



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SENEGAL

March 22, 2018

**Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number: 72068518RFA00007
EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN SENEGAL
Amendment #000001**

The purpose of this Amendment 00001 is to modify the notice of funding opportunity:

- 1) Provide answers to questions submitted by applicants;
- 2) Add Attachments

Please refer to the following pages for responses to questions and new attachments.

Sincerely,

Chadwick Mills

Regional Contracting/Agreement Officer

Amendment No. 000001 - Questions and Answers

Re: NOFO 72068518RFA00007

Equitable Access to Education in Southern Senegal

- 1. Can USAID please confirm that all documents can be submitted in Word 2016 and Excel 2016 file formats?**

Response: Yes, all documents can be submitted in Word 2016 and Excel 2016 File Format.

- 2. Can the technical and cost narratives also be submitted in PDF format to maintain the integrity of the graphics and layout?**

Response: Yes, the technical and cost narratives can be submitted in PDF format.

- 3. We note that the original targets included in the RFI from April 2017 have been removed from the RFA. Does USAID have specific targets in mind for the number of girls and boys who will benefit from increased equitable access to education as a result of this activity? For the number of girls and boys who will gain new access to education opportunities?**

Response: USAID has not specified targets for the number of girls and boys who will benefit from this activity. USAID would like applicants to provide ambitious, but realistic targets that reflect their technical approach, budget and the context within each of the four target regions.

- 4. On page 10 of the NOFO, there are two indicators that seek secondary school data (e.g. total number of new entrants, number of secondary classrooms built or repaired). The project focus is purely on primary school education, which in Senegal, includes the provision of middle school. Often middle school is considered a form of "secondary education" in other countries. Do these two indicators refer to middle school new entrants and middle school classrooms, instead of secondary level, for the Senegalese context?**

Response: Yes, in the context of Senegal, the two indicators refer to middle school entrants and classrooms

- 5. On page 21 of the NOFO, it is indicated that organizational charts should be included in the annexes to the technical proposal. However, on page 22, the NOFO states, "An organizational chart placing proposed personnel (key, technical and administrative) with clearly defined position titles, level of effort, and lines of reporting should be included" in the Management and Staffing Approach. Can USAID please confirm that the organizational chart can be included as an annex that does not count against the page limit?**

Response: Yes, the organizational chart can be included as an annex that does not count against the page limit.

- 6. On page 22, the NOFO states "All past experience cited should be supported by past performance references." Can USAID please confirm that past performance**

information should be included as an annex to the technical proposal and will not count against the page limit?

Response: Past Performance should be provided in the annex and will not be counted against the page limitation. Please refer to attachment 1 provided in the NOFO and submit a maximum of three references.

- 7. On page 27 of the NOFO, it states, “The recipient must provide cost share representing at least 15% of USAID funding.” However, on page 30, it states, “Cost Sharing is not required under this NOFO.” Please confirm cost share is not required.**

Response: Cost Share is not required. USAID/Senegal encourages it and will review any proposed cost share as part of overall cost-effectiveness.

- 8. On page 27 of the NOFO a programmatic budget is requested by expected results. However, the results listed do not match the results in pages 3-6 and the cost application format section provides no other details regarding a programmatic breakdown. Please confirm that a programmatic breakdown is not required, or, if it is needed, the level of detail required.**

Response: No programmatic breakdown is required. Please refer to attached Budget Summary Format (Attachment 12).

- 9. On page 28 of the NOFO, it states, “No construction is authorized under this cooperative agreement.” However, on page 13, it states, “Applicants should set-aside \$1.5 million for miscellaneous small-scale construction/renovation activities.” And, for outcomes 1 and 2, on pages 4 and 5, it states “A small portion of the \$1.5M budget set-aside for small scale rehabilitation activities is anticipated to be applied to this outcome.” Could USAID please clarify its expectation?**

Response: As stated in page 13 of the NOFO, applicants should set-aside \$1.5 million for miscellaneous small-scale construction/renovation activities.

