USAID | WEST BANK/GAZA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

October 14, 2015

Subject:	Amendment to USAID/West Bank and Gaza Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number: RFA-294-15-000003
Amendment No.:	One (1)
Issuance Date of Amendment No. 1:	October 7, 2015
Issuance Date of NOFO:	September 4, 2015
Closing Date of NOFO:	November 13, 2015 (Amended)
Closing Time:	4:00 PM (Jerusalem Time UTC/GMT +2 hours)

Dear Applicant:

The purpose of this Amendment No. One (1) to Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number: RFA-294-15-000003 is to:

a. Extend the closing date of this NOFO from November 4, 2015 to November 13, 2015. Closing time remains at 4:00 PM (Jerusalem Time UTC/GMT +2 hours).
b. Provide answers to all questions received regarding the subject NOFO (see Attachments 1 and 2).

Any questions regarding this amendment must be submitted in writing to Ms. Linda Maher and Ms. Reine Joubran using the following e-mail address WBGEnvGazaSub@usaid.gov no later than Tuesday October 20, 2015. No further questions, however, will be entertained as to the NOFO itself.

Sincerely,

Dale Lewis
Agreement Officer
USAID West Bank & Gaza

Attachment 1 – Technical Questions & Answers
Attachment 2 – Contractual Questions & Answers

ATTACHMENT 1

Attachment 1 – Technical Questions & Answers
USAID/West Bank and Gaza
RFA-294-15-000003
Envision Gaza 2020 Program

Question No. 1: The NOFO discusses the "partial engagement of the civil society in emergency, humanitarian and recovery response" as a "missed opportunity to help CSOs to grow and develop" (Page 9) and the importance of Envision Gaza 2020 to work through a network of CSOs to take on a "leading role in responding effectively and efficiently to humanitarian crises and emergencies" (Page 11). The illustrative cross-cutting indicators also demonstrate the desire for Envision Gaza 2020 to build the capacity of Palestinian CSOs. With very specific program budget allocations in the NOFO, where does USAID anticipate that the Applicant will budget for CSO capacity building activities?

Answer No. 1: Program costs do not preclude the applicant from budgeting for CSO capacity building activities. However, USAID does not envision capacity building as a standalone activity. Rather, costs of capacity building activities can be included within a grant's budget when such activities would be warranted and are advantageous to the overall program.

Question No. 2: Page 15 states the Recipient that program interventions could include activities in non-Designated Terrorist Organization (DTO) municipalities. At this time, does USAID consider any of the municipalities in Gaza to be non-DTO municipalities or is this a reference to the potential of having to pivot activities to the West Bank?

Answer No. 2: Some municipalities in Gaza are in fact considered non-DTO at this time by the USG. However, specific localities will be defined during the development of the program's Work Plan.

Question No. 3: Can USAID please provide definitions of indicators in the logframe, or clarify the difference between the two outputs listed in the logframe on Page 23: 'Household and individual income increased' and 'Livelihoods restored or enhanced'?

Answer No. 3: 'Household and individual income increased' is related to Component 2's "Short-term Work" activity. 'Livelihoods restored or enhanced' is related to Component 2's "Minor Capital Investments" activity. Note that these indicators were provided for illustrative purposes only. Applicants may propose alternative or additional indicators.

Question No. 4: On page 19, the NOFO indicates that "The Recipient will conduct a final independent third-party evaluation to assess the activity's performance.

The final evaluation should be conducted at least six months prior to the conclusion of the activity." Would USAID please confirm that evaluations do not apply to individual activities, but rather to the overall program performance?

Answer No. 4: The aforementioned evaluation refers to the overall program performance.

Question No. 5: Would USAID consider substituting advanced degree requirements for key personnel with additional relevant years of experience?

Answer No. 5: Yes. For the positions of Grants and Compliance Manager, Finance Manager, and Program Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, five years of additional experience in the respective relevant field may substitute for the advanced degree requirements. The requirements for the positions of Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party, however, remain unchanged.

Question No. 6: Provided that the M&E Plan will be completed in close coordination with the Mission, may Applicants submit PIRS [Performance Indicator Reference Sheet] with the final version of the M&E Plan?

Answer No. 6: Applicants may submit the PIRS (Performance Indicator Reference Sheet) with the final version of the M&E Plan.

