

Amendment #4

A Grand Challenge for Development: Water and Energy for Food (WE4F)

Addendum #1: Middle East and North Africa (MENA region)

Addendum #2: South/Southeast Asia (S/SE Asia region)

Issued under BAA Solicitation: 7200AA20R00004

**Amendment #4**

A Grand Challenge for Development:

Water and Energy for Food (WE4F):— Regional Innovation Hubs

Addendum #1: Middle East and North Africa (MENA region)

Addendum #2: South/Southeast Asia (S/SE Asia region)

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Date posted: Monday, December 9, 2019

Subject: A) Webinar information
B) Q&A posting

A) Regarding a possible webinar

Based on the caliber of questions received, USAID has decided not to hold any webinar sessions regarding either Addenda.

B) Regarding the Q&A session

This documents contents responses to all questions submitted to the

we4fgrandchallenge@gmail.com mailbox no later than **Friday, December 6, 2019 @ 5:00pm/1700** (local Washington, DC time)

WE4F BAA Q&A

1. Would USAID kindly consider extending the expression of interest (EOI) submission deadline to December 23, 2019? The Thanksgiving US holiday is the weekend prior to the current delivery date, and a two-week extension would allow bidders based in the US sufficient time to prepare our response.

USAID released a RFI in October and the BAA and the 2 addenda, with very similar information as the RFI in November. Please note, all interested parties are asked to submit an Expression of Interest document, not a fully blown proposal. Therefore,

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USAID will not extend the deadline to December 23, 2019. The deadline will remain 9:00 am EST on Wed. December 11, 2019.

2. On page 6 of the second addendum, USAID states that the S/SE Asia Regional Innovation Hub will be located in Bangkok, Thailand, though it also indicates in the submission instructions on page 17 of the second addendum that “expressions of interest must indicate [...] the location the firm plans to establish or co-locate the Regional Innovation hub office.” Can USAID please clarify what additional information they want regarding the office location at this initial EOI stage?

USAID expects that the main office of the S/SE Asia Regional Hub will be located in Bangkok, Thailand. If EOIs have other offices or if they are planning to work in consortia, and the other partners offices are not in Thailand, USAID requests information on the other locations be provided.

3. Could USAID confirm that offerors can select the location for the S/SE Asia Regional Innovation Hub?

USAID expects that the main office of the S/SE Asia Regional Hub will be located in Bangkok, Thailand. If EOIs have other offices or if they are planning to work in consortia, and the other partners offices are not in Thailand, USAID requests information on the other locations be provided.

4. Would USAID confirm the list of the countries in South/Southeast Asia from which enterprises are eligible to participate in WE4F?

USAID and its partners are currently reviewing and revising the list of eligible countries. At this time the list includes: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam,

Note that countries may be added to or removed from this list by USAID and its partners before the launch of the WE4F S/SE Asia Regional Innovation Hub.

5. Could USAID clarify its definitions of "small and growing enterprises" and "mid to late stage enterprises"?

USAID views the term small and growing enterprises as a general terminology for enterprises that have fewer than 1,000,000 customers/end-users but greater than 1,000 customers and end-users. As noted in the BAA, USAID considers “mid to late stage

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enterprises” those that are expecting to reach hundreds of thousands to millions of customers/end-users.

6. Could USAID elaborate on what it means by research or development in the Technical Approach description of Addendum 2 (page 16)? Should expressions of interest propose research or development activities, or should they rather propose how we would deliver on the partners' vision for the management of the Regional Innovation Hub?

Given the multiple goals of the WE4F partners through the Regional Innovation Hubs, we believe that the Hubs will be learning labs where new strategies and techniques will be developed to deliver on the partner’s vision for the management of the Regional Innovation Hub. In addition, the WE4F partners believe we haven’t yet seen any organization successfully deliver on all of these goals and aims to date in one activity. Therefore, we expect that those organizations or consortia expressing interest propose how they would deliver on the partner’s vision for the management of the Regional Innovation Hub.

7. On page 23 of the solicitation, USAID references Attachment 1, Program Description, and Attachment 2, Ecosystem graphic; however, they are not included in the solicitation files. Can USAID please provide copies of those attachments?

Please refer to the [WE4F RFI](#) pages 20-21.

8. Can USAID please clarify what it means on page 24 under bullet point ‘f’: “How would you deal with ESG issues in supporting enterprise development?”

