



USAID | GUATEMALA

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Issue Date: July 13, 2021

Deadline for Question: July 26, 2021

Closing Date to receive
Concept Papers: August 16, 2021

Closing Time: 10 a.m. (Guatemala Time)

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity

Number: Request for Applications (RFA) 72052021RFA00006

Project Title: Basic Education Quality and Transitions

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 98.001

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified entities to implement the Basic Education Quality and Transitions project. Eligibility for this award is not restricted.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process. This is a multi-tiered RFA in accordance with ADS 303.3.6.1(c). Selection under this RFA will be based on a two-step process:

- Phase 1 - Concept Paper submissions: open to all eligible organizations as described in this RFA.
- Phase 2 - Full application submissions and oral presentation: by invitation only to applicants selected under Phase 1 evaluation.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NOFO. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the NOFO has been received from the internet in its entirety.

USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.6.f. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

Issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Alina
Menicucci

Digitally signed by
Alina Menicucci
Date: 2021.07.13
20:30:03 +02'00'

Alina Menicucci
Agreement Officer

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID’s supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BEQT	Basic Education Quality and Transition Activity
CDCS	Country Development and Cooperation Strategy
DIGEDUCA	Ministry of Education Department of Evaluation and Educational Research
GOG	Government of Guatemala
IR	Intermediate Result
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MOE	Minister of Education
PD	Program Description
PSS	Psychosocial Support
REAULA	Reforma Educativa en el Aula Program
SEL	Social and Emotional Learning
SINAE	National Educational Coaching System (Sistema Nacional de Acompañamiento Escolar)
TLM	Teaching and learning material
TOC	Theories of Change
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WH	Western Highlands

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Basic Education Quality and Transition Activity

1. Purpose

The Basic Education Quality and Transition (BEQT) activity, also referred to as the Activity, will improve foundational reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills acquisition for children and youth through the formal education system and will increase the transition rate of students from primary to lower secondary education in targeted rural municipalities of Guatemala. The Activity is planned to be an initial award with a follow-on transition award¹ to local subrecipient(s), and as such will aim to strengthen the organizational and technical capacities of local subrecipient(s) to manage funds from USAID or other donors and to sustain key components of the Activity. The primary beneficiaries of this Activity are students in grades 4-6 and *primero básico*² as well as local partner organizations with experience in project implementation in the basic education sector, potentially including local civil society organizations, local non-governmental organizations, and universities. The Activity may also seek to identify gaps and further the sustainability of gains made from previous USAID investments in grades 1-3 as in the implementation of Bilingual Intercultural Education Models and reading intervention programs.

BEQT will contribute to achieving USAID Guatemala's CDCS Development Objective 2: Partner with the Government of Guatemala and other stakeholders to strengthen effective and accountable governance to improve quality of life and deter irregular migration; specifically Intermediate Result 2.2: Improved quality of social services (health, education, water).

2. Place of Performance

Interventions will take place at the national level, coordinating closely with the Ministry of Education (MOE), and the sub-national level, coordinating closely with local government institutions. At the sub-national level, USAID has identified Baja Verapaz, Huehuetenango, El Quiché, and San Marcos as departments where there is a combination of high irregular migration as well as high dropout rates. USAID anticipates that BEQT interventions will be focused in these departments. USAID currently operates in all but Baja Verapaz, and added this department as a result of data and consultations that demonstrated a need to consider this new geographic area.

The Activity will work with USAID and the MOE to select up to three municipalities in each of the departments described above. The selection of the municipalities should consider the following factors, especially with regards to marginalized and vulnerable populations such as indigenous groups, girls/women, and youth:

¹ See USAID ADS 303.6 Definition for Transition Award, accessed at <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303>. Also see ADS 303mbb on Process for Transition Awards, accessed at <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mbb>

² Primero basico is the first level of lower secondary, following grade 6.

- Demonstrated commitment from the municipalities to improve education and learning outcomes
- Dropout rates
- Data on students who have disengaged from the education system or not been reached during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Education outcomes shown at the municipal level in math and reading in previous national or other assessments
- Other key indicators of interest such as irregular out-migration.

3. Development Challenge: Context and Opportunities

COVID-19 had an impact on the Guatemalan educational system. 2,943,371 students from 34,718 public schools from different levels and modalities stopped having face-to-face classes as of March 16, 2020. Among the positive actions observed throughout the 2020 school year, MoE was able to put into practice a robust school feeding program for preprimary and primary students. In addition, the I Learn at Home Strategy (Aprendo en Casa) was developed to facilitate distance learning in urban and rural environments through different modalities: radio, television, printed materials and the use of social media outlets. The school year 2021 was planned to begin no later than February 2021. Due to a rise in COVID cases in March, classes were canceled in the majority of municipalities across the country.

Before the pandemic, Guatemala's education was experiencing an imminent learning crisis. The closure of schools due to COVID-19, has only deepened such a crisis and it is expected to have disastrous consequences for youth and children's education and those not able to access distance learning. The most vulnerable and the ones at-risk have less possibilities of returning to school after the pandemic is over. Students could face Gender-Based Violence, and be subject to child marriage or child labor. It is imperative to help the educational system, overcome certain challenges: one is to expand internet access to students from the public system. The last census³ indicates that only two out of ten households have connectivity. Rural area students need access to cellphones and technological devices that would allow to access learning platforms and online resources. In addition, it is necessary to support teachers and school administrators with hybrid and distance learning approaches that could better facilitate learning, and to support a transition to emotionally safe return to school.

Students are not succeeding academically in primary grades and *primero básico*, and as a result many are dropping out of school. Prior to the pandemic, rates of dropout were already particularly high in rural Guatemala, as noted in Table 1 below.

³ <https://www.censopoblacion.gt/>

Table 1 - Dropout Rates by Department in Grades 1, 5, 6, and *Primero Básico*⁴

Departament	Dropout Rates (2019)			
	Grade 1	Grade 5	Grade 6	I Básico
Alta Verapaz	4.12%	3.37%	2.77%	4.94%
Baja Verapaz	5.77%	5.42%	4.38%	10.91%
Huehuetenango	7.49%	6.78%	5.74%	11.07%
Quetzaltenango	3.91%	2.68%	2.72%	5.35%
Quiché	4.20%	4.62%	4.24%	6.77%
San Marcos	6.38%	3.40%	2.97%	6.84%
Totonicapán	3.46%	2.81%	2.35%	5.29%

Available evidence from USAID assessments, MOE-produced reports, and consultations with the Government of Guatemala (GOG) and international donors indicate that many students are not succeeding in their education and are leaving the school system due to the following key constraints:

- Low quality instruction and inability to foster foundational reading, math, and social and emotional skills⁵. School subjects become a challenge and students leave school.⁶
- Poor school system administration that does not effectively track enrollment, attendance, student learning (including social and emotional skills), and transition. This results in schools not being aware and able to respond to the needs of students.⁷
- Lack of support outside of school from communities and families to practice foundational skills and ensure children enroll, attend, and transition to the next level of school, often due to other needs at home. Learners may experience a life-changing incident (e.g., teen pregnancy, need to work, loss of a loved one, etc.) and dropout of school.
- Many learners graduating from primary school do not have access to lower-secondary education due to a shortage of seats and space for them in lower-secondary schools.
- Lower-secondary schools are often too far for learners to attend and families cannot afford the transportation expenses. In addition, children and teenagers are forced to work at an early age because of poverty, food insecurity, among other factors.
- Limited capacity and resources of local institutions to improve and sustain education outcomes. USAID/Guatemala has held contracts in the basic education sector with large international partners as lead implementers. While these contracts have improved education outcomes as well as capacity of some local institutions such as basic education providers, civil society organizations, and faith-based organizations, more targeted capacity building support is needed for local partners to transition to the role of lead implementing partners and sustain education results within the local education system over time.

⁴ Data compiled from Ministry of Education <http://estadistica.mineduc.gob.gt/Anuario/home.html#>

⁵ Ending Learning Poverty: What will it take?. World Bank. 2019

⁶ Guatemala en PISA-D: jóvenes fuera de la escuela. Mineduc Guatemala. 2020

⁷ Guía para promover la transición exitosa: Mineduc.2019

4. Relationship to U.S. Government and Government of Guatemala priorities

Relationship to USG Policies and Priorities

The Activity will be aligned with USG-supported commitments as well as strategies of the GOG. The Activity will be centered on improving foundational reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills of Guatemalan students as well as transition rates from upper primary to lower secondary in the selected municipalities.

U.S. policy objectives⁸ in Guatemala related to the wellbeing of Guatemalans include:

- Increasing citizen security in Guatemala.
- Engaging Guatemalan government institutions to fight corruption, increasing openness and transparency, supporting rule of law, and strengthening the effectiveness of government institutions to improve Guatemalan confidence in government agencies.
- Reducing irregular migration and illicit trafficking of goods and people to the United States by boosting broad-based economic growth, addressing the economic drivers of migration, and engaging the government and the private sector to reduce poverty.

U.S. foreign assistance in Guatemala invests in citizen security, governance, and economic growth to discourage irregular migration, improve government services, increase transparency, fight corruption, and support repatriation and reintegration efforts.

Guatemala continues to face formidable challenges: weak governance, endemic corruption, pervasive poverty, food insecurity, severe violence, citizen insecurity, and inequitable access to economic opportunities and social services. These challenges drive irregular migration and contribute to the expansion of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs). U.S. efforts aim to protect U.S. citizens by addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of irregular migration and illicit trafficking of people and goods.

Relationship to GOG Policies and Priorities

The Activity will also support Guatemala's Governmental General Policy 2020-2024, in advancements in both inclusive education services and primary school completion. The Activity will explore ways to build upon the gains of the MOE's strategy *Aprendo en Casa y en Clase*, and the previous administration's strategy *Comprometidos con Primer Grado* by prioritizing support to young learners to improve achievement and increase internal efficiency at a critical point in primary school. The Activity will also support implementation of the Open Government Alliance⁹, a presidential and global initiative that contains components relating to improving reading outcomes in early grades.

⁸ <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-guatemala/>

⁹ <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/policy-area/education/>

BEQT will support the implementation of the National Educational Coaching System (SINAE¹⁰) where relevant; the Activity will work with USAID, the MOE, and local governments to determine where support to SINAE makes the most sense. In addition this Activity will support the National Decentralization Agenda which establishes the process through which the regulatory capacities of the national ministries are strengthened, along with the improvement of the capacities of the municipal authorities to invest and implement projects to improve development outcomes.

In addition, BEQT will support GOG's commitment to fulfilling the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, specifically goal number four, by helping to promote stronger multilingual education at the primary level that will help reduce dropout rates, narrow literacy gaps, and decrease gender disparities. Gender inequality, in particular, is a cross-cutting issue that affects the long-term development of Guatemala. The Activity should seek to support networks of women's groups where relevant, promote greater participation of women in community and civic activities, and consider gender differences related to developing appropriate strategies for foundational skills development among boys and girls. In addition, this Activity will provide an opportunity to strengthen USAID's engagement with Indigenous Peoples and narrow the literacy gaps among indigenous and non-indigenous students.

Relationship to USAID Education Priorities

BEQT takes into consideration the following USAID Education Policy¹¹ principles:

- Prioritize country-focus and ownership
- Focus and concentrate investments on measurably and sustainably improving learning and educational outcomes
- Strengthen systems and develop capacity in local institutions
- Work in partnership and leverage resources
- Drive decision-making and investments using evidence and data
- Promote equity and inclusion

BEQT also aligns to the following USAID Education Policy¹² priorities:

- Children and youth, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable, have increased access to quality education that is safe, relevant, and promotes social well-being.
- Children and youth gain literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills that are foundational to future learning and success.

¹⁰ An MOE initiative which aims to improve learning and school retention through strengthening teaching-learning processes. SINAE strengthens the principal's role and provides coaching services to teachers with the end goal of increasing coverage and completion rates.

¹¹ USAID Education Policy, 2018. Accessed at <https://www.usaid.gov/education/policy>

¹² USAID Education Policy, 2018. Accessed at <https://www.usaid.gov/education/policy>

Building on USAID's prior work

To capture and incorporate lessons learned, this Activity will build upon prior USAID activities that supported intercultural and bilingual education and approaches to early grade reading. Activities including, but not limited to, USAID's Lifelong Learning and Education Reform in the Classroom have valuable experiences and lessons learned that should be considered when designing and implementing activities.

USAID has worked in partnership with the GOG to improve primary grade reading skills and provide educational opportunities for out-of-school learners. USAID interventions have included:

- Expanding support to the MOE to respond to COVID-19 strains on the system, implement the *Aprendo en Casa y en Clase* strategy, plan for the return to school, and plan for completion of school years 2020 and 2021.
- Promoting foundational reading skills as the backbone of lifelong learning and improving the overall quality of education.
- Supporting activities that are implemented by the MOE at the central and local levels, such as the development, printing, and distribution of materials in Mayan languages and Spanish.
- Supporting teacher training and strengthening management and technical skills of MOE personnel.
- Partnering with parents and communities to promote demand for quality education services and raise awareness of the important role that families play in their children's education.
- Collaborating with local governments to establish basic requirements for schools to foster a classroom environment conducive to improving reading skills.
- Providing technical assistance to the MOE to improve information systems and to promote the use of data generated by these systems to inform policy decisions.
- Providing opportunities for out-of-school rural indigenous youth in the Western Highlands to receive education and build skills to increase their access to sustainable livelihoods. Out-of-school youth create life plans and receive support accessing the education and training necessary to reach their goals.

USAID Guatemala's past education programming has led to the following key results and accomplishments relevant to programming for BEQT:

- Bilingual education for indigenous students – USAID has supported the MOE's design and implementation of the literacy model – a pedagogical strategy for bilingual contexts to promote the development of reading skills of early grade students in their mother tongue and in Spanish as a second language. This approach includes development of methodologies and educational materials, teacher training, parental and community involvement, and professional development programs for technical staff of the departmental education offices and educational coaching specialists.
- Improved education information systems – USAID has supported the MOE to build and enhance information systems. Now that the MOE has advanced from a paper-based system to a web-based, user-oriented dashboard of education indicators, USAID has helped the MOE develop

tools to leverage this data for better informed decision-making. USAID assistance is now supporting development of smartphone applications with the goal of real-time access to school-level education indicators of particular interest and utility to departments and municipalities. An example is the app to register information required by the MOE's system and health protocols.

- Alternative basic education quality programs – USAID has developed learning standards for technical and vocational training programs and standards of implementation for institutions that implement these programs. These standards are contributing to strengthened alternative basic education for out-of-school youth and MOE capacity to monitor and assess the quality of these programs.

- Girls' education – USAID has supported the MOE to develop policies that advance gender equality and women's empowerment and improve gender equality in education. With support from USAID and other collaborators, the MOE has conducted gender studies, provided scholarships for girls, advocated for girls education at the community level, and developed practical gender-sensitive education materials and training for administrators, technical officials, and teachers. As a result, there have been significant improvements in gender equality. At the pre-primary level, the gender gap narrowed from 83 to 93 girls for every 100 boys, and in lower secondary, girls' access expanded from 67% to 86% from 1993 to 2013.

Relationship to the 2020-2025 USAID/Guatemala Country Development and Cooperation Strategy (CDCS)

USAID Guatemala's new five-year CDCS was approved on August 27, 2020, and BEQT is being designed around the current strategy, directly contributing to Development Objective 2 (DO2), "Partner with the Government of Guatemala and other stakeholders to strengthen effective and accountable governance to improve quality of life and deter irregular migration," which hypothesizes that parallel improvements in income, health and nutrition, and education among Guatemala's rural poor will foster the sustainable rural development necessary for social and economic equity that deters irregular migration. Target beneficiaries include historically underserved and excluded populations in the Western Highlands (WH) where there are high concentrations of poverty. The Activity will support achievement of IR 2.2 Improved quality of social services (health, education, water), and will be aligned with USAID's 2020 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy.¹³

Relationship to other USAID Guatemala activities

The Activity will support USAID Guatemala's portfolio in several critical ways by impacting learning outcomes at the classroom level and linking to other activities. For example, USAID/Guatemala activities Lifelong Learning and REAULA worked closely with the local universities developing training program for teachers and created the Consortium of Universities¹⁴; there may be an opportunity in BEQT to work with local universities to improve

¹³ USAID's 2020 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy. Accessed at <https://www.usaid.gov/GenderEqualityandWomensEmpowermentPolicy#:~:text=The%202020%20Gender%20Equality%20and.%2C%20their%20families%2C%20their%20communities%2C>

¹⁴ An advisory organization composed of representatives from San Carlos University (a public university) and nine private universities, to improve teacher training.

pre-service teacher training for foundational skills instruction. In addition, both the Puentes and Lifelong Learning activities have devoted resources to strengthen and prepare professionals working with SINAE during the implementation of the initiative; BEQT will link to advances made with SINAE where relevant. This Activity will also build into the results achieved by Nexos Locales project aiming at developing and strengthening the work with communities and municipalities of the WH to improve development outcomes. By supporting the transition to *primero básico*, the Activity will link to the Puentes activity and support outcomes in lower secondary education. In addition the Activity will align with the National Institutions Strengthening Project (NIS Project), currently under procurement. This project will support the Presidential Commission on Open and E-government which has the mandate to implement the OGP initiative in Guatemala

Coordination with other donor activities

Other donors and development partners are also active in the education sector in the departments selected, or have indicated common priorities and strategic interests. These include USDA/McGovern Dole, UNICEF, the World Bank, GIZ, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and others. Applications must demonstrate knowledge of these activities and present a plan to coordinate interventions to avoid duplication of efforts and create synergies.

