labor Market Research in Armenia, 2018.

¹⁷ USAID/Armenia, Gender Analysis Report, August 2019, page 24.

¹⁸ USAID/Armenia, Gender Analysis Report, August 2019, page 39.

¹⁹ USAID/Armenia, Gender Analysis Report, August 2019, page 39.

Another barrier to entry for women engaging effectively in the labor market is that women are expected to take maternity leave to care for their newborn children, whereas men are not expected and do not take it.²⁰ This stigmatizes working mothers who employers expect will drop out of the workforce for a period of time and makes having children and taking care of children the mother's responsibility. In addition, due to the country's labor code, "for a family with a working mother, maternity leave is financially more beneficial as compared to paternity leave with a lower flat rate payment."²¹ Under the Active Labor Market Policy, there is a provision of assistance to jobseekers to supplement childcare payment for children under two.²²

A.3 PURPOSE

The overarching goal of the Armenia Workforce Development Activity is to improve the soft and technical skills of youth and women and increase their linkages to occupations in key and/or growing sectors by reducing barriers to entry in the labor market. The objectives of the Armenia Workforce Development Activity are:

Objective 1: The gap between the skills of the workforce and the needs of employers is reduced

There is a substantial skills mismatch in the labor market between labor supply and demand. In order to address this, the workforce needs technical and soft skills that are responsive to employer needs. Particular attention should be paid to rural youth, women, and other marginalized populations. Recognizing that bridging the gap will be a complex undertaking, the Armenia Workforce Development Activity should improve coordination, utilization, and impact of partnerships with private and public sectors. In addition, the Armenia Workforce Development Activity should facilitate the participation of marginalized and underprivileged individuals.

USAID is working on job creation in high growth potential sectors (rural economic development/agriculture, tourism). These efforts and those of other entities provide the opportunity to craft tailored technical skills training programs and to revise such technical programs based on regular feedback. Training should be anchored in local institutions whenever possible and could be embedded in established educational and training institutions or through business associations or other private actors. The USAID-legacy Agribusiness Training Center is an example of sector-specific training delivered from a sustainable platform that could be replicated for other high growth sectors.

The Armenia Workforce Development Activity should coordinate with those already working on incorporating work-based learning (WBL) into the national college curriculum, and help reform college curricula and approaches, build the connection between colleges and the private sector, and implement WBL.

²⁰ USAID/Armenia, Gender Analysis Report, August 2019, page 20.

²¹ USAID/Armenia, Gender Analysis Report, August 2019, page 28.

²² USAID/Armenia, Gender Analysis Report, August 2019, page 28.

Both long-term and short-term training opportunities are important and there should be an increased access to TVET opportunities (secondary and post-secondary, as relevant) for rural youth, women, and other marginalized populations. In addition, in order to support effective labor market participation, the workforce also needs to be better informed about, and have greater exposure to, career development choices and opportunities, including career counseling and internships.

Illustrative outcomes for Objective 1

- Improved soft and technical skills training established and institutionalized
- Private sector entities directly engaged in skill development education and training
- Increased number of participants gaining private sector-hosted experiential and/or work-based learning
- Experiential and/or work-based learning scaled
- Job placements for youth and women - in the regions and including non-traditional sectors - increased
- Improved institutionalized approaches to career counseling
- Access to information about professional growth opportunities increased and improved dissemination information to job seekers including youth, women, and marginalized groups in the regions and isolated communities

Objective 2: Societal perceptions shifted to support effective labor market participation

Another major gap in better utilizing Armenia's human capital is how information is shared, utilized, and internalized. Social behavior change is an impactful approach to altering perceptions and is one way that these efforts could be undertaken. The PYD approach calls for the inclusion of families and communities in working with youth. Parental influence on children's professions is one way to engage parents around youth's workforce development. In order to improve attitudes and behaviors of youth around vocational education and employment, parents must be included in the process. In order to address this, the Armenia Workforce Development Activity should improve how information is utilized for effective workforce participation. In addition, the Armenia Workforce Development Activity should work to improve society's support of women's participation in the labor market - both entry and retention. The Armenia Workforce Development Activity should work to increase women's earnings by facilitating their labor market participation and employment in non-traditional sectors. In order to increase inclusive and regional development, information sharing should be improved in addition to any career counseling interventions undertaken.

Illustrative outcomes for Objective 2

- Number of students enrolling in dual TVET system increased
- Communities (including parents, teachers, and youth) more receptive to alternate or non-traditional education, and employment opportunities in specific sectors
- Higher entrance of women into the workforce including in non-traditional sectors
- Increase in youth entering the workforce

Objective 3: The operating and enabling legal regulatory environment of the labor market development is improved

For Armenia to fully utilize its human capital, especially youth and women, it is necessary to improve the operating legal regulatory environment. There is a need to ensure that the GOAM initiates, implements, and enforces the necessary policy and regulatory reforms to improve access to the labor market. The Armenia Workforce Development Activity should work closely with youth and women, the private sector, and the GOAM to determine the most impactful government reforms to undertake, strengthen, and implement. While undertaking this effort, it is essential to develop a strategic communication plan to help the GOAM explain its reforms to the public so that they understand them and can best utilize them.

In addition, in order to encourage women to enter and remain in the labor market at a higher rate, the Armenia Workforce Development Activity should work with the GOAM, the private sector, and women to identify government policies and public services that would encourage and support increased women's participation in the labor market and non-traditional fields. An important part of this support is establishing government and private sector policies and procedures to reduce sexual harassment. It will also be important to identify government and private sector policies and benefits that include and apply to men to improve the usage of paternity leave and other benefits.

