

USAID/MEXICO ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS)**TITLE:** Mexican Partnership Program**NUMBER:** APS-523-12-002**ISSUANCE DATE:** January 30, 2012**CLOSURE DATE:** January 29, 2013

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Mexico is seeking concept papers and, later, applications from Mexican for-profit and non-for-profit organizations to implement activities to support the Mexican Partnership Program related to global climate change, economic competitiveness, youth, human rights and rule of law. Eligible organizations include, but are not limited to, non-government organizations (NGOs), associations, cooperatives, universities, civil society organizations, foundations, and private companies.

The authority of this APS is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. Awards shall be made and administered in accordance with Standard Provisions for Non-US Non-Governmental Organizations (ADS 303) and the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Part 31 for for-profit organizations. Please note that no profit/fee is allowed under assistance and foregone profit does not qualify as cost-sharing or leveraging.

Subject to availability of funds, the United States Government intends to award up to 15 to 20 grants lasting from 1 to 3 years under this APS. USAID however, reserves the right to enter into more, fewer, or not to enter into any awards. The award(s) will be made in accordance with evaluation procedures provided in Section IV. USAID intends to provide approximately \$20 to \$25 million for programs under this APS. Should there be a change in available funding, an amendment to this APS will be issued.

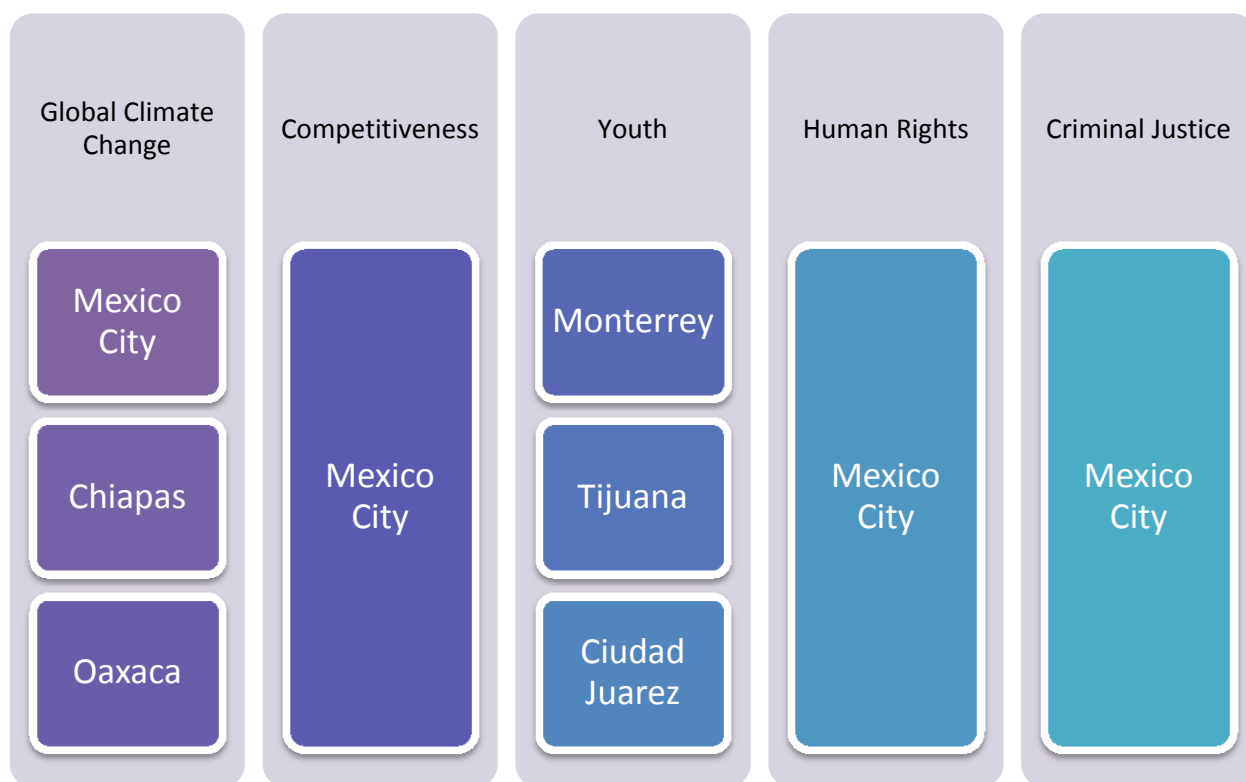
For the purposes of this program, this APS is being issued and consists of this cover letter and the following:

- a) Section I – Funding Opportunity Description
- b) Section II – Award Information
- c) Section III – Eligibility Information
- d) Section IV – Application and Submission Information

- e) Section V – Evaluation Process
- f) Section VI – Award and Administration Information

Interested parties are reminded that concept papers under this APS must be received on or before the indicated closing date and time. All concept papers must be submitted electronically to: mexicoaps@usaid.gov. Please contact the USAID Mission if there are technical or other difficulties with submitting the application by e-mail.

USAID plans to hold regular information sessions on the APS in different locations in Mexico during February and March 2012. The information sessions will be organized by the five technical areas of the APS. USAID plans to hold information sessions as follows:



Additional information sessions may be added depending on interest. Please contact Tere Garduño (tgarduno@usaid.gov) if you would like to be included on the invitation list for these sessions, and note which of the five technical areas is of interest.

Please direct any questions concerning this APS to: mexicoaps@usaid.gov. Answers to questions received will be posted on www.grants.gov.

SECTION I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

USAID is currently undergoing an agency-wide reform effort to improve overall program effectiveness and sustainability through increased engagement of local civil society and private sector organizations. The principal objective of the Mexican Partnership Program is to increase the number and type of partnerships with Mexican non-governmental organizations, working together towards the achievement of shared goals related to global climate change, economic competitiveness, youth, human rights and rule of law.

The Mexican Partnership Program contributes to USAID's overall programming in Mexico. USAID/Mexico programs support Mexican institutions to achieve the following: 1) support Mexico's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; 2) enhance economic competitiveness to improve citizens' lives; 3) develop and test models to mitigate the community-level impact of crime and violence; and 4) support Mexico's implementation of criminal justice constitutional reforms that protect citizens' rights. USAID has worked closely with the Government of Mexico (GOM) and a broad set of stakeholders across Mexico to establish these priority areas and to develop and implement programs. USAID/Mexico is supporting ongoing initiatives that provide technical expertise for policy reform, strengthen institutional capacity and develop mechanisms to leverage public and private sector financing.

