



USAID | SOMALIA

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**Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number 72064923RFA00001 72064923RFA00002 – USAID
Somalia's Accelerated Education Activity - Amendment 01
Questions and Answers**

1. In reference to NOFO #72064923RFA00002, USAID Somalia's Accelerated Education Activity, applicants are required to complete a Beneficiary Target Table as part of Annex 4 of the application. The link to the Beneficiary Target Table is provided in Section D, page 39 of the NOFO. However, the link to the table takes us to a Google Docs webpage where we had to request access to the document, which we are now awaiting. Would USAID kindly consider removing the restriction to access on the link or adding the Beneficiary Target Table to the solicitation documents on Grants.gov?
RESPONSE: The restriction has been removed. All applicants are now able to access the link to the Beneficiary Target table.
2. On page 12 of the NOFO, Table 1 shows 31 districts, but Bondhere/Boondhere is mentioned twice. Could USAID kindly confirm the final targeted districts?
RESPONSE: Bondhere and Boondhere are the same district. The applicant may propose a minimum of 20 districts within the CDCS focal zone to base its management approach and budget. The apparent successful applicant or implementing partner, in collaboration with USAID, will finalize district and site selection during co-creation or work planning.
3. In Section C, page 31, the NOFO requires a minimum of 5% cost share of the projected core award amount. Since the US Government contributes to the Global Partnership for Education, would funding received by the applicant from the Global Partnership for Education be eligible to count towards the 5% cost share?
RESPONSE: No, Per 2 CFR 200.306(b)(5), other Federal Government Funds can not be used for cost-sharing, except where the Federal statute authorizing a program specifically provides that Federal funds made available for such a program can be applied to matching or cost sharing requirements of other Federal programs.
4. On page 40 of the NOFO, applicants are required to submit "detailed budgets for each opportunity module" but is then described as "broken out by major budget category and by year..." which matches the description of the summary budget for the core program. Could USAID please confirm that only Summary-level budgets are required for each of the two opportunity modules?
RESPONSE: Confirmed. Only Summary-level budgets are required for each of the two opportunity modules. The NOFO has been amended accordingly.
5. On page 27 in Section B, the estimated start date of this award is May 30, 2023 which has passed. Could USAID please confirm the anticipated start date?
RESPONSE: May 30, 2024. The NOFO has been amended accordingly.

6. In Section D, page 34, the NOFO states that applicants must use a 12-point Times New Roman font, and that a 10-point Times New Roman font can be used for graphs and charts, text boxes and callout boxes. Could USAID please confirm that applicants may: a) use a 10-point font for footnotes and headers/footers; and b) use a larger than 12-point font for section headings and for the cover page?

RESPONSE: Confirmed.

7. In Section D, page 34, the NOFO states that “the technical application must be in a searchable and editable Word **and** PDF format as appropriate” and that applications should be “submitted in **both** Microsoft Word **and** PDF formats....” Is USAID requiring applicants to submit two versions of the technical application – one version in Word and one version in PDF format? If applicants only need to submit one version of the technical application, could USAID please clarify if it should be in Word or PDF format?

RESPONSE: Applicants must submit two versions of the technical application – one version in Word and one version in PDF format

8. According to Section D, pages 38-39 of the NOFO, applicants must submit an Organizational Chart as Annex 2.a, and an Organogram as Annex 2.c. Could USAID please clarify what it sees as the difference between an Organizational Chart and an Organogram?

RESPONSE: USAID has removed Annex 2.c and updated the requirements of Annex 2.a as follows:

Annex 2.a: (not to exceed two (2) pages) Draft organogram showing the staffing structure and identifying formal relationships with all project staff, partners and significant sub-awardees.

9. **Page 12, Target Districts:** The NOFO states “In consultation with USAID and MoECHE, the Activity may expand into newly liberated areas, based on security, and the need and feasibility of reaching underserved populations and children outside the reach of the formal education system.”

Could USAID provide a list of newly liberated areas that will be considered for expansion during implementation?

RESPONSE: The condition of the ground is too dynamic to determine a list of newly liberated areas.

10. Can USAID confirm that applicants are not expected to propose implementation in newly liberated areas at the application stage?