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) refers to the the 3 pillars of sustainability and societal impact of an enterprise. Specifically here, USAID is asking those expressing interest to provide a general overview on how they will ensure that the supported small and growing enterprises are in compliance with WE4F donor partner’s policies and regulations related to environmental safety, governance, and ensure no net negative societal harm from the supported enterprises. This overview should include some information on the pre-award, during award, and after the end of the award stages of the process.

9. There is a question (question g) in the Technical Approach section of the BAA (page 24) that is not included in Addendum 2. Should we answer this question if submitting an expression of interest for Addendum 2?

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USAID is requesting that those expressing interest respond only to the questions presented in the Addendum to which they are submitting an EOI.

10. The Significant Impact section establishes targets for WE4F. Beyond reiterating these targets, could USAID clarify what it expects applicants to present in this section of their expression of interest?

USAID expects applicants to provide a basic plan of action for how they expect to reach the established targets for significant impact.

11. Requirements (a) and (d) under the Significant Impact section differ in the BAA and the addenda. Could USAID clarify which targets we should consider when submitting an expression of interest?

This is correct. The overall goals for a general description for a Hub differ from the specific targets for each specific Hub. USAID expects applicants to provide a basic plan of action for how they expect to reach the established targets for significant impact as noted in the Addenda to which they are submitting an expression of interest.

12. Is the 100,000 target individuals for the regional hub or the target for the individual NGO/organization applicant?

The 100,000 target for customers/end-users is for the individual NGO's/enterprises. The organization/consortia managing the WE4F Regional Innovation Hub is expected to help a proportion of the enterprises which they support reach the 100,000 customer/end-user target within a 3-5 year timeframe.

13. Is it necessary that the geographical reach of the project be nationwide (for a specific country) or it can be for a smaller area like a village?

USAID expects that whether the geographical reach is nationwide will depend on the scope of activities in a specific country or region. In general, based on previous SWFF and PAEGC activities, we expect the geographical reach to be in multiple locations within a country even if the reach is not nationwide.

14. Would USAID clarify if resumes need to be included for the proposed staff as supplemental materials that are not included in the slides?

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Though resumes are not required, the background and expertise of key staff should be included WITHIN the 20 slides. As noted in the BAA, “Expressions of Interest must indicate the background and expertise of the team suggested from the organization, especially in the field of development of businesses promoting the use of sustainable technologies in the relevant local context. Also, the expression of interest must indicate the managerial and technical staff or team engaged in the endeavor...Reviews of this section will be based on the qualifications of proposed staff, clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities of each proposed staff and each proposed firm (if Organizations/consortia are partnering), and the demonstrated efficacy and clarity of the management plan.”

15. Should Organizations/consortia form complete consortiums now or is it possible for Organizations/consortia to submit responses with the understanding that they currently do not have the full range of capabilities but can form consortiums with partners during the co-creation phase?

Organizations/consortia can submit responses with the understanding that they currently do not have the full range of capabilities but can form consortiums with partners during the co-creation phase. However, if the organizations/consortia doesn't have the full range of capabilities, they must at least provide a plan with potential consortia members that do have those capabilities when they submit their EOI.

16. Is USAID seeking fixed consortia at this phase or interested in organizations utilizing subsequent phases of the BAA process to co-create solutions with other invited Organizations?

Organizations/consortia may submit a fixed consortia at this stage. In addition, Organizations/consortia can submit responses with the understanding that they currently do not have the full range of capabilities but can form consortiums with partners during the co-creation phase. However, Organizations/consortia must at least provide a plan with potential consortia members when they submit their EOI. Nevertheless, all organizations invited to participate in the co-creation process are expected to collaborate with the other invitees throughout the process.

17. If firms join a consortium now and submit a single bid, would the partner in the sub-contractor position also be allowed to join the co-creation event?

Each organization/consortia that is invited to the co-creation event will be allowed to bring 3 people in total. It is up to each invited organization/consortia to determine whether or not they will bring 3 individuals from the lead organization or a combination

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of individuals from the lead organization and the organization in the “subcontractor” position.

18. Will there be a format or specific guidelines in writing the 20 slides proposal?

The format for the 20 slides is outlined on p. 20 of each Addendum. No additional format or specific guidelines will be provided.

19. Would USAID consider not including the header slide and cost breakdown slide as part of the slides count?

USAID has noted in each Addenda that the header slide and cost breakdown are included in the 20 slide count.

20. Would USAID consider not including dividers and a table of contents in the 20 slides- limitation?

USAID has noted the 20 slide limit in each Addendum. All EOIs should be no more than 20 slides, inclusive of all dividers and a table of contents.