To further complement and support the achievement of these objectives, through the Mexican Partnership Program we envision multiple awards to Mexican organizations in the following five areas:

- Engaging Civil Society in Promoting Clean Energy Technologies and Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation,
- Supporting Competitiveness Policy Research and Advocacy,
- Increasing Youth Capacity to Play a Productive Role in the Community,
- Expanding Human Rights Protection Mechanisms, and
- Increasing the Capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) to Support Mexico's Implementation of a New Criminal Justice System.

USAID intends to make separate awards in each of these areas. Innovative ideas and approaches are especially welcome. All proposed activities within each area shall directly and predictably relate to the achievement of that area's program objectives. Applicants are

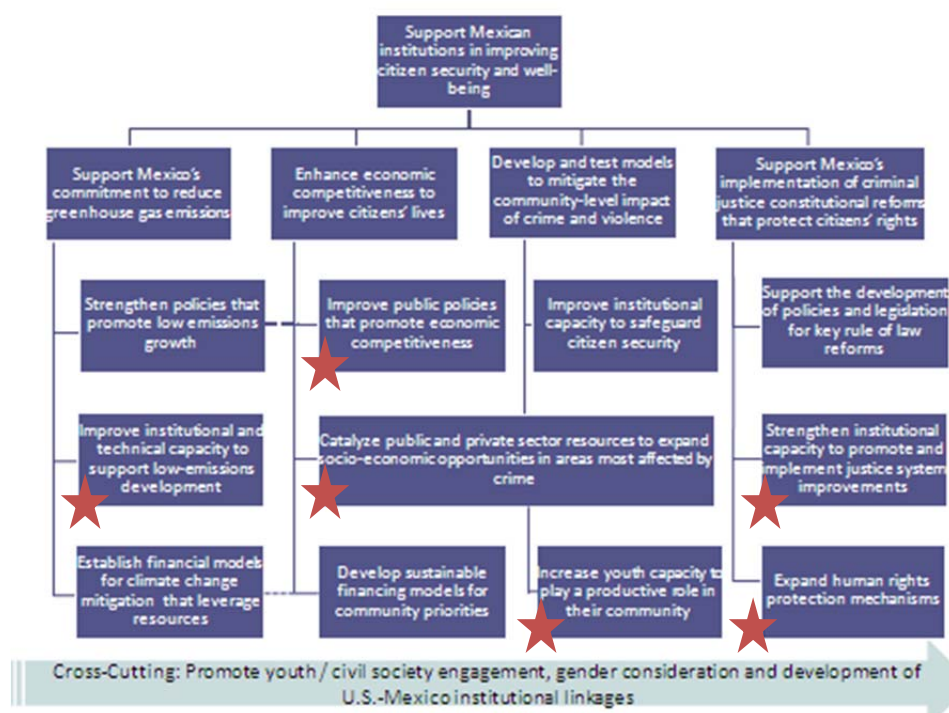
encouraged to propose the best mix of approaches and activities to achieve program results within each area. In addition to programmatic activities, applicants may include activities to strengthen internal organizational capacity if needed. Examples could include acquisition of communications technology, skills training in advocacy, strengthening financial management skills, strategic planning assistance, etc. Depending on needs, USAID/Mexico may also provide support to organizations in meeting USAID financial or management requirements.

In addition to the Mexican Partnership Program, which is focused on Mexican organizations, USAID/Mexico also is receiving applications for Global Development Alliances which seek to leverage at least 1:1 funding for work in specific areas. More information on this opportunity can be found here:

<http://idea.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/attachments/GDA%20APS%20Addendum%20Mexico%202011%20Final.pdf>.

A. Related USAID Programs

USAID's overall program in Mexico supports the achievement of the results outlined below. The Mexican Partnership Program is expected to contribute to those results which are marked with a star:



Applicants can find more information on current USAID programs at <http://mexico.usaid.gov>.

B. Overall Approach

Cross-Cutting Practices

In developing approaches to program activities, USAID strongly encourages applicants to consider the following cross-cutting practices and approaches:

1. Explore Teaming / Partnership Arrangements: To increase program impact and sustainability, USAID/Mexico strongly encourages applicants to consider partnership, teaming, or other arrangements that make best use of existing organizational capacity, resources and relationships. Approaches may involve the formal or informal establishment of coalitions, partnerships, consortia, or other arrangements. Coalitions may involve sub-grant relationships and/or may involve the use of information technology or electronic media for message dissemination, information gathering and sharing, and organizing efforts and activities, as well as other techniques.

Approaches which connect organizations in different geographic areas and with different skill levels are also encouraged. For example, applicants may consider teaming Mexico City-based organizations with grass-roots organizations in various parts of the country. They may consider teaming larger, more established organizations with nascent organizations, or linking similar kinds of coalitions from different geographic areas. There are many other options that could be considered that draw on the different strengths of different types of organizations. Mexican universities should be especially considered.

Applicants are encouraged to consider partnerships and coalitions, as appropriate, to broaden geographic diversity, promote greater inclusion, and increase program reach. Partnerships between Mexican and U.S. institutions are particularly encouraged, with a special focus on universities.

2. Support Consensus-Building: USAID/Mexico encourages applications that bring together relevant stakeholders from the public and private sector to build consensus on activities and approaches in a given area. Effective consensus-building processes are generally inclusive, participatory, egalitarian, and solution-oriented.
3. Recognize Gender Roles: Moreover, proposed interventions should be based upon a gender analysis that considers how the roles that men and women play could impact

implementation and/or results as well as how the proposed program could potentially affect men and women differently.

4. Build Cross-Border Linkages: U.S. and Mexico's shared border and high degree of social, economic and cultural linkages provide a unique rationale for USAID's program, distinct from that found elsewhere in the region. Mexico's status as an upper middle-income country with a high degree of institutional capacity and worldwide leadership on key issues also characterize our partnership relationship. The future security and well-being of the United States is rooted in a partnership with a stable, prosperous and competitive Mexico. Partnership with a strong Mexico will improve the welfare and security of our communities, our economic well-being, and our ability to manage transnational threats such as climate change and organized crime. As a result, organizations are encouraged to leverage and foster unique bilateral institutional linkages between U.S. and Mexican professional peer groups, universities, governments, etc. for the achievement of program results.

Guiding Principles

USAID/Mexico considers the following guiding principles essential for work under the Mexican Partnership Program:

1. Government of Mexico leadership: USAID's programs in Mexico recognize the leadership of the Government of Mexico (GOM) in addressing ongoing development, security and economic challenges. Programming must take this into account.
2. Catalytic programming: With strong GOM leadership and capacity, programs should focus on activities with a catalyzing effect. Work should focus on intervening where there are comparative advantages or a particular experience to offer, and where, with proven successes, the GOM and/or other civil society partners can eventually take the lead in expanding programs.
3. Identify quick wins: Although achieving progress under any of the five areas under the Mexican Partnership Program is a long-term goal, programs should include a component that will generate rapid and visible impact to build citizen support and momentum to continue and expand programs.
4. Transfer of knowledge: Work should emphasize the transfer of methodologies and know-how among Mexican organizations.