Question No. 7: On page 11 of the NOFO, USAID provides an indicator that reads: "Number of internally displaced and host population beneficiaries provided with basic needs as a result of USG assistance (disaggregated by gender—refer to Annex I)." Annex I, however, is VAT Guidance. Would USAID please clarify if there is a missing annex or if Applicants should refer to a different section of the NOFO for information on gender disaggregation?

Answer No. 7: USAID apologizes for the confusion. The indicator is from the Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators list available at http://www.state.gov/f/indicators/.

Question No. 8: Please confirm if there are any restrictions particular to purchasing fresh food from farmers, cooperatives or CBOs.

Answer No. 8: USAID-financed procurements of the following agricultural commodities must receive prior written approval: wheat, rice, corn, soybeans, sorghum, flour, meal, beans, peas, cotton, vegetable oils, and animal oils and fats. Non-U.S. Commodities - Whenever offshore (non-U.S.) procurement of agricultural commodities or products thereof is contemplated, USAID/W must determine the parity position of the commodity. When the prices of such products in the United States are below parity, USAID will not finance the offshore procurement, except in limited circumstances. USAID will be

working closely with the recipient on determining eligibility or identifying any restrictions during implementation of the program.
The complete USAID Commodity Eligibility Listing, is available at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/31251m.pdf

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Question No. 9: If restrictions to purchasing fresh food exist, are there waivers an implementer can obtain in order to include fresh produce with other food assistance provided?

Answer No. 9: Yes; however, requests for waivers will be required to be processed per USAID directives for which it should not be anticipated that an approval will be automatically granted.

Question No. 10: Would USAID consider evaluating proposed Key Personnel based on demonstrated skills and experience, instead of requiring a Master's Degree?

Answer No. 10: Please see answer to technical question No.5 above.

Question No. 11: Some beneficiaries will receive both NFIs and food. Would they be considered as counting towards the targets for both categories?

Answer No. 11: That is correct. Beneficiaries receiving both NFIs and food will be considered to count towards the targets for both categories.

Question No. 12: The indicator for the RFA's main objective is the "Number of internally displaced and host population beneficiaries provided with basic needs as a result of USG assistance." Does the implementer need to solely target IDPs and host population?

Answer No. 12: The overall target population of Envision Gaza 2020 is vulnerable populations. Applicants are encouraged to propose additional indicators that target vulnerable groups in addition to IDPs and host population.

Question No. 13: Please confirm that the Component 1 targets of "At least 10,000 needy people provided with non-food items (NFIs)" and "At least 10,000 needy people provided with food items" refers to 10,000 individuals, not households.

Answer No. 13: It refers to individuals, not households, as an absolute minimum for USAID consideration. Please also note the following language in the RFA: The Recipient may propose in its application greater and/or additional or amended targets, such as tracking the number of households represented by the individual beneficiaries.

Question No. 14: If Component 1 targets refer to households, can an organization use the average number of family members to estimate the number of people in need that will receive basic humanitarian commodities?

Answer No. 14: Please see USAID answer to technical question No.13.

Question No. 15: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Component 1, A- Provision of emergency non-food and supplemental food items… Pg 12. Does USAID have specific items in mind to be included in a home repair kit, would its contents be limited to basic emergency shelter items such as plastic sheeting, could more extensive construction materials be included as well?

Answer No. 15: USAID did not determine a specific list of items to be included in a home repair kit; it may include basic emergency shelter items. Its contents, though, should be limited to basic emergency shelter items and should not include more extensive construction materials.

Question No. 16: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Component 1, A & B, Pages 12 - 13. If the ERR Fund is to be used as the central mechanism for responding during and immediately after emergencies, does USAID then envision Component 1, Part A, rather than responding during and after emergencies, to be for the distribution of food and non-food assistance to chronically vulnerable Gazans over the course of the program?

Answer No. 16: Activities under Component 1-A are designed to provide assistance to communities/individuals still in need from the summer of 2014 conflict and natural disasters in Gaza. However, activities could also apply to a new emergency in Gaza. Component 1-B (ERR) is only authorized in a new emergency, and could apply to either the West Bank or Gaza (see page 8); the Recipient may utilize these funds to perform rapid response humanitarian assistance in Gaza, and also the West Bank, when approved in writing by the Mission Agreement Officer.).