Illustrative outcomes for Objective 3

- Platform for coordination around labor policies and regulations developed and regularly utilized
- Policies and services to encourage and support increased women's participation in the labor market developed and implemented
- Policy gaps identified, legal regulatory framework for workforce development improved including, but not limited to increasing youth and women employment
- Strategic communication plan for policy and regulatory changes developed and implemented

A.4 PROGRAMMATIC AND GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The principles underlying the strategic and operational approach of the Armenia Workforce Development Activity and the proposed interventions include the following:

- A. Positive Youth Development:** This activity is rooted in a Positive Youth Development²³ (PYD) approach, which is based on the belief that, “given guidance and support from caring adults, all youth (ages 10-29) can grow up healthy and productive, making positive contributions to their families, schools, and communities.” PYD programs intentionally focus on developing competencies and behaviors that support pro-social attitudes, a clear and positive personal identity, and positive belief in the future. PYD programs encourage

²³ **Definitions: 1) “Positive youth development” (PYD)** engages youth along with their families, communities and/or governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential. PYD approaches build skills, assets and competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the environment; and transform systems.” USAID supports the use of this definition across Agency implementation. <http://www.youthpower.org/positive-youth-development> **2) YouthPower:** <http://www.youthpower.org> USAID’s flagship cross-sectoral project was designed by youth experts from across workforce development, health, education, HIV/AIDS, and democracy and governance. This website includes the most current evidence based resources related to PYD including systematic reviews of PYD programs, a “What Works For Youth” series, and the latest research and tools to help partners implement high quality youth programs applicable across all regions and USAID programs reaching youth.

youth leadership and experiential learning, as well as adult approachability and champions. Services and opportunities are designed to support young people in developing a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and empowerment. For many, the PYD approach is a paradigm shift in the way that they think about youth, education, employment, leadership, health and environment and its resources. The activity will include concrete and practical approaches that will not only address the challenges that youth face to accomplish the activity results, but will also involve and support young people in the decision-making, management and leadership of this activity.

B. Private Sector Engagement (PSE): The private sector is a key actor in the success and sustainability of this Activity. The Activity will proactively engage with the private sector, understanding USAID’s [private sector engagement policy](#). There will be a strong focus on employers and employment, and incentivizing the private sector to be the main driver. There will be an intentional effort to form long-term public-private partnerships for self-reliance of a workforce skills development system in Armenia. Based on the PSE Policy, the Activity will embrace market-based solutions and consistently leverage the private sector’s expertise, resources, and investment in addressing the labor market’s development challenge.

C. Gender Equity: Women face specific barriers to entry in the labor market. This Activity will proactively identify key avenues for women to enter the labor market, including in non-traditional fields. Increased female participation in the labor market will have a huge impact on the country’s inclusive economic growth as reflected in the previously stated statistics about how the country could annually increase its GDP by 14 percent if women were allowed to enter the labor market at the rate they wanted to.

While not facing the barriers to entry that women face in the labor market, men in Armenia often face expectations related to traditional roles as “breadwinners.” With high unemployment and chronic underemployment, these stereotypes can lead to low self-esteem and attitudes that do not promote an equitable workplace. With a sizable portion of the male population having fought in the recent conflict, creating meaningful jobs as well as promulgating tools to address workplace conflict are critical to creating equitable and safe workplaces.

D. Local Ownership and Sustainability: The Activity should ensure that the Armenian government, private sector, women and youth feel ownership of the Activity’s efforts in order to ensure the impact and sustainability of the interventions. The Deputy Prime Minister’s office Work Armenia program is taking the lead for the Armenian government in coordinating the workforce efforts of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Defense and other relevant government institutions. As such, the Activity will closely coordinate with the relevant government bodies throughout the life of the Activity to ensure that their priorities are being addressed and to help inform GOAM priorities.

E. Disability-Inclusive Development: USAID is committed to disability-inclusive development and works to ensure that programs and activities are available to all people.

In Armenia, persons with disabilities often face a lack of job opportunities and discrimination in the workplace. With a notable number of wounded soldiers and volunteers returning from the recent conflict, USAID is interested that persons with disabilities are able to participate fully in Armenia's economic development.

- F. Data Driven Decision-Making:** The Activity's interventions will be based on a full understanding of the country context, needs and future opportunities. It will utilize analysis that has been undertaken by USAID, other donors, the Armenian government, higher education institutions, and the private sector. It will also incorporate information from engaging women and youth themselves through PYD. This analysis will lead to a better understanding of the gaps between the current labor supply and demand (technical and soft skills) with targeted regional interventions and a sector specific focus on firms in key and/or growing sectors with unmet needs; job seekers' barriers to entry in the labor market; cultural, institutional, and legal barriers that impede equitable opportunities in the labor market; and issues of mobility, and displacement for the target job seekers and sectors.
- G. Countering Trafficking in Persons (C-TIP):** USAID intentionally incorporates human trafficking prevention and protection measures into activities across sectors to combat trafficking, avoid unintended negative consequences, and improve broader outcomes in health, inclusive economic growth, and education. The activity will collaborate with relevant GOAM and non-governmental organizations to better understand trafficking in persons (TIP), forced and child labor in the agricultural sector, to plan and implement relevant preventive measures. The specific interventions may include, but not be limited to, designing and disseminating awareness raising materials on TIP and the worst forms of child labor and work place hazards and safety standards, raising awareness of women agripreneurs, female farmers, and local government officials about forced and child labor, trafficking in persons in the at-risk groups of populations in the agriculture sector to identify potential risks in their respective communities, increase economic opportunities for TIP source communities, and, where relevant, engage with national and local governments, as well as non-governmental partners to undertake relevant C-TIP prevention and response measures. The activity will also incorporate relevant performance indicators to monitor progress toward C-TIP.
- H. Focus on the Regions:** The geographic focus of this Activity should be mainly in the regions (marzes) outside of Yerevan. Though there can be some activities and beneficiaries in Yerevan, the majority of the work should be done outside of the capital. The specific marzes that the Activity focuses on can be determined at a later date based on analysis of challenges and opportunities.
- I. Build on Lessons Learned:** USAID has implemented successful workforce development projects around the world and the Armenia Workforce Development Activity will build on these best practices and experiences. For example, USAID has implemented successful career center models, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa region. In addition, under the EU4Youth program in Armenia, Save the Children piloted career centers in 10 colleges and the GOAM is currently deciding how to institutionalize these

pilots. Save the Children's Youth-Focused And Gender-Sensitive Labour Market Research is a good resource. There are also best practices to draw upon for soft skills training - USAID best practices and potentially scaling soft skill training efforts currently being undertaken by other donors.²⁴

A.5 APPLICATION PROCESS

USAID has outlined the application process in Section D of this Addendum. Please see the YP2 APS for additional information.