5. Understand unintended consequences and potential risks of programming: Given the security environment in which programming may take place, it is critical to recognize that activities may put participants at risk of violence. Activities will include measures to mitigate any possible risks.

C. Mexican Partnership Program Objectives and Opportunities

Following is more detailed information about each of the five program areas in which USAID is seeking concept papers. Each of these areas includes specific information on the program objectives, geographic focus and any other parameters to be considered during implementation.

A.1 Engaging Civil Society in Promoting Clean Energy Technologies and Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation

Background

The negative effects of climate change are considered to be the most serious challenge to the global environment. Countries from around the world gathered in December 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to find a solution to global climate change in which developed and developing countries can work together to stabilize increasing global temperatures caused by increased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As an outcome of the conference, most developed and developing countries agreed to the 2009 Copenhagen Accord, which emphasizes the importance of setting developing countries on a low-emissions growth path that will help their economies grow sustainably.

Under President Calderon, Mexico has made climate change a top national priority and has integrated climate change into the country's National Development Plan 2007-2012. Mexico contributes about 1.6 percent of the global GHG emissions. It ranks 13th among the largest emitting countries of the world. In the last 20 years, Mexico's GHG emissions grew by approximately 40 percent, amounting to an annual increase of about 2.5 percent. Energy use is responsible for 61 percent of the country's total emissions; waste contributes 14 percent; land use, land-use change and forestry contribute 10 percent; industrial processes contribute 9 percent and agriculture contributes 6 percent. In addition to having signed the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol, Mexico is the only developing country to submit a Third and Fourth National Communication to the UNFCCC with a detailed updated inventory of its GHG emissions and long term emissions trajectories.

In 2009, Mexico formulated and adopted its Special Program for Climate Change (PECC), which is an economy-wide strategy that aims to reduce the country's GHG emissions by 50 million tons of CO₂ equivalent by 2012 and sets forth goals to reduce emissions by 50 percent in relation to 2000 levels by 2050. Mexico was one of the first signatories of the Copenhagen Accord and pledged to take specific actions toward reducing the country's emissions in up to 30 percent by 2020, conditional on the financial and technological support from the international community to face mitigation and adaptation challenges. Mexico hosted the COP16 in 2010, and is poised to become a leader in transitioning to a low carbon economy as it has already laid significant groundwork for national strategies to combat climate change and its dangerous effects.

President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have made the promotion of low-carbon growth a priority for U.S. diplomatic and development efforts as well. In early 2009, Mexican President Calderon and President Obama established the US-Mexico Bilateral Framework on Clean Energy and Climate Change. The Bilateral Framework focuses on renewable energy, energy efficiency, adaptation, market mechanisms, forestry and land use, green jobs, low carbon energy technology development and capacity building. The U.S. and Mexico, along with Canada, also issued a declaration at the 2009 North American Leaders Summit committing to "develop low-carbon growth plans" and "comparable approaches to measuring, reporting, and verifying emissions reductions [and] greenhouse gas reporting throughout the region." The U.S. and Mexico are both signatories to the Copenhagen Accord which states that "a low emission development strategy is indispensable to sustainable development".

USAID is one of a number of USG entities providing assistance to countries pursuant to the Copenhagen Accord. In FY 2010, the U.S. Congress responded to a request from the President for additional funding to address climate change by appropriating \$305 million to USAID for targeted climate change activities under three sub-key issue areas, or pillars:

- Clean Energy - Intended to achieve significant reductions in GHG trajectories over time by promoting the sustainable use of renewable energy technologies, energy efficient end-use technologies, carbon sequestration and carbon accounting.
- Sustainable Landscapes – Intended to reduce net GHG emissions from the land use sector.

- Adaptation – Intended to build adaptive capacity and reduce vulnerabilities in regions and countries affected by the negative impacts of climate change.

Under the USG Global Climate Change Initiative, USAID/Mexico launched a new, five-year Global Climate Change Program in 2011 with funding for the Clean Energy and Sustainable Landscapes pillars.

Program Objectives

The overall USAID/Mexico Global Climate Change (GCC) Program will run from 2011 through 2016 and will pursue the overall strategic objective of supporting Mexico in achieving a low-carbon future. The Program will achieve this overarching goal by focusing on mitigation efforts in both energy use and the forestry and land-use sectors, the latter focusing specifically on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+). Current implementing partners include Tetra Tech (the Mexico Low Emissions Development Program (MLED)), The Nature Conservancy (the Mexico Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation Program (MREDD)) and the U.S. Forest Service.

USAID seeks to complement already existing GCC efforts with new awards under this APS. Illustrative activities eligible under this APS for support include:

- Improve technical capacities of civil society entities, especially indigenous groups and forest-dependent communities, with regard to climate change, clean energy and REDD+ concepts, policies and methods, low carbon development, carbon markets, carbon finance, and international REDD+ negotiations.
- Disseminate information on climate change, clean energy and REDD+ among stakeholders, particularly civil society, indigenous groups, and forest-dependent communities.
- Design and implement small-scale field projects to build the capacities of public and civil society actors on climate change, clean energy and REDD+, identifying best practices and lessons that can be replicated and brought to scale.
- Train local institution personnel on the design and implementation of clean energy, REDD+ and sustainable forest management practices, including effective leadership, transparency, and consensus-building mechanisms.
- Facilitate adoption of clean energy and/or energy efficient technologies, especially by small businesses.
- Disseminate information regarding the benefits of adopting clean energy and energy efficient technologies.

Geographic Focus

Policy, advocacy, capacity development and information dissemination activities may take place at the national or sub-national level.

Local-level activities in the forestry area should take into account GOM preferences, locations where organizations have existing capacity and experience, and locations where projects consistent with sustainable landscapes funding could be implemented. These locations currently include the Yucatan peninsula, parts of Chiapas, southwestern Chihuahua, Jalisco, Valle de Bravo-Amanalco (State of Mexico), and Oaxaca.

Local-level activities in the energy area should take into account GOM preferences, locations with significant renewable energy resources, and areas complementary to other USAID programming. These locations currently include Baja California and Chihuahua.

A.2 Supporting Competitiveness Policy Research and Advocacy

Background

Mexico's economy is the 14th largest in the world, but it ranks 78th in terms of GDP per capita, an indication that there is low labor productivity. The World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Competitiveness Index for 2011-2012 ranks Mexico 58th among 142 countries. Mexico's traditional competitive strengths include its large internal market size, good transport infrastructure, sound macroeconomic policies, and strong levels of technological adoption. These strengths, combined with the government's efforts to foster greater competition and improve the regulatory environment enabled Mexico to climb from 66th in 2010-2011 to 58th in 2011-2012.