Question No. 17: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Component 1, B-Emergency Rapid Response (ERR), Page 13. Will the use of ERR funds be restricted to during or immediately following an emergency or will USAID allow for access to the funds in advance of a possible emergency for preparedness activities such as preparing stocks, provide for warehousing of emergency stockpiles, covering standby staff, training local partners, etc?

Answer No. 17: USAID would theoretically allow for emergency preparedness activities, however decisions in this regard will be made on a case-by-case basis prior to or at the time of an emergency based on the specific conditions and the nature of the activities proposed.

Question No. 18: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Component 1, B-Emergency Rapid Response (ERR), Page 13. Will ERR funds be obligated in full at the signing of the Cooperative Agreement or will the ERR be obligated in increments that equal 20% of the overall program obligation?

Answer No. 18: All funds, including ERR funds, will be incrementally obligated to the program. The total of these incremental fundings will not exceed the budget allocation for each Component and in the case of the ERR funds equal the percentage stated in the NOFO, subject to availability of funds.

Question No. 19: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Component 2, Page 14. The NOFO defines 'short-term work' as 'three month work opportunities to skilled and unskilled laborers'. Can USAID confirm that 'short-term work' includes cash-for work activities, especially as the NOFO states that the Recipient is required to ensure beneficiaries are taught skills and afforded experiences that lead to sustainable longer-term employment by linking with other job opportunities being created in the private sector in Gaza or by other donors.' (p7)

Answer No. 19: “Short-term work” includes cash for work activities. However, USAID is interested in a range of approaches and activities being proposed in this regard by Applicants.

Question No. 20: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Component 2, Page 14. Are the specified three month duration of Short-term Work and six month duration of internships mandatory or illustrative, allowing for some flexibility in how these approaches are used?

Answer No. 20: They are illustrative. USAID refers Applicants to the existing language in the RFA, which was specifically designed to provide flexibility to Applicants to propose a range of approaches and activities.

Question No. 21: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Component 2, Pages 15. Is there a maximum amount allowed for a minor capital investment? What range in value does USAID envision for a minor capital investment?

Answer No. 21: The maximum amount and range in value will be determined based on the results of the needs assessment. Envision Gaza 2020 will respond to priority needs identified through a participatory rapid needs assessment conducted by the Recipient.

Question No. 22: Section VII, Management, Page 20 - 21. Qualifications of Key Personnel:

We believe the requirement of a master's degree or above for all key personnel positions will narrow the field of potential candidates, and reduce the possibility of identifying the strongest candidates for this program. Furthermore, such specifically-defined requirements reduce the likelihood of identifying Gazan candidates with the requisite background. We request that USAID adjust this requirement to allow for cumulative years of experience to substitute for a requirement of a master's degree for all key personnel positions.

Answer No. 22: Please see answer to technical question No.5.

Question No. 23: Can the implementation of health-related activities and delivery of psychosocial services by local CBOs be included within the scope of the program as part of either an emergency/post-emergency response, under Component 1, or internships, under Component 2?

Answer No. 23: Such services will be provided by other USAID programs..

Question No. 24: Would USAID consider supporting an implementer in obtaining any waivers that may be necessary in order to include fresh produce with other food assistance provided under the program's Component 1?

Answer No. 24: Please see answer to question No.8.

Question No. 25: In the description of non-food assistance and supplemental food assistance on p. 12, the NOFO states under Point A that non-food and food assistance should be provided to communities/individuals still in need from the summer 2014 conflict, and then on the same page (Points 1 and 2) states that these types of assistance should be provided both during and after emergencies without specifying a particular emergency as in Point A.

Can USAID confirm whether its intention for these activities is to provide food and non-food assistance only to communities/individuals still in need from the summer 2014 conflict, or whether the intention was to provide food and non-food assistance not only to those still in need from the summer 2014 conflict, but also during and after new emergencies that arise during the project period? If the latter, then can we safely assume that the Emergency Rapid Response fund would still be able to be used to support food and non-food assistance if those were the priority needs of families?

Answer No. 25: Please see answer to question No.16. The intention is also to provide assistance during and after new emergencies should the need arise. The nature of the assistance will be determined at the time of emergency according to need.