End of Section A

²⁴ Social and Emotional Learning and Soft Skills USAID Education Policy Brief: <https://www.edulinks.org/resources/social-and-emotional-learning-and-soft-skills>.

SECTION B - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

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

This program is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. Issuance of this Addendum does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor do those commit the U.S. Government to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of questions, comments, suggestions, concept notes, or an application. Applicants submit Concept Note applications at their own risk, and all preparation and submission costs are at their expense.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID intends to make one award not to exceed \$7.5 million in total for the life of the award. Also, USAID reserves the right to make, or not to make, an award through this Addendum to the YP2 APS. All terms and conditions of the YP2 APS apply.

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

The anticipated period of performance for award, if any, made under the Preparing Armenia's Labor Market Addendum to the YP2 APS is June 1, 2021 – May 31, 2026.

B.3 TYPE OF INSTRUMENT

An award resulting from this APS Addendum will take the form of a Cooperative Agreement.

End of Section B

SECTION C - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligibility under the Armenia Workforce Development Activity addendum is restricted to implementing partners that are:

- (i) Local entities. This includes public, private, for-profit, and non-profit organizations, as well as institutions of higher education, and non-governmental organizations. Further, the organization must be a legally recognized organizational entity in Armenia.
- (ii) Locally established partners (LEP) in Armenia. Unlike local entities, LEPs must demonstrate viability apart from USAID funding by showing that they have received at least as much in non-U.S. Government funding as they have received from USAID in the previous five years.

The partner must also meet the New Partnerships Initiative modality for **Direct Awards to New²⁵ or Underutilized²⁶ Partners (NUP)**. These eligibility requirements apply to the principal applicant.

When considering making an award to a potential partner with limited or no previous USAID experience, USAID will undertake necessary pre-award reviews to determine the organization's "responsibility" as discussed below. USAID reserves the right to perform pre-award reviews for the local partner, regardless of prior experience with USAID.

"Responsibility" of Applicant

In order for an award to be made, the Agreement Officer must make an affirmative determination that the applicant is "responsible". A positive responsibility determination means that the applicant possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management and technical competence to plan and carry out the program to be funded, and that the applicant will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID.

International best practice is important for the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum and, as such, international and U.S. partners, including higher education institutions, are encouraged to partner as subs under local Armenia institutions as primes for this effort.

End of Section C

²⁵ New Partner: An individual or organization that has not received any funding from USAID as a prime partner over the last five years.

²⁶ Underutilized Partner: An organization that has received less than \$25 million in direct or indirect awards from USAID over the past five years.

SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT

The point of contact for this Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum are: Francis Hall, Agreement Officer (AO) and Armen Yeghiazarian, Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist. If an award is made for the program, the AO will appoint an Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) at that time to provide technical and administrative oversight of the specific award.

The Agency will furnish promptly to all prospective applicants as an amendment to this Addendum any information concerning this Addendum given to a particular prospective Applicant, if that information is necessary in submitting applications, or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant.

D.2 APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process for the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum Name will happen in four phases:

1. An open call for a brief (5-7 page) Concept Note;
2. Review of concept notes by USAID as outlined below;
3. In-person and/or virtual co-creation discussions and/or workshop(s) with selected Concept Note(s), by invitation only; and
4. Submission and review of Full Application(s), by invitation only.

USAID/Armenia will be responsible for the review of Concept Notes and Full Applications and management of any subsequent award issued under this Addendum. Additional information about each phase of the Application and Review process is provided below.

Concept Note Submission

USAID will host a three-week Q&A period, where prospective applicants are invited to ask questions until **5:00PM Yerevan time, on February 17, 2021**. Questions regarding the substance and objectives of the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum should be directed to Francis Hall and/or to Armen Yeghiazarian (yerevanidaao@usaid.gov). One week after the closure of the Q&A submission period, USAID/Armenia will post written responses on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

Concept notes are due by **5:00PM Yerevan time on March 19, 2021**. Concept notes submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed. Concept notes must be prepared and submitted in English using the provided template (see Attachment A) on www.grants.gov. Respondents are asked to download the template from grants.gov in Word format, provide their responses in that document, and email a PDF saved copy of the document to Armen Yeghiazarian (yerevanidaao@usaid.gov) with the file name saved as: "Prime Applicant - Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum Concept Note." Concept notes must be five (5) to seven (7) pages, double-spaced with 12point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins on the electronic equivalent of A4 format paper. Content above seven pages will not be reviewed. Charts, graphs, CVs of key personnel, past performance information

and references, as well as preliminary budget are not included in the five (5) to seven (7) pages limitation for the Concept Notes.

After a concept note is received, USAID/Armenia reserves the right to request supplementary information or pose clarifying questions to any applicant. Requesting supplementary information or posing clarifying questions to one applicant does not obligate USAID to do so with all applicants, nor does it guarantee invitation to submit a full application.

Concept Note Review

Concept notes will be reviewed based on the proposed approach, feasibility and alignment with the above-referenced purpose of the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum. Additionally, concepts should be consistent with USAID legal and policy restrictions, including those set forth in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) and in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

All terms and conditions of the YP2 APS apply.

USAID/Armenia anticipates notifying authors of concept notes within 30 days of submission if USAID/Armenia wishes to engage in further discussions/co-creation, maintain the application in a pool for potential future engagement, or if USAID/Armenia will not pursue further collaboration under the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum based on the submitted concept note.

Co-Creation Process

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/Armenia will invite a subset of the most highly qualified concept note applicants to engage in a round of co-creation with USAID/Armenia prior to submission of full applications. The aim of the co-creation phase is to further define Activity objectives, design interventions, align timelines, and finalize budgets. Through discussions, both the applicant(s) and USAID/Armenia may identify additional resources, partners, or strategies necessary to successfully implement the Activity. This process may involve extensive discussions with USAID/Washington, USAID/Armenia Mission staff, or other experts, within or outside of USAID. Co-creation may happen in-person or virtually, through video conference, and phone calls.