However, the WEF identified the following problem areas that are holding back Mexico's capacity to further enhance competitiveness: flaws in the public institutional framework; security concerns; a failure to adopt and implement policies to boost domestic competition, especially in strategic sectors such as information and communications technology, energy, and retailing; and insufficient reforms to render the labor market more efficient. Other weaknesses, including the current overall quality of the educational system, insufficient company spending on research and development, and limited innovation capacity, could jeopardize the future ability of Mexico to compete internationally in higher-value-added sectors.

The World Bank's Doing Business Index for 2012 ranks Mexico 53rd among 183 countries in terms of the ease of doing business, and identifies the following problem areas: getting electricity (142nd); registering property (140th); paying taxes (109th); enforcing contracts (81st);

starting a business (75th); and trading across borders (59th). There is a clear policy commitment on the part of the Government of Mexico to improve the competitiveness of the Mexican economy. The Mexico Competitiveness Institute (IMCO) defines competitiveness as “the ability to attract and retain private investment and talent.” In its International Competitiveness Index, a comparison of 46 countries published in 2011, IMCO ranked Mexico 32nd. IMCO based its rankings on the following ten distinct competitiveness factors: macroeconomic stability; efficient factor markets; world class precursor sectors; sophistication and innovation in economic sectors; efficient and effective government; inclusive, educated, and healthy society; reliable and objective justice system; stable and functioning political system; sustainable environmental management; and ability to capitalize on international relations.

Program Objectives

USAID is supporting Mexico’s competitiveness-related priorities, as outlined in the Government of Mexico’s National Development Plan: promoting the systemic reforms that will ultimately result in increased private investment, sustained economic growth, and the generation of employment opportunities for Mexico’s young people. USAID is working with Mexican partners to improve economic governance and increase private sector competitiveness by improving the business enabling environment and by building sustainable support for continued policy reforms and systemic changes. USAID is also supporting Mexican-led efforts to ensure more sustainable environmental governance and management and more efficient precursor markets (markets that facilitate economic growth across all sectors).

Good governance is both a goal and a tool to enable Mexicans to improve their country’s competitiveness. Only government can address the business enabling environment to encourage competition; only government can establish and enforce the rules and processes that are necessary to enable private businesses of all sizes to compete fairly. Not only is governance a key factor affecting Mexican competitiveness, but key principles and practices for good governance must be applied in order to address other factors like environmental and natural resource management and improvements in production factors and precursor markets.

USAID is supporting efforts to increase transparency and accountability, develop public policies that contribute to competitiveness, improve government effectiveness in promoting competition, and strengthen the role of civil society in oversight and advocacy for policy changes and transparency. Some of these efforts are focused on commercial law reform, the goal being to make the resolution of commercial disputes more efficient, fair, and predictable, as well as to increase the availability of credit to small businesses (through comprehensive secured transaction reform).

USAID's activities are demand driven, addressing policy priorities articulated by the Government of Mexico and significant private and civil society organizations, as well as networks of individuals who are strongly interested in important competitiveness policy constraints.

USAID will consider proposals through the Mexican Partnership Program that advance policy research and advocacy on the competitiveness-related issues outlined above. Proposals should meet each of the following criteria:

- The issue to be addressed is a significant constraint to Mexico's competitiveness.
- The issue to be addressed is a publicly recognized priority of the Government of Mexico, major private sector organizations, academic institutions, and/or civil society. Preferably the issue should be of concern to more than one of these actors.
- There should be a reasonable chance of achieving progress on reforms.

Geographic Focus

Given the focus on policy research, policy reform and advocacy, activities in this area are expected to take place at a national level.

A.3 Increasing Youth Capacity to Play a Productive Role in the Community

Background

Narco-trafficking-related crime and violence affects Mexico's security and economic development, with a particularly significant effect on young people. Strengthening the social and economic resilience of the community while weakening the environment by which cartels and gangs can exist and thrive will contribute to improving citizen security in targeted communities. Targeting youth for intervention by providing meaningful opportunities and incentives to engage in a culture of lawfulness is essential to stemming the flow of potential recruits for cartels. For the purposes of work in this area, youth are defined to be between the ages of 10 and 29.

USAID is interested in supporting programs that target at-risk youth who are most vulnerable to engaging in criminal activity. Programs should support and enhance existing replicable non-governmental organization (NGO) models focused principally on preventing at-risk youth from engaging in drug consumption, violent gang activity and criminal violence associated with the narcotics cartels.

Program Objectives

Work in this area supports six different objectives which are outlined below:

Objective #1: After-School and Summer Enrichment Initiative

USAID is interested in supporting programs focused on morning and afternoon activities for primary and secondary school students before or after their half-day school shifts. These programs may include academic/tutorial assistance, nutritional support, dynamic physical activities (sports, martial arts, dance, etc.) and cultural and scientific enrichment workshops. These activities should inculcate in youth participants the values of discipline, teamwork, punctuality, respect and self-esteem. Activities should specifically aim to enhance future academic participation, diminish school desertion, occupy idle time in which dangers of drugs and crime frequently present themselves and instill youth with personal values and tools to resist them. Principles of civic education, including volunteerism, service learning and/or community engagement should also be considered as an element of the program. In addition, applicants may consider recreational or creative activities that allow participants an outlet to express their reactions regarding situation that affect their lives, such as violence, loss of relatives / friends as a consequence of crime, addictions, etc. Activities should consider sustainability, including the potential for GOM replication of methodologies, most notably with the Ministry of Education, and through leveraging of corporate financial support and buy-in.

After school activities should also include the following specific elements:

- Hiring qualified instructors/staff who are permanent residents of target communities;
- Instructors should be carefully selected and must use a participatory approach and be flexible and committed to the program;
- Include senior preparatory and university students from target neighborhoods as youth interns/instructional assistants to both assist students academically, but also serve as role models for neighborhood youth;
- Weekend activities or other opportunities encouraging/requiring parental participation;
- Substantial bridging activities during months of academic recess with less emphasis on academic/tutorial support;
- Sustained outreach campaign to ensure youth recruitment from the most marginalized neighborhoods in target *polígonos* (based on the following criteria: physical distance; single mother heads of household; families with member(s) in prison; patterns of family violence; students w/academic or disciplinary deficiencies; families unable to afford school fees, uniforms, etc.; and youth who until recently were engaged in gangs, but

reassessed based on cartel-generated violence);

- Creation of support networks that include participation of parents, peers, and/or instructors for the duration of the program;
- Development of a referral network for youth required specialized or more advanced support; and
- A preference for private sector leveraged funding or resources of approximately 45%.

