



USAID | PHILIPPINES

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

February 1, 2013

Subject: Amendment to RFA-492-13-000001
RFA Title: Youth Engagement and Skills for Mindanao (YES! Mindanao)

Dear Prospective Applicant:

The intention of this posting is to provide responses to questions received (Attachment 1) for the above-mentioned RFA. Specific responses that clarify and/or revise sections in the RFA document shall be considered as official changes to the RFA.

We look forward to your organization's participation.

Sincerely,

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Ms. Sallie McElrath
Supervisory Agreement Officer
USAID Philippines

Attachment 1
RFA-492-13-000001 (YES! Mindanao)
Response to Questions Received

Question 1: What are the specific LGUs covered under the Program?

Response 1: LGUs shall be identified from the regions ARMM, IX, and XII as indicated on the bottom of page 9. LGUs may also include other disaster affected areas. Specific LGUs will be agreed upon after award and identified in the work plan for this activity.

Question 2: There is an inconsistency in the number of hard copies required for the submission, page 2 of the RFA mentions 3 hard copies while page 26 mentions 4 hard copies. Please clarify how many hard copies are required?

Response 2: The requirement should be five (5) hard copies for the technical application, one (1) original and four (4) copies while only two (2) hard copies for the cost/business application, one (1) original and one (1) copy. Attention should also be to Mr. Franco Calixto, Acquisition Specialist.

Question 3: How does the 8 LGU sites apply to the four cities named in the RFA?

Response 3: The four priority cities (Cotabato City, Zamboanga City, Isabela City, and Marawi City) are part of the eight (8) priority LGUs.

Question 4: Are applicants expected to work in selected Barangays only or in the entire city for the four named cities?

Response 4: Due to the level of mobility of OSY, successful applicants should consider not limiting work to select barangays and consider working in the entire city as appropriate.

Question 5: In page 14 “The project will increase employability of at least 12,000 youth with certified skills of at least national certification standard of Level III (trainer level).” In order to enroll in Level III trainings, participants must have a high school degree diploma (as pre-requisite). Is it a contradiction to the main principle of serving out-of-school populations who would not have a high school degree or should the statement read “12,000 youth with certified skills of at least certification standard Level I”?

Response 5: Yes, the statement on page 14 should read “12,000 youth with certified skills of at least certification standard of Level I”.

Question 6: Page 15, under the first Performance Target, reads “target LGUs increase by at least 25% of their respective per capita expenditure on education from baseline by project end”. Is it correct to assume that this increase could include leverage both in-kind and cash contributions from other local stakeholders?

Response 6: The Performance Target of increasing “by at least 25% of their respective per capita expenditure on education from baseline by project end” is modified to “by at least 10% of their respective per capita expenditure on education from baseline by project end”. This may not include leverage both in-kind and cash contributions from other local stakeholders.

Question 7: Is the branding and marking plan not part of the application and will only be requested of the apparently successful applicant?

Response 7: Although not listed in item G on page 28 (Annexes), applicants are required to submit Branding and Marking plan as outlined on page 34 of the Request for Applications (Section vii. Branding Strategy and Marking Plan).

Question 8: Is the ceiling rate requirement on page 38 a definite requirement for submission and later on be part of the award document?

Response 8: This requirement is rescinded. Ceiling rates on direct costs are no longer sought from applicants.

Question 9: Are the cost document requirements (e.g. Representations and Certifications, NICRA, etc.) required from both prime recipient and proposed subgrantees/subrecipients?

Response 9: Yes, both prime and sub-recipients are required to submit the cost document requirements.

Question 10: Is there a limit on the number of attachments per email for the electronic submission?

Response 10: There is no limit for the number of attachments per email for as long as the total message size shall not exceed 5MB.

Question 11: Will the application be considered late if hard copies are received after the submission deadline even if electronic submission is received before the deadline?

Response 11: As mentioned in Sub-section C on page 27 of the RFA, Acceptance of application is upon receipt of the hard copy NOT the electronic copy.

Question 12: Is Microsoft version 2007 an acceptable format for the electronic submission?

Response 12: Yes.

Question 13: Page 20 states “at least two regional offices will be needed to be established” while page 38 mentions “the applicant must consider into its cost application budget provision for offices at least one each in Mindanao and in Manila”. Are these similar?

Response 13: Please use the information found on page 20: It is envision that at least two regional offices will need to be established in order to cover the broad geographical area covered in this project. The applicant should propose office sites. Recognizing, however, that security concerns are present and frequently changing in many project implementation areas, USAID, based on recommendations from the U.S. Embassy’s Regional Security Officer, reserves the right to suggest different locations for the offices including areas that may more directly support activities that support areas in Mindanao affected by typhoons or other natural disasters. It is highly encouraged, though not required, to set up an office in Manila.

Question 14: Is there no target number for youth accessing ALS considering that this is a key component? There seems to be a mismatch between page 4 statement of “increase ACCESS for out-of-school youth to education through alternative learning systems” and the result statement and performance target on page 15-16 pertains to improved service delivery.

Response 14: Applicants should propose targets as appropriate noting that those included on page 15 of the RFA are “... provisional and subject to further review.”