By applying to the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum, applicants grant USAID/Armenia the right to share concept notes with appropriate external partners for the purposes of evaluation or co-creation. All parties privy to the contents of submitted concept notes, whether within or outside of USAID, will be required to keep contents in confidence. Additional information about the co-creation process can be found in the "Co-Creation, Collaboration, and Communication under YP2 APS" section of the umbrella YP2 APS and through USAID's Co-creation Toolkits.

Note: Communication with USAID/Armenia during the concept note/co-creation phase should NOT be interpreted as a commitment to funding or guaranteed request for a full application. Any expenses incurred by applicants during this time are solely the responsibility of the applicants, unless otherwise stated in writing by USAID/Armenia.

If USAID/Armenia decides to continue with the proposed activities following the co-creation phase, USAID/Armenia will request a full application from applicants, inclusive of all modifications, expansions, discussions, etc. resulting from the co-creation phase and will provide a full application template for completion.

Full Application

USAID/Armenia will only accept full applications from applicants invited to continue in the application process. It is expected that full applications will expand upon their concept note and incorporate any discussions, ideas, plans, feedback or changes from USAID/Armenia and other partners discussed during the co-creation phase. **Note: USAID/Armenia's Request for Application (RFA) should not be interpreted as a commitment of funds.**

QUESTIONS

Questions regarding the substance and outcomes of the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum should be directed to Francis Hall and/or to Armen Yeghiazarian at yerevanidaao@usaid.gov. Questions regarding the substance and terms of the YP2 APS umbrella should be directed to YP2APS@usaid.gov and the subject line "Question - YP2 APS Umbrella".

End of Section D

SECTION E - INFORMATION ON THE REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

E.1 REVIEW OF CONCEPT NOTES

Once a Concept Note has been submitted in response to the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum, USAID will conduct an initial review of the Concept Note using the criteria outlined in the Merit Review Criteria and Considerations section below.

The purpose of the initial review and related communication is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further discussions regarding the proposed approach and activities. The initial review and communication will result in one of three outcomes:

- A decision to forego further consideration of the approach proposed in the Concept Note;
- An invitation to engage in more in-depth and specific co-creation discussions aimed at further developing the proposed approach and determining whether to request a Full Application.

E.2 MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATIONS

Concept Notes and subsequent Full Applications to the Armenia Workforce Development Activity Addendum will be assessed according to the following merit review criteria on an adjectival system (Exceptional, Very Good, Satisfactory, Marginal, Unsatisfactory). All Criteria are weighted equally. Also, all Sub-Criteria under a Criterion are of equal weight.

Criterion 1 – Technical Approach

Extent to which the proposed overall technical approach is likely to achieve the stated objectives for each component and is clearly aligned with GoAM priorities. Also, consideration will be given to the application that incorporates lessons learned from similar programs and activities and how proposed activities build on the applicant's prior experience. Particularly, USAID will evaluate the extent to which the technical approach demonstrates an efficient, logical, innovative, sustainable, well-conceived, and technically appropriate approach for the Armenia Workforce Development Activity.

Sub-Criterion 1.1 - Incorporation of Positive Youth Development Approaches

Extent to which the proposed plan incorporates Positive Youth Development approaches in the proposed activities. The extent to which the proposed plan addresses the challenges that youth face to accomplish the activity results, and how young people will be involved when implementing this activity including engaging with youth led or youth-related organizations and providing capacity development when necessary.

Sub-Criterion 1.2 - Incorporation of Private Sector Engagement Approaches

Extent to which the proposed plan will incorporate USAID Private Sector Engagement Policy approaches in the proposed activities. Particularly the extent to which private sector engagement contributes to the overall technical approach such as, the proposed role, input, and impact, of the private sector on project targets/objectives. The extent to which the proposed plan incorporates market driven factors and core business interests of the private sector in partnering with USAID. The kinds of private sector assets, out of all that are available, will the offerors aim to leverage, (as inputs) and why (this could include cash, brand recognition, supply chain access, marketing campaigns, or other corporate assets). Offerors should not approach private sector partners or request any letter of commitment at the concept paper stage. Letters of commitment will be requested with the final application.

Sub-Criterion 1.3 - Inclusiveness

Extent to which the proposed partnerships, research, projects, or activities align with USAID gender, disability inclusive development, and C-TIP policies and international best practice; demonstrates relevant technical expertise in gender equitable programming; and proposes effective approach(es) to achieving objectives/outcomes that are technically sound, well-defined, and achievable.

Sub-Criterion 1.4 - Local Ownership and Sustainability

Extent to which the proposed partnerships, research, projects, or activities demonstrates contribution to sustainable outcomes beyond the lifetime of the award; demonstrates engagement with the private sector and leverages new or existing resources; and proposes an evidence-informed plan for analyzing, synthesizing and disseminating data and findings that will inform ongoing and future programming and contribute to sustainable outcomes and impact.

Criterion 2 – Qualifications of Proposed Partnership(s)

The experience and expertise of the primary applicant and any sub-applicants, if proposed, will be considered when consortiums are proposed to achieve the specified results including the roles and responsibility of the proposed consortium members. Specifically, USAID will evaluate the primary applicant's and any sub-applicant's capacity in terms of knowledge, technical capacity, experience, and ability to achieve desired results.

Criterion 3 – Staffing Plan and Qualifications of Key Personnel

Adequacy of the staffing plan, including the assigned levels of effort and skill categories of various proposed personnel as they relate to the specific activities and results of the implementation plan; use of qualified local and international experts. Key personnel will be evaluated on their knowledge, skills, and demonstrated abilities in their proposed area of responsibility, as well as experience, expertise and performance of the key personnel in managing complex development programs, and demonstrated prior experience in working

with other assistance programs with the same level of complexity and magnitude in areas relevant to the proposed activity.

Criterion 4 – Relevant Past Performance

The applicant must have a minimum of five years of relevant past performance in the respective Program areas. Emphasis will be placed on prior achievements in similar programs to that proposed. The Selection Committee may contact references other than those provided in the application.

Budget Review

The Agency will review the initial budget of the concept note(s) under consideration as a result of the merit criteria review to consider: (1) the extent of the applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested; (2) whether the applicant's plans will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency.

