



Broad Agency Announcement # BAA-OAA-OEGI-WASH-2020
Western Kenya Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Dear Interested Party,

We thank you for submitting questions in response to the referenced Broad Agency Announcement (BAA). We are providing our responses to the questions as follows. The response to each question is in **blue font** immediately following the question.

A revised BAA incorporating some of the changes resulting from responses to questions is posted along with this document. Changes will be highlighted for ease of reference.

- 1) Is there an incumbent contractor currently performing these services, if similar services have been performed in the past, or is this a new requirement?
USAID RESPONSE: This new work builds off of several activities, including the Kenya Integrated WASH (KIWASH) project, WASH Partnerships and Learning for Sustainability (WASHPALS) research, Sustainable WASH Systems; and the Kenya Water Tower Climate Change Resilience program. It is expected that Applicants will apply evidence and learning from prior activities, including but not limited to the ones listed here, but this is not a direct follow-on to a specific program.
- 2) If this is a follow-on requirement, could you please provide the previous contract or task order number?
USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 1.
- 3) The BAA seems to be focused more on capacity building and system strengthening. There is less mention of infrastructure development. Does this mean that applicants shall not entirely undertake WASH construction related projects in the target locations/counties? Can USAID please provide clarification on this?
USAID RESPONSE: Applicants may propose construction-related projects if they are appropriate to the overall approach. However, construction is not a mandatory requirement.
- 4) On page 5, the BAA states that EOI submissions can address one or both areas of interest, however, on page 7 it is stated that more than one EOI can be submitted with each EOI identifying the specific challenge statement it is addressing. Can USAID please clarify if an applicant cannot address the two challenges in a single EOI submission?
USAID RESPONSE: Applicants may, but are not required to, address both challenges in a single EOI submission if desired. In that case, the Applicant should indicate that their EOI addresses both challenge statements (see change on page 7).

- 5) For the research component of this project, does USAID have predefined thematic areas or research topics we should focus on or is it at the applicant's discretion to choose?
USAID RESPONSE: Applicants may propose any research topics or questions designed to address one or both of the two challenge statements defined in the BAA.
- 6) To what extent does this BAA aim to support sanitation solutions in urban areas? This BAA seems to highlight the challenges in rural areas, though it also states that approaches should be county-wide.
USAID RESPONSE: Responses should address the main challenges for water in sanitation in rural areas, but may also incorporate urban areas within the target counties as appropriate to the overall approach.
- 7) On page 5, the BAA states that "Activities should consider how they will collect and make use of evidence throughout the implementation period." Could USAID clarify if they anticipate a pilot phase and a scale-up within the referenced implementation period?
USAID RESPONSE: Applicants may propose any approach for collecting and using evidence. This could be a pilot and scale-up phase, or any other approach.
- 8) Could USAID specify how long the implementation period will be?
USAID RESPONSE: This will be determined during the development of concept phase, but typically USAID activities do not last more than five years.
- 9) On page 13, the BAA states that the "Expression of Interest must: Contain a cover page with the following information (included in the page count)..." Can USAID confirm that the cover page can be half a page as to maximize the amount of space available for narrative?
USAID RESPONSE: Yes, as long as the cover page covers the required information, the remainder of the page can be used for the narrative.
- 10) On page 13, the BAA states that the cover page can contain an optional graphic. Would USAID clarify if this "optional graphic" can use a font smaller than 12-point, as long as it is legible, as is common in proposals?
USAID RESPONSE: Yes.
- 11) On page 13, the BAA states that the EOI must be "no more than 5 pages in length." Given the importance of partnerships with stakeholders, would USAID allow for the inclusion of letters of collaboration and/or memoranda of understanding (MOUs) as annexes separate from the 5-page limit?
USAID RESPONSE: No. Any annexes submitted will not be considered.
- 12) On page 8, the BAA states that the "EOI must indicate the background and expertise of the organization, and the managerial and technical staff or team to be engaged." Could USAID confirm that "the managerial and technical staff or team to be engaged" refers to those that would participate in Stage 2, in program implementation post-award, or both?
USAID RESPONSE: "The managerial and technical staff or team to be engaged" refers to the personnel who would be implementing the activity post-award. At the EOI phase, these staff may be illustrative and not yet committed to the activity. These staff are not necessarily required to participate in co-creation workshops, but may come on-board after an award is made.

