



USAID | **MALI**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

August 29, 2016

Subject: APS-688-16-000002 – Amendment 2
Disability education funding for deaf and blind children in Mali

Dear Prospective Applicant:

This amendment modifies APS-688-16-000002, Disability education for deaf and blind children in Mali, to provide Answers to Questions that were raised by potential applicants for the general consideration of the interested parties.

Except for the specific changes transmitted through this amendment, all other terms and conditions of the RFA as published remain unchanged, and the closing date for receiving the first round of concept papers is still **September 29, 2016**.

Sincerely,

Chadwick C. Mills
Agreement Officer

Attachment A: Questions/Answers

ATTACHMENT A - QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

General:

1. Is it possible for the APS document to be made available in French?

No, the APS will not be made available in French.

However, potential applicants are reminded that, in accordance with APS Section 2.2.1, Concept Paper Instructions, "Malian organizations may submit concept paper(s) in French, with an executive summary in English."

2. Is it possible to indicate how many grants are expected to be awarded under Round 1? No.
3. To help with planning, is USAID able to provide an estimate of the expected turnaround time for full applications should a concept note be selected for further consideration?

An exact timeline cannot be provided. However, the most optimistic estimates are that USAID may take 4 to 6 weeks for reviewing the concept papers that are due September 29, 2016 and requesting a full application from the pre-selected ones o/a Nov. 1-15. Then, the applicants would be given 3-4 weeks for preparing and submitting a full application that would be due, therefore, between December 15 and 31, 2016. Last, USAID will need another 6-8 weeks for conducting the review of the full applications, requesting clarifications if deemed necessary, analyzing the proposed costs/negotiating and preparing the award. The last could be extended by another 2-4 weeks if a pre-assessment is necessary.

4. Under Section 2.2.2, is it possible to indicate the expected deadline for Full Applications under Round 1?

As mentioned above, the request for full application could be sent to the pre-selected applicants between November 1 and 15, 2016.

5. As this project is proposed for 2 years, are the 2 years for a pilot program leading to an extension later on?

USAID has a CDCS going until 2020, if this program is successful after 2 years and it is possible to have additional funds, USAID can look to extend over the 2 years. Applicant must propose an approach that will be sustainable and encourage USAID to extend the implementation timeline.

6. Through this APS and its Amendment 1, the Disability Education Fund allocated to Mali will be used to address deaf/hard-of-hearing and/or blind/low-vision children. Can an application be focused on either deaf or blind children only?

An application can be focused on either deaf or blind children only.

Would USAID kindly clarify if proposed projects focusing only on addressing needs of children who are hard-of-hearing and/or with low-vision will be accepted, or must proposed projects focus on addressing the education needs of both deaf and hard of hearing and/or blind and low vision children?

As for deaf and blind above, an application can be focused on addressing only the needs of children who are hard-of-hearing and/or with low-vision.

Note: Through this APS, USAID Mali has elected to use its earmarked Disability Education Fund for implementing activities supporting deaf/hard-of-hearing and/or blind/low-vision children only. An application for activities supporting children with other disabilities will not be selected/funded.

7. Are applicants required to respond to all 3 Objectives in the APS, or is it possible to address only 1-2 objectives? If an organization proposes activities to implement only the APS Objective 3, Improve Inclusive Education Delivery System, will the application be considered?

An application can propose an approach that addresses Objectives 1 and 2 only, or Objective 1 only or Objective 2 only, but cannot propose activities that address Objective 3 only. To be considered responsive, an application must propose at minimum activities that will address the Objective 3 combined with Objective 1 and/or Objective 2.

8. Is it possible to propose the Ministry of Education as a sub-grantee?

Yes, but with restrictions. An application can propose to provide training/capacity building to the "Pool Education Inclusive" at the Ministry of Education (MoE), and/or use the "Pool Education Inclusive" to train and provide capacity building to other Malian entities. However, if a sub-grant is proposed, internal USAID policies will be considered/addressed before it is approved.

Do the Malian government employees working for Ministry of Education (MoE) get some extra salaries under the award?

No. The U.S. Government funds cannot be used to pay additional extra-salaries to MoE staff collaborating during the project implementation.

9. Does the APS include the coverage of Deaf and Blind children care since early age before getting to the early grade reading age?

The objective of this APS is to support children of primary school age.

Is there a limit of age for early childhood/primary school?

The objective of this APS is to support all children in primary school.

10. Should the proposed activities address only children already enrolled/identified in a program or can the application propose to identify/enroll additional ones?

Yes the proposed activities may be for addressing the needs of both children already identified/enrolled and identifying/enrolling "new entrants". Each category will be supported by a specific indicator. Another category to be considered is to propose activities that will identify and re-enroll out-of-school children (children enrolled then excluded of school at one point). In brief, the proposed activities must/can address the needs of all deaf/hard-of-hearing and blind/low-vision children.

11. How will USAID make the payment if an applicant is selected for an award?

The payment method will depend on the type of organization and type of award negotiated and agreed upon. Payments can be made through reimbursement and/or advance

References to APS Section 1 – Program Description

12. The Section 1.3, Other Design Considerations, is modified as follows:

- The third bullet ("programs focused on the provision of assistive devices of physical rehabilitation") is supplemented with the following: "Programs focused exclusively on the procurement and provision of assistive devices or physical rehabilitation will not be considered. USAID recognizes that in some cases, students or classrooms may require basic equipment to facilitate learning and access. This should not be the focus of offerors proposals. Partners should propose solutions that first consider how to use existing organizations or partnerships to procure/provide such devices and only include procurement of minimal devices where essential to furthering the objectives."
- The following is added as a new bullet: "Programs that focus exclusively on research without implementing activities to further Objectives 3."

13. Under Section 1.3 (d) "Rapid Start Up", what is the expected timeframe and when is the grant implementation expected to start?

At this point, the most optimistic estimated start date of any award is o/a mid-February 2017. However, the award date can be delayed if USAID needs to conduct the pre-award assessment of a pre-selected new implementer.

14. Regarding Section 1.3 (a), (i) can USAID provide more clarification on the geographic coverage? (ii) Can construction be allowed for Blind and Deaf children for some zones where there are no appropriate schools? And (iii) What will USAID do to protect the applicant if the proposed zone is not secure?

- (i) There is no restriction regarding the geographic coverage, as long as it is in Mali.
- (ii) The construction of new schools cannot be funded under this APS. However, USAID is looking for any innovative inclusive approach that would facilitate the inclusion of deaf and blind children.
- (iii) The applicant must come with a security plan that will be assessed at time of award.

Reference Section 2 – Instructions and other Provisions

15. Under Section 2.1, (i) can further clarification be provided on whether applicants can apply as consortia? (ii) is the 30% subaward limitation applies to the consortia?

- (i) Yes, applicant can work as consortium. However, the only interlocutor that USAID/Mali will have direct collaboration will be a designated Prime who will receive the award. The consortium must have a legal registration.
- (ii) The 30% limitation is for "international firms" as "subawardees".

16. The Section 2.2.1 (b) is modified as follows:

- The third bullet is deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following: "Defines who will benefit from the project and the rationale behind the proposed geographic location of implementation."
- The following bullet is added: "Proposes clear approach and results to be achieved"

17. The Section 2.2.1 (c) is supplemented with the following: "An application must present a clear rationale for the choice of partners if proposing a consortium/prime-sub arrangement."