



USAID | SENEGAL

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Subject: Questions and Answers (Q&A)

Reference: Notice of Funding Opportunity No. 72068519RFA00003

Program Title: NIGER GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND POLICY REFORM ACTIVITY

Date: December 21, 2018

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) wants to thank you for submitting questions in response to the referenced Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Your questions were reviewed, and we hereby provide answers/clarifications enclosed herewith as ATTACHMENT A.

The deadline for submission of technical and cost application is now revised from January 11, 2019 to January 21, 2019 at 16:30PM (GMT) Local Dakar, Senegal Time.

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

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Alula Abera
Regional Agreement Officer

Enclosed:

- **ATTACHMENT A – Question & Answers**
 - **ANNEX 1:** The RISE II Results Framework
 - **ANNEX 2:** Youth Assessment Themes
 - **ANNEX 3:** List of current projects implemented in Niger

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

GENERAL

1. I send this message in request for assistance with submitting an application for the below opportunity. Please assist with application access on Grants.gov as the apply button for this opportunity is grayed out click disabled.

USAID Response: Applicants must submit their technical and cost application by email, to the email addresses listed under Section D.1 and D.2. of the NOFO. Please do not submit applications through the Grants.gov website.

2. Multiple religious and sectoral holidays during the solicitation period have created a condensed timeline for technical design and slowed the recruitment process. Would USAID consider granting an extension to ensure applicants have sufficient time to recruit highly qualified candidates and put together responsive technical applications?

USAID Response: Application submission deadline has been extended from January 11, 2019 to January 21, 2019 at 16:30 Local Dakar, Senegal Time.

3. Would in-kind grants to public institutions be considered under PRG-GAP?

USAID Response: Only in limited circumstances would USAID consider in-kind grants to public institutions. In such a circumstance, there would have to be a clear link between the in-kind grant and achieving specific policy reforms. Grants should be focused on civil society organizations to build the demand for reform as well as initiatives that build or reinforce inclusive, transparent reform mechanisms between government institutions and civil society.

4. Does USAID have a target for the overall amount of grant funding to be awarded by PRG-GAP to local civil society and other organizations/institutions?

USAID Response: No. Potential applicants can propose their grants funds based on their technical approach.

5. Could USAID, please, provide a local staff compensation table and a list of benefits for local staff?

USAID Response: No. The requested document does not apply to this NOFO. Applicants' are to use their established personnel compensation policy.

6. Please we want the french version.

USAID Response: A French version of the solicitation is not available.

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

7. On page 9, USAID references the DRG Assessment for Niger completed in 2017. Would USAID consider making the assessment publicly available?

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USAID Response: Unfortunately, USAID's 2017 Niger DRG Assessment is unavailable to the public.

8. On page 11, USAID states, "the RISE II Results Framework is attached to this Scope of Work" and refers to specific IRs and sub-IRs. For context, did USAID intend to include with the RFA, the full Results Framework for RISE II? If so could USAID please share the results framework?

USAID Response: The RISE II Results Framework is attached as ANNEX I to this Q&A.

9. On page 19, under illustrative indicators, the RFA says: "The recipient should, however, include the relevant indicators from the U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework, specifically those related to election administration and institution building." Since this project does not include work related to election administration, can USAID please clarify which relevant indicator applicants should utilize?

USAID Response: Applicants should include relevant indicators from the Good Governance, Political Competition & Consensus Building, and Civil Society Program Areas under the Governing Justly and Democratically Objective within the U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework.

10. On page 22, USAID refers to "funding an ethnographic study on how women in Niger conceive of, and define, women's empowerment" and indicates that this study was due to conclude in summer 2018. Can USAID please provide any materials or data relevant to this study?

USAID Response: The final report of the aforementioned ethnographic study is being finalized. As soon as it is finalized, the report will be placed on the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) at <https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/home/Default.aspx>.

11. Also on p. 22, USAID refers to a joint USAID/UNICEF countrywide youth assessment, due to conclude by the end of 2018. Can USAID please provide any initial data, conclusions, and overall themes from this assessment, assuming it is in progress?

USAID Response: USAID anticipates the final report of the countrywide youth assessment will be finalized and made public in February 2019. A brochure highlighting the key themes emanating from the youth assessment is attached as ANNEX 2 to this Q&A.

12. Page 6: Could USAID, please, share a document (the latest report, for example) that describes the main activities and partners for the Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced (RISE) II Program that PRG-GAP will support?