Question No. 26: On p. 27 of the NOFO, one of the activities/inputs listed is "Private sector food processing, preservation, and distribution Priority might be given to the following categories: 1) women from female-headed households. 2) disabled women and men, 3) marginalized and poor households. The activity will be hosted by CSOs in targeted communities, ensuring easy access to the beneficiaries." Because private sector food processing, preservation and distribution is not mentioned even peripherally anywhere else in the NOFO, this seems as if it may not have been intended to be included as an activity.

Can USAID confirm whether or not this activity does in fact belong in the logical framework for program design?

Answer No. 26: USAID apologizes for this oversight. Please ignore the aforementioned bullet. It was not intended as a potential input or activity.

Question No. 27: On p. 11. The Objective states: "Envision Gaza 2020 aims to create a path for vulnerable populations in Gaza (including households, youth, women, and other marginalized groups." Can USAID clarify what definition of "vulnerable" (a term used several times in the NOFO) is being used?

Answer No. 27: The term "vulnerable populations" is defined in a footnote on page 6.

Question No. 28: On p, 12 under Non Food Assistance states illustrative NFOs as household cleaning supplies, kitchen utilities, school uniforms, back to school kits, bedding, tarps, gas stoves and cylinders, potable water and tanks, school bags, home repair kits. The paragraph goes on to say: "Procurement of such items will require prior USAID written approval, including approval of the procurement of restricted and/or ineligible commodities…". Understanding "unless described in the application and funded in the approved award, the contracting out of any work under a Federal award" requires prior approval, if NFI items are budgeted within the approved cost proposal, we would like to confirm that approval of the budget represents approval of the indicated cost and a separate prior written approval would not be required.

Answer No. 28: Approval of the budget does NOT represent approval of specific items that may be "ineligible" or :"restricted" and subject to separate prior written approval.

Question No. 29: Throughout the RFA, USAID mentions the necessary targeted impact to "youth".

Is USAID defining "youth" per the USAID Policy on Youth Development, specifically for "ages under 30"?

Answer No. 29: USAID refers Applicants to the existing language in the RFA, which on page 17 refers to USAID's October 2012 Youth in Development policy paper which states on page 2: "While youth development programs often focus on young people in the 15-24 year age range, the policy recognizes that USAID youth programs likely engage a broader cohort of 10 and 29 year olds; with the critical understanding that the transition from childhood to adulthood is not finite or linear and varies across and within countries. The policy asks all USAID missions to consider how they can mainstream youth across their portfolios, and provides guidance on when and how to prioritize and target intentional youth development efforts. While this policy is framed around young people's development, it also acknowledges the important links to and synergies with protection issues and interventions, as well as laws and policies protecting those aged 0 to17 (who are defined as "children" by international standards and convention)."

Question No. 30: On p. 15, "Minor Capital Investments" states that "Envision Gaza 2020 will bolster income generation for the neediest in Gaza through minor capital contributions to textile, agricultural, and other workers." This section refers to capital contributions. On page 16, "Indicators" refers to credit: "Proportion of female participants in USG-assistance programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)) (OPstd)"
Is USAID open to the capital investments being made either as grants/contributions or credit? Or is USAID referring to a different type of credit above?

Answer No. 30: Envision Gaza 2020 will not include credit activities. Minor capital investments are to be made through grants or contributions only.

Question No. 31: Is the Logical framework between pages 23 to 27 required or illustrative?

Answer No. 31: The Logical Framework is illustrative. The RFA was specifically designed to provide flexibility to Applicants in order for USAID to receive a range of approaches and proposed activities.

[END OF ATTACHMENT 1]

ATTACHMENT 2

Attachment 2 – Contractual Questions & Answers

USAID/West Bank and Gaza
RFA-294-15-000003
Envision Gaza 2020 Program

Question No. 1: On page 18, Section V. Subject "Evaluation" states that "An independent USAID-led mid-term evaluation will be conducted during the third year of implementation." This implies that USAID will fund the evaluation directly and that it should not be included in the program budget. Could USAID please confirm that USAID will cover the cost for a mid-term evaluation?

Answer No. 1: Correct, USAID confirms that the mid-term evaluation costs will be covered directly by USAID and is not anticipated from the program budget.

Question No. 2: Page 34 paragraph 2 refers to the "title page" of the application.

a. May the Title Page be separate from the Cover Page?
b. Is the Title Page counted within the 25-page limit for the technical application?