Objective #2: Reduction of School Desertion

A critical juncture in school desertion of students at greater risk of involvement in criminal activities in low-income neighborhoods is between sixth grade and the first year of secondary school. Academic and discipline problems affect the ability of the highest at-risk students to remain in secondary school, particularly between the second and third year of secondary school. In some cities like Ciudad Juarez, desertion rates of up to 75% affect the transition from secondary to preparatory (senior high) school. To address these challenges, USAID seeks to support programs to bridge the gap between primary and secondary schooling by providing continuing counseling and academic and financial support to at-risk youth. Activities will take into account the registration cycles for secondary schools in target cities. For program beneficiaries who decide to register for school after the deadline, the program must coordinate with local authorities to seek late-registration approval.

Reduction of School Desertion activities should also include the following specific elements:

- A mechanism to identify primary school students who are nearing completion of their primary education, but have not enrolled in secondary school;
- Visits to homes of at-risk youth by outreach workers (who could include university students) to consult with parents and students and assist in overcoming obstacles preventing students from continuing their education;
- Follow up academic, tutorial and motivational assistance;
- Inclusion of learning strategies that promote critical thinking, self-discipline and that help students understand the learning process;
- Scholarships and financial aid based on continued academic performance for the highest at-risk youth populations; and
- A preference for private sector leveraged funding or resources of approximately 25%.

Objective #3: Complementary Efforts for Highest At-Risk Youth and Gang Members

The degree to which the USAID-supported programs can recruit and maintain participation of

the most at-risk youth in specific activities will be an important determinant of their success. Reaching youth who are reassessing their involvement in criminal or gang activity will be particularly important. Activities under this objective should reach youth beginning at age 11 who are exposed to and are gradually induced into intensifying their association with gang members. More specifically, activities should target youth who until recently were more actively associated with gangs, but who, in the wake of the recent wave of violence, are reassessing their futures and could be reintegrated into or strengthened within the school system or other available program networks (community centers, distance learning, etc.). Under this objective, activities should harness the skills and street experience of organizations skilled in gang interventions to assist in and supplement the recruitment of the most vulnerable youth in target communities. USAID will consider supporting direct interventions focused on the complex population of gang members and youth who neither study nor work.

Activities under this objective should also include the following specific elements:

- Mechanism to identify appropriate beneficiaries;
- Outreach conducted by people with street-level experience, not just experts in gang culture; and
- Promotion of community reintegration and the provision of support services for this purpose.

Objective #4: Promoting Job Creation

Targeting youth for intervention by developing linkages with the private sector for meaningful economic opportunities is essential to stemming the flow of potential recruits for gangs and criminal organizations. The dearth of financial prospects for many young Mexicans make them more susceptible to involvement in criminal activities. Building on market studies and analyses, activities under this objective should result in concrete employment opportunities for at-risk youth – defined as youth living in high-crime and marginalized areas with limited access to public services. Activities could include a wide range of interventions, including training, internships, mentoring, etc., with the end result being jobs for program beneficiaries. The overall expected end result for work in this area is that at-risk youth are employed.

Job creation activities should also include the following specific elements:

- Expansion of tools and approaches that allow youth to increase entrepreneurial skills and self-employment through the development of micro-businesses;

- Providing participants with technical assistance on how to develop and implement a business plan and on opportunities for securing financing from government programs, banks and micro-lending institutions;
- Where strategic opportunities exist, activities will leverage resources, skills and technologies from the private sector to support the broader goal of employment generation for at-risk youth.

Objective #5: Addressing Domestic Violence

Domestic violence affects the safety of all family members as well as members of the larger community. Research shows that children who witness domestic violence are at greater risk for engaging in violence and criminality. Even when domestic violence does not result in direct physical injury to the child, it can interfere with both the mother's and the father's parenting to such a degree that the children may be neglected or abused. Children raised in homes where domestic violence occurs are more likely to become violent, attempt suicide, abuse drugs and alcohol, run away from home, engage in teenage prostitution and other delinquent behavior, and commit sexual assault crimes. The issue of family violence has been identified by leading Mexican universities and think tanks as one of the leading risk factors that lead youth toward crime and violence.

In order to address this challenge, activities under this objective should provide counseling, mental health assistance and access to services for family and domestic violence, including preventative work with youth and parents. Assistance packages should not only focus on youth, but include family participation. If parents are not involved, there is a higher likelihood that youth will return to crime.

Objective #6: Addressing Mental Health

Exposure to crime and violence can affect the mental health of community members and result in depression, addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder. This in turn can lead to a rise in suicides, domestic violence and parents abandoning their children - which all have a debilitating effect on the social fabric of the community. To confront these challenges, USAID will consider activities that provide mental health services to community members in the target *polígonos*. Activities should include innovative and holistic approaches that target at-risk youth and their families, and provide them with a range of services from psychological support to professional development opportunities. Programs may also target first-time offenders of minor crimes and provide them and their families with legal assistance, educational support and the opportunity to engage in recreational activities including art, sports and dance

Geographic Focus

Work in this area should focus on those areas with high crime and violence rates, ongoing implementation of local civic and/or GOM prevention and community development initiatives, and GOM prioritization for security investments. These areas currently include Ciudad Juarez, Tijuana, and Monterrey.

The GOM has identified specific communities in these cities as the strategic focus point for these activities. These communities have been preliminarily identified as: Ciudad Juarez (Francisco I Madero, Riveras del Bravo, Felipe Angeles), Tijuana (Camino Verde, Granjas Familiares and Mariano Matamoros) and Monterrey (Colonia Independencia, La Alianza, Nuevo Almaguer (Guadalupe)). The idea is that successes in these areas can be replicated and expanded to other communities that have also been affected by violence and criminality.

A.4 Expanding Human Rights Protection Mechanisms

Background

The State Department 2010 Human Rights Report for Mexico notes the following problems as having been reported on by the National Human Rights Commission: unlawful killings by security forces; kidnappings; physical abuse; poor and overcrowded prison conditions; arbitrary arrests and detention; corruption, inefficiency, and lack of transparency that engendered impunity within the judicial system; confessions coerced through torture; and violence and threats against journalists leading to self-censorship. The Commission estimates that approximately 20,000 migrants were kidnapped during their attempt to transit the country and cross the border in 2010, although the National Migration Institute disputes this figure. The government entities with the greatest number of human rights complaints filed against them in 2010 were the Secretariat of Defense, the Mexican institute for Social Security, the Federal Police, and the Prosecutor General.

Recent findings of the InterAmerican Court of Human Rights (and to a lesser extent recent decisions by the Mexican Supreme Court) have made important steps forward in pushing for civilian handling of human rights abuses by the military – a critical issue in a situation where the military has been deployed for domestic policing. However, necessary steps for effective implementation in the spirit of the InterAmerican Court’s decisions are still in development. Mexican civil society organizations have been leading these efforts.

