



USAID | NIGERIA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

June 23, 2021

Notice of Funding Opportunity No: 72062021RFA00007

Program Title: USAID/Nigeria Opportunities to Learn (OTL) Activity

AMENDMENT NO.: 1

The purpose of this amendment is to modify the subject NOFO and provide answers to questions received.

The subject NOFO is hereby amended as follows:

A. The dates on the cover page of Original NOFO are amended to read:

Issue Date: June 04, 2021

Deadline for Questions: June 14, 2021

Original Closing Date: July 05, 2021 at 17:30 Local Nigeria Time (GMT +1)

Revised Closing Date: July 30, 2021 at 14:30 Local Nigeria Time (GMT +1)

B. Responses to Questions Received:

GENERAL

1. We are preparing to submit a response for the above referenced notice of funding, but would like to enquire as to whether USAID would consider delaying the submission date beyond July 5?

[USAID Response: Application submission deadline has been extended from July 05, 2021 to July 30, 2021 at 14:30 Local Nigeria Time \(GMT +1\).](#)

2. Would USAID please consider extending the closing date for applications?

[USAID Response: see response to question #1 above.](#)

3. Would USAID please consider making Addressing Education in Northeast Nigeria's (AENN) annual reports, as well as other program reports including GESI, RERA, and the needs assessments, available to applicants?

USAID Response: Yes. AENN's annual reports are attached to this amendment (Attachment A). As discussed in the OTL program description, AENN conducted two needs assessments, a Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) and a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI). These two assessments are included in Attachment B.

4. Given that Nigeria's legal non-family working age is 15, can USAID further clarify their expectations around preparing youth vocationally to enter the workforce before having the legal right to do so?

USAID Response: USAID recognizes the overwhelming evidence that demonstrates foundational skills in reading, literacy, numeracy and social and emotional skills as essential for preparing young people to engage in the workforce when they are legally able to. Therefore, the Opportunities to Learn activity will target these skills as part of the educational and life trajectory of young people in targeted communities. The expectation is that those targeted under 15 years of age are to be prepared and encouraged to move to the post basic level or appropriate class where schools exist.

5. I write on behalf of my organization to seek your support in accessing the Opportunities To Learning (OTP) grant application.

USAID Response: All applicants are advised to read the OTL solicitation carefully to understand the requirements, and procedures for application submission. Specifically, **Section D.4** beginning on page 39 addresses the **Application Submission Procedures**. Applicants must note that **Applications for the OTL are not to be submitted through the Grants.gov portal** but only to the email addresses specified in the NOFO.

6. Been trying to apply for a grant with the topic Nigeria: Opportunities to Learn Activity. The apply now button is not accessible at my end. Please sir what can I do?

USAID Response: See response to question #5 above.

7. Would it be okay if I applied for this grant in the form of teaching with AI as artificial intelligence is the future and we are developing a site where AI trains humans. Pegheads.org we are partnered with one of the largest AI companies in the world.

USAID Response: The program description describes the parameters of the education activity which USAID will support.

SECTION A – Program Description

8. Page 6, Section A, Summary states, “The primary beneficiaries for this activity will be children and youth ages 9 to 15 years, particularly displaced and host community children in conflict-affected communities where education has been disrupted or is otherwise not accessible.” There are a multitude of Kor’anic/Islamiyah schools across Northern Nigeria, where many of Nigeria’s 10-12 million out-of-school children and adolescents attend religious education.

Question: Does USAID foresee the Kor’anic/Islamiyah students as likely beneficiaries of OtL interventions in the focus states?

USAID Response: The activity is aimed at serving out-of-school children and youth. All children and youth who are not attending school are eligible to participate without regard to religion or ethnicity.

9. Page 6, Section A, Summary states the following: “Scope: Selected communities in Borno and Yobe states, with the potential to expand to a third state, either Adamawa or Gombe.”

Question: Would USAID please clarify whether the applicant should budget for the third state under the \$25M ceiling at this time or will USAID provide additional funding for a third state at a later date?

