



March 5, 2014

Subject: Request for Applications (RFA) Number: RFA-278-14-00004
USAID Jordan Communication, Advocacy and Policy (USAID J-CAP) Activity
Amendment #1

The purpose of this Amendment is to:

1. Revise Section I, by deleting “shall” and replacing with “should” in the following pages:
 - a. Section I, page 7, 1st Paragraph, last Sentence hereinafter states “All interventions under this activity should support the achievement of the two primary objectives as outlined in the RFA.”
 - b. Section I, page 7, 2nd paragraph, 6th sentence hereinafter states “Applicants should focus interventions on supporting institutional strengthening, financial management, training, and capacity building to increase the ability to select NGOs and CBOs to strategically plan, implement and evaluate reproductive health social and behavior change activities at the community level.”
 - c. Section I, page 7, 2nd paragraph, 8th sentence hereinafter states “Identifying new partners should not be at the expense of capacity building for existing USAID/Jordan partners.”
 - d. Section I, page 8, 2nd paragraph, last sentence hereinafter states “USAID/Jordan’s experience with BCC activities demonstrate that focused community level campaigns can achieve results; therefore a phased approach with maximum coverage based on available data and potential for impact should be considered.”
 - e. Section I, page 8, 3rd paragraph, last sentence hereinafter states “USAID/Jordan health programs should provide equitable access to healthcare across subpopulation groups, including vulnerable populations. Activities should benefit the entirety of Jordanian society, without respect to nationality, in support of the GOJ national development and demographic goals.”
 - f. Section I, page 8, last line, hereinafter states “Activities should be designed that actively educate beneficiaries about their rights to high-quality services, provide essential knowledge of reproductive processes and the benefits of family planning, and foster skills to articulate needs and rights. In this way activities can catalyze more sustainable behavior change.”
 - g. Section I, page 17, 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence, hereinafter states “This activity shall be gender-sensitive and prioritize the participation of women beneficiaries and other marginalized groups, from the beginning and continuously, in design, decision-making, priority setting, implementation, and evaluation – and finally should ensure ownership by participants and beneficiaries.”
2. Revise Section IV, page 25, last paragraph, second sentence, by deleting “core non-program staff” and replacing with “core non-Key Personnel staff”, and clarifying such that hereinafter the

Sentence states: "Staffing plans are expected to include core non-Key Personnel staff, minimum key technical staff, and an explanation of how additional technical expertise will be obtained with attention to cost-containment and avoiding unnecessary staffing."

3. Revise Section IV, page 26, 1st sentence, by deleting "may" and replacing with "will" and including additional clarification so that hereinafter the sentence states "The Applicant will include a summary staffing pattern as an annex, which will not be included in the page limit. This staffing pattern should include the resumes and/or CVs of each of the proposed core non-Key Personnel staff. Resumes and CVs should not exceed 2 pages each but there is no page limit to the staffing pattern annex."
4. Revise Section VI, Page 42, under Section 3(a), by deleting "Within 45 days of signing the award" and replacing with "Within 45 days of signing the sub-award".
5. Revise Attachment 2, Page 57, by deleting from the first sentence "will co-locate and embed with relevant stakeholders as possible to achieve its goals and objectives."
6. Responds to questions received from potential applicants. Accordingly, the subject RFA is hereby amended at Attachment 1.

Attachment 1

The following are questions received from potential Applicants and answers provided:

Question 1: Under Component 1, the RFA refers to increasing demand for Family Planning and Reproductive Health services. However, the emphasis is heavy on behavior change related to family planning only. Does this mean behavior change in relation to other reproductive health services is not a priority of this RFA?

Response:

Yes. Emphasis should be primarily on family planning, not other reproductive health services, such as safe motherhood & gender based violence.

Question 2: The main focus of the RFA seems to be at the national and community levels, but page SECTION I - 9 states "Social and behavior change activities and campaigns shall be implemented at various levels, i.e. the national, sub-national, and community levels". Can this be clarified?

Response:

The national and community level interventions are the priorities for this RFA, but given that some governorates have certain peculiarities in terms of Total Fertility Rate and Family Planning, additional measures might be needed at governorate level.

Question 3: Question:
Does USAID anticipate that the modern method campaigns currently run by the SHOPS Ta'ziz Project will migrate to the J-CAP activity?

Response:

Yes.

Question 4: On page 42, section 3(a) notes that a capacity building plan is due to USAID 45 days after signing the award. It is our understanding that the grantees will not be identified within that timeframe. Can USAID clarify the timing of this plan?

Response:

As set forth above, page 42 has been amended to state that the capacity building plan is due to USAID 45 days after signing of the sub-award to a grantee.

Question 5:

Section I, Paragraph 1.b. Sub-Grant Program Details, page 14 states, “The grantees under the sub-grants program can include a wide range of governmental and non-governmental organizations, including... local, regional, and national governments.”