Program Objectives

Given these challenges, the primary objective of work in this area is to build NGO capacity to engage broader civil society, citizenry, and local governments to prevent human rights

violations, promote a culture of respect and value for human rights, and adequately respond to violations when they occur. This will require a multi-phased and sequential approach to build the technical and organizational capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) at the state level, rebuild spaces for dialogue between all kinds of civil society and the GOM at different levels, and work to prevent and address human rights violations through better monitoring, reporting, and capacity building at the local level for state actors. A focus on women's and migrant's rights is particularly important, as well as human rights protections in general.

USAID anticipates that program(s) under this section of the APS would be led by a local organization or consortium, which could include non-governmental organizations and universities, to serve as an umbrella organization providing technical and financial support through subgrants to a range of organizations in states with a high prevalence of human rights issues (See geographic focus section below). Below are illustrative activities for achieving program objectives in this area that, if feasible, should be implemented in a sequential manner:

- Identify key civil society actors in target states and assess their technical and organizational capacity
- Provide in-depth training in a) technical matters related to the new criminal justice system and human rights legislative framework in Mexico and how to litigate human rights cases effectively given the new scenario and b) organizational capacity matters like strategic planning, resource management, advocacy and social mobilization, as well as attitude/behavior change and communications.
- Develop or adapt a diagnostic tool that establishes a baseline for local capacity in the following areas: a) technical knowledge of human rights, related legislation, the new judicial system, the InterAmerican human rights system, and strategic litigation for human rights (including women's and migrants issues) in the new judicial system; b) organizational capacity for strategic planning, financial management, monitoring and evaluation, human resources management; and c) programmatic effectiveness as measured through achievement of stated or implicit goals, ability to shape or influence public opinion and dialogue, ability to develop and implement a communications strategy, social and political capital of the organization (strength of networks, connections, linkages to local stakeholders and government).
- Develop an approach and content to address any identified weaknesses from the baseline assessment across technical, organizational, and programmatic areas.

- Support dialogue and accountability activities, both looking upstream towards local and federal government counterparts, as well as looking to peers in the “community of influence” for both potential perpetrators and potential victims of human rights abuses. The community of influence for human rights will vary in each target state, but is expected to include other civil society actors, informal but organized civil society (mothers groups, local cooperatives, etc.), religious leaders, school/university leadership, local media personalities (from DJs to formal press), etc.
- Work with local government stakeholders in each state (prosecutors, police, judicial, military representatives, etc.) to develop a human rights plan of action for the State, including an inventory of all resources (from all sources) available both for training / awareness / prevention as well as for victims’ assistance / *denuncia* / litigation.
- Build GOM capacity to increase awareness and prevent abuses.
- Establish a mechanism, such as community-based Monitoring and Action Committees that can monitor and provide training for other civil society actors (informal organizations, community leaders, etc.) on preventing and responding to human rights abuses.
- Build awareness among the general population about how human rights abuses affect them, and reduce the perceived dichotomy between respect for human rights and security.
- Establish a civil society-based Human Rights Observatory in each target state.
- Build a national-level Human Rights Consultative Board, which could include advisory academics/experts, advisory human rights NGOs that work at the national level, and capacity-development oriented NGOs. The consultative board may also include a federal level executive and legislative branch representative.
- As a transversal theme, activities should focus on ways to support implementation of the recent ground-breaking human rights constitutional reform.

Geographic Focus

Work in this area is expected to take place at the national level, with a focus in those states with a high prevalence of human rights issues. These currently include Baja California, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, Guerrero, Michoacán, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Sinaloa, Tamaulipas and Veracruz.

A.5 Increasing the Capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) to support Mexico's implementation of a new criminal justice system

Background

In 2008, the GOM passed a set of Constitutional amendments that mandated nation-wide criminal justice reforms which should be completed by 2016. These amendments imply a profound change in how criminal justice is administered, and how citizens will be attended by the Courts, the Prosecutor's Offices, the Public Defender's Offices, and the Police. Mexican states pioneered reform implementation by adopting elements of an accusatorial system, such as professional public defenders, alternative justice mechanisms, public hearings with evidence presented orally to judges, and pre-trial services to ensure fair bail decisions.

USAID has supported justice sector reform through its Justice and Security Program (JASP), which has trained more than 9,000 justice operators in the new criminal justice system, and has supported state¹ and Federal authorities in implementing solutions for court administration, alternative dispute resolution, criminal investigation, and more efficient defense.

Program Objectives

CSOs play a critical role in advancing criminal justice reform by helping to: 1) oversee justice sector institutions' reform implementation efforts, 2) promote awareness of the reform, and 3) inform Mexican citizens on the reform's impact and achievements. Awards in this area will increase the capacity of CSOs to implement activities along these lines. Illustrative activities to achieve program objectives in this area include:

- Strengthening the capacity of oversight organizations that track and report on reform implementation progress and that engage constructively with the GOM.
- Building the capacity of CSOs to more effectively leverage new media tools to provide citizens with a range of accurate information on the criminal justice reform.
- Strengthening CSOs administrative and financial capabilities.
- Support CSOs, including NGOs and media, and GOM Social Communications Units on how to effectively work together to educate citizens about the criminal justice reform.

¹ The JASP has worked in seven priority "tier one" States, namely Baja California, Chihuahua, Nuevo León, Hidalgo, Morelos, Oaxaca and Durango, and four "tier two" States, which are Zacatecas, Tamaulipas, Querétaro, and Puebla where assistance is more limited and focuses on policy reform.

- Conducting surveys utilizing strong local methodologies to monitor public opinion regarding the reform
- Increasing the capacity CSOs to apply for and manage diverse sources of funding

Geographic Focus

Work in this area is expected to take place at the national level, with an emphasis on those states where other USAID rule of law programs are being implemented. These states currently include Baja California, Chihuahua, Hidalgo, Morelos, Nuevo Leon, Puebla and Oaxaca. Additional states may include Durango, Tamaulipas, Zacatecas and Estado de Mexico.

SECTION II. AWARD INFORMATION

Subject to the availability of funds, approximately \$20 to \$25 million is expected to be available to support programs under this APS, for approximately 15-20 grants lasting from one to three years. USAID/Mexico reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted under this APS. This APS does not constitute an award commitment on the part of USAID, nor does it commit USAID to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of any application.