USAID Response: At this time, USAID does not have resources allocated to expand the scope of the activity to a third state. Therefore, the discussion in the application of expansion to a third state should be limited to an explanation of how the applicant would adapt available resources to respond if asked to expand.

Question: Would USAID please provide a timeline or the year of implementation during which the third state may be added to the scope?

USAID Response: See response to question #9.

10. Page 6 indicates that the geographic scope of the project are communities in Borno and Yobe states, with potential to expand to a third state (either Adamawa or Gombe). Do bidders need to propose activities in the third state or should they only budget and initially plan for the two states?

USAID Response: See response to question #9.

11. Page 6 states that 75% of children aged 4-16 in Borno and Yobe have never been to school, whereas the paragraph above indicates the rates of out-of-school children in each state are 42 percent and 57 percent, respectively.

Could USAID please share the data sources for these statistics? The citations provided do not seem to relate to the figures.

USAID Response: It should be noted that population census data and data on school attendance are incomplete, not fully reliable, and may vary according to data source. Therefore, applicants are advised to consider these data to be estimates that help describe the development challenge. The data cited are from the print report of the 2020 Nigeria Education Data Survey which, at this time, is not available online from the Nigeria National Population Commission.

12. Page 10 references the Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessments conducted under the AENN project in 75 communities in Borno and Yobe states. Can USAID please share these assessment reports with bidders? At present, they are not available on the DEC.

USAID Response: See response to question #3.

13. Page 13 states the project will target 1,200 non-formal learning centers (NFLCs) in Borno and Yobe; should the implementers also consider engaging with NFLCs in the potential third state as part of their approach and AMELP?

USAID Response: See response to question #9.

14. Page 14, Result 1. The NOFO states that Result 1 is “Aligned with Result 5...Such accreditation and alignment is critical to ensuring enrolled children and youth have opportunities to transition into the formal education system or training opportunities (see Result 3)”.

Question: Would USAID please clarify if the referenced “(see Result 3)” should reference Result 4: Children and youth successfully mainstream into local formal education and training opportunities?

USAID Response: The reference to Result 3 is an error. USAID confirms the reference should be to Result 4.

15. Page 19 includes a few references to youth-led organizations engaging in community mobilization and activity monitoring with an emphasis on reading activities. Does USAID see these youth organizations to be involved primarily in OtL’s reading curriculum or is the role envisioned for these groups broader than what is noted under Result 5?

USAID Response: USAID does not envision the role of youth organizations to be focused only on the reading curriculum. Youth and youth organizations can contribute a wide variety of assets which would benefit the implementation of

OTL. Applicants are encouraged to propose various approaches to taking full advantage of the assets provided by youth leaders and youth organizations.

16. Page 19 states that one key area of Result 5 will be to support the transfer and sustainability of AENN-supported Data Hubs to state and local education authorities, with the assumption that by the end of OtL, the Data Hubs will be fully staffed and maintained by state education budgets. Can USAID please share more information on the current transfer status of these hubs? At present, the latest AENN quarterly reports are not available on the DEC.

USAID Response: AENN is currently working with the Borno and Yobe state education teams to ensure the integration of the datahub operations into the state workplan. The AENN Datahub Activity Report is included in this NOFO amendment to provide additional information (See **Attachment C**). Education Management Information System (EMIS) officers will be further trained on the effective operations of the datahubs. The most recent AENN quarterly report is included in this NOFO amendment as **Attachment A**. To ensure that Borno and Yobe states have a sustainable access to the datahub after AENN's exit, AENN recently concluded a Gap Analysis to harmonize all data management related activities. These activities include UNICEF's EMIS interventions that are designed to ensure the data hubs are transferred to both states as an integrated process.

17. Page 20 of the NOFO seems to have an incomplete sentence: "USAID anticipates achievements under this result to be incremental,". Can USAID please provide the complete sentence intended for this section?

USAID Response: USAID confirms the sentence was incomplete. The full sentence should be, "USAID anticipates achievements under this result to be incremental, *characterized by slow but steady progress.*"

SECTION D – Application and Submission Information

18. Page 40, Technical Application Format. The Abbreviations and Acronym List is not included in the Format and Presentation of the Technical Application but is included as an Annex #3 on page 73.