The complete cost application of the apparently successful applicant will be evaluated for completeness, realism, reasonability and allocability.

Note: More comprehensive information regarding the application and review processes (including concept note submission, co-creation, full application, and merit review stages) can be found in the umbrella YP2 APS, located at [grants.gov](https://www.usaid.gov/grants). Applicants are advised to refer to both the umbrella APS and this addendum in preparing concept notes and full applications, as applicable.

E.3 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Applicants should ensure that their concept note is aligned with USAID strategies, policies, and priorities, such as the [Country Development Cooperation Strategy](#), [USAID Youth in Development Policy](#), [USAID Private-Sector Engagement Policy](#), [Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy](#), [the Employment Framework](#), and the [USAID Education Policy](#).

End of Section E

SECTION F - INFORMATION ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL AWARDS

F.1 FEDERAL AWARD NOTICES

The USAID Agreement Officer (AO) is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. Applicants are prohibited from charging or incurring costs to the proposed award prior to receipt of either a fully executed award or a specific, written authorization from the AO. USAID will administer awards in accordance with Parts 700 and 200 of Title 2 of the CFR, and Standard Provisions for U.S./non-U.S. organizations.

F.2 TYPE OF AWARD

USAID/Armenia will provide funds under this Annual Program Statement to successful Applicant using a cooperative agreement.

F.3 AWARD DISCRETION

USAID reserves the right to make, or not to make, awards through this Addendum to the YP2 APS. The actual number of assistance awards, if any, under this Addendum is subject to the availability of funds, the interests and requirements of USAID, and the viability of Concept Notes/Applications received.

F.4 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON AWARD ADMINISTRATION

- ADS Chapter 201 Program Cycle Operational Policy:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/201.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 204 Environmental Procedures:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/204.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 205 - Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/205.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for U.S. organizations:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 318 Intellectual Property Rights:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1876/318.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 579 USAID Development Data:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/579.pdf>
- Grant and Contract Process: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/grant-and-contract-process>

- USAID Graphic Standards Manual and Partner Co-branding Guide:
[https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1869/USAID GSM 03 05 2019.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1869/USAID_GSM_03_05_2019.pdf)

End of Section F

SECTION G - FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

The Agreement Officer for the resultant award is:

Name: Francis A. Hall

Title: Regional Contracting and Agreement Officer

Email: fhall@usaid.gov

Tel: +995 591703515

Mail Address: USAID/Caucasus

U.S. Embassy in Georgia

29 Georgian-American Friendship Avenue

Tbilisi, Georgia 0131

The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist is:

Name: Armen Yeghiazarian

Title: Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

Email: ayeghiazarian@usaid.gov

Tel: +37410 494-466

Mail Address: USAID/Armenia

1 American avenue

Yerevan 0082, Armenia

End of Section G

END OF APS ADDENDUM No: 72011121APS00001

Attachment A - Concept Note Template

Concept papers should be 5-7 pages (*excluding CVs, past performance reports, and the budget table*).

Recommended outline:

1. Technical Approach (*not to exceed 3-4 pages*): Describe how the proposed activities achieve the stated objectives for each component and how are they clearly aligned with USAID and GoAM priorities
 - a. Overall technical approach
 - b. Positive Youth Development approach
 - c. Private Sector Engagement approach
 - d. Inclusiveness
 - e. Local Ownership and Sustainability plan
2. Qualifications of Proposed Partnerships (*not to exceed 1 page*) - Briefly describe the experience, expertise and capacity in terms of knowledge, technical capacity, and ability to achieve desired results. Please provide a project diagram indicating the roles of the various partners.
3. Illustrative Interventions/Outcomes (*not to exceed 1 page*): Briefly describe the preliminary thinking for the development approach, including a list of illustrative activities and anticipated outcomes. As appropriate, address the specific needs of women, youth, and marginalized groups, and clarify intervention level (national, local, Yerevan).
4. Staffing Plan and Qualifications of Key Personnel (not to exceed five people) - Please provide CVs of identified key personnel.
5. Relevant Past Performance (include only relevant projects implemented within the past five years).
6. Budget table (*not to exceed 1 page*): Present an initial summary budget for the proposed activities, with a breakdown of the annual funding requirements over the life of the activity.

Attachment B - Past Performance Information (PPI)

(To be completed by the applicant)

1. Award Number:
2. Contractor/Recipient (Name and Address):
3. Type of Award:
4. Complexity of Work: Difficult _____ Routine _____
5. Description, location, and relevancy of work:
6. Dollar Value of Work : _____ Status: Active ____ Completed ____
7. Date of Award: _____ Award Completion Date (including extensions): _____
8. Type and Extent of Subawards:
9. Name, Address, Telephone Number, and E-mail Address of the Awarding Contracting/Agreement Officer and/or the Contracting/Agreement Officer's Representative (and other references as applicable):

Attachment C - Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) Amendment

US Agency for International Development (USAID) USAID/Armenia

Program/Project/Activity Data

Activity/Project Name:	Armenia Workforce Development Project	
Assistance Objective:	More Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth	
Program Area:	DR.1 Economic Growth	
Country(ies) and/or Operating Unit:	Armenia/E&E	
Originating Office:	Sustainable Development Office	Date: May 8, 2020
PAD Level IEE: No	DCN of Original RCE/IEE:	N/A
Supplemental IEE: No	DCN of Amendment(s):	N/A
RCE/IEE Amendment: No		
If Yes, Purpose of Amendment (AMD):		
DCN(s) of All Related EA/IEE/RCE/ER(s):		
Implementation Start/End:	Activity Implementation: Jan 2021– Jan 2026	
Funding Amount:	\$7,500,000	
Contract/Award Number (if known):	TBD	
IEE Expiration Date (if any):	January 2026	
Recommended Environmental Determination: Categorical Exclusion: ☒ Positive Determination: ☐ Negative Determination: ☒ Deferral: ☐		
Additional Elements: Conditions: ☒ Local Procurement: ☒ Government to Government: ☐ Donor Co-Funded: ☐ Sustainability Analysis (included): ☐ Climate Change Vulnerability Analysis (included): ☒		

1. Background and Project Description

1.1. Purpose and Scope of the IEE

The purpose of IEE is to provide an environmental determination for a new activity to increase opportunities for workforce development for youth and women to be prepared for formal wage employment in Armenia. To streamline environmental compliance review processes, this IEE is issued at the activity-level rather than as an Amendment to the More Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth PAD-level IEE.