21. Would USAID consider that tables, graphics, charts, graphs be formatted in a font size smaller than 12-point?

USAID noted that all text within the slides should be 12-point font to be readable by reviewers. EOIs with charts, tables, etc that are formatted in a size that is noticeably smaller than a 12-point font may not be reviewed.

22. For the cost proposal, could USAID clarify the difference between challenge grants and investment facilitation matching capital?

Challenge grants are funds that go directly to enterprises as a milestone-based grant. Investment facilitation matching capital may include, but is not limited to: first loss capital in a debt/equity instrument, matching capital for a debt/equity instrument, funds for paying the legal costs related to the creation, management, or termination of a debt/equity instrument, etc.

23. On page 18 of the second addendum, USAID provides a budget template table that includes “challenge grants” as a part of the \$12-15 M overall budget. Could USAID please provide an estimate of the desired amount to be set aside for this line item in order for bidders to determine the appropriate technical and management costs?

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For the MENA HUB, USAID estimates challenge grants may be around \$2.5 million. For the S/SE Asia Hub, USAID estimates challenge grants may be approximately \$4.5 million. However, final amounts for challenge grants will be determined as part of the co-creation process.

24. Could USAID please clarify if the co-investment resources mentioned on page 18 of the second addendum under “cost proposal info” are a part of or in addition to the \$12-15 M?

The co-investment resources are in addition to the amount expected to be provided by WE4F donor partners listed in the S/SE Asia Addendum. The co-investment resources are in addition to the amount expected to be provided by WE4F donor partners listed in the MENA Addendum. Speculative donor contributions and co-investment figures will be discussed during the co-creation process.

25. On page 18 of the second addendum, under “cost proposal info,” USAID requests that “The cost proposal slide should... contain information about a ‘potential’ deliverables table.” Could USAID please clarify what potential deliverables it expects to see as part of the cost section?

USAID expects cost related to annual Hub reporting, annual enterprise, reporting, hub, events, and other items noted in the budget template.

26. On page 25, USAID states, “Proposals should provide a clear management plan in narrative form for the development, review, and submission of all associated deliverables, including a proposed milestone schedule.” Can USAID clarify if the management plan’s narrative needs to be included in the allotted 20 slides for the EOI?

USAID confirms that the narrative management plan needs to be included in the allotted 20 slides for the EOI.

27. On page 25, section III: “Cost Proposal Info,” USAID states, “The Cost proposal slide should align with the proposed technical approach; and contain information about a “potential” deliverables table, budget with cost breakdowns, and any relevant supporting cost information.” Can USAID confirm that no additional cost breakdowns are needed at this stage, besides the S/SE Asia Budget Template included on page 18 of Addendum 2?

Confirmed.

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28. Throughout the solicitation a 3-5 year period is referenced; however, in order to adequately budget activities and management costs, a specific project period would be helpful.

USAID believes that Organizations/consortia may take the average of 4 years for budgeting, but purposefully gave a 3-5 year window for the budget.

29. Does USAID imagine that indirect rates and fees will be included as a separate line item in the budget template provided on page 26 of the solicitation, or rolled into the line items?

The template provided by USAID was illustrative. Organizations/consortia are expected to provide cost information that support their technical proposal.

30. Would USAID clarify if the proposed value of the contract only represents the management portion of the program? Or does this value also include the grants to be disbursed to the Enterprises?

USAID notes that the proposed value includes the management portion of the program, the grants portion of the program, the technical assistance portion of the program, and the investment facilitation portion of the program. See question #23 for additional information about the grant portion of the program.

31. Will the selected contractor have to incur the costs of the program infrastructure to process the enterprises that receive the grants (e.g., application portal, managing evaluators, etc.)?

USAID and its partners are planning to create a program-wide application portal and some SOPs to streamline application processing and award preparation. However, USAID expects that the selected organization/consortia will have to incur some of the program infrastructure cost (LOE, etc.) related to the process the enterprise that receive the grants.

32. Can USAID please specify the number of years the Hubs are intended to be operated?

USAID purposefully gave a 3-5 year window for the Hubs, as it will depend on when the hubs become fully operational as to when they will start and end.

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33. Can USAID clarify why it is opting to utilize the BAA instrument for this opportunity?

Although there is some initial evidence from the PACE initiative on the performance of accelerators from USAID, there is still a great need to determine regional and contextually effective modalities to provide Technical Assistance (TA), investment facilitation, and capacity building for entrepreneurs at the nexus of Water, Energy, and Food (WE4F). Therefore, the use of a BAA mechanism encourages a collaborative process to assist the Agency in determining the most effective way to implement the vision of the WE4F partners.