Answer No. 2: Title page is not separate from Cover Page. Title/Cover Page, Table of Contents, and any tables, charts and graphs will not count for the 25 pages limit.

Question No. 3: Could USAID please confirm that the Cover Page, Table of Contents, and Executive Summary are not included in the 25-page technical application page limit?

Answer No. 3: Cover Page and Table of Contents will not count for the 25 page limit, however, the Executive Summary will.

Question No. 4: May applicants include a list of Abbreviations and Acronyms as part of the technical but not subject to the page limit?

Answer No. 4: A list of Abbreviations and Acronyms for the technical application is encouraged, and will not count for the 25 page limit.

Question No. 5: Would USAID please confirm that the illustrative first year work plan, Gantt chart, and illustrative M&E plan should be submitted only as Appendices and not part of the technical approach subject to the 25-page limit?

Answer No. 5: USAID confirms. As instructed on pages 38 and 39 of the NOFO, the illustrative first year work plan, Gantt chart, and illustrative M&E plan should be submitted as Appendices and are considered separate documents from the 25 page Technical Application page limitation

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Question No. 6: Could USAID please clarify if the three references for Key Personnel should be included in the technical narrative or if they may be submitted in Appendix B in addition to the 3-page CVs and LOCs?

Answer No. 6: References for key personnel should be submitted in Appendix B as an attachment to each respective proposed key personnel's resume.

Question No. 7: Page 37, section e.4: May the list of positions and associated LOE and locations be included as an appendix?

Answer No. 7: As instructed in the NOFO page 39, the Staffing Plan described in page 37, section e.4 should be submitted as Appendix E – Staffing Plan.

Question No. 8: On page 38, section g. "Past Performance" USAID states that "Applicants shall describe all programs in which the primary Applicant (as well as any partners substantially involved in implementation i.e. receiving 25% or more of the total proposed project cost) implemented similar programs over the past three (3) years." However, on page 39, section h.1 Appendix A – Relevant Past Performance Information USAID states that "Applicants must submit a list of the five most recent U.S. Government or other donor funded contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, etc." Could USAID please clarify whether applicants should supply all relevant recent programs or just five?

Answer No. 8: Please note that in addition to the description of the similar program implemented over the past three years (which must be submitted as part of the technical application), a list of the five most recent programs must be submitted in Appendix A as instructed on page 39.

Question No. 9: Could USAID please confirm that applicants should include a description of past performance in the technical narrative (with details in the annex), separate from the institutional experience section?

Answer No. 9: USAID Confirms, please see answer to question 8.

Question No. 10: As referenced on page 42 of the NOFO, can USAID please clarify whether the cost application for subawardees who will be substantially involved in implementation (i.e. receiving 25% or more of the total proposed project costs), includes the complete cost application documents, or only the budget and budget narrative?

Answer No. 10: As instructed on page 42, Subawards cost applications should follow the same cost format as submitted by the Applicant.

Question No. 11: Would USAID be open to applicants proposing a Finance Director in lieu of a Finance Manager to attract a wider variety of candidates to the program?

Answer No. 11: USAID would consider any one of these titles.

Question No. 12: On page 20 of the NOFO, under USAID requests the following COP qualification criteria: "including at least 15 years prior experience working in humanitarian assistance, and emergency response, plus experience in managing complex international-donor funded development activities in challenging environments." Our interpretation of this criteria statement is that a combined 15 years of experience in humanitarian assistance, emergency response, and management of complex donor funded programs and/or activities in challenging environments is required. Would USAID kindly confirm if this interpretation is correct?

Answer No. 12: USAID confirms.

Question No. 13: Please confirm whether the cover page, table of contents, and executive summary are included in the 25 page limit for the technical section of the application. Please also confirm if the applicant may include an acronym list and transmittal letter that do not count toward the 25 page limit.

Answer No. 13: Please see answers to questions 2, 3, and 4 above. A one page transmittal letter will not count for the 25 page limit.

Question No. 14: Would USAID consider graphics to be non-counting pages?

Answer No. 14: Title/Cover Page, Table of Contents, and any tables, charts and graphs <u>will not</u> count for the 25 pages limit.

Question No. 15: Would USAID confirm that the staffing plan should be submitted in Appendix E and not as part of the Staffing Chapter?

Answer No. 15: USAID Confirms, please see answer to question No. 7.