This work will entail technical assistance, research, convening opportunities, and small grants.

The environmental determination for this technical assistance, research, convening opportunities, and small grants is qualified for a negative determination with conditions.

1.2 Project Overview

The overarching goal of Armenia Workforce Development Activity is to increase opportunities for formal wage employment in ways that include women and youth. While USAID has been working to create jobs in key sectors such as high tech, tourism and agriculture, there is still a lack of jobs in the country. The country's small, isolated market limits Armenia's ability to achieve economies of scale and to attract investment; inequality remains high; the private sector continues to be constrained by human capital deficiencies; and unemployment rates remain high, all of which impedes Armenia's economic security and growth potential.

Though polling indicates widespread popular support for the current government, it also indicates that citizens have high expectations for seeing economic benefits from the 2018 velvet revolution. In addition, the country will long be dealing with the economic fallout of the COVID-19 crisis. As such, the Activity will enhance Armenia's economic security by making stronger linkages between the labor market and formal wage employment opportunities and by maximizing the Armenian government's efforts to fully utilize the potential of the Armenian people. It will promote efforts to address the significant labor market gaps and the low level of female and youth labor market participation.

1.3 Activity Objectives and Expected Results

The activity purpose will be achieved through three interconnected Objectives and six Expected Results (ER), as follows:

Objective 1: The gap between the skills of the workforce and the needs of employers is reduced

To achieve this Objective, the activity will work on bridging the gap between the workforce and employers in order to reduce the skills mismatch between labor supply and demand. In order to do this, the workforce needs technical and soft skills that are responsive to employer needs. Recognizing that bridging the gap is a complex undertaking, the Activity will utilize multiple

efforts to improve coordination, utilization and impact of partnerships. In addition, the Activity will consider what incentives may be needed by target beneficiaries in order to facilitate the participation of marginalized and underprivileged individuals.

ER 1.1 Experiential or work-based learning is strengthened and scaled

Activity 1.1.1 Increase engagement of the private sector

Activity 1.1.2 Improve educational institutions approach to technical skills training

Activity 1.1.3 Establish short-term training opportunities at educational institutions

Activity 1.1.4 Increase access to skill development opportunities for regional youth, women, and other marginalized populations

ER 1.2 Soft skills of target beneficiaries enhanced

Activity 1.2.1 Work with the GOAM and private sector to institutionalize soft skills training

Activity 1.2.2 Leverage soft skill training efforts currently being undertaken by other stakeholders

Activity 1.2.3 Establish a mentorship program for target youth

Some illustrative outcomes for Objective 1 may include, but not limited to:

- Improved approaches of educational institutions to technical skills training
- Short-term training opportunities established
- Access to skill development opportunities for regional youth, women, and other marginalized populations increased
- Increased engagement of the private sector - private sector entities directly engaged in skill development education increased
- Number of youth enrolled in vocational or other training increased
- Soft skills of youth at the conclusion of training/programming improved and institutionalized
- Job placements for youth and women increased
- Number of women trained and employed in non-traditional sectors increased

Objective 2: Information utilized to improve effective labor market

In addition to technical and soft skill development, another major gap in better utilizing Armenia's human capital is how information is shared, utilized and internalized. In order to improve youth's attitudes and behaviors around vocational education and employment, parents must be included. In order to address this, the Activity will improve how information is utilized for effective workforce participation. The Activity will work to improve society's support of women's participation in the labor market - both entry and retention. In order to support effective labor market participation, the workforce also needs to be better informed about, and have greater exposure to, career development choices and opportunities, including career counseling and internships.

ER 2.1 Societal attitudes and understanding around labor market issues improved

Activity 2.1.1 Improve the community's (including parents', teachers', and youth's) views on alternate or non-traditional education, including TVET

Activity 2.1.2 Improve the community's (including parents', teachers', and youth's) views around employment opportunities in specific sectors

Activity 2.1.3 Improve society's views on women in the workforce and in non-traditional sectors
ER 2.2 Career development and counseling institutions and mechanisms strengthened and scaled

Activity 2.2.1 Support career development entities and mechanisms in targeted colleges and/or universities

Activity 2.2.2 Support the GOAM in institutionalizing career counseling in high school

Activity 2.2.3 Pilot efforts to ensure that educational institutions have access to information about professional growth opportunities and share them with their students

Some illustrative outcomes for Objective 2 may include, but not limited to:

- Community's more receptive to alternate or non-traditional education, including TVET, and employment opportunities in specific sectors
- Society more receptive to women in the workforce and in non-traditional sectors improved
- Support the GOAM in institutionalizing career counseling in high school
- Educational institutions have increased access to information about professional growth opportunities and increased dissemination of this information to students
- Number of students who transition to further education, training or job placement following participation in career center activities increased
- Youth in the regions, women, isolated communities, and marginalized groups report an increased knowledge of professional development opportunities and career development pathways

Objective 3: The operating and enabling environment of the labor market development is improved

For Armenia to fully utilize its human capital, especially youth and women, it is necessary to facilitate the optimum operating environment. This could be undertaken by supporting the GOAM in the necessary policy and regulatory reforms and corresponding strategic messaging.