USAID Response: The RISE II Technical Approach Working Paper can be found at <https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1860/usaid-resilience-sahel-enhanced-rise-ii-technical-approach-working-paper>. This technical working paper outlines USAID's

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technical approach to RISE II to include planned objectives, intermediate results, and illustrative interventions.

13. Page 9: Could USAID, please, share the report on the nationwide democracy, human rights, and governance assessment in Niger that USAID conducted in 2017?

USAID Response: Unfortunately, USAID's 2017 Niger DRG Assessment is unavailable to the public.

14. Page 10: Could USAID provide a list of its current projects in Niger and the names of the respective implementers?

USAID Response: A list of current projects implemented in Niger is attached as ANNEX 3 to this Q&A. Please note that the list is constantly changing as the new projects are awarded, existing awards are amended, and old projects end. The list should be viewed as a current snapshot of the main projects currently under implementation (not planned).

15. Page 11: The RfA states: "This activity will also support the Bridge project currently under design.." How does USAID envision PRG-GAP's support for both RISE II program and the Bridge program: Is this limited to ensuring effective coordination, so that there are no duplications and the projects support each other's work? Or is there an expectation that PRG-GAP and RISE II or/and Bridge would look at opportunities for cofunding certain projects/activities/local partners?

USAID Response: USAID expects that PRG-GAP coordinate and collaborate very closely with its RISE II and Bridge implementing partners. In fact, USAID views this coordination as critical to the success of this Activity. PRG-GAP is designed to directly support reforms identified by USAID sectoral partners (i.e. RISE II and Bridge implementing partners). In doing so, PRG-GAP will need to support demand and supply-side institutions best positioned to champion and advance the desired sectoral reforms. For example, PRG-GAP may need to focus its demand side technical assistance on civil society organizations already supported by USAID sectoral programs to make them stronger advocates for reform and give them the tools to hold government accountable. At the same time, PRG-GAP may need to provide supply side technical assistance to national institutions that are in a position to realize and implement reforms supported by USAID's sectoral programs. In short, PRG-GAP is expected to be a demand driven Activity with that demand emanating largely from USAID's RISE II and Bridge Programs. Applicants will need to describe their approach to partnering with other USAID implementing partners.

16. Page 15: Could USAID share the latest report about PRG-PA's activities?

USAID Response: No. This report is not available to the public.

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17. Has USAID commissioned any recent opinion surveys related to democracy and governance issues in Niger? If yes, could USAID, please, share the report?

USAID Response: USAID has not commissioned any recent opinion surveys related to democracy and governance in Niger.

18. Page 19: The RfA refers to a number of illustrative indicators that would require conducting nationwide opinion surveys. Does USAID envision that the PRG-GAP implementer will commission such survey or does USAID conduct such surveys and the PRG-GAP implementer would be able to tag along certain questions that would provide data for these indicators?

USAID Response: USAID does not currently conduct nationwide opinion surveys. Applicants will need to propose approaches and tools, such as baseline and endline data collection, to obtain the needed data and information to effectively evaluate the impact and effectiveness of PRG-GAP interventions.

19. Page 21: The RfA refers to an ethnographic study on how women in Niger conceive of, and define, women's empowerment, commissioned by USAID and expected to be completed by the end of the summer 2018. If the report is available, could USAID, please, share it with us?

USAID Response: The final report of the aforementioned ethnographic study is being finalized. As soon as it is finalized, the report will be placed on the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) at <https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/home/Default.aspx>.

20. Is USAID expecting the implementer to award grants and provide technical assistance under each of the three PRG-GAP objectives or does it intend to limit the assistance to public institutions only to technical assistance?

USAID Response: As described in the response to question #3, USAID's intent is to focus support to public institutions on technical assistance. Grants should be focused on the other two objectives. In limited circumstances, USAID may consider in-kind grants to public institutions but there would have to be a clear link between the in-kind grant and achieving specific policy reforms. Direct financial support to public institutions will not be authorized.

21. Section A, IX, page 22, can USAID confirm that the two expatriate positions (Chief of Party and Policy Reform Adviser) outlined in the NOFO are the only required Key Personnel positions for this program?

USAID Response: USAID confirms that the two expatriate positions outlined in the NOFO are the only required Key Personnel positions for this Activity.

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22. Section A, IX, page 22, the NOFO states that the two key personnel positions are intended to be held by expatriate staff. Can USAID confirm whether or not these roles could be transitioned to local national staff or third country nationals (TCN) during the program, if deemed appropriate? Or, are the positions required to be expatriate for the entire life of the project?