5. Theory of Change

The Activity's theory of change posits the following:

If in-person and remote reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills instruction for all learners¹⁵ in primary school and *primero básico* in target areas is improved; school management systems for student enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning are strengthened; family and community engagement in foundational skills practice and transition for all learners in target areas is improved; and organizational and technical capacities of local organizations are increased; **then** more learners in target areas will have improved reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills; more learners will successfully transition from primary school to lower secondary education; and local capacity will be installed to sustain key components of the Activity.

With reading, writing, math, and SEL outcomes improved for all learners in target areas, the rate of student transition to lower secondary for all learners in target areas increased, and local partners' capacity strengthened to implement and sustain improvements to the education system, the Activity will improve the quality of life for youth, particularly indigenous youth and young women in target areas of Guatemala. In the long-term, these results will contribute to USAID Guatemala's CDCS Development Objective 2: Partner with the Government of Guatemala and

¹⁵ Note that by all learners, the BEQT theory of change and program description refer to inclusion of girls and boys, learners with disabilities, those living in poverty and those with limited/no access to online learning modalities, learners from ethnic/linguistic minority and indigenous groups, learners from rural areas, those affected by crisis and/or conflict, and any other learners who are marginalized or vulnerable. This will likely entail differentiated instruction. The target beneficiaries at the primary level are anticipated to be students in grades 4-6; however, the Activity will also support learners in grades 1-3.

other stakeholders to strengthen effective and accountable governance to improve quality of life and deter irregular migration; specifically Intermediate Result 2.2: Improved quality of social services (health, education, water).

6. Desired Results

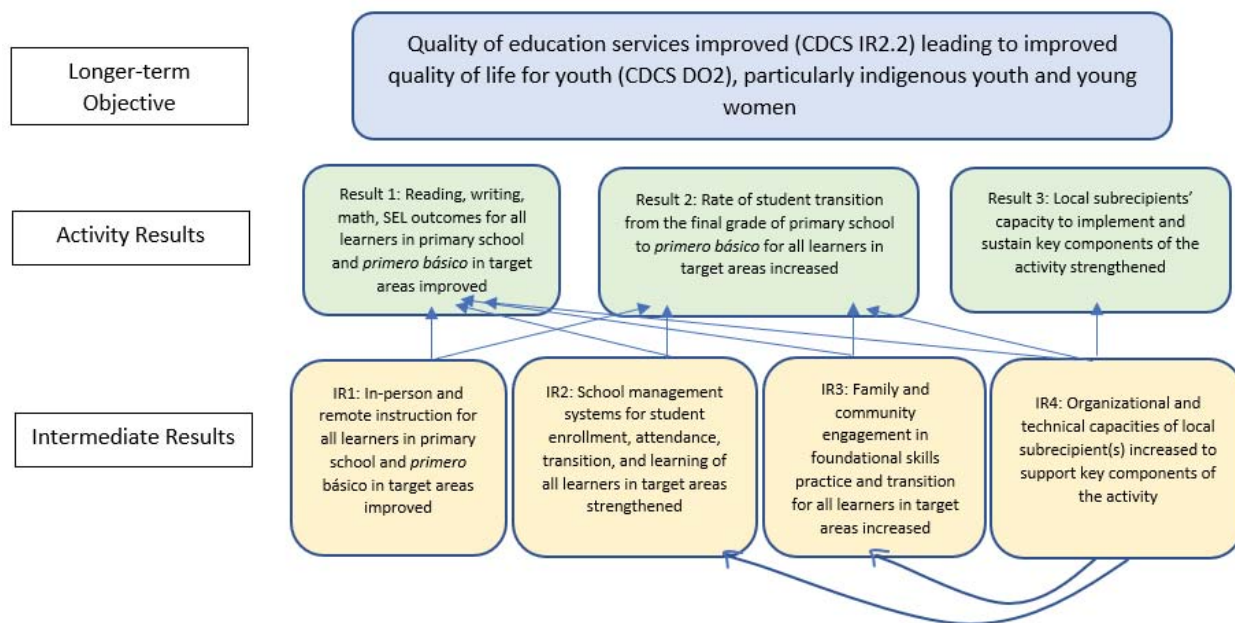
BEQT will implement solutions to the development challenge in the geographic areas outlined above and must advance the following Activity Results:

- Result 1: Reading, writing, math, SEL outcomes for all learners in primary school and *primero básico* in target areas improved
- Result 2: Rate of student transition from the final grade of primary school to *primero básico* for all learners in target areas increased
- Result 3: Local subrecipient(s) capacity to implement and sustain key components of the Activity strengthened

To accomplish the Activity Results, BEQT will focus on four Intermediate Results (IRs):

- IR1: In-person and remote foundational skills instruction for all learners in primary school and *primero básico* in target areas improved
- IR2: School management systems for student enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning of all learners in target areas strengthened
- IR3: Community and family engagement in foundational skills practice and transition for all learners in target areas improved
- IR4: Organizational and technical capacities of local subrecipient(s) increased to support key component(s) of the Activity

IRs 1, 2, and 3 will lead to the achievement of Activity Results 1 and 2. IR4 will directly lead to the achievement of Activity Result 3 and will support the achievement and sustainability of Activity Results 1 and 2 by contributing to IR2 and/or IR3.



7. Approach and Illustrative Interventions

The Activity Results, IRs, and interventions will take into account the USAID Reading MATTERS Framework,¹⁶ which is a systems approach that highlights the systemic components that evidence shows are critical to fostering foundational skills acquisition for all learners, and the Social and Emotional Learning in USAID Basic Education Programs: How-To Note.¹⁷ By all learners, USAID emphasizes inclusion of marginalized groups such as indigenous children and youth, girls, and learners with disabilities. For the Activity to be inclusive, all activity components should consider how to incorporate universal design for learning principles,¹⁸ and research/data collection should focus on differences in outcomes between groups.

Activity Result 1: Reading, writing, math, SEL outcomes for all learners in primary school and primero básico in target areas improved

The focus of this Activity Result is for learners in grades 4-6 and *primero básico* to improve their reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills. BEQT will support the MOE and other key local stakeholders to sustainably improve these skills for all learners in target areas inclusive of girls and boys, learners with disabilities, those living in poverty and those with limited/no access to online learning modalities, learners from ethnic/linguistic minority and indigenous groups, learners from rural areas, those affected by crisis and/or conflict, and any other learners who are vulnerable or experiencing marginalization. These skills will be measured by regular summative and formative assessments, which should be aligned to internationally recognized

¹⁶ USAID Reading MATTERS Framework, 2018. Accessed at

<https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/usaaid-reading-matters-conceptual-framework>

¹⁷ Social and Emotional Skills in USAID Basic Education Programs: How-To Note, 2021. Accessed at

<https://www.edu-links.org/resources/social-emotional-learning-usaid-basic-education-programs-how-note>

¹⁸ Universal design for learning principles can be found in the USAID Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Learn to Read Toolkit (2019). Accessed at <https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/universal-design-learning-help-all-children-read-0>

standards such as the Global Proficiency Framework (GPF)¹⁹ for reading and math skills and the CASEL's SEL Framework.²⁰ BEQT will seek to support the MOE to establish grade-level benchmarks/standards and targets aligned to internationally recognized standards such as the GPF. BEQT will work with USAID Guatemala and the MOE to determine which grades and content areas to prioritize for benchmarks/standards and target-setting.

BEQT may also seek to address foundational skills gaps that remain in grades 1-3, specifically for reading and SEL. BEQT support at the early primary grades may entail supporting assessments and monitoring implementation at those grade levels and providing recommendations to the GOG, local institutions, and other donors.

An initial task within the first four months of the Activity will be to conduct a foundational skills landscape assessment²¹ for in-person and remote education aligned to the components of the USAID Reading MATTERS Framework to identify strengths, opportunities, and challenges in reading, writing, math, and SEL outcomes for the target populations in the target areas of the Activity. This initial assessment is key to understanding needs especially in light of the lack of engagement many learners in rural Guatemala have had with the education system during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the assessment will help inform and refine the approach and interventions in the Activity, possibly including but not limited to standards and policy interventions, teaching and learning materials, teacher training and coaching, assessments, extra support and practice outside of school, and relevant child wellbeing needs. The Activity will work with USAID Guatemala to define the questions and objectives of the assessment.

Activity Result 2: Rate of student transition from the final grade of primary school to primero básico for all learners in target areas increased

The aim of this Result is to strengthen the Guatemalan education system to keep more learners in school through the upper primary grades and successfully transition them to lower secondary education. This will require coordinating closely with the MOE, department and local governments, school administrators, as well as other key local stakeholders on policy and implementation coherence throughout the system. The Result will be measured following the UNESCO definition for transition rate: “Number of young people attending the first grade of lower secondary school as a percentage of those attending the final grade of primary school.”²² The Activity must help develop capacity at the schools, districts, and local government levels to carefully track enrollment, attendance, and transition and address issues that lead to dropout and academic failure.

¹⁹ Global Proficiency Framework found here: <https://www.edu-links.org/resources/global-proficiency-framework-reading-and-mathematics>

²⁰ CASEL's SEL Framework found here: <https://casel.org/sel-framework/>

²¹ For an example of a landscape assessment, see the Literacy Landscape Assessment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo found here: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00X79F.pdf

²² UNESCO, Indicators, Transition rate to lower secondary. Accessed at https://unesco-wide-production.herokuapp.com/indicators/trans_prim#?sort=mean&dimension=all&group=all&age_group=trans_prim&countries=all

Activity Result 3: Local subrecipient(s) capacity to implement and sustain key components of the Activity strengthened

BEQT is planned to be an initial award with a follow-on transition award in accordance with ADS 303mbb,²³ wherein an initial award is made to a prime implementing partner who will develop the capacity of local subrecipient(s) to become more capable of receiving a direct award from USAID or other donors and implementing and sustaining key components of the Activity. The key components of BEQT that USAID anticipates local subrecipient(s) to implement and sustain are the following:

- Monitoring and providing support to school management systems for student enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning of all learners in target areas (IR2 of BEQT); AND
- Strengthening family and community support to improve foundational skills and transition for all learners in target areas improved (IR3 of BEQT).

USAID expects the Activity to work with the MOE and other key local stakeholders such as local universities, although they may not be subrecipients to the award, to implement and sustain in-person and remote foundational skills instruction (IR1 of BEQT).

An initial task of the Activity will be to work with USAID Guatemala to establish explicit criteria that the local subrecipient(s) would need to meet to qualify for the transition award. The BEQT prime implementing partner will have the responsibility of preparing the local subrecipient(s) to meet the requirements outlined in the Non-U.S. Organization Pre-award Survey (NUPAS) or a similar detailed analysis in accordance with ADS 303.3.9.1 that achieves the same objectives as the NUPAS. The capacity areas, as outlined in the NUPAS, may include the areas of legal structure, financial management and internal controls systems, procurement systems, human resources systems, project performance management, and organizational sustainability. Additionally, the capacities needed for the transition award may also include relevant technical education areas.

By the end of year 3 of the Activity, the prime implementing partner will inform USAID of the potential suitability of the transition award to local subrecipient(s), according to the established criteria. The prime implementing partner's recommendation will discuss how the proposed local subrecipient(s) meet(s) the agreed-upon criteria for the transition award, including their capacity to implement and sustain key components of BEQT.

IR1. In-person and remote foundational skills instruction for all learners in primary school and primero básico in target areas improved

The aim of IR1 is to support the MOE and other key local stakeholders to improve in-person and remote instruction to help all grade 4-6 and *primero basico* learners in the target areas to develop

²³ See USAID ADS 303.6 Definition for Transition Award. Accessed at <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303>. Also see ADS 303mbb on Process for Transition Awards. Accessed at <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mbb>

reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills. To meet the needs of all learners, particularly of marginalized and vulnerable learners, differentiated instruction and in some cases remedial instruction will likely be needed. To improve in-person and remote instruction, the Activity will work with MOE, departments, municipal governments, and schools to understand needs and address the gaps in foundational skills instruction for all learners in the target areas, including a foundational skills landscape assessment. BEQT may also seek to address in-person and remote foundational skills instruction gaps that remain in grades 1-3, specifically for reading and SEL. BEQT support at the early primary grades may entail supporting assessments and monitoring implementation at those grade levels and providing recommendations to the GOG, local institutions, and other donors. Working across multiple grade levels will be challenging and the Activity does not necessarily need to address needs across all grade levels at once; therefore, the prime implementing partner should propose a logical, sequenced roll out plan and implementation plan to address in-person and remote instructional needs for target learners in primary and *primero básico*.

IR1 Illustrative Interventions:

- Perform a foundational reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills landscape assessment to identify opportunities and challenges in foundational skills outcomes for the target populations in the target areas of the Activity. In the assessment, include a component to assess the effectiveness of alternative approaches within the school system to face-to-face learning and identify gaps in remote and in-person foundational skills training, instruction, and materials.
- Support the MOE to develop benchmarks/standards and targets for reading, math, and SEL outcomes aligned to internationally recognized standards such as the GPF and CASEL's SEL Framework.²⁴
- Support the MOE to update the curriculum for foundational reading, writing, math, and SEL skills instruction in grades 4-6 and *primero basico* for in-person, remote, and hybrid modalities.
- Provide training and ongoing coaching support to teachers on foundational reading, writing, math, and SEL instruction for grades 4-6 and *primero basico* for in-person, remote, and hybrid modalities. Training and coaching will integrate support from the National Educational Coaching System (SINAE) and/or local universities where possible.
- Align teaching and learning materials (TLMs) to the updated curriculum for foundational reading, writing, math, and SEL skills in grades 4-6 and *primero basico*, and support MOE and local governments to deliver copies of the materials to each student in the target areas.
- Support teachers and schools to conduct regular assessments, both formative and summative, to inform instruction. Training and coaching to teachers will emphasize regular assessment. Consider novel and effective ways to address learning gaps especially when a hybrid/distance modality is in place.

²⁴ Global Proficiency Framework. Accessed at <https://www.edu-links.org/resources/global-proficiency-framework-reading-and-mathematics>

- To promote inclusive education, BEQT should incorporate an approach known as Universal Design for Learning (UDL)²⁵ understood as the promotion of quality education that respects individual differences. The inclusive education perspective promotes positive acceptance of personal, social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, physical and gender differences. Inclusive education seeks to support learning for all, particularly marginalized and vulnerable groups including students with disabilities, indigenous children, and girls, by promoting access to education on a full and equitable basis with others.
- Partner with local universities to improve pre-service training for teachers of foundational reading, math, and SEL skills, aligning pre-service with in-service training. BEQT may partner with local universities to develop a training program for teachers to become certified coaches in foundational skills (SEL included) under the UDL approach.

IR2. School management systems for student enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning in target areas strengthened

The aim of this IR is to strengthen school management systems to achieve coherence in policy and implementation and ensure learners are enrolling, attending, learning, and transitioning through the primary grades to *primero basico*. To strengthen Guatemalan school management systems, BEQT will focus efforts at different levels in the system, potentially supporting the MOE, departmental and municipal governments, school districts, and schools. In light of COVID-19, support to school management systems will also explore how to increase access, enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning for students participating remotely or virtually.

IR2 Illustrative Interventions:

- Strengthen the capacity of school administration to monitor student enrollment, attendance, and transition to subsequent grades. This may include supporting the development and implementation of early warning systems that alert school administrators and teachers to students that are at-risk of dropping out.
- Data about the education system related to foundational skills outcomes and transitions in grades collected, analyzed, and utilized to inform policy and budgetary decisions.
- Support school management systems to partner with the private sector and mobilize resources to support and sustain the Activity Results.
- Support counseling and psychosocial support of programs (Community Based Psychosocial) for students and teachers at the school level to guarantee effective monitoring, motivating students to transition from primary to lower secondary, preventing students from dropping out and responding to dropout of learners from school.
- Explore the possibility of policy change with the MOE to require automatic enrollment for learners moving from grade 6 to *primero básico*.
- BEQT will explore the possibility of policy change with the MOE to require the school principal be an established position in schools.

