July 31, 2012.

SUBJECT: Request for Applications (RFA) Number **RFA-386-12-000006, Amendment#01**

Project Name : USAID/India's Partnership on Women's Entrepreneurship in Clean Energy (wPOWER).

This Amendment No. 1 to subject RFA is hereby issued to include Questions and Answers. Except as specifically amended herein, all other terms and conditions of the subject RFA remain unchanged and in full force and effect.

Ques 1: How many organizations will be shortlisted? My understand is that 1.2 million will be awarded to only 1 organization is this correct? If not, what would be the approx. grant per organization in that case?
Answer : USAID intends to award only ONE Cooperative Agreement to an Indian organization (lead partner).

Ques 2 : Can we propose multiple projects under the same theme? For instance, could we propose different projects in Bihar, Karnataka, Gujarat with different partners?
Answer : Applicants can submit only one application for a single project. As far as different states are concerned, these can be integrated together as part of a single project.

Ques 3 : Is the programme coverage area is not specified; can it be any single State in India or multiple States, the group size; or is it to be a part of strategy belonging?
Answer : The coverage area and location is left to the applicant's discretion.

Ques 4 : Can we propose untested projects i.e. with new process/financial innovations? Does product development fit into this?
Answer: As long as product development and new process/financial innovations address the RFA requirements and components, these can be proposed.

Ques 5 : Is a social enterprise with private limited status eligible to participate, or is it only for non-profits?
Answer : All indigenous Indian organizations are eligible, but no profit is payable under assistance awards.

Ques 6a): Please clarify what you mean by A minimum of 1 (USAID):4(private sector partner) leveraging from private sector and a cost share of 20% is required for this project.
Ques 6b) : Page No 4 in RFP: "A minimum of 1(USAID):4(private sector partner) leveraging from private sector and a cost share of 20% is required for this project. Out of the 20% cost share, 5% cost share needs to be in cash and rest 15% could be in terms of time, or resources."

Ques 6c):. Section I- 1 (II) - It suggests the 1:4 leveraging ratio for the partnership. Would appreciate if you could clarify what you mean by this leverage ratio. Does it mean that we need to leverage 80% more on the provided grant through other sources of capital or from other partners. Also, kindly suggest if the cost share component described in Section IV - 4 (B) as 20% is the same thing as the leverage ratio of 1:4 or something different.
Ques 6d) : The RFP mentions that out of the 20% cost share, 5% cost share has to be in cash from the applicant. Can this come as co-financing from another on going project with similar objectives after prior permission? Can co-financing be considered as non federal resources and eligible under 5% cost share? How would the USAID audit team require the 5% cash share accounting?
Answer: This means that the selected organization will have to leverage resources from private partners (either in cash or in kind). If USAID gives 1 part, then recipient has to raise 3 times more resources during the program period.
Cost share is separate from leveraging. Cost sharing becomes a condition of an award when it is part of the approved award budget. Cost sharing must be verifiable from the recipient's records, is subject to the requirements of 22 CFR 226.23, and can be audited. If a recipient does not meet its cost sharing requirement, questioned costs can be a result. The successful applicant has to provide at least 5% of the USAID contribution in cash and the remaining 15% in cash and/or time and/or resources Cost share refers to the resources a recipient contributes to the total cost of an agreement. Pls. see the below link for further clarity:
http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title22-vol1/xml/CFR-2011-title22-vol1-part226.xml#seqnum226.23

Ques 7 : Please clarify what you mean by Develop an innovative public private partnership.
Answer: USAID is looking at more partnerships with private sector. We believe that public-private partnerships is important for project scale up and sustainability. wPOWER project should result in a public-private partnership model which would help in leveraging resources and help meet the project objectives of building and strengthening networks of women clean energy entrepreneurs and promote sustainable energy access.

Ques 8 : Are NGOs, Civil society organizations considered to be private sector partners? Can you elaborate further on who are private sector partners.
Answer : Yes.

Ques 9 : Mobilization plan mentioned in page no 20 - this requires that an extensive outline be provided of how the activity will get underway and time lines. Does this mean an activity chart and a GANTT chart? What else is required? Is it required ONLY for the first 6 months?
Answer : Per Page 21 of the RFA, mobilization plan must provide step-by step outline of how the applicant will get the activity underway and include a clear timeline. It is very similar to a GANTT chart and it is required only for the first 6 month.

Ques 10 : NGOs usually charge 10-15% project costs as institutional overheads. Are institutional overheads permissible? Can they be included under the head of 'others'
Answer : No, all indirect costs including overheads must be direct charged to the respective budget line item unless the applicant has an established Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreeemnt with a U.S. federal agency.

Ques 11 : We are proposing the project with 5 partner organizations and one individual partner. We think that during the course of implementation there would be more organizations that would be aligned to the thought process and they would in some way contribute to project implementation. Their efforts would have to be reimbursed. Can this be considered under the head of contractual expenses?
Answer : Any sub-contracting arrangement not specified in the application would require prior approval from Agreement Officer on case by case specific basis, However, the total approved budget shall remain unchanged.

Ques 12 : Page No 8 , Required forms mention Form S424, S424A, S424B and the following link https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormsMenu?source=agency3
The above link has many forms but not S424A, S424B. Which forms are to be used? Does only the lead applicant have to fill up / sign in the forms? Is there any authorization required from partners for the lead applicant.
Answer : Kindly click on the same link, on the uploaded page click on "Form Families". When the fresh page gets uploaded click on "SF424 Family" on this page you will find the required forms.
Kindly note that the forms are "Standard Forms" hence they are prefixed with "SF" not "S" as is in your question.

Ques 13 : Is it mandatory that there has to be one USAID owned Indian Partner in the Consortium and a minimum of four private sector partners in India or the partnership can be with total Indian Partners.
Answer : The prime for this Cooperative Award has to be an indigenous Indian organization. The private sector leveraging can come from any/all private partner who are the Sub-partners to the prime awardee.
There is no such thing as USAID owned Indian partner.

Ques 14 : The RFA mentions about training of Women in technologies and applications related to Solar (Photovoltaic and Thermal), Biomass Energy including cooking stoves. Is this programme to address all these products or can it be a single product?
Answer : The program should address most of these technologies and not just a single product. However, the list is illustrative.

Ques 15 : In other way, there is no quantification provided in terms of number of women entrepreneurs to be trained in any of the focused fields, coverage of the programme like number of States in India or limitations etc.; or Is it also part of the technical strategy of the bidder?
Answer : This is part of the technical strategy that the applicant has to propose in the application.

Ques 16 : Does the bidder or each of the bidding organizations should have necessary statutory provision to receive money in US Dollars or the leader of the Consortium can receive money and transfer to the partners.
Answer : The grant will be made to one single organization. The prime organization should have a FCRA account to receive USAID funding and USAID would transfer funds to this one FCRA account only.

Ques 17 : Section III - 1 - Definition of Local Organization - We have an Indian Private Limited Company which implements biomass based microgrids in India. However, this Company is 100% owned by a Mauritian holding Company which is turn is held by a 100% US parent company. The structure is proposed to get international investors in the Company and there are no assets in the US and Mauritian holding Company except the Indian Company assets. Let us know if we would qualify for this competition.

Answer : The answer to this question is already provided under section III (1) for Definition Of Eligible Local Organizations on page 17.