The funding amount for each programmatic area is expected to be allocated as shown in table below:

Programmatic Area	Estimated Amount of Available Funding	Estimated Number of Awards
Engaging Civil Society in Promoting Clean Energy Technologies and Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation	Up to \$4 million	1-3
Supporting Competitiveness Policy Research and Advocacy	Up to \$2 million	1-2
Increasing Youth Capacity to Play a Productive Role in the Community	Up to \$15 million	1-10
Expanding Human Rights Protection Mechanisms	Up to \$3 million	1-2
Increasing the Capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) to Support Mexico's Implementation of a New Criminal Justice System	Up to \$2 million	1-3

USAID will not consider funding any program of less than \$100,000 over a period of one year. The maximum grant amount in any one area is not expected to exceed the total estimated amount of available funding per programmatic area as shown in the chart above. The total funding for the APS may be increased if funds are available, and especially worthy applications are submitted.

SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Because this program is intended to enhance USAID's direct relationship with Mexican organizations, to be considered for award, the prime applicant must:

1. if a for-profit organization:
 - a. be organized under the laws of Mexico,
 - b. have its principal place of business in Mexico, and
 - c. be majority beneficially owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Mexico, or
2. if a not-for-profit organization:
 - a. be organized under the laws of Mexico,
 - b. have its principal place of business in Mexico, and
 - c. be managed by a governing body, the majority of whom are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Mexico.
3. have been in operation as a local Mexican organization for no less than two years immediately preceding the date of application.

For the purpose of this APS, educational institutions are considered as not-for-profit organizations. While the prime applicant must be a Mexican organization that meets the criteria listed above, organizations may submit applications individually or in partnership with other international or local organizations. Partnerships between Mexican and U.S. organizations are particularly encouraged.

Partnerships with governmental organizations may also be considered where a sub-national or national governmental organization may contribute expertise, staff or resources to achieving a program objective; however, the prime applicant must meet the eligibility criteria outlined above. Any USAID resources provided to a governmental organization under a partnership arrangement must comply with USAID guidance in this area as outlined in USAID regulation ADS 303.3.21(b), Sub-awards to PIOs and Foreign Governmental Organizations.

This program does not require cost sharing, but cost sharing is strongly encouraged and will be considered as a factor in cost effectiveness. Certain program areas reference preferred cost sharing amounts which will be considered during the evaluation process. Cost share may be in cash or in-kind.

SECTION IV. APPLICATION PROCESS

This program will use a two-stage process, beginning with the submission of a concept paper and followed by the submission of a full application if requested by USAID. In the first stage, applicants will prepare and submit a concept paper and budget, not to exceed five pages. USAID will review concept papers and advise applicants if they are invited to submit a full application. Full applications will be evaluated by a panel of USAID experts.

Concept papers will be considered if they are received before the closing date of the APS. There is no limit on the number of concept papers an organization may submit. However, because funding is limited and concepts will be reviewed as they are received, those that are received earlier in this period will have a greater probability of success. For work in the areas of Increasing Youth Capacity to Play a Productive Role in the Community, and Expanding Human Rights Protection Mechanisms, concept papers received by March 15, 2012 will receive priority consideration.

Proposed programs should have an estimated value and performance period that is within the parameters described in this APS. USAID/Mexico may opt to exclude from further consideration any submission which is not within these parameters.

There are four steps in a full successful application process:

A. Step One: Submit Concept Paper (not to exceed five pages in total)

The objective of the concept paper is to give USAID a clear understanding of the project that is being proposed. It is not intended to provide budget detail, staffing plans, organizational background, or similar detailed information. The concept paper shall be about the project concept itself, including the purpose of the project, the location(s) where it would be conducted, the timeframe for implementation, the number and description of the people or organizations that will benefit, a general statement of the approach and expected results, an outline of expected management arrangements, and the amount of funds requested, including any expected leveraged resources. A sample concept paper format is attached.

The concept paper must clearly state the area under this APS that it relates to, as outlined in Section I, Funding Opportunity Description. Concept papers may be submitted in Spanish or English. The concept paper should address only one area under the APS. The concept paper will be reviewed by a panel of USAID employees, who will determine whether the concept has sufficient merit to warrant preparation of a full application.

Concept papers will be reviewed primarily on technical merit, specifically the degree to which they contribute to the achievement of objectives outlined in the APS. In addition, USAID will review the degree to which they comply with the geographic location, cross-cutting practices, guiding principles and budget parameters as stated in the APS.

Multiple concept papers may be submitted by an organization.

B. Step Two: IF INVITED BY USAID, Submit a Full Application *(not to exceed 15 pages in total, without attachments)*

If the concept paper is judged to have sufficient merit, USAID will invite organizations to submit a full application. The full application will include a summary of program activities, expected program results and mechanisms for monitoring and measuring program performance, a project timeline and implementation plan, a description of organizational technical, administrative and financial management capacity, a description of prior related work, and a budget.

Full applications and all supporting material must be submitted in English. USAID will provide organizations with instructions for submitting a full application, including recommended formats.

C. Step Three: USAID Review of Full Application

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they convincingly describe how:

- The applicant organization possesses or has identified means to acquire the requisite capacity / capability to implement the activities efficiently and effectively;
- The proposed program directly responds to the areas of interest under this APS;
- The proposed activities are likely to directly lead to the anticipated results and expected impacts; and
- The proposed budget is realistic and consistent with the proposed activities and results and

the results are objective, quantifiable, and measurable.

Evaluation Factors

A successful grant application will propose a program or project that is responsive to the stated purpose of this APS, and is evaluated favorably against the evaluation factors. The four main evaluation factors (Technical Merit, Management and Staffing Capability, Past Performance, and Cost Effectiveness) are of relatively equal weight.

1. Technical Merit

USAID will review the extent to which the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended results in a specific timeframe. This includes reviewing the relevance of the approach to the problem to be addressed, whether the proposed activities are consistent with the objectives sought, how the activities are interrelated, and how activities will be tracked, monitored and reported. The degree of innovation in terms of program approach will also be considered. USAID will review the effectiveness of the applicant's approach to gender issues relating to the proposed activities, and the extent to which the applicant has considered and incorporated the cross-cutting practices and guiding principles identified in Section 1.B.

For applications with a focus on sustaining activities or organizational capacity beyond the life of the award, USAID will review the extent to which the proposed activity promotes, strengthens, and is supported by sustainable local organizations that can champion sound concepts, innovative practices, and changes beyond the life of the award.

2. Management and Staffing Capability

USAID will review the effectiveness of the approach in terms of internal organizational structure, technical, administrative and financial management capacity and proposed staffing. If partnerships are proposed, USAID will review the degree to which roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

3. Past Performance

USAID will review past performance, with emphasis on prior projects, if any, which are similar to that which is proposed. (Please note: If the applicant has no past performance history, the applicant will receive a neutral rating in this category.)