- 13) Could USAID please provide more detail on the anticipated budget range for this activity or activities?

USAID RESPONSE: USAID anticipates having approximately \$34M for an activity or multiple activities to address these challenges. Specific award amount(s) will be determined during the Concept Note and award phases of the process.

- 14) Section VII, Expression of Interest Information Formatting, page 14: The BAA notice states that the EOI “must sufficiently address each of the criteria listed on page 10–11.” However, the criteria listed on these pages is located under the subsection for Concept Paper evaluation under Stage 3. Will USAID please confirm that criteria for the EOI are those listed on pages 7–9, and not on 10–11?

USAID RESPONSE: That is correct. The criteria for the EOI are listed on pages 7-9.

- 15) STAGE 1- Submission of Expression of Interest (EOIs), page 7: The BAA states “More than one expression of interest can be submitted. **EOIs must state which of the two challenge statements they are addressing.**” Under Areas of Interest (page 5) the BAA states “The Expression(s) of Interest must include a proposed R&D intervention **to address one or both of the areas** listed below with the ultimate goal of achieving sustainable water and sanitation services in Western Kenya.” Can USAID clarify if one EOI can be used to address both challenges, i.e. water and sanitation for the selected geography?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 4.

- 16) Section VIII, page 13: The BAA states that EOIs must use “no smaller than 12-point font.” May offerors use a smaller font size for tables or graphics?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 10.

- 17) Could USAID please share the total anticipated budget for Western Kenya WASH activities? We recognize that USAID may elect to make an award to more than one organization.

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 13.

- 18) Criteria for Expression of Interest (EOI), point # 3, pg. 3, states that the “EOI must indicate the background and expertise of the organization, and the managerial and technical staff or team to be engaged”. Could USAID please clarify if engagement of “managerial and technical staff” refers to team members that will participate in the co-creation process in Stage 2 or if this refers to proposed project implementation staff, should the offeror be selected for Stage 4? We recognize that decisions on project implementation staff will be informed by co-creation and co-development of concept notes.

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 12.

- 19) In reference to Stage 2- Co-Creation and Co-Development of the Concept Paper, pg. 9, could USAID please clarify how many members from the apparently successful offeror’s consortium will be allowed to participate in the multi-day co-creation workshop?

USAID RESPONSE: This will be determined based on the format of the co-creation workshop and how many EOIs are selected. However, typical USAID co-creation events in the past have allowed for two participants representing each EOI.

- 20) In reference to Stage 2- Co-Creation and Co-Development of the Concept Paper, pg. 9, could USAID please clarify if multiple successful offerors will participate in the same multi-day co-creation workshop?

USAID RESPONSE: Co-Creation may bring together multiple potential partners, or take the form of one-on-one Co-Creation, at the discretion of USAID. This will be dependent on the EOIs selected to move forward with Co-Creation.

- 21) Could USAID please provide an estimate of when offerors will be notified of the status of their Expression of Interest submissions? In addition, how much time will successful Stage 1 offerors have to prepare for their Stage II participation?

USAID RESPONSE: USAID aims to inform successful applicants that their EOIs have been selected for co-creation by early January 2021, and would allow participants 4-6 weeks to prepare for any co-creation workshops. This timeline is subject to change.

- 22) V. General Criteria of Consideration, point #3, pg. 7, states that “The past performance of the Offerors, and the managerial and technical ability of the team engaged in the endeavor are always significant considerations in assessing the potential and the risks associated with each award.” To allow USAID to make an informed evaluation of Offerors past performance, will USAID consider allowing offerors to include a past performance annex (not included in the 5-page count)?

USAID RESPONSE: No annexes will be considered.

- 23) Expression of Interest must, pg 13, point E, states that the cover page is included in the page count. Does the offeror have the flexibility to use a portion of the space allocated to the cover page to introduce the technical approach, provided that the cover page includes all of the information required by USAID (i.e., Respondent Name/Group and Contact Information; Response Title; BAA Name/Number)?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 9.

- 24) In reference to Stage 2: Part 2: Co-Development of Concept Papers, Additional Partners/Resources, pg. 10, the last sentence appears to be incomplete.

USAID RESPONSE: This was an error and has been corrected on page 10.

- 25) Budget: USAID is not providing a budget ceiling for this BAA process. Without any boundaries, there is an increased risk that Offerors will be eliminated through a misalignment of concepts with parameters. Will USAID consider providing a ceiling or specifying at what stage a budget will be shared?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 13.