- 10. Section I-A.2, page 4 notes “a \$1.5M budget set aside for small-scale rehabilitation activities”. Could USAID please clarify whether this includes refurbishment activities?**

Response: Yes this includes refurbishment activities.

- 11. With respect to the \$1.5M budget set aside, will USAID allow the issuance of sub-grants for additional activities that may be required, beyond and above the mandatory set-aside for small scale rehabilitation?**

Response: Yes, USAID will allow the issuance of sub-grants with qualified local organizations for additional activities that may be required, beyond and above the mandatory set-aside for small scale rehabilitation

- 12. Section IV – C. Application Submission Procedures, page 19, the RFA states that “Applicants may upload applications to <http://grants.gov>” and that “Applicants must submit applications electronically to EDU_solicitations@usaid.gov.” Could USAID please**

confirm that it is sufficient for applicants to submit applications by email only and need not submit through grants.gov, in addition to email submission?

Response: It is sufficient for applicants to submit applications by e-mail only to EDU_solicitations@usaid.gov with a copy to cmills@usaid.gov.

13. Section IV – D. Technical Application Format, page 21, the RFA states, “Please number pages as ‘Page _ of _ Pages’ where a page number combined with a letter indicates a page that is exempt from the 30-page limitation.” Would USAID kindly clarify what is meant by a page number combined with a letter?

Response: USAID prefers not to have page numbers with letters. Please refer to page limit instructions on page 20 and 21 of the NOFO.

14. Section IV—D, page 22 notes “USAID/Senegal may require past performance references for key personnel from the apparently successful applicant to confirm success of past work”. Could USAID please confirm that applicants do not have to submit contact information for references for key personnel candidates with their resumes at this stage of the application process?

Response: Applicants are not required to submit key personnel references at this stage.

15. Section IV-D, page 22 notes “USAID/Senegal may require past performance references from the apparently successful applicant to confirm past achievements.” Further, on page 21, the list of annexes does not allow the inclusion of project past performance references. Please confirm that applicants do not have to submit past performance information (PPI) forms, provided as Attachment 1 of the RFA, as part of the initial application.

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 6.

16. Section IV-D, page 23 states “applicants must include...their approach to achieving environmental compliance and management. Could USAID please provide a copy of the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) completed for this activity per 22 CFR216, so that applicants may align proposed environmental impact management and mitigation approaches accordingly?

Response: Please see attached IEE (Attachment 10) approved in August 2016. However, please note that some activities have been revised since then and may differ from activities that are being proposed in this NOFO.

17. Could USAID please provide the full local compensation plan for Senegal including FSN scale and allowances”, so that applicants may examine market value for local staff salaries and allowances?

Response: Please see attached Local Compensation Plan (LCP) Attachment 11.

18. Section IV - Section E Cost Application Format, page 27, the RFA states that “the recipient must provide cost share representing at least 15% of USAID funding,” but on page 30 of the same section the RFA states that “cost sharing is not required under this NOFO.”

a) Could USAID please confirm that cost share is not required? Page 2

b) If cost share is required, could USAID please release additional information as to its internal determination of the cost share requirement, so that organizations may maximize their response to the cost share requirement to the benefit of the program and engage a broader base of contributors ensuring wider adoption and sustainability of program efforts?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 7.

19. Section IV—E Cost Application Format:

a) c. Budget, p. 24, in the Illustrative budget format, USAID includes line #10 Estimated Award Amount – Federal Share, line #11 Programmatic Budget, and Total Activity Budget.

i. What is the difference between the Total Activity Budget line item and #10 Estimated Award Amount? Are these the same amounts or is the #10 Estimated Award Amount intended to be added to #11 Programmatic Budget to determine the Total Activity Budget?

Response: Please see revised Budget Summary Format (Attachment 12).

ii. If the latter, please confirm that #11 Programmatic Budget includes all applicable indirect costs.

b) c.8. Other Direct Costs, p. 26 references “the CTI activity”. Could USAID please clarify what the CTI activity is?