4. Cost Effectiveness

Proposed budgets will be reviewed to determine if the applicant's approach is cost effective,

and makes use of existing resources, capacities, materials, tools, and other leveraged sources of funding. USAID will review the degree to which the results are objective, quantifiable, and measurable with costs that can be tied directly to specific corresponding results. A realistic commitment to cost share and/or to leveraging private sector resources is generally viewed as enhancing the evaluated cost effectiveness of a program.

D. Step Four: Negotiation and Agreement of Grant Terms

If USAID's review results in a recommendation for funding, then, subject to the availability of funds, the organization and USAID/Mexico will enter final discussions to ensure all pre-award requirements are met and significant grant terms are negotiated and agreed. USAID will determine the appropriate form of the award, in consultation with the applicant organization, based upon the nature and amount of the funded application and the type of relationship to be established. Where feasible, USAID will use simplified format or fixed obligation type grant agreements. Otherwise, most awards will use the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations and may be either a grant or a cooperative agreement. If a cooperative agreement is selected, it will include a statement of involvement by USAID in the administration of the award.

The exact details of the negotiation phase will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to each application; however, the following are common areas that require discussion and agreement prior to award:

1) Branding Strategy and Marking Plan

USAID/Mexico has flexibility in branding approaches depending upon the type of activities proposed and the specific conditions of program implementation. Not all programs will require the same type of recognition of USAID support. Depending on the circumstances, the organization may be requested to propose a branding strategy and marking plan which provides for appropriate acknowledgment of USAID/Mexico support, and which will become a material element of the grant.

Important, useful information on USAID's branding and marking policy can be found in USAID's on-line Automated Directive System (ADS) Chapter 320. ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "assistance" apply to this APS. ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "acquisition" do not apply to this APS. ADS Chapter 320 can be found on the USAID website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf>. A helpful list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about branding and marking can also be found on the USAID website:

http://www.usaid.gov/branding/marketing_faq.html.

2) Payment terms

These may include payment through the provision of advances, direct reimbursement, or payment through a fixed obligation grant where payments are made based upon the achievement of specific results.

3) Administrative procedures

These may include items concerning administrative reporting and logistical requirements for the program, including training components.

4) USAID-desired involvement

If USAID's role during the implementation of the award is substantial, a 'cooperative agreement' form of grant may be awarded which will contain the details of USAID's involvement. This may include approval of the implementation plan, approval of key personnel, and/or collaboration or joint participation of USAID and the recipient on the program.

5) Other

Additional award terms may be included, such as special provisions and/or special award conditions.

It is possible that an application recommended for funding will not actually result in a grant award, due to insufficient availability of funding, or because the organization is deemed not sufficiently capable of managing a USAID grant, or for other reason(s) which will be provided to the applicant.

A decision not to fund an application may occur at any phase of the evaluation process. No program expenditures will be paid by USAID/Mexico, except those covered in a grant signed by the USAID Agreement Officer.

SECTION V. EVALUATION PROCESS

A. Schedule of the Evaluation Process

USAID will review concept papers on a regular basis while the APS is open. USAID will review applications received by the following dates:

- March 15, 2012 – USAID will review all concept papers received by March 15, 2012 during the first phase of the APS. Concept papers for the program areas of Increasing Youth Capacity to Play a Productive Role in the Community and Expanding Human Rights Protection Mechanisms that are received before March 15, 2012 will receive priority consideration. The majority of awards in these two areas are expected to be made by September 30, 2012.
- June 15, 2012 – USAID will review all concept papers received by June 15, 2012 during the second phase of the APS.
- October 15, 2012 – USAID will review all concept papers received by October 15, 2012 during the third phase of the APS.
- January 29, 2013 – USAID will review all concept papers received by January 29, 2012 during the fourth and final phase of the APS.

USAID/Mexico will inform unsuccessful applicants in writing, explaining briefly why the concept paper was not selected for the submission of a full application. Unsuccessful applicants may resubmit revised concept papers for consideration.

For those organizations invited to submit a full application, USAID/Mexico will review those applications as they are received. The Government intends to evaluate each of the technical criteria stated in Section C. Step Three: USAID Review of Full Applications, Evaluation Factors (page No. 24), in accordance with an adjectival scoring system as follows: “O = Outstanding, B = Better, A = Acceptable, M = Marginal, and U = Unacceptable. USAID will provide a complete definition of the adjectival scoring system to those organizations invited to submit a full application.

USAID/Mexico will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing, explaining briefly why the application was not selected. Applicants may request a more comprehensive debriefing on their application within 10 days of receiving this notification. USAID reserves the right to provide debriefings orally, in writing, or electronically.

B. Pre-Award Responsibility Determination

A pre-award review will be conducted and will include an examination of the application's budget to ensure it is a realistic financial expression of the proposed program and does not

contain estimated costs which may be unreasonable or unable to be charged under the program.

Depending on the type of award being considered, an additional pre-award survey or assessment may be conducted. The areas covered by a pre-award survey or assessment will vary according to circumstances and to the type of USAID award being considered, but may include reviews to ensure the organization meets the necessary standards for financial management, program management, property, procurement, reports and records, internal controls, is in good financial standing, and has the technical capacity to conduct the proposed program.

C. Pre-Award Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements of the Recipient

Organizations may be required to provide the following certifications, assurances and other statements. Complete copies of these Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements shall be included if a full application is requested, and will be provided by USAID if an invitation to submit a full application is made by USAID.

- a. Certification Regarding Lobbying
- b. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for covered assistance in covered countries;
- c. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224;
- d. Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking;
- e. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants; and
- f. All applicants must provide a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.

SECTION VI. AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

USAID will determine the appropriate form of an award, in consultation with the applicant organization, based upon the nature and amount of the funded application and the type of relationship to be established. Where feasible, USAID will use simplified format or fixed obligation type grant agreements. Otherwise, most awards will use the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations and may be either a grant or a cooperative agreement. If a cooperative agreement is selected, it will include a statement of involvement by USAID in the administration of the award.

USAID Automated Directive System (ADS), Chapter 303, contains USAID policy and procedures concerning "Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-governmental Organizations" and is available on our agency website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>.

Copies of referenced documents may be found via USAID ADS Chapter 303, including links to other websites. Copies of the referenced documents may also be requested from the points of contact listed in this APS.

Successful applicants will be expected to implement activities in compliance with USAID regulations defined in Title 22, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 216 (22 CFR 216). Prior to award, USAID will prepare an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) covering the types of activities expected to be implemented under this APS. The IEE will provide guidance to applicants regarding which activities can be implemented without additional consideration and which may require consideration of additional environmental analysis, monitoring and/or mitigation measures.

For more information regarding USAID's environmental compliance regulations, applicants are referred to the website:
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/regulations.html.