Question: Would USAID confirm that the Acronym List does not count against the 33-page limit.

USAID Response: USAID confirms that if an Acronym List is provided by an Applicant, it will not count against the 33-page limit. Applicants should note that Annex #3 on page 73 refers to ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS for the OTL NOFO.

19. Page 41, Technical Application Format, lists a “Staffing Plan including a skills matrix” as an attachment for the format and presentation of the technical approach.

Question: Would USAID confirm that the Staffing Plan including a skills matrix annex is intended only for Key Personnel?

USAID Response: A Staffing Plan should cover all the personnel planned for the implementation of the activity (refer to **Staffing Plan** on page 43 of the NOFO), while the Skills Matrix should cover key personnel. A sample Key Personnel Skills Matrix is attached to this NOFO amendment as **Attachment D**. Please note that any information provided by Applicants as Annex/Attachment must have been discussed in a relevant section in the technical application, and referenced appropriately.

Question: Would USAID kindly provide a description for the Staffing Plan and Skills Matrix Annex?

USAID Response: See answer to question #19, paragraph 1 above.

20. Page 41 lists the Security Operational Plan as an attachment to the Technical Submission; however, page 51 lists this as a requirement for the Cost Application. Can USAID please confirm that the Security Operational Plan should be submitted as an annex to the Cost Application?

USAID Response: Applicants must submit a Security Plan as a part of the technical application. The Security Plan should follow the format presented in Annex 7 of this NOFO and is submitted as an annex to the technical application. A budget for the security plan should be included in the cost application.

21. Should the Security Operational Plan (p. 41) or Security Plan (p. 47), be included both as an attachment to the Technical Application and as part of the Budget and Budget Narrative?

USAID Response: Applicants must submit a Security Plan in an annex to the technical application, provide cost estimates for Security in the budget sheet, and explain the basis of the estimates in the budget narrative.

22. Page 42 states the technical approach must articulate a clear theory of change (TOC); however, on page 12, USAID provides a TOC for the OTL activity. Can USAID please confirm whether they would like implementing partners to use the TOC provided on page 12 or submit an updated/tailored TOC?

USAID Response: USAID’s OTL Activity Theory of Change only goes down to the results level. Applicants are encouraged to further develop this theory of

change with proposed evidence-based interventions that lead to “specific, measurable, and achievable activity intermediate and sub-intermediate results” as requested in the Technical Application Format. Adapted or tailored TOCs, with corresponding analysis, should address the development challenge articulated in the program description and guide the applicants’ proposed interventions.

23. Page 43, Section D, Management Approach states the applicant must “Include in an annex the curriculum vitae (limited to 2 pages per individual) for all key personnel proposed using a standard format.”, and Page 53, Section E, Evaluation Criteria #2: Management Approach states the management approach will be evaluated on the following “the relevance and strength of qualifications and experience for proposed key personnel, including technical expertise, adaptive management skills, education levels, and number of years of experience.”

Question: Given the extensive experience of key personnel candidates and in order to allow the applicant to effectively and accurately meet this criterion, would USAID consider allowing a 3-page maximum page requirement for key personnel CVs?

USAID Response: Yes. USAID hereby confirms allowing submission of CVs limited to three pages per individual for all key personnel proposed.

24. Page 43, Staffing Plan, states that “The Applicant must also provide a written and signed letter of intention from each key personnel” and page 41, Technical Application Format, requests Letters of Commitment for Key Personnel.

Question: Would USAID confirm that it expects to see Letters of Commitment not Letters of Intent?

USAID Response: Letters of Commitment and Letters of Intent have the same meaning under this NOFO. Therefore, whichever is provided will suffice.

25. Page 45, Section D, Budget and Budget Narrative states “The Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:...the Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the project.”

Question: Can USAID please confirm whether detailed budgets must be submitted for all sub-recipients or just major sub-recipients (those with 20% of the Applicant’s total proposed budget or a prominent part of the technical effort, as defined on page 41 of the NOFO)?