Response: Any reference to the CTI Activity is deleted.

c) c.11. Programmatic Budget, p. 27: Please clarify the requirements for submission of a programmatic budget (line item #11 in the Budget template); i.e.,

i. Is the breakdown of costs a below-the-line summary budget by result per year and is it based on the amounts listed in the Total Estimated Award Amount inclusive of all indirect costs or is it in addition to the Total Estimated Award Amount?

Response: Please see revised Budget Summary Format (Attachment 12).

ii. The expected results listed i.e. 1) capacity of local government to respond to citizen demand increased, 2) mobilization and management of local public resources improved, and 3) community participation in service delivery management (health, education, WASH, Agriculture) increased do not align to the scope of work for the EAESS activity as outlined in Section I of the RFA. Could USAID please remove the reference to these results from the cost application instructions and allow applicants to structure program budgets in line with their proposed technical approaches?

Response: The applicant's proposed budget will not be broken down by program line item. Rather, please see the attached Budget Summary Format - Attachment 12 in the amendment to the solicitation.

20. Are applicants required to provide separate detailed budgets for each programmatic result or is it acceptable to just include the summary amounts per result per year without separate detailed budgets per result?

Response: Applicants are not required to provide separate detailed budgets for each programmatic result. USAID prefers that applicants include summary amounts per year without separate detailed budgets per result.

21. Alternatively, can programmatic activity costs per results be detailed under ODCs rather than below the-line, so that budgets can reflect all applicable indirect costs?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 19.

22. Should USAID require cost share for the program, could USAID please instruct how cost share should be reflected in applicants' budgets?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 7.

23. Section IV-E (d) Budget Narrative, p. 28 states that “no construction is authorized under this cooperative agreement”, whereas p. 29 asks for “a breakdown of proposed construction/renovation costs.” Could USAID please clarify and confirm what activities are allowed/anticipated under this program as part of the \$1.5 million small-scale rehabilitation fund?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 9.

24. Program Description; Page 1: A. Purpose, paragraph 1

“The purpose of the Equitable Access to Education in Southern Senegal Cooperative Agreement (CA) is to ensure the maximum number of children (aged approximately 9-16) in the Casamance (Ziguinchor, Sedhiou, and Kolda) and Kedougou regions of Senegal have equitable access to relevant basic education opportunities that develop essential life skills”

Could USAID clarify if there is a minimum number of direct beneficiaries expected to be met? What is the acceptable benchmark?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 3.

25. Similarly, could USAID clarify the percentage of 9-11-year-old children and that of 12-16-year-old expected to be targeted by the program?

Response: USAID expects that applicants will propose ambitious but realistic targets for the respective age groups.

26. Page 6, Output 4.2: Could USAID clarify what the expectation is around increasing financial resources that families dedicate to financial expenses?

Response: The out of school children and youth study conducted by USAID highlights the negative impact of poverty on parents' ability to pay school fees and related costs. USAID expects applicants to propose innovative approaches that would reduce this constraint and allow more children to access education.

27. On page one, USAID provides a footnote about the range of life skills and their purpose. However, there is no set definition. Can USAID clarify if there is a preferred definition of life skills in this NOFO?

Response: USAID does not have a set or preferred definition of life skills.

28. Regarding Output 4.4 (Increased engagement of youth to take positive action to promote enrollment and retention in responsive education services), what is the age of youth in this case? Are they considered direct beneficiaries (e.g. ages 10-16 years or older than this)? Please clarify how USAID is defining this target group?

Response: For this output, USAID expects the applicant to work within the defined target age group (9-16 years old) or propose and justify an appropriate age of youth for the specific activities proposed.

29. Regarding Output 4.4, could USAID provide some parameters of the extent of youth to engage in this project?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 28.