- 26) Pages 4-5: The Challenge and Areas of Interest narratives emphasize rural challenges while also asking Offerors to respond to “county-wide” responses. Can USAID confirm whether it has a predominant interest in rural service challenges?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 6.

- 27) Page 4: Challenge asks for collaboration and coordination with “...other relevant USAID and donor activities...”. Can USAID clarify whether there are specific activities referred to here?

USAID RESPONSE: This statement refers to both on-going and future USAID activities, as well as non-USG investments in the WASH sector. Applicants should propose a flexible and general plan for coordination and collaboration with USG, county government, and other stakeholders.

- 28) Page 8: Criteria for EOI #3. “EOI must indicate the background and expertise of the organization...”. Can USAID confirm that for EOIs submitted in partnership/consortium that this

instruction equally refers to the broader consortium background and expertise, rather than just the prime partner?

USAID RESPONSE: Yes, this refers to the background and expertise of any organizations that are part of the consortium submitting the EOI.

- 29) Page 8: Criteria for EOI #3 asks for the EOI to include “the managerial and technical staff or team to be engaged.” Can USAID please confirm that, at this preliminary stage, USAID is looking for indicative staffing rather than specific names and positions. In addition, does USAID expect the “managerial and technical staff to be engaged” to be the same individuals invited to participate in the co-creation process?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 12.

- 30) Page 8, Criteria for EOI #4 requires that the “EOI must indicate what co-investment resources are available to contribute to the solution....”. Can USAID indicate its expectations in terms of contribution match?

USAID RESPONSE: USAID does not have a set expectation for the contribution match. Applicants may propose whatever is appropriate to the concept and based on the organizational resources. Contributions may be in-kind contributions, intellectual property, brand value, high-value coordination, and/or access to key people, places, and information.

- 31) Page 8: Criteria for EOI #5 states that “EOI must demonstrate an approach that works with County Governments and local partners and has the potential to effectively build local capacity. Applicants are allowed and encouraged to submit EOIs in partnership/consortium.” Please confirm whether this statement refers specifically to partnership with County Government as well as other local partners, or just local partners.

USAID RESPONSE: This statement refers to building local capacity for both County Governments and other local partners. Partnership with county government(s) in proposed geography is required.

- 32) Page 10: This paragraph seems to be incomplete. “Additional Partners/Resources. During the Concept Paper co-creation and co-design, both the EOI Offeror(s) and USAID will identify additional potential partners and resources, and whether additional instruments are necessary to successfully implement the project. For those.... “. Could USAID advise on the remainder of the sentence?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 24.

- 33) Page 13, submission: Can USAID confirm whether the Cover Page, included in the 5-page limit, must be a separate page?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 9.

- 34) Would a consortium of 5 parties be acceptable?

USAID RESPONSE: Yes. There is no limit on the number of partners who can form a consortium for purposes of the EOI.

- 35) Approximately how long will the BAA process take from stage 1 to stage 4?

USAID RESPONSE: The BAA process is anticipated to take approximately 8-12 months from solicitation to award.

- 36) How many virtual multi-day workshops will there be in the co-creation phase?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 20.

37) What is the size of the funding? What is the value range of the individual awards?

USAID RESPONSE: See response to Question 13.

38) Typically, we have found early engagement with county local government leadership has improved the success of our projects. Is this something USAID can arrange for us to expedite our project and help inform our project planning and estimating approach?

USAID RESPONSE: Yes, USAID is committed to facilitating relationships and providing fora for engagement with counties, either during Co-Creation or prior to award. But it is also expected that successful consortia would develop their own relationships with County Government(s).

39) To understand the scale of the opportunity by county, please can you provide details of all sites with disparate water systems mentioned in the BAA in each county? These would ideally be developed or upgraded from less reliable handpumps, therefore would it be possible to include the numbers of users at each site and the depth to groundwater at each?

USAID RESPONSE: No, USAID does not have the ability to provide this information.

40) Please confirm that Nyamira and Vihiga are not priority counties under this BAA.

USAID RESPONSE: Nyamira and Vihiga are not included as target counties under this BAA.

41) Can one organization participate in the BAA as a prime and a sub?

USAID RESPONSE: An organization can be a part of multiple EOIs, including as both prime and sub.