RESPONSE: Applicants may propose implementation sites in newly liberated areas to demonstrate its capacity to expand to newly liberated areas.

The apparent successful applicant or implementing partner, in collaboration with USAID, will finalize district and site selection during co-creation or work planning.

11. **Page 12, Target Districts:** Could USAID confirm if the Activity will be permitted to operate ABE and NFE activities within community spaces and learning spaces that have a religious affiliation?

RESPONSE: The Activity may not engage in explicitly religious activities (including activities that involve overt religious content such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization), as part of the programs or services directly funded with direct financial assistance from USAID. If an organization conducts explicitly religious activities, the activities must be offered separately, in time or location, from the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from USAID, and participation must be voluntary for beneficiaries of the programs or services funded with such assistance.

A faith-based organization that receives financial assistance from USAID may use space in its facilities.

The Activity shall not, in providing services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or potential program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief, refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to attend or participate in a religious practice.

Per the Establishment Clause, the Activity may not use direct financial assistance from USAID (including through a prime award or sub-award) to support or engage in any explicitly religious activities, including religious instruction.

For more information on regulations concerning federal awards and religious activities, see 22 CFR 205.1.

12. **Page 27, Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards:** The NOFO states “The estimated start date will be on or about May 30, 2023.” Could USAID confirm the estimated start date is May 30, 2024?

RESPONSE: Confirmed, May 30, 2024. The NOFO has been amended accordingly.

13. **Page 31, Cost Sharing or Matching:** As the NOFO includes a cost share requirement of 5%, as allowed under ADS 303.3.10.2 and as noted in ADS 303.3.10.1, and as the Activity Planner will have made a determination of the appropriate amount of cost share in support of the requirement to include the determination in the financial analysis of the program prior to issuance of a NOFO, could USAID kindly provide a copy of that determination (written memorandum to the AO documenting the factors that were considered when determining the amount of cost share)? We respectfully request this documentation as the requirement for cost share in the Somalia context seems unreasonable having researched possibilities and opportunities for cost share to support other needs attributable to funding restrictions due to the Establishment Clause challenges. Therefore, any additional information to be gleaned from USAID’s internal analysis/market research would be beneficial to all potential applicants.

RESPONSE: USAID determined that cost sharing is an important element of the USAID-recipient relationship to support the achievement of results. The cost share amount was derived from the cost share requirements in similar activities in Somalia. The Cost-Share memo is an internal deliberative document.

14. **Page 38, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** The NOFO requires the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan to “provide illustrative outcome and output indicators, including a target for the number of children and youth reached. Applicants must propose a mix of standard and custom indicators. Applicants must provide a process for determining how children and youth will be identified/counted as an ‘enrolled student,’ ‘unique learner,’ and ‘ABE graduate.’” In addition, Annex 1.a: Log frame also requires applicants to include “indicators to measure achievement of key results, baseline values and targets for each indicator by year. Indicator targets must be ambitious but realistic.” As indicators will be fully detailed in the Log frame annex, would USAID kindly consider removing the requirement to provide indicators in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan?

RESPONSE: USAID requires that applicants submit both the Annex 1 log frame and MEL plan as described in the NOFO.

15. **Page 38, Technical Application Annexes:** The NOFO notes that Annex 1 (Log frame) will be evaluated as part of the Technical Approach Section. However, the content of the Log frame aligns with the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan instructions and review criteria. Could USAID confirm under which section and review criteria Annex 1 will be evaluated?

RESPONSE: USAID will evaluate Annex 1 as part of the Technical Approach section as currently stated in the NOFO.

16. **Pages 38-39, Technical Application Annexes:** Annex 2 requires an “Organizational Chart that includes lines of supervision between project staff and partners” and a “Draft organogram showing the staffing structure and identifying formal relationships with all project staff, partners and significant sub-awardees.” Could USAID kindly clarify the difference between these two annexes? Would USAID consider consolidating these requirements into one organizational chart annex?

RESPONSE: USAID has removed Annex 2.c and updated the requirements of Annex 2.a as follows:

Annex 2.a: (not to exceed two (2) pages) Draft organogram showing the staffing structure and identifying formal relationships with all project staff, partners and significant sub-awardees.