USAID Response: Applicants are free to propose key personnel over the life of the Activity that are suitable to effectively implement their technical approach to include transitioning to local national staff. As point of clarification, the definition used for expatriate staff includes Third Country Nationals (TCNs).

23. The NOFO states that an ethnographic study on Nigerien women's perceptions of women's empowerment would be concluded in Summer 2018 (page 21). Has this been completed? If so, can USAID share this study with applicants?

USAID Response: The final report of the aforementioned ethnographic study is being finalized. As soon as it is finalized, the report will be placed on the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) at <https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/home/Default.aspx>.

24. Can USAID share with applicants the RISE II gender analysis that is referenced on page 21?

USAID Response: USAID's Gender Analysis prepared for RISE II can be found at: https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/Detail_Presto.aspx?vID=47&ctID=ODVhZjk4NWQtM2YyMi00YjRmLTkxNjktZTcxMjM2NDhmY2Uy&rID=NTEwMDQw
A summary of the Gender Analysis is available at <https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1860/summary-rise-gender-analysis>

25. Has the youth assessment co-funded with UNICEF been completed (page 22)? If so, could USAID share it with applicants?

USAID Response: USAID anticipates the final report of the countrywide youth assessment will be finalized and made public in February 2019. A brochure highlighting the key themes emanating from the youth assessment is attached as ANNEX 4.

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

26. On pages 34-36, the RFA's instructions for the technical application includes sections for the Key Personnel and Staffing Plan and the Management Plan and Institutional Capability. The descriptions of these sections create some redundancies between the information requested for the Staffing Plan and the Management Plan. Would USAID consider resolving this by moving the Management Plan contents into the Key Personnel and Staffing Plan section and increasing the page limit for this section?

USAID Response: USAID will accept applications that combine the Key Personnel and Staffing Plan section with the Management Plan and Institutional Capability section. In this instance, the combined section should be no more than ten (10) pages. If

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applicants combine these sections, they still must address all the elements under the two sections as described in the NOFO.

27. Under NOFO Section D.3 (page 31), the NOFO details what information applicants must include on the “cover page.” With respect to a cover letter, it states the following: “Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria.” However, Section D.5 provides detailed instructions for the “Cover Letter.” Should the heading for D.5.a instead be “Cover Page”?

USAID Response: Cover Letter and Cover Page are used interchangeably under this NOFO.

Both the Technical and Business (Cost) Applications must include a Cover Page/Cover Letter which will serve as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer.

28. Under Section D.5, Technical Application Format (page 33), the NOFO includes a list of attachments to include as part of the technical application. The final attachment is “past performance information.” Section D.6, Cost Application, includes History of Performance (item i) is a required component and asks that applicants provide specific information via Annex #6 (Past Performance Information). Can completing Annex #6 for past performance information satisfy the history of performance requirement of both the technical and cost applications?

USAID Response: Yes.

29. Can prospective applicants adjust the budget template in accordance with their accounting standards as long as they adhere to the SF424 categories?

USAID Response: Yes.

30. Under Section D.5 on page 49, Technical Application Format (page 33), the list of attachments includes a Draft EMMP (as applicable). Acknowledging that the activity has received an environmental determination of “categorical exclusion” given the focus on technical assistance related to government accountability and policy reform”, could USAID confirm that if activities and interventions are not expected to require a revision of the determination, then a draft Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan is not required as an attachment to the applicant’s submission?

USAID Response: No EMMP is required for actions that have received a final BEO approval with environmental determination of Categorical Exclusion. Any actions that were not covered under the approved Request for Categorical Exclusion may necessitate an EMMP following a supplemental environmental examination.

31. Are sub-recipients required to submit to USAID the documents listed in Section D.6.c., Required Certifications and Assurances?

USAID Response: No. It is only required for the Prime.

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SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

32. In NOFO Section F, # 3, on page 48, USAID requires the submission of Annex 2 that will include a financial table which contains expenses during the reported period, year-to-year amount, and remaining budget line item amount; however the standard reporting form SF-425 does not require that information. We respectfully request that USAID consider removing this requirement to enhance clarity and ensure alignment with 2 CFR 200.327.

USAID Response: The requirement for submission of Annex 2: “Include a financial table which contains expenses during the reported period, year-to-date amount, and remaining budget line item amount.” under bullet 2 on page 48 is hereby removed from the NOFO.