30. On Page 12, the NOFO requires that contextual analyses conducted at the outset of the activity include an analysis of gender and disability. Please clarify if the applicants are expected to complete a gender and disability analysis before submission?

Response: Applicants are not expected to complete a gender and disability analysis before submission.

31. Page 27c.10. Cost Sharing: “The recipient must provide cost share representing at least 15% of USAID funding”

While on page 30: “Cost Sharing is not required under this NOFO. However, USAID/Senegal encourages it and will review any proposed cost share as part of overall cost-effectiveness”.

Could USAID clarify if Cost Share is required or is it optional?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 7.

33. Section D. Technical application format (Annexes Page 21).

Resumes/Curriculum Vitae (CVs) for Key Personnel and long-term professional staff (not to exceed [NTE] 2 pages each), proposed position descriptions (NTE 1 page each) and signed letters of commitment (NTE 1 page each) from Key Personnel. What positions does USAID consider key?

Response: USAID is not defining key personnel. Please refer to page 22 in the NOFO, under management and staffing approach.

34. For the institutional reforms to the formal and CBE systems described in the NOFO, does USAID anticipate that the recipient will work on a national scale, or only in the regions targeted by the project ?

Response: The recipient will only work in the regions targeted by the project, but will be cognizant of the need to consult and work within national guidelines.

35. Does USAID have a minimum target for the CBE services/centers to be reached in this project? If so, can USAID share this information?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 3

36. On page 4, the NOFO expresses that a large portion of the \$1.5 million set aside is for small-scale rehabilitation activities for Outcome 1. On p. 5 it also says the same, but that it would be applied to Outcome 2. Does USAID expect us to set aside \$1.5 million for Outcome 1 and an additional \$1.5 million for Outcome 2 rehabilitation in the total amount of \$3 million across both outcomes? Please clarify what is expected in terms of funding set aside for rehabilitation.

Response: \$1.5 million budget is set aside for both outcomes 1 and 2.

37. Are the documents pertaining to Environmental Compliance included in the page count or are they considered to be an additional Annex not listed on page 21? Or is a plan on how environmental compliance meant to be included only in the PMP?

Response: The applicant is expected to describe its overall approach to environmental compliance in the technical approach and submit a more detailed environmental compliance plan as part of the PMP.

38. Is submission of the Past Performance Information template included in Attachment 1 required with the proposal? If yes, how many past performance references may be submitted? Will the submission of this template be counted towards page limit, as it is not included in the Annexes listed on page 21?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 6.

39. Is the organogram required in the main body of the proposal or can it be presented in the Annexes?

Response: The organogram should be presented in the Annexes.

40. Under Cost Application Format section, subsections c.4 Equipment, c.5 Supplies and c.7. Other Direct Costs, USAID asks applicants to provide basis for cost estimates (eg., proforma invoice, published price lists, etc.). Can USAID confirm that actual proforma invoices and other documents supporting the unit cost be submitted with the proposal?

Response: No proforma invoices are required to be submitted.

41. Under Cost Application Format section, c.6 Contractual: Sub-Awards section, we would like USAID to confirm whether all subaward detailed budgets are required (including small grants, lower tier subcontractors etc).

Response: Yes, all sub-award detailed budgets are required including small grants, lower tier subcontractors etc.

42. Under Cost Application Format section, subsection c.11 Programmatic Budget, can USAID confirm the result areas included in this section?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 19.

43. Under Cost Application Format section, subsection d. Budget Narrative, USAID mentions that no construction is authorized under this cooperative agreement. In preceding sections, applicants are requested to set aside \$1.5 million for construction/renovation activities. Can USAID clarify these two positions?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 9.

44. Under Cost Application Format section, subsection d Budget Narrative, it is stated that cost sharing is not required (page 30). However under the same section, subsection c.10 Cost Sharing is required. Can USAID confirm which section is correct?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 7.

45. Under Cost Application Format section, under F. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM), does USAID require all subawards, including local Senegalese organizations, be registered under SAM?