²⁵ USAID Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Learn to Read Toolkit (2019). Accessed at <https://www.globalreadingnetwork.net/resources/universal-design-learning-help-all-children-read-0>

- To address the limited number of seats in lower secondary, BEQT will explore options for opening up more seats, implementing flexible distance learning modalities within the school system, such as through radio, and subsidizing costs for those living more than five kilometers away from the nearest secondary school²⁶.
- BEQT will seek to link to the health and other sector activities where possible to provide access to WASH facilities in schools to improve access, especially for girls.
- BEQT will work with the Ministry of Education Department of Evaluation and Educational (DIGEDUCA) to improve data collection and its appropriate utilization. The last time learning outcomes were collected for learners in reading and math for grades 3 and 6 was 2014. With the impact of COVID-19, it is important to understand where young learners are in their foundational skills and how much remediation and differentiation is needed.
- BEQT will work at the subnational level with MOE's Departmental Directorates, and municipalities²⁷ to strengthen their investments in quality education,²⁸ likely to include at a minimum appropriate teaching and learning materials for all teachers and students and quality training/support for teachers, and key transitions using evidence and channeling the guidance and tools that MOE Departmental Education Offices provide to achieve results in their territories. Students have unique codes that can be used to track their progress in the system. In Guatemala, municipalities receive resources from the central government by law, in addition they manage resources assigned by the Development Councils National System, and have limited authority to collect taxes.

IR3. Community and family engagement in foundational skills practice and transition for all learners in target areas improved

This component will focus on increasing engagement with communities and families to support foundational skills practice outside of school as well as enrollment, attendance, and transitions in school. This will likely entail exploring flexible modalities for education, development and distribution of community education resources, guidance and training for families and communities to support remote learning, and subsidies for transportation for learners that live far from school.

IR3 Illustrative Interventions:

- As many as 20 percent of young learners are dropping out of the education system during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the anticipation of more abandoning school.²⁹ Therefore, BEQT will explore the feasibility of providing technical support to communities and families for learners in grades 1-6 and *primero basico* to support their access to education and learning at home. With distance materials for early grade reading materials developed

²⁶ exitoescolarenciclobasico.org/oportunidades-de-aprendizaje

²⁷ Clusters of municipal governments which share a common interest.

²⁸ In 2019 Guatemala passed the Decentralization Law ratifying future dissemination of authorities to municipal leaders and empowering them to become more influential in managing education within their community.

²⁹ Ferdy Montepeque, 2020, "Educación, bajo la sombra de la deserción y la brecha digital," *elPeriodico World Review*. Accessed at: <https://especiales.elperiodico.com.gt/aniversario24/educacion-bajo-la-sombra-de-la-desercion-y-la-brecha-digital.html>

through Lifelong Learning, BEQT could potentially support the use of these materials and the incorporation of distance learning as a flexible modality for early primary learners; strengthening a bilingual model which in grades 1-3 promotes reading in their own language and helping with the transferring of skills in the bilingual model in the higher grades of primary.

- Community interventions address needs to support student enrollment, attendance, learning, and transition between grade levels. Communities gain access to and utilize data on enrollment, attendance, learning and transition to inform their interventions.
- The increased community and family support may entail building upon the *Organización de Padres de Familia (OPF)* and the *Juntas Escolares*, civil society organizations composed of parents of students and teachers whose objective is to work together to improve education services in their communities, as well as community and municipal development councils (*COCODES* and *COMUDES*) c. These groups contribute to and participate in the decentralization of the education system by optimizing the administration of resources destined for their communities. The *OPFs* and the *Juntas Escolares* could play a role in promoting enrollment, attendance, learning, and transition of all learners in the target areas.
- Together with community leadership, the Activity increases municipal education investment and strengthened governance systems through progressive policies, partnerships, and capacity building.
- Community members participate in certified coaching programs and PSS designed by local universities to increase academic and social and emotional support to students.

IR4. Organizational and technical capacities of local subrecipient(s) strengthened to support key component(s) of the Activity

A key objective of BEQT is to build capacity of new and underutilized local subrecipient partner(s) to eventually become qualified lead implementers in a transition award, capable of implementing and sustaining key components of BEQT. The key components of BEQT that USAID anticipates local subrecipient(s) to implement and sustain are the following:

- Monitoring and providing support to school management systems for student enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning of all learners in target areas (IR2 of BEQT); AND
- Strengthening family and community support to improve foundational skills and transition for all learners in target areas improved (IR3 of BEQT).

The BEQT prime implementing partner will need to conduct an initial organizational capacity assessment to determine strengths and areas for improvement of the local subrecipient(s). Following the initial assessment, the prime partner must submit a detailed training plan with steps and milestones for the subrecipient(s) to improve and develop the capacities needed to qualify for a transition award, and the prime partner will take the lead on providing training and ongoing support to the local subrecipient(s) to address any areas for improvement identified in the organizational capacity assessment. The prime partner will then measure the progress of the local subrecipient(s) using an organizational capacity assessment tool every six months and adapt the training plan according to the results of the assessment.

By the end of year 3 of the Activity, the prime implementing partner will inform USAID of the local organization's documented level of improvement and the considerations for the suitability to be considered an applicant for the transition award. Upon receipt of the information, USAID will determine the need to perform a NUPAS to the proposed local organizations.

IR4 Illustrative Interventions:

- Perform an inventory of organizations within departments and municipalities that could support IR2 AND IR3 of BEQT.
- Establish explicit criteria that the local subrecipient(s) would need to meet to qualify for the transition award.
- Conduct an initial organizational capacity assessment to identify strengths and areas for improvement of local subrecipients. Utilize findings of assessments to develop a detailed training plan with steps and milestones for the subrecipient(s) to improve and develop the capacities needed to qualify for a transition award.
- Provide training and ongoing organizational and technical capacity support to local subrecipient(s) to ultimately prepare the sub for a Non-U.S. Organization Pre-award Survey (NUPAS) or a similar detailed analysis in accordance with ADS 303.3.9.1 that achieves the same objectives as the NUPAS. Key organizational areas for capacity development per NUPAS may include 1) Legal Structure, 2) financial management and internal control systems, 3) procurement systems, 4) Human resources systems, 5) Project Performance Management, and 6) organization sustainability. Identify and correct deficiencies in the NUPAS or similar analysis and corrected to ensure compliance with USAID regulations and policies.
- Build the technical capacity of local subrecipient(s) to monitor and provide support to school management systems for student enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning of all learners in target areas.
- Build the technical capacity of local subrecipient(s) to strengthen family and community support to improve foundational skills and transition for all learners in target areas.
- Measure and monitor change using performance metrics and an organizational capacity assessment tool.

8. Other Considerations

Cross-cutting principles

The following section outlines the cross-cutting principles that will guide this Activity. They are necessary components to ensure that beneficiaries receive quality services free of stigma and discrimination.

Indigenous Engagement, Community Ownership, and Inclusion

Activities must be developed and implemented in coordination with local communities and in response to their self-identified needs and priorities. The active engagement with indigenous

peoples in design and implementation of local initiatives, as well as national and local policy-making processes, is necessary to achieve sustainability, and the organization in charge of implementing the Activity will work, wherever possible, with and through local systems and organizations. During consultations and audience research conducted by USAID, community members have emphasized the importance they place on donors consulting with potential beneficiaries and with local authorities before carrying out the program of activities or specific interventions and the necessity of collaboration between communities and local authorities to meet the needs of the population. Similarly, they expressed frustration at the historical lack of opportunity for effective participation for reasons that range from patterns of discrimination, risks of persecution for participation and a need to focus survival priorities in other areas. The organization will engage with indigenous peoples through existing networks and as members of the Advisory Committee to prioritize activities according to indigenous people's needs and preferred approaches.

Youth

Guatemala's youth bulge presents significant challenges for the country as many youth are unemployed or under-employed. USAID's strategic approach to youth encapsulates four core domains (assets, agency, contributions and enabling environment) for youth to develop strong socio-emotional and life skills to bolster them in adulthood. Providing youth with education and employment opportunities is imperative for Guatemala's future growth and for the U.S.; young people under 18 years old comprised 10 percent of Guatemalans apprehended on the southern U.S. border in 2019. Family units including children and youth comprised 70 percent of all apprehensions during the same period. Addressing these challenges is essential for youth to meaningfully participate in the Guatemalan economy rather than seeking opportunities outside the country. Further, these youth are Guatemala's future leaders; substantively supporting and engaging with youth presents a significant opportunity to influence America's future allies. USAID will seek to include youth in decision-making and other empowerment activities across the portfolio to give them a voice in Guatemala's future and strengthen recognition of the value they bring to organizations and decision-making bodies. These efforts will also strengthen their ties to Guatemala, presenting substantive alternatives to migration.

Gender

USAID's commitment to advance gender equity and to pursue gender as a key development issue must be fully reflected in this Activity. Gender considerations must be integrated into the activities, ensuring that men and women, as well as vulnerable groups, benefit from USAID support and that gender awareness is built into the activities. The history of exclusion and isolation of women in the WH, as well as their limited experience engaging with national institutions, means that measures must be taken to provide them with the tools to participate in activities and opportunities. The prime implementing partner must ensure all interventions comply with the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy to enhance women's empowerment, prevent and respond to gender-based violence, and reduce gender gaps. The Activity will seek to address the underlying, gender-based constraints to behavior change and demand for and use of health services, working with both sexes and across age groups to increase

effectiveness. Quality of services will be defined to include cultural competency and gender equitable service provision. According to USAID's 2018 Gender Assessment: "The main challenge that women face in participating in USAID/Guatemala projects is related to their limited levels of personal autonomy coupled with time poverty. This is particularly the case for married women, or adolescents and young women still living in their family homes."

Sustainability

Applications must include a sustainability plan for how BEQT will sustain Activity Results and IRs beyond the life of the Activity. The sustainability plan must include details on how BEQT will coordinate closely with the MOE, departments, local governments, and other key local stakeholders to identify, build on, and scale activities that will lead to sustainable improvements in young learners' foundational skills development and transition from primary school to *primero basico* of the target population. Throughout implementation, the Activity will assess the commitment and capacity of GOG and other local institutions to implement and sustain USAID-funded interventions.

The sustainability plan must include concrete steps and actions to move from an initial award to a transition award, as noted under Activity Result 3 and IR4, in accordance with ADS 303.³⁰ To advance from an initial award to a transition award. The prime implementing partner must monitor and train the local subrecipient(s) during the initial award so that local subrecipient(s) become capable of receiving direct assistance from USAID or other donors and implementing/sustaining key component(s) of BEQT.

The prime implementing partner will produce a report by the end of year 3 of the Activity to inform USAID of the potential suitability of the transition award to local subrecipient(s) according to the established criteria. The prime implementing partner's recommendation will discuss how the proposed local subrecipient(s) meet(s) the agreed upon criteria for the transition award, including their capacity to implement and sustain the following key components of BEQT:

- Monitoring/providing support to school management systems for student enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning in target areas (IR2), AND
- Strengthening community and family support to improve foundational skills and transition from primary to lower secondary school in target areas (IR3).

The sustainability plan must also include concrete actions to communicate, coordinate, and harmonize work with select USAID partners in the WH. Maintaining effective communication and collaboration mechanisms with other USAID and other donor programs will be necessary for sustainability, especially at the municipality and community level. BEQT will be able to play a central role in implementing and advancing activities in conjunction with USAID sector programs for the WH, including activities in health, education, agriculture/value-chain, WASH, governance and FTF activities.

30 USAID ADS 303. Accessed at <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303>

Climate Risk Management

Climate risk management (CRM) is required for all USAID-supported projects, with limited exceptions. Climate risk is the potential for negative consequences on activity objectives and/or outcomes due to changing climatic conditions. The focus of CRM at USAID is on the risk to USAID development programming. The CRM process may also identify potential development opportunities associated with current and expected climatic and meteorological changes, including chances to achieve additional development objectives (including increasing climate resilience and reducing GHG emissions).

Climate risks can be manifested through potentially severe adverse consequences for development programs resulting from the interaction of climate-related hazards with the vulnerability of societies and systems. A climate risk may arise when an intervention element, target, or beneficiary is exposed to a climate hazard such as higher temperatures, flooding or drought. The level of risk increases both as the severity and probability of negative impact increases. Per USAID policy, moderate and high climate risks must be addressed in the activity design and/or during implementation. In some cases, USAID may accept a/some risk(s) upon consideration of tradeoffs and how USAID can best achieve its development objectives.

Climate risk ratings are defined as:

- Low climate risk - climate change is unlikely to materially impact achievement or sustainability of activity outcomes.
- Moderate climate risk - climate change may materially impact achievement or sustainability of activity outcomes.
- High climate risk - climate change is likely or highly likely to materially impact achievement or sustainability of activity outcomes.

Climate variability and change is expected to have significant impacts on Guatemala's development goals, and is likely to negatively affect Sustainable Forest Management outcomes if it is not considered during activity implementation. Projected changes in Guatemala are expected to include increasing temperature and decreasing precipitation by 2050. The duration of the canícula is likely to increase and rainfall patterns will become increasingly variable with heavy rainfall events followed by dry days, triggering more droughts and flooding.³¹

All of these changes are likely to have direct negative impacts on activity outcomes. As temperatures and precipitation decrease, the risk of fire will increase, making fire management more difficult (and more important in the long-term). Pest outbreaks are likely to become more common in both the forest and the agricultural sectors, threatening overall productivity and cutting into profits. Increasing heat and drought will threaten the viability of reforestation and

³¹ 2017 USAID Climate Change Risk Profile Guatemala:

https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/2017_USAID%20ATLAS_Climate%20Change%20Risk%20Profile_Guatemala.pdf

natural regeneration and heat stress can reduce worker productivity. The prime implementing partner shall consider the identified climate risks when proposing interventions and explain how they will account for these risks.

Integrated Conflict-Sensitive Analysis

USAID/Guatemala considers social conflict dynamics in all activities to support the overarching goal of a more secure Guatemala that fosters greater socio-economic development and sustainably manages its natural resources. Conflict sensitivity encourages organizations to understand and track conflict dynamics in the contexts in which they are working. As changes arise, organizations must adapt their activities to minimize their potential negative effects and build upon their positive effects on conflict. The application of conflict sensitivity usually does not require a major restructuring of an activity or an explicit focus on peacebuilding; adjusting small activity details can have significant impacts on interaction with the conflict context.

In an effort to ensure interventions are conflict-sensitive, USAID/Guatemala requires that activities: a) do not inadvertently create or exacerbate social conflict; b) factor in the possible impact of existing or potential conflict on staff, implementing partners, and the activities themselves; c) seek appropriate opportunities to mitigate tensions and sources of conflict; and d) support constructive collaboration between communities in conflict when possible.

As part of a conflict-sensitive approach, the prime implementing partner must ensure that all interventions undertaken do not worsen social conflict dynamics in activity sites and support constructive collaboration between communities in conflict, when possible. As part of building a foundation for social cohesion while also pursuing the sectoral objectives of this Activity, the project must reflect awareness of impacts of trauma on local staff, beneficiaries, and communities, and incorporate strategies to strengthen trauma resilience. Resources on conflict sensitive practices, tools, and literature can be found at: <http://www.dmeforpeace.org/peaceexchange/>, <http://cdacollaborative.org/publication/the-do-no-harm-framework-for-analyzing-the-impact-of-assistance-on-conflict-a-handbook>, and https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1862/Guatemala_Conflict_Vulnerability_Assessment.pdf.

Behavior Change Communication

USAID seeks to include Behavior Change Communication (BCC) as a strategy to generate and enhance the generalized support needed for empowerment and sustainable change. USAID considers social and behavior change to be a product of multiple overlapping levels of influence, including individual, interpersonal, community, and organizational, as well as political and environmental factors. As such, social and behavior change communication is a best practice in development organizations; an essential basis for effective programming that deepens and expands the impact and sustainability of development programs. The project shall incorporate BCC in implementation and coordinate with other USAID/Guatemala BCC efforts.

USAID defines BCC as the systematic application of interactive, theory-based, and research-driven communication processes and strategies to create/enhance ‘tipping points’ and social support/mobilization for change at the levels of individual, community, and society (enabling environment). SBCC employs communications strategies in three areas of action: Interpersonal, Social Mobilization, and Advocacy. High-quality BCC is characterized by grounding in behavior change theory; use of a proven programmatic process; attention to both individual behaviors and interpersonal and social influences; and bi-directional, interactive communication.