Questions:

- a. Can cash grants be made to governmental organizations?
- b. Please clarify whether salary supplements to host country officials may be authorized under J-CAP?
- c. If so, will they be authorized on a case-by-case basis or are they authorized for the program as a whole?

Response:

Sub-grants are generally intended for non-governmental entities. However, a determination to provide cash grants for programmatic assistance to governmental organizations will be made on a case-by-case basis. Salary supplements to host country officials will not be authorized, in accordance with ADS 302.3.3(b)(6).

Question 6:

USAID, please clarify and define the intent and parameters of the RFA. While the RFA’s cover letter clearly states that the J-CAP Application is a Cooperative Agreement, much of the wording as well as the RFA’s structure, requirements and focus on accountable results seem to suggest that USAID wishes to utilize J-CAP more like a contract than a CA. Examples of contractual language and RFA structure include:

- a. The word “*shall*” is spread throughout the text which specifies that the implementing agency will be held accountable regardless of the external environment in which they work. As stated in Component 2 (page I-10), the external environment is described as: “*Even though there are concerns at the highest levels of government in Jordan about rapid population growth, these concerns are generally not translated into strong programmatic support for family planning.*”
- b. Implementation and Activity Modules (page I-12) states that a “phased award plan provides USAID/Jordan with the flexibility to redirect or terminate the award ... “. While URC supports a strong focus on accountable yet measurable results, measuring results must be considered within the wider programmatic context of GOJ strategies, political will, and stakeholder performance.
- c. Sub-grant Program (page I-14): while sub-contracts have been included in other USAID-funded Cooperative Agreements, any successful or unsuccessful development or strengthening of local organizations needs to be measured within the broader context.
- d. Substantial Involvement (page II-20): these expanded clauses seem to go well beyond USAID’s standard three in earlier RFAs.

Response:

This is a Cooperative Agreement and follows the guidelines for such a mechanism pursuant to 22 CFR 226 and ADS 303. As set forth above, the use of “shall” has been reviewed, and revised to “should” in certain instances, as set forth hereinabove.

The relationship between Jordan and the United States is a close relationship and integral to the United States’ foreign policy objectives. Therefore, the implementation and activity modules as well as the Substantial Involvement provisions enable USAID to ensure that this proposed activity is deeply aligned with the United States’ foreign policy.

Question 7:

Would USAID consider revising the minimum education requirements for the key personnel to allow years of work experience to be substituted for the Master’s degree?

Response:

No.

Question 8:

Please clarify whether the “summary staffing pattern as an annex” mentioned at the top of page 26 and the “skills matrix for proposed staff,” also on page 26, are the same or two separate annexes? If these are two separate annexes, please clarify what is required in the summary staffing pattern annex.

Response:

The Summary Staffing Pattern and the Skills matrix for proposed staff are two separate annexes.

The Summary Staffing Pattern should summarize the proposed organizational and staff structure and logistical support. As part of this annex, the Applicant should include the resumes and/or CVs for the core non-Key Personnel staff. These resumes and/or CVs may not exceed two (2) pages each. There is no page limit to the Summary Staffing Pattern annex.

The Skills Matrix for Proposed Staff should set forth the skills for all key personnel and core non-key personnel staff. The Applicant may include additional staff within its skills matrix at its option. The skills matrix may not exceed one page.

Question 9: Can USAID provide guidance regarding the number and types of staff to be co-located or embedded?

Response:

Please disregard the statement “Applicant will be have offices in Jordan and will co-locate or embed with relevant stakeholders as possible to achieve its goals and objectives.” This can be addressed at a later stage (i.e. work plans) on a case by case basis, if needed, but it is not required.

Question 10: A Skills matrix of proposed staff is required as an Annex. Please clarify if all key, technical, non-technical, STTA and HQ staff are required in the skills matrix.

Response:

The skills matrix should set forth the skills for all key personnel and core non-key personnel staff. The Applicant may include additional staff within its skills matrix at is option. The skills matrix may not exceed one page.

Question 11: Does the term “core non-program staff” refer to finance and administrative staff?

Response:

Yes, “core non-program staff” refers to and includes finance and administrative staff. In order to further clarify, the RFA has been amended to delete “core non-program staff” and replace with “core non-Key Personnel staff”.

Question 12: Can USAID clarify whether up to five past performance references are requested for the applicant’s team as a whole or if up to five references are requested for the prime and each major subpartner?

Response:

Applicants are requested to provide five past performance references for the prime and each major subpartner (as defined in the RFA), as applicable.

Question 13: The RFA does not mention an Executive Summary in the page count. Also, ‘additional annexes not required by this RFA will not be evaluated’ (pg. SECTION IV – 25). Please confirm that an Executive Summary is not required nor expected.

Response:

An Executive Summary is not required nor expected, however, Applicants are not precluded from submitting such an Executive Summary. If an Executive Summary is submitted, it will not count toward the total page limit but may not exceed one (1) page.