Response: USAID requires prime to be SAM registered, but not sub awards.

46. Will USAID please consider including an acronyms page that does not count towards the total page count of the technical proposal?

Response: Yes, USAID will allow an acronyms page that does not count towards the total page count of the technical proposal.

47. Does USAID consider access to vocational education opportunities as part of the scope of the program?

Response: Cost effective vocational opportunities that complement and support the provision of life skills could be part of a technical approach. Formal and intensive technical and vocational training could be cost prohibitive and may not be as effective in reaching larger numbers of children.

48. Could USAID confirm that Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRSs) are not required as part of the Draft AMELP?

Response: PIRS are not required at this stage as part of the draft AMELP.

49. On Page 23, under Draft Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (AMELP), the NOFO states “The AMELP, including data collection approach, should be in a table format with notes.” Does this mean the entire AMELP including the Learning Agenda and the Performance Monitoring Plan should be in tables? Can narrative or introductory sections in paragraphs be included?

Response: A combination of tables and narrative sections may be included in the draft AMELP.

50. Could USAID confirm that the Draft AMELP Annex is not subject to any page limitation?

Response: The draft AMELP annex is not subject to page limitation.

51. Could USAID please confirm the purpose of Attachment 3: Indicator table on page 64, as this is not explicitly referenced in the main body of the NOFO?

Response: USAID confirms the Attachment 3: Indicator Table on page 64 is deleted.

52. In Section 1 “Program Description,” the purpose states the Equitable Access to Education in Southern Senegal Cooperative Agreement (CA) is to ensure the maximum number of children (aged approximately 9-16) in the Casamance (Ziguinchor, Sedhiou, and Kolda) and Kedougou regions of Senegal have equitable access to relevant basic education opportunities that develop essential life skills. Can USAID give any further guidance as to the number of targeted beneficiaries (students) that are expected to be reached?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 3.

53. Would USAID please provide the anticipated start date for this project?

Response: The anticipated start date is September 2018.

54. What is the CFDA number for this program?

Response: The CFDA number for this program is 98.001

55. Is the host country considered an accompanied post or an unaccompanied post by USAID?

Response: Senegal is an accompanied post.

56. On page 15, the RFA states that the sufficient applicant both “will be subject to a risk assessment (Pre-Award Survey) by the AO” and “the AO may determine a pre-award survey is required”. Could you please clarify whether a pre-award survey must be conducted?

Response: A pre-award survey may be conducted based on USAID determination at time of award.

57. As the recipient will be operating in the host country and need to hire employees in-country as well as expatriate staff and third-country nationals, would USAID kindly provide a copy of (or link to) the current bilateral agreement between the US and the host country or confirm that there is no bilateral agreement between the US and the host country?

Response: This information will not be provided.

58. On page 27, under “Foreign Entities (Non-U.S. Organizations), the RFA states that “Indirect costs shall not be included for Foreign Entities, including prime and sub-awardees”. Is this meant to apply only to local Senegalese organizations? Not allowing indirect costs for all Foreign Entities may exclude potential international NGO partners who rely on indirect cost recovery.

Response: Yes, this applies to local Senegalese organizations that do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA).

59. On page 27, the RFA states: “The recipient must provide cost share representing at least 15% of USAID funding.” However, on page 30, the RFA states: “Cost sharing is not required under this NOFO.” Please clarify whether cost share is required and if so, at what level.

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 7.

60. Would USAID accept leveraging instead of cost sharing?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 7.

61. On Page 29, the RFA states that there must be both a budget with “an accompanying detailed budget narrative”, and later requires “A budget for each program year with an accompanying detailed budget narrative.” Please confirm that one detailed budget, with costs broken out by year, and one detailed budget narrative, detailing costs for the entire program implementation, are sufficient.

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 19.

62. In order to propose salaries that are comparable with USAID’s salaries, would USAID kindly provide its local compensation plan for CCN staff?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 17.