BCC is based on formative research among audiences to develop and distribute coordinated messages, materials, and activities through a range of different communication channels, including but not limited to traditional mass media and social media; community-level activities; interpersonal communication; and non-traditional media.

Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting

The Activity is expected to incorporate a systematic CLA approach that involves strategic collaboration, continuous learning, and adaptive management. The CLA approach is based on the understanding that development efforts yield more effective results when coordinated and collaborative; test promising, new approaches in a continuous manner to identify improvements and efficiencies; and build on what works and eliminate what does not. CLA creates the conditions for fostering broader development success by:

- Collaborating: Facilitating collaboration internally and with external stakeholders to understand local systems, context, and relationships, as well as to strengthen locally-led socio-economic development. This will also facilitate learning and knowledge sharing among projects that are related and complementary to this Activity and the institutions it seeks to strengthen.
- Learning: Generating and incorporating new learning, innovations, and performance information into the project strategy to inform management and design. USAID expects the prime implementing partner to use innovative methodologies for learning and data collection. In addition, the Recipient/contractor should define and execute a MEL Plan as a tool to support CLA and capture project progress and performance to ensure objectives are being met and learning captured.
- Adapting: Translating learning from implementation experience or external sources into strategic and programmatic adjustments; considering changing conditions and emerging risks and game changers. This is achieved by adjusting work plans, interventions, management structures, and operational approaches to account for contextual shifts or learning from a team’s experience, while explicitly sharing a clear, well-articulated rationale for adjustments along the way.

The Recipient will develop and apply strong internal MEL systems. As part of the project’s implementation, the Recipient, working closely with USAID/Guatemala, should develop dynamic MEL practices that contribute to CLA. Performance monitoring will continue throughout project

implementation, while learning phases will provide opportunities for intensive analysis, reflection, and evaluation.

COVID-19 Considerations

Given the effects of COVID-19 and its epidemiological development, USAID expects this Activity to adopt and tailor its interventions within the context of COVID-19 to ensure the safety of its implementing staff and beneficiaries, while also meeting its goals. A close coordination must be developed with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, USAID IPs, municipal and local governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and other counterparts to promote synergies in achieving health and nutrition outcomes, but also limiting risks of spreading the disease both in health providers as in the general population. The available evidence shows that COVID-19 clinical picture in children and pregnant women is usually mild, but independently of the disease severity, confirmed or suspected cases must receive the appropriate infection and prevention care to decrease and avoid the devastating impacts of COVID-19 community spread. Innovative modalities of strengthening human resources skills and providing services will be of the utmost importance for achieving targets and avoiding the disease spread simultaneously.

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to award one (1) Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide \$30 million in total USAID funding over a five-year period.

2. Expected Performance Indicators, Targets, Baseline Data, and Data Collection

After the activity has been awarded, a detailed activity monitoring, evaluation and learning plan (Activity MEL Plan) will be developed by the implementer, in close consultation with USAID.

The Activity MEL Plan will include a detailed description of indicators, targets, baseline data, and data collection methods. USAID intends the activity to be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, in order to (a) ensure the intended results and impact are being generated, and (b) inform activity management if and when course corrections may be necessary. The recipient may also conduct periodic analyses to better understand certain aspects and issues within the award's domain.

Performance monitoring and evaluation will be conducted by the implementing partner.

3. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The anticipated period of performance is five years. The estimated start date is October 2021.

4. Substantial Involvement

USAID will be substantially involved in this Cooperative Agreement to help the Recipient achieve the agreement objectives in the following manner:

- a. Approval of the Recipient's Implementation Plans: The Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) will review and approve the annual work plans.
- b. Approval of Specified Key Personnel: The Agreements Officer (AO) will approve key personnel.
- c. Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation:
 1. The AOR will review and approve the Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan, including indicators.
 2. The AOR will have the authority to modify submission due dates for Plans and Reports. Changes will be communicated to the Recipient in writing.
 3. The Recipient will work with USAID Guatemala to establish an advisory committee for the Activity per ADS 303.3.11.c.(1). The AOR will participate in

meetings with the proposed advisory committee to deal with programmatic and technical matters such as reviewing the strategy and providing feedback on adapting activities.

4. AO will approve all subawards under this Cooperative Agreement. The term sub-awards includes both sub-agreements and contracts under assistance.
5. Agency authority to immediately halt an award activity: The Agreement Officer may immediately halt an award activity if identified specifications are not met.

5. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this program is 937. Code 937 is defined as the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source.

6. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Recipient

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the Basic Education Quality and Transitions activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted. All qualified U.S. and non-U.S. organizations (other than those from foreign policy restricted countries) are eligible to apply. USAID welcomes applications from organizations which have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

Pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 200.400(g), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as Cooperative Agreements, and as such, for-profit organizations must waive profits and/or fees to be eligible to submit an application. Forgone profit does not qualify as cost-share or leverage.

The Recipient must be a responsible entity. Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The successful Applicant will be subject to a responsibility determination and pre-award risk assessment by the Agreement Officer (AO). (see ADS 303.3.9 for more information).

First time recipients of USG or USAID funding may undergo a Pre-award Survey. The AO may determine a pre-award survey is required to conduct an examination that will determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

The applicant is reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the Recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws.

Extensive sub-grants or consortia with local organizations are encouraged in the Applicant's program.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

USAID has established a cost share minimum of ten (10) percent for the award. Such funds may be provided by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level. This may include contribution of staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306.

3. Other

A prime applicant may submit only one application in response to this Notice. Multiple applications from the same prime applicant organization will not be accepted. Applications will not be accepted from individuals.

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Agency Point of Contact

Alina Menicucci
Agreements Officer

Fabiola Loy
Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

email: guatemalaproposals@usaid.gov

2. Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted in writing to guatemalaproposals@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

3. General Content and Form of the Concept Paper and Application

This is a multi-tiered RFA in accordance with ADS 303.3.6.1(c). Selection under this RFA will be based on a two-step process:

- **Phase 1 - Concept paper submissions.** Open to all eligible organizations as described in the RFA. Applicants must first submit a concept paper for review. All concept papers will be evaluated according to the merit review criteria in the RFA.
- **Phase 2 - Full application submissions and oral presentations.** By invitation only to applicants selected from the Phase 1 concept paper submissions. USAID may invite one or more of the applicants with the highest rated concept papers to submit a full application and deliver an oral presentation of their application. Full applications and the accompanying oral presentations will be evaluated according to the merit review criteria in the RFA.

PHASE 1 - CONCEPT PAPER

Open to all eligible organizations as described in this RFA

Concept Paper Submission Instructions

Submit concept papers strictly according to the instructions below. All concept papers received will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and compliance with the application format.

- Concept papers must be submitted electronically via email to guatemalaproposals@usaid.gov. Email submissions must include the following in the subject line: “RFA 72052021RFA00006 – [name of organization] - Concept Paper.”
- Concept papers must not exceed seven (7) pages. Concept papers must be written in English and typed on standard 8 1/2” x 11” paper, single spaced, Times New Roman size 12 font, one inch margins on all sides. **Applicants are advised that any pages exceeding the limit will not be considered for evaluation.**
- Concept papers must be submitted in pdf format in one single file.

Concept Paper Contents

1. Cover Page (not to exceed one page)

The cover page must include the below information:

- a. Activity title and proposed name in Spanish
- b. RFA number 72052021RFA00006
- c. Name of organization (s) applying (lead or primary applicant) for the agreement
- d. Any partnerships and/or proposed sub-awardees
- e. Contact person, telephone number, fax number, address, and types name(s) and title(s) of person(s) who prepared the application, and corresponding signatures.

2. Technical Approach (not to exceed five pages)

In this section, applicants must briefly describe their understanding of the key needs, barriers, and opportunities to achieve the desired outcomes outlined in the PD. Applicants must also provide a preliminary theory of change that is responsive to the needs, barriers, and opportunities identified and leads to the Intermediate Results and Activity Results outlined in the PD. A preliminary implementation plan must be included to demonstrate how proposed interventions will be carried out. The technical approach must also address how proposed interventions and results will be sustained. A strong concept paper will also include a partnerships strategy or plan that incorporates key local partners and alliances. The concept paper must clearly address the factors outlined in the selection criteria, and must demonstrate technical and managerial capacity to implement the Activity. A summary of previous work and experience in managing similar programs must also be included (previous USAID experience is not required).

3. Estimated cost summary (not to exceed one page) - Must describe the proposed subawards.

Summary Budget						
Cost Elements	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Proposed cost to be managed by the prime recipient						
Proposed sub-awards (list each sub-award, name of sub-awardee, and the amount)						
TOTAL AWARD BUDGET						

Once the submitted concept papers have been fully reviewed, the selected Applicant(s) will be notified by the Agreement Officer of their status and the following steps for submission of the full application and oral presentation.

4. Concept Paper Submission Procedures

Concept Papers in response to this RFA must be submitted no later than the closing date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Late Concept papers may be considered at the discretion of the Agreement Officer. Applicants must retain proof of timely delivery.

Concept Papers must be submitted by email to guatemalaproposals@usaid.gov. Email submissions must include the RFA number and applicant's name in the subject line heading.

After submitting a concept paper electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name if submitted via grants.gov that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

Applicants are reminded that e-mail is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the concept paper in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this RFA, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. File size must not exceed 20MB.

Phase 2 - Full Application

Open only to organizations selected in Phase 1

Full Application Submission Instructions

Each applicant must furnish the information required by this RFA. Applications must be submitted in two separate parts: the Technical Application and the Business (Cost) Application. This subsection addresses general content requirements applying to the full application. The Technical application must address technical aspects only while the Business (Cost) Application must present the costs, and address risk and other related issues. **Applicants should not submit a full application unless they receive a request from USAID.**

Both the Technical and Business (Cost) Applications must include a cover page containing the following information:

- i) Program title
- ii) RFA number 72052021RFA00006
- iii) Name of organization (s) applying (lead or primary applicant) for the agreement
- iv) Any partnerships and/or proposed sub-awardees
- v) Contact person, telephone number, fax number, address, and types name(s) and title(s) of person(s) who prepared the application, and corresponding signatures.

Any erasures or other changes to the application must be initialed by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent on behalf of the applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

Applicants must review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this RFA. Failure to do so may be considered as being non-responsive and may be evaluated accordingly. Applicants should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for their records.

Application Submission Procedures

USAID will contact applicants after receipt and review of the Concept Papers and provide further information on submission of full applications.

Applications in response to this RFA must be submitted no later than the closing date and time indicated in correspondence from USAID. Late Applications may be considered at the discretion of the Agreement Officer. Applicants must retain proof of timely delivery.

Applications must be submitted by email to guatemalaproposals@usaid.gov. Email submissions must include the RFA number and applicant's name in the subject line heading. In addition, for an application sent by multiple emails, the subject line must also indicate whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of the emails and their attachments (e.g. "No. 1 of 4", etc.). For example, if your cost application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line that states: "[RFA 72052021RFA00006, [organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".

USAID's preference is that the technical application and the cost application each be submitted as consolidated email attachments, e.g. that you consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending it. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear.

After submitting an application electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name if submitted via grants.gov that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

Applicants are reminded that e-mail is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this RFA, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. File size must not exceed 20MB.

5. Technical Application (25 pages maximum)

The Technical Application must be specific, complete, and concise. The application must demonstrate a clear understanding of the work to be undertaken, the responsibilities of all parties involved, offer critical thinking and analysis for each objective, demonstrate how the programmatic approach and operational principles will be implemented, and tie the technical approach to expected results to be achieved.

The Technical Application is limited to 25 pages and every page of the application must be numbered. The application shall be written in English and typed on standard "8 1/2" x "11" paper

(216mm by 297mm paper), single spaced, Times New Roman font size no smaller than 12. The total size of each e-mail transmission should not exceed 25 Megabytes. Large graphics files are discouraged. Attached file format must be PDF. Attached files should be printable on standard letter-sized paper. The Technical Application must include the following sections:

b) Cover (1) Page to include:

- i) Program title
- ii) RFA number 72052021RFA00006
- iii) Name of organization (s) applying (lead or primary applicant) for the agreement
- iv) Any partnerships and/or proposed sub-awardees
- v) Contact person, telephone number, fax number, address, and types name(s) and title(s) of person(s) who prepared the application, and corresponding signatures.

c) Table of contents (1 page) to include:

- i) Technical Approach
- ii) Management and Staffing plan
- iii) History of Performance (*not included in the page limit*)

1. Technical Approach

The Technical Approach must demonstrate an understanding of the key needs, barriers, and opportunities to improve the desired outcomes outlined in the PD. Based on the key needs, barriers, and opportunities identified, the Applicant must propose a logical theory of change with clear causal linkages for sustainably addressing challenges in the system and achieving the Intermediate Results and Activity Results outlined in the PD.

The application must include a viable and feasible implementation plan informed by the local context and evidence (e.g. the evidence as outlined in the USAID Reading MATTERS Framework). The implementation plan must incorporate universal design for learning principles and describe how it will improve the desired outcomes for all learners in the target areas inclusive of marginalized and vulnerable populations including but not limited to girls and boys, learners with disabilities, those living in poverty and those with limited/no access to online learning modalities, learners from ethnic/linguistic minority and indigenous groups, learners from rural areas, and those affected by crisis and/or conflict.

The application must also present a sustainability and partnership plan that is realistic and ensures that the program results can be sustained after completion of the Activity. The application must include plans to work with key levels of government, likely including the MOE, departments, and municipal governments. For example, the application should include plans for working with the MOE to establish standards, benchmarks, and targets for key foundational skills (e.g. reading and math) at key grade levels aligned to international standards such as the Global Proficiency Framework. The technical approach must clearly specify the Applicant's anticipated primary local partners and alliances, and outline how the Applicant will oversee these contractual and non-contractual relationships to promote capacity strengthening, local ownership and sustainability of interventions and desired outcomes over the life of the activity and beyond.

The technical approach must include a sound Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan. The MEL Plan must reflect realistic, applicable indicators to measure achievements according to the desired outcomes of the Activity with appropriate disaggregations, realistic targets, and a robust methodology for data collection and verification plans. In addition the plan must show how Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA), including flexible, iterative program tracking and management to learn and adapt in response to changing country context and emerging needs, will be incorporated. The approach must also demonstrate effective coordination, integration and complementarity among the Activity's components.

2. Management and Staffing Plan

The Technical Application must include a Management and Staffing Plan that describes the Applicant's proposed management structure and the processes and approaches it will use to provide the technical and advisory services described in the PD. The Applicant will specify the functions, management, and decision-making authority for Key Personnel and any sub-awardees noted in the management structure. The Applicant should demonstrate strong alliances, consortia, or partnering arrangements to proactively address potential problems with flexible and workable solutions. The Applicant will maintain open, timely and effective communications with the USAID, resulting in an implementation partnership that proactively addresses potential problems with flexible, workable solutions

If the Applicant intends to develop broad institutional partnerships, alliances, sub-contracts, or sub agreements as part of implementing the PD, the Applicant shall clearly identify and describe the roles and responsibilities of each entity. The Applicant must discuss the nature of organizational linkages between the prime awardee and any sub-awardees, Partner, and joint venture entity. This will include a discussion of roles and responsibilities, relationships, lines of authority and accountability and mechanisms for utilizing and sharing resources to achieve results..

The Management and Staffing Plan should include the following elements:

- a) Organizational chart that shows the links between key staff and non-key staff and relationships between the applicant and any proposed partner organizations (if the applicant proposes sub-awardees).
- b) Roles and responsibilities for Key Personnel, communication arrangements with USAID, including specific functions, management, and decision making authorities, and the roles and responsibilities of any partner organizations. The application should include a chart with steps describing the approach for project start-up and associated dates.
- c) Overall staffing plan. The Staffing Plan should state each proposed key personnel position and briefly describe the proposed duties and how they link to achieving the expected results.

Key Personnel

The Key Personnel required for the performance of this award include a Chief of Party and four additional Key Personnel to be proposed by the applicant as follows:

Name:	Position:
1. _____	Chief of Party
2. _____	To be determined
3. _____	To be determined
4. _____	To be determined
5. _____	To be determined

Key Personnel specified above are considered to be essential to the work being performed hereunder. The applicant shall propose their own labor mix to fit their technical approach. The Key Personnel are responsible for management, facilitation, and ensuring that activities and tasks are carried out within reasonable requested timeframes and meet quality standards.

The Recipient must immediately notify the AO and the AOR of any Key Personnel's departure and the reasons therefore. The Contractor must take steps to immediately rectify this situation and will propose a substitute candidate for each vacated position along with a budget impact statement in sufficient detail to permit evaluation of the impact on the program. Substitute candidates must meet the minimum qualifications as defined below. The Recipient must not replace any of the Key Personnel without the prior written concurrence of the AOR and written approval of the AO.