Question 14: Would USAID permit submission of an executive summary with the initial technical application that does not count against the page count? If yes, please clarify desired length for the executive summary.

Response:

An Executive Summary is not required nor expected. However, if an Executive Summary is included, it will not count towards the page limit. The Executive Summary may not exceed one (1) page.

Question 15: The Initial Technical Application Format requires a Monitoring and Evaluation plan that adequately evaluates performance and provides information for project planning that satisfies the guidelines regarding such a plan set forth in SECTION VI, Part D, and the M&E plan shall be attached as an Annex (SECTION IV -27). However, the Evaluation Criteria indicates the need for an 'M&E plan that will ensure a robust and reliable M&E approach so that the activity is results-focused, including methodologies for establishing baselines and targets and measuring progress', which is one of the two criteria to be used for evaluating the technical approach. Please confirm if there is a page limit on the M&E plan and that it will be included as an Annex.

Response:

The evaluation criteria related to the M&E Plan for the initial technical application is set forth in Section V.A.3 on page 35. The evaluation criteria related to the M&E Plan for the oral presentation phase is set forth in Section V.B.1 on page 36.

There is no page limit to the M&E plan, which will be included as an annex and does not count against the page limit of the Initial Technical Application.

Question 16: Page IV-2 of the RFA states, "Any additional annexes not required by this RFA will not be evaluated." Would USAID kindly provide a list of all required annexes?

Response:

The required annexes are:

- 1) Summary Staffing Pattern (includes resumes/CVs of core non-Key Personnel staff and key technical staff)**
- 2) Key Personnel Annex – which includes Staffing Skills Matrix of Key Personnel; Key Personnel Resumes; Letters of Commitment; and References**
- 3) Past performance References**
- 4) Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**
- 5) Summary Organizational Chart**

Question 17: Under '**6. Object Class Categories**' on form SF 424 A, should '**Column 1**' include costs for Years 1 and 2 combined (first phase of the program) for the eleven categories?

Response:

The costs for Year 1 and 2 should be separate for the eleven categories. i.e., 'Column 1' should reflect costs for Year 1, Column 2 should reflect costs for Year 2.

Question 18: Section IV, Paragraph B.4. Initial Cost Application Format, RFA page 28 states, "For the purpose of the SF 424A, the first funding period is the first phase of the program, which is two years in duration. The subsequent three phases are each one year in duration." Please clarify whether SF 424A section D should include cash needs for Years 1 and 2 (the first phase of the program). Section E would then include information for Phases 2-4 (years 3-5).

Response:

Section D of the SF424A should include cash needs for Year 1, and then Section E should include information for the remaining years of the activity.

Question 19: Section IV, Paragraph B.4. Initial Cost Application Format, RFA pages 27-28 indicates the summary budget should provide "a breakdown by major cost elements". Additionally, under Section IV, Paragraph D.2 page 32, a list of budget categories is included.

- a. Would it be possible to add categories?
- b. Can we add separate budget categories for Module 2 and Module 3, or should costs for Module 2 and Module 3 be included under the Other Direct Costs category?
- c. Since indirect costs associated with Module 2 and Module 3 would only be applied if/when those modules are exercised, if Module 2 and Module 3 cannot be included as separate categories, please clarify how indirect costs associated with Module 2 and Module 3 should be displayed in the budget.

Response:

The format for the Initial Cost Application is set forth on Section IV.B.4., at pages 27-28. The Applicant should use Standard Form 424-A to complete the Initial Cost Application and should not deviate from the breakdown of major cost elements identified therein.

The cost application referenced in Section IV.D.2, on page 32, refers to the Final Cost Application. The following responds with regard to the Final Cost Application:

- a. **It is acceptable to add categories to the Final Cost Application budget categories.**

- b. A separate line item for Module 2 and Module 3 may be added to the Final Cost Application.
- c. See answer to “b”.

Question 20: The current SF 424s on grants.gov do not include cells to separate Headquarters versus Field Costs. Please confirm that we do not need to disaggregate these costs (Headquarters versus Field Costs) on our SF 424s.

Response:

Confirmed. Applicants do not need to disaggregate Headquarters versus Field Costs in the SF 424.

Question 21: Will USAID prescribe an exchange rate to be used in the proposal?

Response:

The exchange rate is JD 0.708 = US \$1.00.

Question 22: For purposes of setting a level evaluation field for Offerors, would USAID consider prescribing an annual escalation rate for local labor and Other Direct Costs?

Response:

USAID will not prescribe an annual escalation rate for local labor and Other Direct Costs. The Applicant should propose its own rates.

Question 23: Does USAID envision the close-out of any ongoing USAID project prior to the initiation of the Cooperative Agreement that would allow for transfer of Non-Expendable Property to J-CAP?

Response:

Applicants should not assume that there will be a transfer of Non-Expendable Property to the USAID J-CAP Activity.