Question No. 16: Would USAID consider allowing Applicants to provide a list of the five most relevant USG or donor-funded contracts in lieu of the five most recent?

Answer No. 16: A description of all similar (relevant) programs implemented over the past three years (which must be submitted as part of the technical application) is required, in addition to a list of the five most recent programs that must be submitted in Appendix A as instructed on page 39.

Question No. 17: Page 36 of the NOFO requests that Applicants submit an “illustrative first year work plan and a Gantt chart of illustrative activities of the first year of project implementation.” On page 39 of the NOFO, Appendix C is described as “an illustrative life of program work plan and Gantt chart of first year activities.” Would USAID please clarify the expected contents of the work plan and Gantt chart?

Answer No. 17: Specific Guidance on contents of the Work/ Implementation plan (including the Gantt chart) is available on page 52 of the NOFO under section “F.3.2 Program Reporting”.

Question No. 18: Would USAID consider providing the most recent Local Compensation Plan.

Answer No. 18: Local salary scale for West Bank and Jerusalem was published in USAID notice No. 2011-WBG-10 which can be found at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1883/2011-WBG-10.pdf the scale remains valid.

Question No. 19: Please confirm that the Partner Vetting requirement includes “direct vetting” of partner organizations and no other form of vetting, i.e. partner organizations will be required to submit their own information into the system, not the prime.

Answer No. 19: Please note that access to submit the vetting requests directly through the portal system will be limited to the prime awardee who will be responsible to submit all requests directly.

Question No. 20: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Legal and Policy Restrictions, Page 11. With regard to the statement that “all proposed activities must be cleared in advance with USAID’s AOR,” does USAID anticipate a clearance process that is in addition to the requirements under Mission Order 21? If so, does USAID have a clear description of the process?

Answer No. 20: This is to clarify that the clearances are permissible under the material support statute which is separate from the MO21 requirements. Activities should be cleared in advance by USAID/AOR. There is no specific mechanism for obtaining these clearances. The AOR and implementing partner will agree on the mechanism and timeline.

Question No. 21: Section III Proposed Activity and Results, Component 1, A- Provision of emergency non-food and supplemental food items… Pg 12. Will prior

USAID approval be required for ALL items or only those that may be the subject to eligibility restrictions? Will implementers be allowed to submit blanket approval requests for all items that will be required for the program (life of program) or will the approvals need to be activity based?

Answer No. 21: Approval is only required for items that are ineligible or restricted, please see answer to questions No. 8 and 9 in the technical questions section above. Blanket approvals may be requested for specific categories of items.

Question No. 22: Section VII, Management, Page 20 - 21. Is there flexibility in proposing alternate Key Personnel position titles as long as the proposed management structure and positions proposed ensure that all required functions are adequately and appropriately covered?

Answer No. 22: Major changes to the Key Personnel titles will not be accepted. However, USAID will consider alternative titles that are slightly different from the NOFO positions, as long as they remain within the required domain, and all NOFO relevant requirements are met including key personnel minimum requirements. Please see answer to question No. 11.

Question No. 23: Exclusivity with local partners. In previous solicitations USAID has encouraged and expected local organizations to partner with multiple organizations and discouraged exclusive arrangements. Given the limited number of local organizations in Gaza with sufficient capacity and ability to work in line with US regulations, would USAID consider discouraging exclusivity arrangements with local partners?

Answer No. 23: USAID did not include any relevant guidance in the NOFO.

Question No. 24: Section C.4, Page 32. Number of Applications. The NOFO states that “each organization may submit only one application per organization, or on behalf of any collaborative arrangement.” Can USAID clarify whether it is possible for an organization to be a sub in multiple consortia?

Answer No. 24: The NOFO referenced language above is applicable for prime applicants and does not apply to proposed sub-awardees, these may be identified under more than one application. .

Question No. 25: Section D.4 Technical Application Format, Page 35. Are the Cover Page, Table of Contents and Executive Summary included within the 25 page limit for the Technical Application?

Answer No. 25: Please see answers to questions No. 2, 3, 4, and 13 above.

Question No. 26: F.3.2 Program Reporting, g) FINAL REPORT, page 56. The requirement that a Draft Final Report be submitted not less than 60 days prior to the end of the award period is in contradiction to the provisions of CFR 200.238 which states that “the final performance report will be due 90 calendar days after the period of performance end date.” Will USAID adjust this language so as to conform to the CFR 200.238 provisions?