The application must present in an annex CVs that detail experience, education, and qualifications of each Key Personnel. The applicant must include a list of three to five references and contact information.

1. Chief of Party

Responsible for overall and day-to-day management of award activities, involving multiple tasks across multiple locations. Demonstrates high-level strategic vision for advancing desired outcomes outlined in the PD, excellent management skills and leadership of complex projects. Provides effective technical and project management guidance and coordination to the overall project team and is responsible for the quality of all work products. Organizes, directs and coordinates the planning and production of all award support activities, effectively leveraging partners' expertise. Responsible for staffing, project planning, project financials, and staff direction and oversight. Maintains and manages the relationship with USAID. It is anticipated that the Project Director role, perhaps in combination with other duties, will require full-time or near full-time attention, 90 to 100 percent level of effort.

Experience & Education: Minimum of 10 years experience working in education and/or international development; minimum of five years experience in managing international development programs in education or other fields. Minimum of five years experience as a director of education programs with strong leadership skills and experience in managing large teams across multiple partner organizations, as well as working in politically sensitive contexts. The Chief of Party must demonstrate skills in problem solving, consensus building and coordination of diverse interests and institutions. Master's degree in education, development, or a related field required. Must be professionally proficient and fluent in written and spoken Spanish and English

2. To Be Determined

3. To Be Determined

4. To Be Determined

5. To Be Determined

Performance History (*Does not count against the page limit*)

The applicant must submit Performance History information in a separate document from the technical application. Applicants must provide records of relevant previous performance that demonstrate their organizational capacity and relevant technical and managerial resources and expertise to design and implement the described Activity.

The section must include a list with the Applicant's (maximum of five) most relevant contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs. The reference information for these awards must include the performance location, award number (if available), a brief description of the work performed, results achieved, and a point of contact with current telephone numbers and email addresses.

USAID reserves the right to obtain past performance information from other sources including those not named in the applications.

6. ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Applicants invited to participate in the oral presentation must make arrangements with USAID/Guatemala to develop a virtual presentation or if COVID-19 regulations permit it must appear in person at USAID/Guatemala. The proposed Chief of Party must lead the presentation and USAID encourages the presence and participation of other proposed Key Personnel. The maximum number of oral presentation participants from each applicant is four from the Prime applicant and one from each major sub-awardee (defined as any sub-awardee expected to perform 20% or more of the work described in the PD). A maximum of five persons will be allowed to formally participate in the oral presentation.

Applicants bear sole responsibility for any and all costs associated with participation in the oral presentation. The applicant will be scheduled to present during the morning or afternoon. The date and time of the presentation will be chosen at random. USAID expects the presentation to be exactly one hour and an additional 45 minutes for questions and answers. USAID may choose to take 15 minutes to convene internally to develop questions based on the presentation.

Any resource applicants use during will become an official part of the source selection file and the SC may refer to those resources during evaluation. The applicant oral presentation letter shall

indicate the presentation resources submission deadline. Applicants must use a MS PowerPoint slide deck.

The presentation delivered by the Chief of Party and other proposed Key Personnel will contribute to the SC's scoring under the Management and Staffing Plan Criterion, specifically based on the Key Personnel's demonstrated understanding of the development challenges and technical approach of the application. This will not be an opportunity to revise applications.

7. Business (Cost) Application

The Business (Cost) Application must be submitted separately from the Technical Application. While no page limit exists for the full cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.

Prior to award, applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant's risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.205. Applicants should not submit any additional information with their initial application.

The Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):

a) **Cover Page** - (See Section D.3 above for requirements)

b) **SF 424 Form(s)**

The applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the SF-424 series. Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov or using these links:

Instructions for SF-424	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424A	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html
Budget Information (SF-424A)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424B	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html
Assurances (SF-424B)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html

Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application.

c) Required Certifications and Assurances

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with their application:

- iv)** “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient” document found at <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>
- v)** Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
- vi)** Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

d) Budget and Budget Narrative

The Budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and must be broken out by project year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time required to make an award, and may result in the cost application's rejection. The Budget Narrative must contain sufficient detail to allow USAID to understand the proposed costs. The applicant must ensure the budgeted costs address any additional requirements identified in Section F, such as Branding and Marking. The Budget Narrative (for prime and subrecipients) must be thorough, including sources to support USAID's determination that the proposed costs are fair and reasonable.

The Budget must include Summary and Detailed Budget worksheets or tabs, with contents below:

e) Summary Budget

The Summary Budget includes all program costs (federal and non-federal), for each major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the applicant and potential sub-applicants for the entire program period. Applicants must submit a summary and a detailed budget as follows (each proposed sub-award must include the same cost element break-down):

Summary Budget by Years						
Cost Elements	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
1. Salaries and allowances						
2. Fringe Benefits						

3. Travel, Transportation, and Per Diem						
4. Equipment and Supplies						
5. Sub-awards*						
6. Other Direct Costs						
7. Indirect Costs						
Estimated Cost (sum 1 to 7)						
8. Cost Share						
TOTAL AWARD BUDGET						

*Note: Individual sub-awards proposed must include the same cost element break-downs in their budget as applicable

- Detailed Budget, including a breakdown by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
- 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.

The Detailed Budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

- 1) Salaries and Allowances – Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. The applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.
- 2) Fringe Benefits – (if applicable) If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate is approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the Budget Narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g.,

superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

3) Travel and Transportation – Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant's normal travel policies. When appropriate please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative.

4) Equipment and supplies – Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The Budget Narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.

5) Sub-Awards – Any goods and services being procured through a subcontract mechanism.

The applicant should identify the activities to be implemented through sub grants. The Applicant shall describe its approach to, and how it will manage the competition and award of sub-awards in line with USAID best practices and the Guatemalan context.

6) Other Direct Costs – This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.

7) Indirect Costs – Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200.414. The application must identify which approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate methods:

Method 1 - Direct Charge Only

Eligibility: Any applicant

Initial Application Requirements: See above on direct costs

Method 2 - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

Eligibility: Any applicant with a NICRA issued by a USG Agency must use that NICRA

Initial Application Requirements: If the applicant has a current NICRA, submit your approved NICRA and the associated disclosed practices. If your NICRA was issued by an Agency other than USAID, provide the contact information for the approving Agency. Additionally, at the Agency's discretion, a provisional rate may be set forth in the award subject to audit and

finalization. See USAID's Indirect Cost Rate Guide for Non Profit Organizations for further guidance.

Method 3 - De Minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)

Eligibility: Any applicant that has never received a NICRA

Initial Application Requirements: Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate an indirect rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The applicant must describe which cost elements it charges indirectly vs. directly. See 2 CFR 200.414(f) for further information.

If the applicant does not have an approved NICRA and does not elect to utilize the 10% de minimis rate, the Agreement Officer will provide further instructions and may request additional supporting information, including financial statements and audits, should the application still be under consideration after the merit review. USAID is under no obligation to approve the applicant's requested method.

8) Cost Sharing – The applicant should estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources to be provided over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting award.

e) Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407

Inclusion of an item of cost in the detailed application budget does not satisfy any requirements for prior approval by the Agency. If the applicant would like the award to reflect approval of any cost elements for which prior written approval is specifically required for allowability, the applicant must specify and justify that cost. See 2 CFR 200.407 for information regarding which cost elements require prior written approval.

f) Approval of Subawards

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization
- DUNS Number
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred

- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.332(b)
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation.

g) Dun and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (DUNS number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid DUNS number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients;
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient (www.beta.sam.gov).
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

DUNS number: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM registration: <http://www.beta.sam.gov>

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on www.beta.sam.gov, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

h) History of Performance

The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed five years, as follows:

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;
- A brief description of the activity;
- Period of Performance;

- Award Amount;
- Reports and findings from any audits performed in the last three years; and
- Name of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information including telephone number, and e-mail address for each proposed individual.

If the applicant encountered problems on any of the referenced Awards, it may provide a short explanation and the corrective action taken. The applicant should not provide general information on its performance. USAID reserves the right to obtain relevant information concerning an applicant's history of performance from any sources and may consider such information in its review of the applicant's risk. The Agency may request additional information and conduct a pre-award survey if it determines that it is necessary to inform the risk assessment.

i) Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

The apparently successful applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer and incorporated into any resulting award. Annex 1 includes the template for the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan.

j) Funding Restrictions

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.331 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not be authorized under this award.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer.

Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.4 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

Procurements made on or after October 1, 2022 for covered telecommunications, will be unallowable in accordance with the standard provision "Allowable Costs" and 2 CFR 200.471, or the Standard Provision "Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment" for non-US recipients.

8. Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term (August 2018)

a. Personal Conflict of Interest

1. An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the

competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.

2. The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

b. Organizational Conflict of Interest

The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

Technical and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Technical Application Format. The Technical Application will be scored by a Selection Committee (SC) using the criteria described in this section.

2. Review and Selection Process

This is a multi-tiered RFA in accordance with ADS 303.3.6.1(c). Selection under this RFA will be based on a two-step process:

Phase 1 - Concept Paper submissions: open to all eligible organizations as described in this RFA.

Phase 2 - Full application submissions and oral presentations: by invitation only to applicants selected under Phase 1 evaluation.

Applicants must first submit a concept paper for review. All concept papers will be evaluated according to the criteria specified in this RFA. If the concept is determined to warrant further evaluation per the selection criteria established, USAID will request a full application.

a) Merit Review

Phase 1 - Concept Paper **Open to all eligible organizations as described in this RFA**

USAID will use a streamlined process to evaluate the concept papers. The concept papers will be evaluated using the following three selection criteria:

1. Technical approach
2. Partnerships
3. Past experience

Each criterion will be evaluated using a pass/fail rating.

Once the submitted concept papers have been fully reviewed, the selected Applicant(s) will be notified by the Agreement Officer of their status and the steps for submission of the Full Application.

Phase 2 - Full Application

Open only to organizations selected in Phase 1

USAID will conduct a merit review of the applications received that comply with the instructions in this RFA. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria shown in descending order of importance:

CRITERION	CRITERION NAME
Criterion 1	Technical Approach
Criterion 2	Management and Staffing Plan

Criterion 1 - Technical Approach (60 points)

The Technical Approach will be evaluated based on the extent to which the application:

- Demonstrates an understanding of the key needs, barriers, and opportunities to sustainably improve the desired outcomes outlined in the PD.
- Clearly articulates a theory of change that is logical and provides clear causal linkages for sustainably addressing challenges in the system and achieving the Intermediate Results and Activity Results outlined in the PD.
- Clearly articulates an implementation plan that is viable and feasible, informed by evidence and the local context, and incorporates universal design for learning principles to improve the desired outcomes for all learners in the target areas inclusive of marginalized and vulnerable populations.
- Clearly articulates a sustainability and partnership plan that is realistic, ensures that the program results can be sustained after completion of the Activity, and meaningfully incorporates key local partners and alliances.
- Includes a MEL Plan that reflects realistic, applicable indicators and targets, a robust data collection methodology, and incorporates CLA.

Criterion 2 - Management and Staffing Plan (40 points)

The Management and Staffing Plan will be evaluated based on the extent to which the application:

- Includes an organizational chart that shows logical and appropriate links between key staff and non-key staff and relationships among any proposed partner organizations (if the applicant proposed sub-awardees).
- Proposes a labor mix of Key Personnel that fits the technical approach and is able to successfully carry out activities and tasks within reasonable requested timeframes and achieve the objectives outlined in the PD.
- Clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities for Key Personnel, communication arrangements with USAID and country offices among themselves (including specific function, management, and decision making authorities), and the roles and responsibilities of any partner organizations, and provides a realistic approach and timeframe for start up. This includes providing a clear explanation of any sub-awardee's organizational capacity and expertise relative to its role in the project.
- Includes a clear description of the key positions necessary to achieve the expected results, demonstrating a balance between technical and managerial areas as well as local and regional experts to comply with the activities described in the PD.

b) Business Review

The Agency will evaluate the cost application of the applicant(s) under consideration for an award as a result of the merit criteria review to determine whether the costs are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

The Agency will also consider (1) the extent of the applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested; (2) whether the applicant's plans will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency; and (3) whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

Proposed cost share, if provided, will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

The AO will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.206). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.208).

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award.

Following the selection for award and successful negotiations, the successful Applicant will receive an electronic copy of the notice of the award signed by the Agreement Officer which serves as the authorizing document. The Agreement Officer will only do so after making a positive responsibility determination that the Applicant possesses, or has the ability to obtain, the necessary management competence in planning and carrying out assistance programs and that it will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID.

USAID will follow the guidelines of ADS 303.3.7.2 to provide additional information for unsuccessful Applicants.

2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations.

For US organizations: [ADS 303](#), [2 CFR 700](#), [2 CFR 200](#), and [Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental organizations](#).

For Non US organizations: [Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations](#).

See Annex 2, for a list of the Standard Provisions that will be applicable to any awards resulting from this NOFO.

3. Reporting Requirements

All Plans and Reports shall be submitted in English. The quarterly, annual/semi-annual, and final reports shall be submitted in English with an Executive Summary in English and Spanish unless otherwise specified. Documents shall be submitted by email (one version in the original software program and one version in PDF). All reports will be submitted to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) with copy to the Agreement Officer and the Acquisition and Assistance Specialist.

Financial Reporting

A. Quarterly Financial Reports

The Recipient will submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) on a quarterly basis via electronic format.

Electronic copies of the SF-425 can be found at: <https://www.usaid.gov/forms/sf-425>.

The financial reports are due 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter on October 30, January 30, April 30, and July 30.

B. Quarterly Accrual Reports

The Recipient shall submit an estimated accrual report including the following information: (i) agreement number; (ii) recipient's name; (iii) total amount obligated; (iv) total amount invoiced for; (v) total amount expended but not yet invoiced for; (vi) remaining unexpended funds; (vii) estimated completion date; and (viii) any pertinent information, such as analysis, projections for the next quarter, a summary showing planned expenditures against current obligations. The accruals report shall be presented in English to the AOR and other designated administrative staff, on a quarterly basis (15 days prior to the close of each fiscal year quarter) in the format to be provided to the Recipient upon award signature.

Technical Reporting

A. Annual Work Plan

Within 45 days of award of the CA, the Recipient will submit for USAID AOR approval its detailed Strategic Work Plan covering the period of one calendar year from award date. In subsequent years, the recipient must submit the annual work plan by May 1st. The Plan shall include a description of activities, timelines and budgets, and will identify any start up activities required, as well as critical paths and milestones for the period of the agreement. The Recipient shall include in the Work Plan all results and activities described in the Program Description and the Environmental Mitigation Measures applicable. The budget shall be developed by line item, country and results.

The Annual Work Plans must include:

- Proposed accomplishments for the fiscal year, and expected progress toward achieving the CA results that are linked to the Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan.
- Timeline for implementation of the year's proposed activities, including target completion dates.
- Information on how activities will be implemented.
- Analysis of possible obstacles hindering achievement of objectives.
- Target Setting: The recipient will work collaboratively with the AOR to set annual activity targets that will contribute to reaching strategic plans. Annual targets will also contribute to global targets as set out by the Annual Performance Plan and Report. Initial activity

target setting will be informed by existing and activity baseline data that should be available within 30 days of activity start-up. Annual targets must also be established for each indicator and presented to the USAID/Guatemala AOR.

- Detailed budget by line item and countries. Beginning in year 2, the Annual Work Plan must show planned expenditures by quarterly and actual expenditures to date.
- Activity Fact Sheet or Activity Profile, in Spanish and English, that summarizes pertinent information regarding the activities developed in Central America that can be used for preparing media kits and for disseminating to interested stakeholders.
- A description of any information, communication, education, and training materials planned.
- Proposed events, including planned local and international training events, expected results.
- A description of the use of other sources of funds (when applicable) that shall be submitted in a separate section of the Annual Work Plan (and reports) in order to facilitate tracking.

B. Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan

Within 60 days of award, the Recipient shall submit in electronic version to USAID/Guatemala a Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP) for the time frame of the activity. The AMELP will include:

- a. **A monitoring plan** to measure and assess activity results with appropriate indicators for each level of the results framework.
- b. **A strategic evaluation and learning agenda**, i.e., a set of questions which the program intends to answer via systematic research methods. Because USAID may intend to separately procure an independent impact evaluation of this award, recipients should focus their evaluation agenda on more formative and process evaluation questions and situational or needs assessments. Such internal evaluations (conducted by the awardee) are subject to review and approval by USAID.
- c. **A collaboration, learning, and adaptation (CLA) approach** to partner with key stakeholders, learn from the Activity's implementation, inform adaptive management and address any issues in the theory of change, and contribute to reporting.