ER 3.1 Labor market policies, services, regulations and reforms are initiated, implemented, and enforced to remove barriers and create incentives

Activity 3.1.1 Assist the GOAM in targeted policy and regulatory reforms

Activity 3.1.2 Develop a strategic communication plan for policy and regulatory changes

Activity 3.1.3 Create platform for coordination around labor policies and regulations

ER 3.2 The necessary labor policy, regulations and reforms are initiated, implemented and enforced to encourage and support women's participation in the labor market

Activity 3.2.1 Provide support to the GOAM to identify policies and services that would encourage and support increased women's participation in the labor market

Activity 3.2.2 Support private sector and GOAM in establishing policies and procedures to reduce sexual harassment

Activity 3.2.3 Work with the GOAM to address policy gaps, especially for fathers

Some illustrative outcomes for Objective 3 may include, but not limited to:

- Platform for coordination around labor policies and regulations developed and regularly utilized

- Policies and services to encourage and support increased women's participation in the labor market developed and implemented
- Legal regulatory framework for workforce development improved
- Policies and services to encourage and support women's increased access to the labor market improved
- Strategic communication plan for policy and regulatory changes developed and implemented
- Number of services and/or policies with improved gender-responsive characteristics increased
- Number of key stakeholders advocating for reforms increased

2. Climate Change Vulnerability Analysis and Climate Risk Screening

Activities	Potential Climate Risk	Climate Risk Rating*
<i>Objective 1: The gap between the skills of the workforce and the needs of employers is reduced</i>		
1.1 Experiential or work-based learning is strengthened and scaled	Severe weather events may impact the schedule	Low
1.2 Soft skills of target beneficiaries enhanced	Severe weather events may impact the schedule	Low
<i>Objective 2: Information utilized to improve effective labor market</i>		
ER 2.1 Societal attitudes and understanding around labor market issues improved	Severe weather events may impact the schedule	Low
ER 2.2 Career development and counseling institutions and mechanisms strengthened and scaled	Severe weather events may impact the schedule	Low
<i>Objective 3: The operating and enabling environment of the labor market development is improved</i>		
ER 3.1 Labor market policies, services, regulations and reforms are initiated, implemented, and enforced to remove barriers and create incentives	N/A	Low
ER 3.2 The necessary labor policy, regulations and reforms are initiated, implemented and enforced to encourage and support women's participation in the labor market	N/A	Low

Climate Risk Screening was based on analysis of the existing climate information from Armenia's risk profile and respective references and the impact upon this project. See Annex 1

of this IEE for further details of the climate risk screening for the activity. The climate risk analysis was done using the Climate Risk Screening and Management Tool.

3. Analysis of Potential Environmental Impact

Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.3(a)(92)(iii), the originator of the proposed project has reviewed the potential environmental impacts of the action summarized in the foregoing IEE. As per *Program Description* Section of this document, different types of activities will be provided under the Workforce Development Activity. Most of the activities outlined in the table below are not going to have adverse impact. Provision of material support (i.e. lab equipment, computers etc.) to beneficiaries under Activities 1.1.3, 1.1.4 and 2.2.1 may have negative effect should these lab equipment and computers not be properly used and disposed in a sustainable manner.

4. Recommended Environmental Actions

4.1 Recommended Mitigation Measures

Defined/Illustrative Activities	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Recommended Threshold Determination
1.1.1.1 Increase engagement of the private sector 1.1.1.2 Improve educational institutions approach to technical skills training	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion
1.1.1.3 Establish short-term training opportunities at educational institutions 1.1.1.4 Increase access to skill development opportunities for regional youth, women, and other marginalized populations	Provision of material support (i.e. lab equipment and computers) to beneficiaries may have some negative effect should lab equipment and computers not used properly and be disposed in a sustainable manner.	USAID will provide targeted beneficiaries training on proper use and disposal of computers and equipment in compliance with applicable Armenian and EU best practice on electronic waste management standards to ensure that the beneficiaries recycle the hardware (i.e. computers) in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner. All training shall comply with Armenian government directives regarding Covid-19 minimization, including social distances and use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Negative Determination
1.2.1 Work with the GOAM and private sector to institutionalize soft skills training 1.2.2 Leverage soft skill training efforts currently being undertaken by other stakeholders 1.2.3 Establish a mentorship program for target youth	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion

Defined/Illustrative Activities	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Recommended Threshold Determination
2.2.1 Support career development entities and mechanisms in targeted colleges and/or universities	Provision of material support (i.e. lab equipment and computers) to beneficiaries may have some negative effect should lab equipment and computers not used properly and be disposed in a sustainable manner.	Implementer shall provide targeted beneficiaries training on proper use and disposal of provided equipment in compliance with applicable Armenian and EU best practice on waste management standards to ensure that the beneficiaries use and recycle in a sustainable and environmentally sound manner. Training shall include instruction on adherence to all applicable occupational health standards including use of proper PPE. All training shall comply with Armenian government directives regarding Covid-19 minimization, including social distances and use of appropriate PPE.	Negative Determination
2.2.2 Support the GOAM in institutionalizing career counseling in high school	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion
2.2.3 Pilot efforts to ensure that educational institutions have access to information about professional growth opportunities and share them with their students	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion
3.1.1 Assist the GOAM in targeted policy and regulatory reforms	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion
3.1.2 Develop a strategic communication plan for policy and regulatory changes	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion

Defined/Illustrative Activities	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Recommended Threshold Determination
3.1.3 Create platform for coordination around labor policies and regulations	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion
3.2.1 Provide support to the GOAM to identify policies and services that would encourage and support increased women's participation in the labor market	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion
3.2.2 Support private sector and GOAM in establishing policies and procedures to reduce sexual harassment	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion
3.2.3 Work with the GOAM to address policy gaps, especially for fathers	None Anticipated	N/A	Categorical Exclusion

4.2 Recommended Environmental Determination

Categorical Exclusion:

A categorical exclusion is recommended for the following identified activities under 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2):

- All activities per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i), for education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment or the climate; and
- All activities per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(iii), for analyses, studies, academic/research workshops and meetings

Negative Determination:

A negative determination with conditions is recommended for activities 1.1.3, 1.1.4 and 2.2.1 per 22 CFR 216.3(a)(2)(iii). Specific terms and conditions are presented in below Section.

4.3. Terms and Conditions

4.3.1 For activity 1.1.3, 1.1.4 and 2.2.1 the intervention must build awareness providing training around environmental, health and safety best practices for equipment and hardware use and disposal to ensure that beneficiaries will use and dispose the granted equipment in a sustainable manner.

4.3.2. The activity will be implemented in compliance with the requirements of the local environmental legislation and health, safety standards and best international practice.

4.3.3. The training materials shall be captured in the IP annual work plans, when applicable, and therefore budgeted for and reviewed for adequacy.