Question 15: Will USAID give criteria for the selection of the LGUs in other target areas such as the province of Sulu, Basilan, Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley?

Response 15: Yes, these sites will be discussed after award during work plan finalization.

Question 16: Will USAID consider youth who come from neighboring LGUs who are either enrolled in the TVET institutions or participating in the Project’s different activities or are we only considering out-of-school youth strictly coming from the target LGUs specified in the RFA?

Response 16: Yes, USAID will consider youth who come from neighboring LGUs, though the preference is to work with OSY from the selected sites.

Question 17: Does USAID have a prescribed age range for youth given that USAID Youth in Development Policy mentions 10-29 years old while the World Health Organization defines youth between 15-24 years old?

Response 17: Applicants should use as their definition of youth those who are between 15 and 30 years of age as per the R8044 ‘Youth in Nation Building Act’.

Question 18: Can individuals who have finished or graduated from vocational high school or technical courses but are unemployed considered under the out-of-school youth description? Does it also include youth who are underemployed or are working in difficult situations (i.e., domestic workers)?

Response 18: Yes, as long as they meet the definition of out of school youth as defined by the National Youth Commission: not enrolled in any formal or vocational school, not employed and not a tertiary level graduate.

Question 19: What are the basis for the figures indicated in the proposed performance targets on page 15? Is there an assumption that the baseline figures are below 50% ? The language used in formulating some of the target statements is a bit ambiguous, e.g. placement of OSY in jobs increased by 70% ABOVE the baseline by project end. Does this mean that if the baseline is at 35% or 40% and the project is able to reach the 100% mark, the project would not have met the target of 70% above the baseline?

Response 19: Nothing in the RFA language states that “It is understood that these results and targets are provisional and subject to further review” the concept of improvement above a baseline is that targeted levels of improvement should use the baseline as a starting point and measure success FROM that line. Final targets and exact percent changes will be decided upon award and at the finalization of the monitoring and evaluation plan.

Question 20: Are material outputs (e.g. training modules) developed from similar projects in other countries valid cost share items?

Response 20: For as long as costs associated in the development and production of such materials does not come from federal funding, then these items may be considered for cost share valuation. Furthermore, the claim should not have been (or will be) concurrently claimed as cost share with other federal projects. Guidance on means of verification for such to be considered cost share still applies.

Question 21: Please clarify whether submission on a CD-ROM is necessary for the hard-copy submission?

Response 21: Hard copy submission requires a CD-ROM submission. Only one CD-ROM each (1 technical and 1 cost) will suffice for the entire application.

Question 22: Is the sustainability plan a required Annex?

Response 22: Yes, with the guidance in page 34 mentioning sustainability plan among the required annex descriptions, a “preliminary sustainability plan” is required as an Annex.

Question 23: How should past performance and past experience be documented in the application?

Response 23: Applicants must submit past experience/program information for the past three years (as required in page 33 of the RFA). The information submitted must include contact information of at least two people (name, telephone number and email address). In addition to considering the applicant’s past experience, USAID will assess past performance by collecting information from contact references of the listed projects considered the most relevant.

Question 24: With other technical review factors being equal, would a budget of \$10.5 million be more competitive than a budget that is closer to \$11 million?

Response 24: Item 3 of page 45 of the RFA defines the basis of evaluation of costs.

Question 25: Are applicants required to use the current ALS program from the Department of Education? If so, are the applicants expected to work in the areas that overlap between the current ALS programming and the locations noted on page 10? Or are applicants expected to work in all areas in which ALS is currently being implemented? If not, may alternate programs be designed and/or included?

Response 25: Applicants are not required to work in all areas in which ALS is being implemented. In areas where ALSO is not being implemented the applicant may propose alternate programs. These programs will need to be approved by the Department of Education.

Question 26: Are the proposed performance targets (in page 15 of the RFA) of 50% improvement on teacher performance refer to formal school teachers or ALS instructional managers?

Response 26: USAID is referring to ALS instructional managers.

Question 27: May applicants instead submit a PDF version for both the technical and cost application?

Response 27: PDF version may be allowed for the technical application and budget narrative in the cost application. However, the Excel version for the budget breakdowns remain to be a firm requirement. We reiterate the requirement that calculations and formula shall be accessible and not hidden or protected by password.

Question 28: Under past performance, please clarify is USAID requires 3 contact people per project experience or 3 project per applicant?

Response 28: As mentioned in Response number 23, the past performance reference contact people are toned down to “at least 2”.

Question 29: Are original signatures required or may applicants include scanned signatures?

Response 29: Original signatures are preferred but scanned signatures are allowed.

Question 30: Where 22 CFR 226.81 prohibits profit under assistance instruments, does this apply to for-profit sub-awards?

Response 30: Yes.

Question 31: Are applicants expected to include the Bangsamoro Development Authority in articulating institutional arrangements?

Response 31: Applicants are not required to respond to the Bangsamoro Development Authority (BDA). However, the application should be flexible enough to include future arrangements with BDA.

Question 32: Can USAID share copy of the CDCS?

Response 32: No, unfortunately the CDCS is not available for public distribution at this time.

Question 33: Are Public International Organizations (PIOs) eligible to apply?

Response 33: Yes.