Monitoring Plan

Upon award, the recipient shall work with the USAID/Guatemala Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) on the monitoring plan (MP) portion of the AMELP to ensure that indicators are aligned with the Mission's development objectives, the Activity's results framework, and the Activity's proposed theory of change. The Recipient will also consult with other relevant implementing partners and counterparts in developing the final MP. MP indicators will contribute to USAID reporting, as well as reporting for other Presidential initiatives. Please

refer to the USAID Education Reporting Guidance³² for updated 2020 Compendium of Standard and Supplemental performance indicator reference sheets (PIRS). The plan should use the USAID Standard and Supplemental indicators, but it may go beyond them to also include relevant custom indicators if custom indicators would be more responsive to activity interventions and desired outcomes.

USAID requires that all performance measures be part of a coherent system that will objectively assess the overall progress of activities with the ultimate goal of achieving the expected results outlined in the Program Description. Where relevant, the MP should enable tracking of higher-level outcomes.

The MP should include indicators, baselines and targets relevant to activity-level management and monitoring, which clearly support achievement of USAID/Guatemala goals and targets. The recipient shall develop a strong data collection system, which includes adequate data quality controls and complies with all USAID data quality requirements, ADS 201.3.5. Each indicator in the final MP will have a performance indicator reference sheet that provides detailed descriptions of the indicator, numerator and denominator where percent measures are used, and a data collection plan. Where appropriate, MP baselines should draw on results from USAID's previous projects as well as other studies and surveys. The following is a list of illustrative indicators for consideration in the MP:

Result	Illustrative indicator(s)
Activity Result 1: Reading, writing, math, SEL outcomes for all learners in primary school and <i>primero básico</i> in target areas improved	● Supp-2: Percent of learners targeted for USG assistance with an increase of at least one proficiency level in reading at the end of primary ● Supp-6: Percent of learners with an increase of at least one proficiency level in math at the end of primary with USG assistance ● Supp-9: Percent of learners with improved social and emotional skills, as locally defined, following participation in USG-assisted programs
Activity Result 2: Rate of student transition from the final grade of primary school to <i>primero básico</i> of all learners in target areas increased	● Custom: Percent of learners targeted for USG assistance transitioning from the final grade of primary school to <i>primero básico</i>

³² USAID Education Reporting Guidance
<https://www.edu-links.org/resources/USAID-Education-Reporting-Guidance>

Activity Result 3: Local subrecipient(s) capacity to implement and sustain key components of the Activity strengthened	● CBLD-9: Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance
Intermediate Result (IR) 1: In-person and remote foundational skills instruction for all learners in primary school and primero básico in target areas improved	● Supp-10: Percent of teachers providing quality classroom instruction with USG support
IR 2: School management systems for student enrollment, attendance, transition, and learning in target areas strengthened	● Supp-16: Education system strengthened - data systems ● Supp-15: Education system strengthened - policy reform
IR 3: Community and family engagement in foundational skills practice and transition for all learners in target areas increased	● Custom: Percent of parents or caregivers targeted for USG assistance who have engaged learners in foundational skills practice outside of school ● Custom: Percent of parents or caregivers targeted for USG assistance who have engaged learners in transitioning from primary to lower secondary school.
IR 4: Organizational and technical capacities of local subrecipient(s) to support key component(s) of the Activity strengthened	● CBLD-9: Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance
Overall	● ES.1-3 Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance ● ES.1-4 Number of learners in secondary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance

Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) for USAID education standard and supplemental indicators can be found in the links embedded in the table above. For custom indicators, the recipient must provide PIRS.

The MP shall specify approximate dates for data collection, the method, type, and source of information to be collected, and shall report on these indicators in line with existing and future USG guidance. Intervals for data collection must be no less frequent than annually nor more frequent than quarterly except in unusual circumstances, for example where more frequent

reporting is necessary for the effective monitoring of the Federal award or could significantly affect program outcomes.

The MP should also present measures and approaches through which outcomes of capacity building and coordination activities can be measured and verified. USAID expects the recipient to be innovative and creative in capturing, documenting, and reporting on its monitoring indicators.

The Recipient must define a baseline either based on previous activities or from measurements in the first year of the activity. The MP should also include the Recipient's goals proposed to each year and the end of this agreement. Once approved, this plan will provide the basis for the implementing organization's progress reporting throughout the life of this agreement.

The Recipient must inform USAID as soon as the following types of conditions become known:

(1) Problems, delays, or adverse conditions which will materially impair the ability to meet the objectives of the award. This disclosure must include a statement of the action taken, or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.

(2) Favorable developments which enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Strategic Evaluation and Learning Agenda

As noted in the Program Description, an initial task within the first four months of the Activity will be to conduct and submit a report on a foundational skills landscape assessment for in-person and remote education aligned to the components of the USAID Reading MATTERS Framework to identify strengths, opportunities, and challenges in reading, writing, math, and SEL outcomes for the target populations in the target areas of the Activity. This initial assessment is key to understanding needs especially in light of the lack of engagement many learners in rural Guatemala have had with the education system during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the assessment will help inform and refine the Strategic Evaluation and Learning Agenda within the AMELP. The Activity will work with USAID Guatemala to define the questions and objectives of the assessment.

The project is encouraged to create a list of evaluation and learning questions that should be answered to ensure successful implementation – e.g., questions about causal linkages in the proposed theory of change, questions about national needs, perceptions of the project, barriers to achieving targeted outcomes, piloting of tools, etc. The list of evaluation and learning questions should be refined by the results of the foundational skills landscape assessment that is to be submitted within the first four months of the Activity. Any piloting of approaches should consider using a rapid feedback monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning approach (RF MERL).³³

³³ USAID RF MERL fact sheet

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/15396/RAPID_Factsheets_2019.pdf

Data generated by the plan will be used to design and modify programmatic approaches to improve impact, in consultation with USAID. The project should carry out formative research on priority groups of interest, including potentially generating stigma and discrimination data on these populations, Sustainability Index and other contextual and economic analysis to feed into intervention design.

CLA Approach

The AMELP is expected to incorporate a systematic CLA approach that involves strategic collaboration, continuous learning, and adaptive management. The CLA approach is based on the understanding that development efforts yield more effective results when coordinated and collaborative; test promising, new approaches in a continuous manner to identify improvements and efficiencies; and build on what works and eliminate what does not. The CLA Approach must include quarterly pause and reflect sessions to learn from implementation, inform adaptive management and address any issues in the theory of change, and contribute to reporting. The quarterly pause and reflect sessions should coincide with the submission of the quarterly performance reports. The first pause and reflect session of the Activity should consider the findings of the initial foundational skills landscape assessment.

C. Security Plan

The Recipient must submit a detailed Security Plan within 45 days of award of the Cooperative Agreement that describes the Recipient's plan to safeguard all project operations. The plan is to be implemented and maintained by all sub-awardees as well. The Recipient will share the security plan with the Agreement Officer, AOR and Partner Security Liaison Advisor, but it will not be approved by USAID personnel. The plan will include the following:

- i. Procedures for reporting and addressing security threats;
- ii. Procedures for reporting any deaths related to the project;
- iii. Procedures for reporting and addressing any persons missing or kidnapping incidents;
- iv. Name and contact information of security contact person for the head office and regional office(s);
- v. An internal cascade list for communicating with staff to be updated and maintained by the Recipient.

The Recipient must provide the name, address, and telephone numbers of the Chief of Party and their designee to USAID as principal contacts in case of security situations/emergencies. Recipients are responsible for sharing information with their staff.

D. Quarterly Performance Reports

Thirty (30) calendar days after the end of each quarter, on January 30, April 30, July 30, the Recipient will be required to provide quarterly performance reports to describe activities

undertaken during the quarter, report on progress made toward achieving results, and make necessary adjustments for activities, timelines, etc. that will be undertaken in the next quarter. As noted under the section on the CLA Approach above, a quarterly pause and reflect session should coincide with the submission of the quarterly performance reports. The report from the last quarterly (October 30) will be combined with the Annual Report described above.

The reports must discuss any implementation problems and describe the corrective actions taken and the costs associated with the delay. As part of each quarterly report, the Recipient shall submit a list of all in-country training events performed during the reporting period. This report shall include at a minimum: name of the training program, field of study, relationship to the objectives of this instrument, start and end dates, estimated cost (USAID's cost and partner's cost disaggregated by instruction, trainee, and travel) and number of male and female participants. U.S. and third country training information shall also be included in each quarterly report.

The Recipient is required to provide quarterly data for the required Performance Indicators, using the PMP matrix and Data for Accountability. This results matrix with the indicator report must be submitted as an annex to the quarterly reports.

The report must include a list of all documentation uploaded to the DEC during the quarterly reporting period Thirty (30) days after the end of each quarter, on January 30, April 30 (See below the Semi-annual Report), and July 30. The reports must include financial information on the expense incurred, available funding for the remainder of the activity and any variances from planned expenditures.

The quarterly reports should include the status of the transition award.

E. Annual Performance Reports (APR)

i. Yearly, USAID requires the recipient to prepare and submit performance reports reflecting more detailed data on achievements and targets. The AOR will receive a narrative report describing the achievement of targets, and for selected indicators the data will be entered into a selected platform. Due dates for these reports are on or about October 31. Based on the AMELP to be developed by the Recipient in collaboration with USAID, the Recipient shall submit an updated report on progress towards agreed targets and indicators six months after each Annual Report. The report should at minimum include the following: a) explanation of quantifiable output of the programs or projects supported; b) reasons why established goals and objectives were not met, if appropriate; c) cost reporting that follows the Cost Reporting Guidance for

USAID-Funded Education Activities³⁴ and an analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs; and d) information on all awards made to sub-partners. The Recipient must immediately notify USAID of developments that have a significant impact on award-supported activities. Further, notification must include a statement of the action taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.

Cost Reporting. As noted in the previous paragraph, the APR must include a section on cost reporting. The cost reporting section of the APRs must comply with the cost data collection and reporting as outlined in USAID's Cost Reporting [Guidance](#) and [Annexes](#). In collaboration with USAID, the Recipient will select from the list of categories found in the USAID Cost Reporting Guidance to create cost codes relevant for the activity and aligned with cost analysis questions of interest to USAID Mission, Partner Government and/or the Recipient. Sub-codes for non-recurrent costs (creation of the intervention) and recurrent costs (implementation of the intervention) for categories with substantial non-recurrent costs must be included. The USAID Cost Reporting Guidance provides a list of additional optional sub-codes.

The cost data noted above must be collected on a continual basis by the Awardee following standard procedures, to ensure that the entirety of activity expenditure is captured. The Recipient must document details of the cost reporting system in a Cost Reporting Manual, to be submitted to USAID by the end of the first quarter of the Award. The Awardee must deliver a cost report and supporting data in Excel format following standard financial reporting format according to the schedule specified in the agreement, with additional disaggregation by agreed-upon standard cost categories. The report must include disaggregated expenditure for the reporting period, with the standard financial reporting categories (labor with local and international reported separately, fringe, materials procured, rent, travel, and overhead recovery) for each cost category. The report must indicate which expenditure was incurred through a sub-award to another organization as well as local versus international expenditure.

Additionally, the Recipient also must document and report a) details of the intervention, both as outputs and the dosage at the beneficiary level, and b) activity-critical inputs from other sources, following templates in the Cost Reporting Guidance. Activity-critical inputs from other sources may include donated resources such as volunteer time, in-kind equipment/ infrastructure and services, and any beneficiary/stakeholder inputs and other unpaid inputs that are often not accounted for in traditional budgets. The USAID Cost Reporting Guidance provides information and templates for capturing these data. The Recipient is not responsible for monetizing these inputs, unless this information is readily available. The Recipient must follow templates in the Cost Reporting Guidance.

³⁴ Cost Reporting Guidance for USAID-Funded Education Activities
<https://www.edu-links.org/sites/default/files/media/file/USAID%20Cost%20Reporting%20Guidance%202018%20FINAL%20%281%29.pdf>

ii. The fourth quarterly report shall also serve as the Annual Performance Report and shall be submitted on October 30. The annual report should also consolidate data from the previous quarterly reports in order to present annual totals for the numerical targets. The Annual Reports shall include success stories for publication. The Annual Report should also focus on accomplishments, progress and problems toward achievement of results, performance measures, indicators and benchmarks, tied to the Annual Work Plan and the Performance Monitoring Plan targets, for the quarter and the entire previous fiscal year.

iii. The Recipient will maintain a consolidated database that tracks sub-awardee performance, as applicable. Performance data shall be in accordance with the standard indicators that USAID is required to report on. In addition, performance data should meet reasonable standards of validity, reliability, timeliness, precision, and integrity.

F. Final Performance Report

The Recipient must submit a draft Final Performance Report within 60 days of the expiration of this Agreement. USAID will provide comments within 15 days. The Final Report will be due 60 days after expiration of the agreement.

The final report will highlight major successes achieved during the entire period of performance with reference to established targets, and should also discuss any shortcomings and/or difficulties encountered. An additional function of this report is to outline lessons learned and make recommendations for any future activity. The Recipient shall submit an electronic copy and two print copies of this report to the USAID/Guatemala AOR in English and an additional copy to the Development Experience Clearinghouse through electronic means.

G. Close-Out/Demobilization Plan

Six months prior to the completion date of the Cooperative Agreement, a close-out/demobilization plan, including the proposed disposition of equipment, including vehicles, must be submitted to the USAID Agreement Officer for approval with copy to the AOR. The close-out plan shall include a list of actions that are typically required for close-out activities such as: ensuring that all program activities are completed; conducting an analysis of progress to date and, if necessary, expediting timelines to ensure completion; conducting a thorough pipeline analysis to ensure that there are sufficient funds available to finalize activities and complete all requirements; ensuring that all reports are submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement; ensuring that all subcontracts and/or sub-awards are completed and payments settled, if applicable. The recipient must submit a final inventory of all residual non-expendable

property that was acquired or furnished by the Government under the Cooperative Agreement and request disposition instructions for any property acquired or furnished by the Government under the program. Particular care should be taken regarding vehicles, since their legal transfer may require a special procedure that would need to be completed before the completion date of the award.

4. Program Income

No program income is anticipated under the resulting award of this NOFO.

5. Environmental Compliance

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-200>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. Applicant environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this RFA.

In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

No activity funded under this Cooperative Agreement will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), or Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) No. LAC-IEE-21-93 (See Annex 3) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as "approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.").

As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the contractor/recipient, in collaboration with the USAID AOR and MEO, REA or BEO, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this Cooperative Agreement to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

If the recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, if the life of activity funding ceiling will be eclipsed, or if a time extension is required, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

6. Management of sub-awards

The recipient will establish a cost-effective system for awarding and managing sub-awards that is designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the project activities. The approach should include efficient procedures for identifying and approving sub-award applications.

The Agreements Officer must approve the sub award manual and all sub-awards. All sub-awards must comply in all material respects with USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 303, as well as the Code of Federal Regulations 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700. The sub grants manual should be sent for approval 60 days after the signature of the Cooperative Agreement.

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

1. NOFO Points of Contact

The point of contact for this RFA and any questions during the award process is as follows:

Fabiola Loy
Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
email: guatemalaproposals@usaid.gov

2. Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID's acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistance-ombudsman>

The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

1. Applications with Proprietary Data

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

“This application includes data that must not be disclosed, duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government’s right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers}.”

Additionally, the applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

“Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application.”

2. Recipient’s Staff Support, Administrative and Logistics Arrangements and Legal Registration in the Cooperating Country

The Recipient will be responsible for all administrative support and logistics required to fulfill the requirements of this Agreement. These include all travel arrangements, appointment scheduling, secretarial services, report preparations services, printing, and duplicating.

In addition, the Recipient is responsible to comply with all applicable local laws regarding fringe benefits for its local employees, local business operations, including but not limited to the registration of its offices in the local country, etc.

Adherence to IVA program is a requirement for the prime recipient and for any sub-awardees; exemption procedures will be provided to the Recipient soon after award. Use of EXENIVA form is authorized only for official project related procurement.

Use of IVA exemption form is authorized for project related procurement. USAID will support the customs clearance of official project vehicles. These vehicles will be cleared free of duty and IVA and will be given MI license plates.

The recipient will appoint two individuals to be trained and provided access to EXENIVA. The names of the appointed persons will be provided to the AOR.

3. Electronic Payment System: Definitions:

“Cash Payment System” means a payment system that generates any transfer of funds through a transaction originated by cash, check, or similar paper instrument. This includes electronic payments to a financial institution or clearing house that subsequently issues cash, check, or similar paper instrument to the designated payee.