Answer No. 26: The submission timing of the Final Report is hereby revised and replaced by the following language: “The Recipient is required to submit a final performance report within 90 calendar days after the end of the Period of Performance. The Recipient shall submit one copy of a Final Report to the AOR and one copy to the Agreement Officer.”

Question No. 27: Vetting. USAID’s Partner Vetting System (PVS) pilot that went into effect in July, 2015 in five countries (Kenya, Guatemala, Lebanon, Philippines, and Ukraine) provides for direct vetting to be carried out by USAID. Mission Order 21 specifies indirect vetting, carried out by USAID’s Implementing Partners. In light of the system being piloted elsewhere, does USAID West Bank/Gaza foresee carrying out direct vetting under the Envision Gaza 2020 award?

Answer No. 27: The system in other countries is largely based on the WBG Mission’s vetting rules and procedures. There is no intention to make any changes to our system in the near future.

Question No. 28: On p. 35, the NOFO states that the technical application must be no longer than 25 pages.

Can USAID confirm whether the cover table and table of contents are included in the 25 page limit for the technical application?

Answer No. 28: Please see answers to questions No. 2, 3, 4, and 13 above.

Question No. 29: On p. 35, the NOFO gives instructions that say that applications must be “compatible MS Word, PDF, and with budgets as text accessible… In case of any conflicts between the MS Word and PDF versions of the application, the PDF version will govern”.

Can USAID confirm whether this means that both Word/Excel and PDF versions are required to be submitted, or should applicants choose just one format to use for submission?

Answer No. 29: Both Word/Excel and PDF versions are required.

Question No. 30: On p. 36, the directions for the Technical Approach (point #4) say that applicants are expected to submit an illustrative first year work plan and a Gantt chart of illustrative activities. However, on p. 39, Appendix C requests both an illustrative life of program work plan and Gantt chart of first year activities.

Can USAID please confirm that the work plan and Gantt chart should both go only in Appendix C, and not in the Technical Approach section of the Technical Application?

Answer No. 30: An illustrative life of program work plan and Gantt chart of first year Activities are to be submitted as Appendix C, not in the Technical Approach.

Question No. 31: On p. 36, the directions for the Technical Approach (point #5) say that applicants are expected to submit an illustrative M&E plan, however on p. 39, an illustrative M&E plan is also requested to be provided in Appendix D.

Can USAID please confirm that the illustrative M&E plan belongs only in Appendix D, and should not be repeated in the Technical Approach section of the Technical Application? If this is the case, should all M&E information go into Appendix D (and not in the Technical Approach section of the Technical Application)?

Answer No. 31: The illustrative M&E plan itself shall be submitted as Appendix D and not in the technical approach. However, any additional information, explanation, introduction, or description of the M&E plan should be included in the Technical approach and thus subject to the 25 pages limits.

Question No. 32: On p. 37 (point #4) it notes that applicants should also submit a staffing plan, however on p. 39 Appendix E is listed as the staffing plan.

Can USAID confirm that the staffing plan mentioned under point #4 on p. 37 is in fact Appendix E, and that all the staffing plan information outlined under point #4 on p. 37 should be included only in Appendix E?

Answer No. 32: USAID confirms. Staffing Plan as described on page 37 point 4 should be submitted as Appendix E.

Question No. 33: On p. 40, the NOFO says “If the applicant has established a consortium or another legal relationship among its partners, the Cost/Business application must include a copy of the legal relationship between the parties”.

Can USAID confirm that this is referring to letters of commitment between the parties, and that these letters of commitment should be submitted as part of the cost application?

Answer No. 33: Copies of any legal relationship must be included in the Cost Application. This includes and not limited to memos of understanding and legal letters of commitment.

Question No. 34: On p. 31, the NOFO states that "'USAID does not require cost share under this NOFO" while p. 50 on Cost Evaluation states that "cost applications of the most highly ranked technical applications will be evaluated for cost effectiveness including the level of proposed cost share".

2 CFR 200.306 (a), albeit referring to research proposals, states that if cost share commitments are voluntary, it cannot be used as a factor during the merit review of applications. Since this NOFO does not explicitly require cost sharing, please confirm that any voluntary cost share will not influence the decision of the review panel.