4.4. USAID Monitoring and Reporting

4.4.1 The COR, with the support of the MEO, is responsible for monitoring compliance of activities by means of desktop reviews and site visits.

4.4.2 A summary report of the Mission's compliance relative to this IEE shall be sent to the BEO on an annual basis, normally in connection with preparation of the Mission's annual environmental compliance report required under ADS 203.3.8.5 and 204.3.3.

4.4.4 The BEO or his/her designated representative may conduct site visits or request additional information for compliance monitoring purposes to ensure compliance with this IEE, as necessary.

4.5. Implementing Partner (IP) Monitoring and Reporting

4.5.1 The originator of the proposed project has reviewed the potential environmental impacts of the action summarized in the foregoing IEE.

4.5.2 The IP shall report on environmental compliance requirements as part of their routine project reporting to USAID.

5. Mandatory Inclusion of Requirements in Solicitations, Awards, Budgets and Workplans

- 5.1 Appropriate environmental compliance language, including limitations defined in Section 6, shall be incorporated into solicitations and awards for this activity and projects budgets shall provide for adequate funding and human resources to comply with requirements of this IEE.
- 5.2 Solicitations shall include Statements of Work with task(s) for meeting environmental compliance requirements and appropriate evaluation criteria.
- 5.3 Environmental mitigation and monitoring requirements, when available, shall also be included in solicitations and awards.
- 5.4 The IP shall incorporate conditions set forth in this IEE into their annual work plans.
- 5.5 The IP shall ensure annual work plans do not prescribe activities that are defined as limitations, as defined in Section 6.
- 5.6 The USAID Mission will include an indicator for environmental compliance as part of the project's performance monitoring plan.

6. Limitations of the IEE: This IEE does not cover activities (and therefore should changes in scope implicate any of the issues/activities listed below, a BEO-approved amendment shall be required), that:

- 6.1 Normally have a significant effect on the environment under §216.2(d)(1) [See http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/regulations.html]
- 6.2 Support project preparation, project feasibility studies, engineering design for activities listed in §216.2(d)(1);
- 6.3 Affect endangered species;
- 6.4 Result in wetland or biodiversity degradation or loss;
- 6.5 Support extractive industries (e.g. mining and quarrying);
- 6.6 Promote timber harvesting;
- 6.7 Provide support for regulatory permitting;
- 6.8 Result in privatization of industrial or infrastructure facilities;
- 6.9 Lead to new construction of buildings or other structures;
- 6.10 Assist the procurement (including payment in kind, donations, guarantees of credit) or use (including handling, transport, fuel for transport, storage, mixing, loading, application, cleanup of spray equipment, and disposal) of pesticides or activities involving procurement, transport, use, storage, or disposal of toxic materials and /or pesticides (cover all insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, etc. covered under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act); and
- 6.11 Procure or use genetically modified organisms.

7. Revisions

Under §216.3(a)(9), if new information becomes available that indicates that activities covered by the IEE might be considered major and their effect significant, or if additional activities are proposed that might be considered major and their adverse effect significant, this environmental threshold decision will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the Mission with concurrence by the BEO. It is the responsibility of the USAID COR/AOR to keep the MEO and BEO informed of any new information or changes in the activity that might require revision of this determination.

Approval:	Deborah Grieser Digitally signed by Deborah Grieser Date: 2020.06.03 09:34:58 +04'00' Deborah Grieser, Mission Director	Date
Clearance:	Marina Vardanyan Digitally signed by Marina Vardanyan Date: 2020.06.02 17:20:51 +04'00' Marina Vardanyan/Mission Environmental Officer	Date
Clearance:	Simon Sargsyan Digitally signed by Simon Sargsyan Date: 2020.06.02 16:27:05 +04'00' Simon Sargsyan, AOR/COR	Date
Concurrence:	HARRY BOTTENBERG (affiliate) Digitally signed by HARRY BOTTENBERG (affiliate) Date: 2020.07.24 13:17:21 -04'00' Harry Bottenberg, Acting Bureau Environmental Officer, E&E	Date

Distribution:

IEE/RCE File

MEO (to also provide a copy to COR)

Attachments: Annex 1: Climate Risk Screening and Management Tool for Activity/Project/Strategy Design

Annex A. Climate Risk Screening and Management Tool for the Activity Design

1.1: Defined or Anticipated DOs, IRs, or sectors: good governance	1.2: Timeframe*	1.3: Geography	2: Climate Risks*	3: Adaptive Capacity*	4: Climate Risk Rating of DO or IR* [Enter rating for each DO or IR* High, Moderate, or Low]	5: Opportunities	6.1: Climate Risk Management Options	6.2: How Climate Risks Are Addressed in the Strategy*	7: Next Steps for Project and/or Activity Design*	8: Accepted Climate Risks*
Activity 1.1.1	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 1.1.2	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 1.1.3	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	Schedule works in a way to avoid severe weather events	N/A	Exercise flexibility in planning	N/A	N/A
Activity 1.1.4	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	Schedule works in a way to avoid severe weather events	N/A	Exercise flexibility in planning	N/A	N/A
Activity 1.2.1	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 1.2.2	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 1.2.3	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	Schedule works in a way to avoid severe weather events	N/A	Exercise flexibility in planning	N/A	N/A
Activity 2.1.1	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 2.1.2	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 2.1.3	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

1.1: Defined or Anticipated DOs, IRs, or sectors: good governance	1.2: Timeframe*	1.3: Geography	2: Climate Risks*	3: Adaptive Capacity*	4: Climate Risk Rating of DO or IR* [Enter rating for each DO or IR* High, Moderate, or Low]	5: Opportunities	6.1: Climate Risk Management Options	6.2: How Climate Risks Are Addressed in the Strategy*	7: Next Steps for Project and/or Activity Design*	8: Accepted Climate Risks*
Activity 2.2.1	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 2.2.2	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	Schedule works in a way to avoid severe weather events	N/A	Exercise flexibility in planning	N/A	N/A
Activity 2.2.3	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 3.1.1	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 3.1.2	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 3.1.3	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 3.2.1	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 3.2.2	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 3.2.3	2021-2026	Armenia	N/A	N/A	Low	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A