USAID Response: Applicants must submit detailed budget information for themselves and their major sub-awardees. Major sub partners are defined as those expected to perform at least 20 percent of the Applicant’s total proposed budget, or a prominent part of the technical effort.

26. Page 47, Section D, Security Plan states, “The security plan accompanied by the budget will be reviewed together with the technical and cost applications”. Page 41 lists the Security Operational Plan as a technical attachment but Page 51 includes the Security Plan as part of the Business (cost) Application Format.

Question: Would USAID please clarify whether the Security Plan should be included in the cost or the technical application?

USAID Response: See answer to question #20 above.

27. Page 49, History of Performance. The History of Performance is included in the Business (Cost) Application Format section.

Question: Would USAID please confirm that it expects to see the History of Performance, (Annex #6: Past Performance Information attached on page 77) as part of the Business (Cost) Application?

USAID Response: Annex #6 is to be submitted in the Business (Cost) Application package. However, Applicants must utilize the technical narrative to provide sufficient details of their organizational capability and experience to facilitate assessment of Merit Review Criterion #3.

28. Should applicants submit past performance information for projects led by the applicant or should we include projects led by partner organizations?

USAID Response: Past performance information is only required for the Prime Applicants. However, Applicants must utilize the technical narrative to explain the complementarity of their organizational capability and experience among the group to facilitate assessment of Merit Review Criterion #3.

SECTION F – Federal Award Administration Information

29. Page 64, 5(d) Environmental Compliance. The NOFO states that an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) has been approved for the USAID/Nigeria Development Objective (DO) 4, “Equitable Quality Education Accessed” Programs in the Education sector.

Question: Would USAID clarify if this should be for DO 2 referenced on page 6, Summary, “The proposed activity will directly contribute to USAID/Nigeria’s Development Objective 2—A healthier, better educated

population—via Intermediate Result 2.2—Improved learning outcomes in targeted states”?

USAID Response: Both references are to USAID Nigeria’s education-related development objective. The IEE referring to DO 4 still applies to the DO 2 nomenclature in the Mission’s current Country Development Cooperation Strategy for 2020-2025.

Question: The Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) requires input from the IEE. Would USAID kindly provide the approved IEE for the USAID/Nigeria Development Objective (DO) 4?

USAID Response: Yes. Follow this link to access:

- Approved IEE for DO 4: <https://ecd.usaid.gov/repository/pdf/40271.pdf>.
- First Approved IEE amendment for DO 2: <https://ecd.usaid.gov/repository/pdf/51149.pdf>; and
- Second Approved IEE amendment for DO 2 is attached to this NOFO amendment as **Attachment E**.

30. Given that on page 64 USAID confirms their IEE determined the activity qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion and Negative Determination with Conditions, would USAID consider waiving the requirement listed on page 41 for bidders to submit a draft EMMP with the proposal, and instead require this for the selected bidder upon award in accordance with their approved approach?

USAID Response: USAID waives the requirement to submit an EMMP with the proposal. Thus, submission of an EMMP is not a requirement of this NOFO; the list on page 41, bullet g, “Attachments as applicable” is illustrative. The EMMP will be required to be submitted prior to award by the apparently successful applicant.

31. Page 64 includes a link to the EMMP template but it appears that the linked site is nonfunctioning. Can USAID please confirm that the template provided here is the correct format?

USAID Response: The EMMP template is attached to this amendment (for informational purposes only) as **Attachment F**. Applicants can also follow this link online to access the template: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/Template_EMMP_v3.1_March2019.docx

C. List of Attachments to this NOFO Amendment #1:

- a. Attachment A = AENN’s Project Year 3, Quarter 2 Report;

- b. Attachment B = AENN's RERA and GESI Report;
- c. Attachment C = AENN's Datahub Activity Report;
- d. Attachment D = Sample Key Personnel Skills Matrix;
- e. Attachment E = Second Approved RCE/IEE amendment for DO 2; and
- f. Attachment F = EMMP Template