Answer No. 34: This NOFO is not a Federal Research solicitation where voluntary cost share is not expected, and therefore cannot be used during the merit review of the application. However, please note that Cost Evaluation is not part of the evaluation criteria for this NOFO and thus will not affect the review and scoring of the technical panel. Cost applications will be subject to a separate cost analysis in which the level of proposed cost share will contribute to the determination of cost effectiveness for the government.

Question No. 35: On p. 55, the NOFO outlines the requirement for annual reports as follows: "The annual report should be submitted no later than 30 days after the end of year…". Page 56 outlines the requirement and due date for the Final Report as follows: "A draft final report shall be provided not less than sixty days prior to the end of the award period…the Recipient will revise and submit the final report no later than 15 days after receipt of comments". Both of these reporting requirements are not consistent with 2 CFR 200.328 (b) (1): "Annual reports must be due 90 calendar days after the reporting period; quarterly or semi-annual reports must be due 30 calendar days after the reporting period…The final performance report will be due 90 calendar days after the period of performance end date."

Would USAID be willing to amend the reporting due dates to be consistent with 2 CFR 200?

Answer No. 35: For the annual reports, the answer is no. Please note that 2 CFR 200.328 (b)(1) states that: " *The non-Federal entity must submit performance reports at the interval required by the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity to best inform improvements in program outcomes and productivity. Intervals must be no less frequent than annually nor more frequent than quarterly except in unusual circumstances*". Additionally, although the CFR states that annual reports should be submitted 90 days after the reporting period ends, it gives the awarding Agency the flexibility by stating that "the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity may require annual reports before the anniversary dates of multiple year Federal awards"

As for the Final Report, please see USAID's answer to question No. 26.

Question No. 36: On p. 61, Capital Assistance states that "Prior to committing any USAID funds for capital assistance projects…the Recipient will provide USAID with sufficient information to determine that Palestinian counterpart institutions and communities have the capacity to maintain and utilize the assistance effectively". Examples of capital assistance are given as "mechanical items and other equipment purchased for use by local partners".

Can USAID be more specific on what constitutes capital assistance under this Agreement? Our interpretation of Section 611(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 provides that whenever certain types of funds are proposed to be used for a capital assistance project exceeding $1 million, the head of agency must take into consideration the mission director's certification as to the capability of the country to effectively maintain and utilize the project. Is that $1M threshold applied to this award?

Answer No. 36: When capital assistance is proposed with a total U.S. assistance for it will exceed $1 million, a prior written approval must be obtained from USAID. That being said, such capital assistance is not envisioned under this program.

Question No. 37: Section F.7.13 of the NOFO sets out thresholds for Annual Salary Increases as follows: "CCN Staff: One annual salary increase of not more than 5% or less depending on the organization's internal policies may be granted after the employee's completing of each 12 months of satisfactory services under this Agreement". There is an identical maximum threshold of 5% also cited for International Staff.

Unlike Acquisition instruments, there is no maximum threshold applied by USAID for Assistance, or Cooperative Agreements. 2 CFR 200 Subpart E (cost principles) do not mention any merit salary increase thresholds. Annual Salary increases for CCNs would rather be determined by the Recipient organization's policies and procedures. Will USAID be willing to remove this condition from the NOFO in line with Assistance regulation?

Answer No. 37: This limitation to annual increases is the Mission's practice which is applied to all recipients. However, we will be willing to revisit this matter and discuss with the successful recipient following award. This might require the recipient to share with USAID their written policies pertaining to salary compensation and annual increases.

Question No. 38: What does "OP-std" mean?

Answer No. 38: OP stands for "Operational Plan" and std stands for "Standard".

Question No. 39: Will it in any way hurt our score on a future application if we apply to this NOFO and score poorly?

Answer No. 39: No. Each Solicitation/Application process is a stand-alone process which its evaluation and scoring is in no way affected by evaluations and scoring on other solicitations whether in a positive or negative manner.

Question No. 40: Will vetting be required for end beneficiaries receiving food and non-food assistance? The target for these two items is 10,000 beneficiary per program. Assuming 10 people per family, would we need to vet 1,000 heads-of-household?

Answer No. 40: Please refer to section V. (5) (b) under Mission Order No. 21 with regard to the vetting requirements of households receiving assistance and the threshold associated with it.

[END OF ATTACHMENT 2]