“Electronic Payment System” means a payment system that generates any transfer of funds, other than a transaction originated by cash, check, or similar paper instrument, that is initiated through an electronic terminal, telephone, mobile phone, computer, or magnetic tape, for the purpose of ordering, instructing or authorizing a financial institution to debit or credit an account. The term includes debit cards, wire transfers, transfers made at automatic teller machines, and point-of-sale terminals.

The recipient agrees to use an electronic payment system for any payments under this award to beneficiaries, sub recipients, or contractors.

Exceptions. Recipients are allowed the following exceptions, provided the recipient documents its files with the appropriate justification:

Cash payments made while establishing electronic payment systems, provided that this exception is not used for more than six months from the effective date of this award.

Cash payments made to payees where the recipient does not expect to make payments to the same payee on a regular, recurring basis, and payment through an electronic payment system is not reasonably available.

Cash payments to vendors below \$3000, when payment through an electronic payment system is not reasonably available.

The Recipient has received a written exception from the Agreement Officer that a specific payment or all cash payments are authorized based on the Recipient’s written justification, which provides a basis and cost analysis for the requested exception.

More information about how to establish, implement, and manage electronic payment methods is available to recipients at <http://solutionscenter.nethope.org/programs/c2e-toolkit>.

4. Special Award Requirement Relating to the Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (November 2020)

USAID has been granted a temporary waiver under Section 889(d)(2) that will allow the recipient to use award funds through September 30, 2022, to procure certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment as specified in the standard provision “Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (AUGUST 2020).” Based on this waiver, all costs incurred for covered telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment will be allowable through September 30, 2022, without regard to the standard provision “Allowable Costs” and the cost principle at 2 CFR 200.471. Procurements made on or after October 1, 2022, will be unallowable in accordance with the standard provision “Allowable Costs” and 2 CFR 200.471, or the Standard Provision “Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment” for non-US recipients.

5. Transition Award

Transition Awards are designed exclusively for work with local partners, thus promoting local and direct engagement, and ensuring the sustainability of an activity. The recipient is expected to provide a sub-award (s) to a local organization(s) who may become eligible for a direct award (also known as “Transition Award”) from USAID.

The initial award Recipient is required to focus activity resources on building the capacity of this local organization(s); the goal of which is to allow them to eventually receive direct awards from USAID Missions.

USAID may make an award without competition to the local organization if that organization meets the “Criteria for the initial award recipient to identify and qualify a sub-recipient for a direct award” in accordance with ADS 303.3.6.5(d).

In order to qualify, they must demonstrate sufficient capacity, particularly in terms of legal, administrative and financial management to receive direct funding from USAID.

Criteria for the prime recipient to identify and qualify a sub-recipient for a direct award

The applicant will furnish a sub-award(s) to the local organization(s) and also work to build its technical, legal, managerial, and financial capacity to lead as prime in future USAID funded awards.

The applicant will work with the local organization(s) to ultimately prepare it for a Non-U.S. Organization Pre-award Survey (NUPAS) or a similar detailed analysis in accordance with ADS 303.3.9.1(b) that achieves the same objectives as the NUPAS. In addition, when a NUPAS or similar analysis is conducted, the applicant, in consultation with USAID, may be asked to provide assistance to the local organization(s) to rectify deficiencies identified in the NUPAS or similar analysis mentioned above to ensure compliance with USAID regulations and policies.

To qualify for a direct award and be eligible to receive USAID funding, local organizations must have:

- Met all the requirements of the ADS 303 definitions of local organization as follows:
Local entity means an individual, a corporation, a nonprofit organization, or another body of persons that:
(1) is legally organized under the laws of Guatemala;
(2) has as its principal place of business or operations in Guatemala;
(3) is majority owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Guatemala; and
(4) managed by a governing body the majority of who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of a country receiving assistance.

For purposes of this section, “majority-owned” and “-managed by” include, without limitation, beneficiary interests and the power, either directly or indirectly, whether exercised or exercisable, to control the election, appointment, or tenure of the organization's managers or a majority of the organization's governing body by any means.

- Active status on the System for Award Management (SAM), and no exclusions on the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) website or UN Sanctions List.
- Technical and management experience in the relevant fields
- Consistent access to and capacity to use minimum necessary infrastructure (office, internet access, electricity, etc.), and hardware and software (computer equipment and professional/statistics/visualization, software packages, etc.) to perform tasks related to the objectives of the direct award.
- Working relationships and active engagement with host country governments, multilateral, and USG agencies.
- Well-defined indicators of success and description of how it intends to monitor its own program performance in a cost-effective and efficient manner, including the sources of data used for this performance monitoring.
- Staffing capacity with an appropriate balance of skills and staffing management plan which optimizes efficiency, and demonstrates how the proposed staffing configuration will enable the local sub-recipient to accomplish the desired result; and the extent to which the overall staffing plan fosters local ownership and utilizes local capacity.
- Proficient financial management and internal control systems (e.g. banking accounts, bookkeeping system, financial statements, an accounting cycle, sources of funding, financial reporting, audit and review of financial statements).
- Ability to manage USG funds responsibly and efficiently.
- Capacity to meet USG program and financial reporting requirements.

The status of the transition award must be reported in each Quarterly Performance Report.

Procedures for making the direct award

USAID/Guatemala will issue direct awards based on the availability of funding and evaluated needs, as well as the readiness of the local partner(s) to perform the required work.

By the end of year 3 of the Cooperative Agreement, the recipient will inform USAID of the local organization's documented level of improvement and the considerations for the suitability to be considered an applicant for the transition award. Upon receipt of the information, USAID will determine the need to perform a NUPAS to the proposed local organizations.

ANNEX 1 - TEMPLATE - BRANDING STRATEGY AND MARKING PLAN



BRANDING AND MARKING GUIDANCE AND TEMPLATE FOR ASSISTANCE AWARDS

1. GUIDANCE

USAID's policy is that programs, projects, activities, public communications, or commodities implemented or delivered under co-funded instruments – such as grants, cooperative agreements, or other assistance awards that usually require a cost share – generally are “co-branded and co-marked.” This policy applies to assistance awards even when the award does not require any cost sharing.

Co-branding and co-marking means that the program name represents both USAID and the implementing partner, and the USAID identity and implementer's logo must both be visible with equal size and prominence on program materials produced for program purposes. However, the AO, after consulting with the activity manager/requesting office, may determine that activity goals require that the USAID Identity be larger and more prominent, if USAID is the majority donor and the USAID funded activity or public communication is especially visible and important to USAID.

A host-country symbol or ministry logo or other U.S. Government seal or logo may also be added, if applicable.

Marking is not required for recipient's offices, vehicles, and items the recipient procures for its own administrative use. The prohibitions on use of the USAID Standard Graphic Identity (see **320.3.1.5** and **320.3.1.6**) apply by USAID policy to recipients of grants and cooperative agreements.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This sample/template is based on ADS 320.3.3 and 2 CFR 700.16 and has the branding and marking requirements for assistance awards only. **The recipient, by responding to the questions in *italics*, will be able to substantially comply with the ADS and CFR requirements.**

When preparing these documents use the following guidance:

- USAID identity must follow guidance laid out in the USAID Graphic Standards Manual
- No recipient logos
- No acronyms
- Do not use other competing identities (unless granted an exception by the appropriate USAID officer.)
- Include the word “Project” at the end of the name of the activity
- Do not use add a slash after USAID to add the project name, it is reserved for MIssions, such as USAID/Guatemala.
- Do not use project names that look like a brand

key/legend: To be completed by the partner

2. TEMPLATE

"USAID BRANDING STRATEGY"

AWARD TITLE

AWARD NUMBER

DATE OF PLAN

1) Program Name

[Name] (Follow guidelines in March 16, 2016 USAID Graphic Standards Manual and Partner Co-branding Guide, Section 4 entitled Grants, Cooperative Agreements & Assistance <https://www.usaid.gov/branding/gsm>).

Identify activity name in English and host-country language(s).

- 2) **Desired level of visibility:** Select high, medium or low visibility determined by considerations for each activity and its communication strategy.

3) Positioning

This section discusses how to publicize the program, visibility considerations, and includes a description of the communications tools to be used.

The Recipient may use co-branding and co-marking in accordance with ADS 320.3.3.1 for visual, textual and verbal materials and communications, which may be translated into host-country languages as appropriate. Presumptive exceptions will be outlined in the Marking Plan and if/when a situation arises that is not considered in the Marking Plan, it will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and Agreement Officer (AO).

- No logos must be developed for this project.

4) Program Communications and Publicity

- Who are the primary and secondary audiences for this activity?
- What communications or activity materials will be used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries?
- What is the main activity message?
- Will the recipient announce and promote publicly this activity to host country citizens? If yes, what press and promotional events are planned?
- Please provide any additional ideas about how to increase awareness that the American people support this activity.

5) Key milestones and opportunities

The following key milestones are anticipated to generate awareness that the program is from the American people. These milestones may be linked to specific points in time, such as at the beginning or end of a program, or to an opportunity to showcase reports or other materials (consult ADS 320 and 2 CFR 700). These include, but are not limited to:

- training events,
- publishing reports,
- highlighting success stories,
- promoting final or interim reports, and
- communicating program impact/overall results
- speaking engagements, including in communities.

6) Acknowledgements

- Will there be any direct involvement from a host country government ministry? If yes, please indicate which one or ones. Will the recipient acknowledge the ministry as an additional co-sponsor?

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

USAID's policy requires non-U.S., non-governmental organizations, including cooperating country non-governmental organizations (and in rare cases, Public International Organizations) to follow marking requirements for assistance awards. Marking requirements, including requests for presumptive exceptions and waivers for assistance awards must be in accordance with 2 CFR 700.16(h).

With reference to ADS Sections 320.3.3.2 and 2 CFR 700.16, the Recipient shall prepare a Marking Plan containing information substantially similar to the sample provided below:

"USAID MARKING PLAN"

AWARD TITLE

AWARD NUMBER

Marking Plan for the [Name] Activity

With reference to ADS 320.3.3 and 2 CFR 700, below is the required Marking Plan:

1.0 MARKING

1.1 MARKING PLAN

Table 1 outlines the types of materials and activities that may be produced under the USAID [Name] Activity. Any materials and activities that are not anticipated below, but are produced under the initiative, will also be subject to branding guidelines and AO approval, as appropriate. The goal is to mark activities, and not implementing partners.

All materials, activities and deliverables marked with the USAID logo for the [Name] Activity will follow design guidance for color, type, and layout in the USAID Graphic Standards Manual and Partner Co-Branding Guide (March 2016) as related to equipment, reports, studies, events, and public communication (including printed products, audio, visual, and electronic materials), etc. The USAID logo will be used for programmatic correspondence. Recipient's letterhead will be used for administrative correspondence and will not have the USAID logo. Business cards will not show the USAID logo but may use text: USAID Recipient.

After award and prior to printing, please provide graphic examples of visual marking of materials, activities and deliverables using the USAID logo and activity name in situations of co-branding and no-branding, in both English and Spanish.

There are two criteria used to determine when the disclaimer provision must be used:

- As per 2 CFR 700.16(c) (1) Studies, reports, publications, Websites, and all informational and promotional products not authored, reviewed, or edited by USAID; and
- As per the discretion of the AOR and Recipient's consideration of a specific situation.

However, AOR should review and approve all public communication materials where USAID logo is used.

The provision is as follows in English and Spanish:

This study/report/Website/video (specify) is made possible by the generous support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this (specify) are the sole responsibility of (name of organization) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Este estudio/reporte/sitio web/video fue posible gracias al apoyo generoso del pueblo de los Estados Unidos, a través de la Agencia de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional (USAID). El contenido de este estudio/reporte/sitio web/video es responsabilidad de (nombre de la organización) y no necesariamente refleja el punto de vista de USAID o del gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Sub-recipient: As specified in the standard provisions, the marking requirements will “flow down” to sub-recipients or sub-awards, and will include the USAID-approved marking provision in all USAID funded sub-awards, as follows: “As a condition of receipt of this sub-award, marking with USAID identity of a size and prominence equivalent to or greater than the recipient's, sub-recipient's, other donor's or third party's is required.”

TABLE 1. MARKING PLAN FOR MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES (illustrative examples only)

Follow the guidelines contained in the USAID Graphic Standards Manual and Partner Co-Branding Guide (March 2016).

Category/Material	Type of Marking	Visual, Verbal, Textual Disclaimer
Administrative		
Activity related stationery products	The USAID logo will be used.	Visual Textual
Contract Deliverables: documents, publications, studies, reports, papers, technical assistance consultant reports	Follow guidelines for exclusive marking. Use specific language for deliverables when submitted to USAID for review.	Visual Textual
Program Communication		

Technical reports, publications, documents, studies	The USAID logo will appear on the cover; design follows guidelines for exclusive branding unless co-branding is acceptable or an exemption is provided for no branding.	Visual Textual — Consider Disclaimer
Training materials, manuals and sessions	The USAID logo will appear on the cover of documents and verbal branding will be used at training sessions; design follows guidelines for exclusive branding unless co-branding or an exception for no marking is indicated.	Visual, Textual, Verbal — Consider Disclaimer for Visual & Textual
Audiovisual: Video, CDs-ROM, Animated Infographics	The USAID logo will be printed on CD labels, splash screen/menus, and packaging; design follows guidelines for exclusive branding unless co-branding or an exemption is indicated for no marking.	Visual
PowerPoint presentations	The USAID logo is required as per USAID presentation template; design follows guidelines for the exclusive branding unless co-branding is acceptable or an exemption for no branding is indicated. Templates available at www.usaid.gov/branding/resources	Visual
Posters, banners, exhibition booth signs, event signage	The USAID logo will appear on the material; design follows guidelines for exclusive branding unless co-branding or an exemption for no branding is indicated.	Visual
Program public awareness, advocacy and behavior change materials and activities	The USAID logo will appear on each material based on the purpose and type of material, target audience and how to be used. Design follows guidelines for exclusive branding unless co-branding or an exemption for no branding is indicated.	Visual, Textual or Verbal
Web portal and social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, blogs, others)	Follow guidelines in ADS 558 for appropriate branding and marking.	Visual Textual

Institutional Communication		
Photographs, Infographics	The USAID logo or “USAID” in text will appear on the material; design follows guidelines for exclusive branding unless co-branding or an exemption for no branding is indicated.	Visual Textual — Consider Disclaimer on Infographics
Collateral, print information material (i.e., success stories, fact sheets, articles, feature stories, others)	The USAID logo will appear on printed materials; design follows guidelines for exclusive branding.	Visual Textual
Equipment purchased for their own use	The USAID logo will appear on items; exclusive branding unless co-branding is acceptable or an exemption for no branding is indicated.	Visual

Websites. Websites that are produced under USAID-financed assistance instruments must follow the guidelines of ADS 557.3.4.2. Websites that are produced under USAID-financed assistance instruments and fall outside the scope of 557.3.4 must comply only with USAID branding guidelines for assistance instruments (Branding Guidelines). As provided in this chapter, As provided in this ADS chapter, the Website Governance Board must be notified of the proposed website as far in advance of the site's launch as possible. LPA/WM must review and approve sites produced under assistance instruments to ensure compliance with Section 508 Accessibility requirements, as detailed in ADS 551. USAID staff must ensure that websites produced under USAID-financed assistance instruments and fall outside the scope of section 557.3.4 do not reside on a .gov domain. The site must be marked appropriately on the index page of the site and every major entry point to the website with a disclaimer that states: "The information provided on this website is not official U.S. Government information and does not represent the views or positions of the U.S. Agency for International Development or the U.S. Government."

1.2 Exceptions to Contract Marking Requirements

If applicable, use one or several of the following exceptions to fill out Table 2, depending on the circumstances. In addition to the table below, details about why the exception is required must be attached to this marking plan.

2 CFR 700.16 (h) Presumptive Exceptions

- Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Election monitoring or ballots, and voter information literature;
 - Political party support or public policy advocacy or reform;
 - Independent media, such as television and radio broadcasts, and newspaper articles and editorials; and
 - PSAs or public opinion polls and surveys.
- Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent.
- Undercut host-country government “ownership” of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, PSAs, or other communications better positioned as “by” or “from” a cooperating country ministry, organization, or government official.
- Impair the functionality of an item, such as sterilized equipment or spare parts.
- Incur substantial costs or be impractical, such as items too small or otherwise unsuited for individual marking, such as food in bulk.
- Offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate on such items as condoms, toilets, bed pans, or similar commodities.

- g. Conflict with international law, such as the international recognized neutrality of the International Red Cross (IRC) or other organizations.
- h. Deter achievement of program goals, such as cooperating with other donors or ensuring repayment of loans.

Category/Material for exception	Specific Exception(s)	Visual, Verbal, Textual
Administrative		
Program Communication		
Institutional Communication		
Commodities and Equipment		

1.3 SUB AWARDS

Sub awards when authorized in accordance with ADS 303, must be branded and marked following the guidelines of the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan approved for the prime award . The Recipient is responsible for including branding and marking requirements for these subawards.