63. In Section IV.E.c. (page 24) – USAID provided an illustrative budget format and descriptions detailed in pages 24-28

a. C.6 - Please confirm that “Contractual” should also include consultant costs.

Response: Yes, contractual should also include consultant costs.

b. C.11 – Please clarify what is to be included in this section as the note on page 27 seems to be unrelated.

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 19.

64. Are there any Mission-specific blanket waivers in effect which will be available to an award resulting from this solicitation?

Response: There are not any Mission specific blanket waivers.

65. Is there a MB limit (per email) for the electronic submission?

Response: No there is not an MB limit per e-mail for the electronic submission. With that in mind USAID asks that applicants do not submit excessively large MB files.

66. Is there a limit on the number of attachments (per email) for the electronic submission?

Response: There is not a limit on the number of attachments (per e-mail) for the electronic submission.

67. Please confirm that later versions of Microsoft Word and Excel documents (2010/2013/2016) are acceptable.

Response: Yes, later versions of Microsoft Word and Excel documents (2010/2013/2016) are acceptable.

68. Please confirm that documents which require a signature may be submitted in pdf electronically signed.

Response: Yes, documents which require a signature may be submitted in pdf electronically signed.

69. The RFA requests several cost documents from the applicant (e.g. NICRA, certifications, and Evidence of Responsibility). Are these items required from proposed sub recipients, or only from the prime applicant?

Response: These items are only required from the prime applicants.

70. On page 21, the NOFO states that “Please number pages as “Page __ of __ Pages” where a page number combined with a letter indicates a page that is exempt from the 30-page limitation. Annexes can be numbered separately and should be numbered as “Annex 1: 1 of X, Annex 2: 2 of X”, et cetera. Pages should be paginated at the bottom.” To facilitate combining all annexes into one document, may offerors use the following instead: “Technical Annexes—Page XXX”?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question number 13.

71. Would USAID please provide a copy of the referenced August 3, 2016 IEE?

Response: Please refer to answer provided to question #16.

72. Would USAID please provide information regarding who the USAID contact person will be regarding compliance with USAID environmental assessment regulations?

Response: USAID does not deem necessary to provide this information at this stage.

73. How can applicants access copies of applicable Mission Orders?

Response: Mission orders are not available.

74. On page 9, the RFA states that a draft AMELP is to be submitted, followed by a final AMELP 90 days after award, however, page 58 states that the AMELP is due 45 dates after award, with no draft mentioned. Could you please clarify: 1.) whether a draft AMELP is required; and 2.) the required submission dates of the draft (if any) and final AMELP?

Response: As stated on page 9 of the NOFO, the applicant must submit a draft AMEL in response to this NOFO. A final AMELP will be due 90 days after award.

75. Is USAID firm on its target age group of 9-16, or is there some flexibility?

Response: USAID is firm on its target group of 9-16. However, as stated in the response to question #28, USAID may be flexible for the age group related to output 4.4.

76. On pages 4 and 5, the RFA states: ‘A small portion of the \$1.5M budget set-aside for small scale rehabilitation activities is anticipated to be applied to this outcome’. What should be the extent of “rehabilitation activities” given that on page 28 the RFA states: “No construction is authorized under this cooperative agreement.”

Response: Please refer to answer to question number 9.

77. On page 28, the RFA states: “No construction is authorized under this cooperative agreement,” however, pages 13 and 29 request that the applicant budgets and provides breakdowns for construction/renovation costs. Please confirm that construction costs are allowed.

Response: Please refer to answer to question number 9.

78. Is not there's a French version of the guidelines?

Response: There is not a French version.

79. The proposal will be submitted in any language also?

Response: Proposals must be submitted in English only.

[END OF QUESTIONS]

SECTION VIII: OTHER INFORMATION

Below are the attachments furnished to the Applicants:

Add:

- 10. IEE Initial Environmental Examination - August 2016
- 11. Local Compensation Plan (LCP)
- 12. Budget Summary Format

[END OF AMENDMENT 000001]