1.4 PREPRODUCTION REVIEW

USAID requests preproduction review of USAID-funded public communications and program material for compliance with USAID graphic standards and the approved Marking Plan.

1.5 GRAPHIC EXAMPLES

Provide graphic examples of visual marking for the materials included under Table 1 using the USAID logo, co-branding, and project name in both English and Spanish.

Also provide graphic examples for the materials with exceptions to marking requirements (if applicable).

Incorrect example for project name



Correct example for project name



Letterhead and business cards



ANNEX 2 - STANDARD PROVISIONS

(Note: the full text of these provisions may be found at: <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa> and <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>). The actual Standard Provisions included in the award will be dependent on the organization that is selected. The award will include the latest Mandatory Provisions for either U.S. or non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations. The award will also contain the following “required as applicable” Standard Provisions:

Please note that the resulting award will include all standard provisions (both mandatory and required as applicable) in full text.

REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PREDETERMINED (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA2. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PROVISIONAL (Nonprofit) (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA3. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE - PROVISIONAL (Profit) (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA5. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA6. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
	X	RAA7. PROTECTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT (APRIL 1998)
	X	RAA8. CARE OF LABORATORY ANIMALS (MARCH 2004)
X		RAA9. TITLE TO AND CARE OF PROPERTY (COOPERATING COUNTRY TITLE) (NOVEMBER 1985)
X		RAA10. COST SHARING (MATCHING) (FEBRUARY 2012)
X		RAA11. PROHIBITION OF ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS (JUNE 1999)
X		RAA12. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
X		RAA13. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA14. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA15. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
	X	RAA16. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
	X	RAA17. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
X		RAA18. USAID DISABILITY POLICY - ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2004)

	X	RAA19. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
	X	RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA23. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA24. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
	X	RAA25. PATENT REPORTING PROCEDURES (NOVEMBER 2020)
	X	RAA26. ACCESS TO USAID FACILITIES AND USAID'S INFORMATION SYSTEMS (AUGUST 2013)
X		RAA27. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA28. AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
	X	RAA29. RESERVED
	X	RAA30. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
	X	RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR NON-U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. ADVANCE PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA2. REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (DECEMBER 2014)
TBD		RAA3. INDIRECT COSTS – NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (NICRA) (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – CHARGED AS A FIXED AMOUNT (NONPROFIT) (JUNE 2012)
		RAA5. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA6. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA7. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA8. SUBAWARDS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA9. TRAVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA10. OCEAN SHIPMENT OF GOODS (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA11. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA12. PATENT RIGHTS (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA13. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)

X		RAA14. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
X		RAA 15. COST SHARE (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA16. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
X		RAA17. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA18. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
	X	RAA19. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA23. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
	X	RAA24. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
	X	RAA25. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
	X	RAA26. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING(ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
X		RAA27. LIMITATION ON SUBAWARDS TO NON-LOCAL ENTITIES (JULY 2014)
X		RAA28. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA29. CONTRACT AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
	X	RAA30. RESERVED
	X	RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

REQUEST FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

PROJECT/ACTIVITY DATA

Project/Activity Name:	Basic Education Quality and Transition to Lower Secondary
Geographic Location(s) (Country/Region):	Guatemala/LAC
Amendment (Yes/No), if Yes indicate # (1, 2...):	No
Implementation Start/End Dates (FY or M/D/Y):	2021-2026
If Amended, specify New End Date:	
Solicitation/Contract/Award Number(s):	TBD
Implementing Partner(s):	TBD
Bureau Tracking ID:	LAC-IEE-21-93
Tracking ID of Related RCE/IEE (if any):	
Tracking ID of Other, Related Analyses:	

ORGANIZATIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Implementing Operating Unit(s): (e.g. Mission or Bureau or Office)	USAID/Guatemala
Other Affected Operating Unit(s):	N/A
Lead BEO Bureau:	LAC
Funding Operating Unit(s): (e.g. Mission or Bureau or Office)	Guatemala
Funding Account(s) (if available):	Basic Education
Original Funding Amount:	\$30 M
If Amended, specify funding amount:	
If Amended, specify new funding total:	
Prepared by:	Ingrid Sanchinelli
Date Prepared:	May 3, 2021

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REVIEW DATA

Analysis Type:	☒ Request for Categorical Exclusion ☐ Deferral
Environmental Determination(s):	☒ Categorical Exclusion(s) ☐ Deferred (per 22 CFR 216.3(a)(7)(iv))
RCE Expiration Date (if applicable):	N/A
Additional Analyses/Reporting Required:	
Climate Risks Identified (#):	Low <u>2</u> Moderate <u>#</u> High <u>#</u>
Climate Risks Addressed (#):	Low <u>2</u> Moderate <u>#</u> High <u>#</u>

THRESHOLD DETERMINATION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PROJECT/ACTIVITY SUMMARY This integrated education activity will improve foundational reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills acquisition for children and youth through the formal education system, and the activity will increase retention and transition rates from primary to lower secondary in rural Guatemala. This activity will also strengthen local subrecipient(s)' capacity to become a USAID implementing partner and sustain results of the activity, contributing to Guatemala's Journey to Self-Reliance and transition the award to their leadership. The primary beneficiaries of this activity will be students in grades 4-6 and *primero básico* as well as local partner organizations in the basic education sector who, with additional capacity building support, can confidently assume the implementation of this award once USAID determines that the local partner organization is capable of managing USG funds and contributes to specific actions during the five years of the prime award. The activity will also seek to identify gaps and further the sustainability offshore up gains made from previous USAID investments in grades 1-3 as in the implementation of Bilingual Intercultural Education Models and reading intervention programs.

The Basic Education Quality and Transition to Lower Secondary activity (BEQT) will contribute to achieving USAID's Guatemala's CDCS Development Objective 2: Effective and Accountable Governance to Improve Quality of Life and Deter irregular migration; specifically, under Intermediate Result 2.2: Improved quality of social services (health, education, water) and Intermediate Result 2.3: Strengthened citizen engagement and advocacy.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATIONS

Upon approval of this document, the determinations become affirmed, per Agency regulations (22 CFR 216).

TABLE 1: ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATIONS

Projects/Activities	Categorical Exclusion Citation (if applicable)	Deferral ¹
Project/Activity 1 — <i>Reading, writing, math, and SEL outcomes improved</i>	§216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)	☐
Project/Activity 2 — <i>Rate of student transition to lower secondary increased</i>	§216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.) §216.2(c)(2)(iii) Analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings.	☐
Project/Activity 3 - <i>Local subrecipient(s)' capacity for</i>	§216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs	☐

¹ Deferrals must be cleared through an Amendment to this RCE prior to implementation of any deferred activities.

<i>sustainability developed</i>	include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.	
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CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT

Climate Risk Screening Tables attached as annex I. Extreme weather and natural or man-made disasters can disrupt the activities. The activity will adjust planning accordingly. The activity will have different means to communicate and reach and contact activity site to inform and be informed of the current situation. There is an opportunity to educate youth on national pressing environmental concerns and to provide environmental consideration awareness and safety and security measures to be taken when extreme weather occurs.

BEO SPECIFIED CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

N/A

IMPLEMENTATION

In accordance with 22 CFR 216 and Agency policy, the conditions and requirements of this document become mandatory upon approval. This includes the relevant limitations, conditions and requirements in this document as stated in Section 3 of this RCE and any BEO Specified Conditions of Approval.

USAID APPROVAL OF INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION

PROJECT/ACTIVITY NAME: Basic Education Quality and Transition to Lower Secondary

APPROVAL:	 Anupama Rajaraman, Mission Director	06/01/2021 Date
Clearance:	Electronically Cleared Marvin Crespín-Gamez, Acting Health and Education Office Director	5/26/2021 Date
Clearance:	Patricia Zuleta Patricia Zuleta, A/COR	5/25/2021 Date
Clearance:	Regina Soto Regina Soto, Mission Environmental & Climate Integration Officer	5/25/2021 Date
Clearance:	Carlos R. Hasbun Carlos Hasbun, Regional Environmental Advisor	05/26/2021 Date
Concurrence:	Betzy Colon, Acting LAC Bureau Environmental Officer	
Clearance:	 Annie Wallace, Acting Deputy Mission Director	5/28/21 Date

DISTRIBUTION:

1.0 PROJECT AND ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE RCE

The purpose of this document is to establish that all proposed projects/activities belong to classes of actions eligible for Categorical Exclusions as set out in Agency regulations (22 CFR 216.2(c)) and that there are no foreseeable significant direct or indirect impacts that would preclude them from receiving a Categorical Exclusion. Upon approval of this document, the Categorical Exclusions are affirmed for the project/activity. This analysis also documents the results of the project/activity level Climate Risk Management process in accordance with USAID policy (specifically, ADS 201 mandatory reference 201mal).

This RCE is a critical element of USAID's mandatory environmental review and compliance process meant to achieve environmentally sound activity design and implementation.

1.2 PROJECT/ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

This integrated education activity will improve foundational reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills acquisition for children and youth through the formal education system, and the activity will increase retention and transition rates from primary to lower secondary in rural Guatemala. This activity will also strengthen local subrecipient(s)' capacity to become a USAID implementing partner and sustain results of the activity, contributing to Guatemala's Journey to Self-Reliance and transition the award to their leadership. The primary beneficiaries of this activity will be students in grades 4-6 and primero básico as well as local partner organizations in the basic education sector who, with additional capacity building support, can confidently assume the implementation of this award once USAID determines that the local partner organization is capable of managing USG funds and contributes to specific actions during the five years of the prime award. The activity will also seek to identify gaps and further the sustainability offshore up gains made from previous USAID investments in grades 1-3 as in the implementation of Bilingual Intercultural Education Models and reading intervention programs.

1.3 PROJECT/ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

TABLE 2: DEFINED OR ILLUSTRATIVE PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES AND SUB-ACTIVITIES

Project/Activity 1 — Reading, writing, math, and SEL outcomes improved
<i>In-person and remote instruction improved</i>
- Conduct diagnostic/needs assessment to identify gaps in remote and in-person foundational reading, writing, math, and social and emotional skills training, instruction, and materials
- Provide training and ongoing coaching support to teachers on foundational reading, writing, math, and SEL instruction for grades 4-6 and <i>primero básico</i> for in-person, remote, and hybrid modalities
- Develop teaching and learning materials and distribute them to each teacher and student in the program.
- Establish partnerships with universities to improve and align pre-service teacher training for foundational skills instruction with in-service training and coaching.
Project/Activity 2 — Rate of student transition to lower secondary increased
<i>School management systems strengthened</i>
- Support counseling and psychosocial support of students and teachers at the school level.

- Strengthen the capacity of school administration to monitor student enrollment, attendance, and transition to subsequent grades. This may include supporting the development and implementation of early warning systems that alert school administrators and teachers to students that are at-risk of dropping out.
- To address the limited number of seats in lower secondary, BEQT will explore options for opening up more seats, implementing flexible distance learning modalities such as through radio, and subsidizing transportation costs for those living more than five kilometers away from the nearest secondary school.
- Seek to link to the health and other sector activities where possible to provide access to WASH facilities in schools to improve access, especially for girls.
- Work with the Ministry of Education to improve data collection
- Work at the subnational level with municipalities strengthening their investments in quality education, likely to include at a minimum appropriate teaching and learning materials for all teachers and students and quality training/support for teachers, and key transitions using evidence and channeling the guidance and tools that MOE Departmental Education Offices provide to achieve results in their territories.
<i>Community and family support to improve foundational skills and transition improved</i>
- Support the implementation of distance learning with distance materials as a flexible modality for early primary learners
- Work with civil society organizations composed of parents of students and teachers, whose objective is to work together to improve education services in their communities. These organizations could play a role in enrollment, attendance, learning, and transition of all learners in the target area
- Certified coaching programs with the participation of community members to increase academic and social and emotional
Project/Activity 3 - Local subrecipient(s)' capacity for sustainability developed
- Provide technical assistance to the local subrecipient(s) in the areas of organizational capacity, institutional management, and domestic resource mobilization and also to partner with and support local governments.
- Build the technical capacity of local subrecipient(s) to support learners' foundational skills development and to support student transition to lower secondary education.

2.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

2.1 JUSTIFICATION FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

The activities under the Basic Education Quality and Transition to Lower Secondary are among the classes of actions listed in 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2) and have no foreseeable significant direct or indirect adverse effect on the environment. Therefore, under 22 CFR 216.2(c)(1), neither an IEE nor an EA will be required for these activities. Instead, a Categorical Exclusion is recommended for the projects/activities described above in Section 1.3 as follows:

TABLE 3: RECOMMENDED DETERMINATION FOR CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

Project/Activity and Sub-Activity #	Recommended Determination for Categorical Exclusion
Project/Activity 1 — <i>Reading, writing, math, and SEL outcomes improved</i>	§216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)

Project/Activity 2 — <i>Rate of student transition to lower secondary increased</i>	§216.2(c)(2)(iii) Analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings. §216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)
Project/Activity 3 - <i>Local subrecipient(s)' capacity for sustainability developed</i>	§216.2(c)(2)(i) Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)

Safety measures shall be taken to prevent transmission of COVID-19 during project implementation. Specifically, the implementing partner (IP) will ensure that the following requirements are met:

Ensure compliance with applicable country requirements provided by Health Ministry (*Ministerio de Salud Pública y Asistencia Social*) and technical guidelines to prevent COVID-19 transmission over the course of the activities. This includes ensuring staff safety, safety of community members, and adequate management of waste. As appropriate, train staff and beneficiaries on social distancing, personal protective equipment (PPE) use, and disinfection. IP may follow WHO and/or CDC guidance as appropriate.

The use of disinfectants will be used according to the guidelines made by the US Environmental Protection Agency EPA <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/about-list-n-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19-0>)

2.2 CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT

Extreme weather and natural or man-made disasters can disrupt the activities. The activity will adjust planning accordingly. The activity will have different means to communicate and reach and contact activity site to inform and be informed of the current situation. There is an opportunity to educate youth on national pressing environmental concerns and to provide environmental consideration awareness and safety and security measures to be taken when extreme weather occurs.

3.0 LIMITATIONS OF THE CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

The categorical exclusions recommended in this document apply only to projects/activities and sub-activities described herein.

Other projects/activities that may arise must be subject to an environmental analysis and the appropriate documentation prepared and approved, whether it be a new Request for Categorical Exclusion, an amendment, or other type of 22 CFR 216 document.

It is confirmed that the projects/activities described herein do not involve actions normally having a significant effect on the environment, including those described in 22 CFR 216.2(d).

3.1 MANDATORY INCLUSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS IN SOLICITATIONS, AWARDS, BUDGETS, AND WORK PLANS

USAID will ensure the environmental compliance requirements are incorporated into solicitations, awards, budgets, and work plans, including relevant limitations of Section 3 above. In addition, climate risk management requirements will also be incorporated.

3.2 GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING REQUIREMENTS (IF APPLICABLE)

USAID will ensure that the following requirements are met:

- Provide briefings for Implementing Partner (IP) on environmental compliance responsibilities.
- Ensure integration of compliance responsibilities in prime and sub-awards and grant agreements.
- Ensure compliance with applicable partner country requirements.
- Annual review of project activities to ensure that scope is still covered by Categorical Exclusion.

ATTACHMENTS:

Annex 1: Climate Risk Management Summary Table for Activity

ANNEX 1. **ACTIVITY** CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT SUMMARY TABLE

Tasks/Defined or Illustrative Interventions	Climate Risks ²	Risk Rating ³	How Risks are Addressed ⁴	Opportunities to Strengthen Climate Resilience ⁵
Activity 1 — <i>Reading, writing, math, and SEL outcomes improved</i>	Weather and natural or man-made disaster can disrupt the activities	Low	Adjust planning accordingly. Expand digital training (when possible).	Educate youth on national pressing environmental concerns.
Activity 2 — <i>Rate of student transition to lower secondary increased</i>	Extreme weather could affect project	Low	Have different means to communicate and reach and contact the activity site to inform and be informed of the current situation.	Provide environmental consideration awareness and safety and security measures to be taken when extreme weather occurs.
Activity 3 - <i>Local subrecipient(s)' capacity for sustainability developed</i>				

² List key risks related to the defined/illustrative interventions identified in the screening and additional assessment.

³ Low/Moderate/ High

⁴ Describe how risks have been addressed in activity design and/or additional steps that will be taken in implementation. If you chose to accept the risk, briefly explain why.

⁵ Describe opportunities to achieve multiple development objectives by integrating climate resilience or mitigation measures