17. **Page 39, Technical Application Annexes:** The NOFO notes that Annex 3 (draft Y1 workplan) will be evaluated as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. However, the content of the workplan aligns with the Technical Approach instructions and review criteria. Could USAID confirm under which section and review criteria Annex 3 will be evaluated?

RESPONSE: USAID will evaluate Annex 3 (Draft Y1 Work Plan) under the Merit Review Criteria #1: Technical Approach. The NOFO has been amended accordingly.

18. **Pages 40-41, Budget and Budget Narrative:** The NOFO states “Detailed Budgets for each opportunity module, inclusive of all program costs, broken out by major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the period of performance of the opportunity module” must be included in the cost application. Would USAID kindly consider allowing applicants to budget for each opportunity module as an illustrative line item in the Detailed Budget, given that they are an unfunded budget allocation, not guaranteed, and do not have a defined plan of action?

RESPONSE: Summary-level budgets are required for each of the two opportunity modules. The NOFO has been amended accordingly.

19. Section A, page 23 Section Sub 1R 3.1: *Strengthened community involvement in classrooms to promote retention, learning and safety*, can USAID please clarify what is expected of classroom assistants that are mentioned in this Sub IR.

RESPONSE: USAID mentioned classroom assistants as an example of how community members could be engaged to accomplish Sub IR 3.1. It is up to the applicant to propose specific interventions as part of its technical approach to accomplish the stated goals.

20. For Section A, page 24 under Section Sub IR 4.1: *Government effectively implements ABE and NFE policies through Quality Assurance Frameworks*, can USAID please provide a definition and further information of the Quality Assurance Framework and provide an example? Is there an existing policy or framework that should be utilized?

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pxoHr8w_VSrX1tDjV6ignxynqFGtRsg-yuO5jH6x8-s/edit?usp=sharing

A quality assurance framework refers to the tools, mechanisms and processes used to ensure quality standards are being met. USAID will provide a copy of the Government of Somalia Quality Assurance Framework. USAID will not provide a separate example of a quality assurance framework.

[The Quality Assurance Framework](#)

21. Can USAID please clarify if this Activity will support the print and distribution of MoECHE- approved textbooks for learners?

RESPONSE: As stated in the NOFO, the awardee must prioritize the use of existing materials and work closely with other donor organizations to harmonize distribution of Ministry approved materials. USAID anticipates a need for significant printing and distribution of materials to meet the 1:1 ratio of textbooks to students in the majority of districts . USAID will support the printing and distribution of additional materials as needed.

Additionally, as noted in the NOFO, USAID may consider revisions to existing materials during the third implementation year . USAID will support printing and distribution of revised materials as well.

USAID will amend the NOFO to add a requirement for the implementing partner to conduct an existing material needs assessment in the first quarter of implementation.

Applicants are reminded to carefully review 22 CFR Part 205 and its requirements when planning activities. Applicants must propose ways to collaborate with other partners to develop and finance the instruction prohibited by the Establishment Clause, which is required for the full ABE Curriculum in Somalia.

22. Section D.5(ii)-Staffing and Operations Plan, page 37 the last bullet states “*Propose and approach for hiring, vetting, training, timekeeping, remuneration, and performance verification for ABE teachers.* Can USAID please confirm this refers only for ABE teachers? Can USAID please confirm whether Applicants are to include salaries for ABE and NFE teachers in their Cost Applications.

RESPONSE: The requirement refers to both ABE and NFE teachers. The proposed remuneration for teachers must be included in Cost Applications.

In addition, USAID will replace the word "hiring" with "engaging" to allow applicants to propose the best way to engage teachers.

The new requirement will read: “Propose an approach for engaging, vetting, training, timekeeping, remuneration, and performance verification for ABE and NFE teachers.”

23. Section D.5(iv)-Technical Application Annexes, page 38 and 39 has requested two separate *Annex 2a Organizational Chart and 2c Draft Organogram* that appear to request the same information from Applicants. Can USAID please confirm that only one organizational chart/organogram is required from Applicants and that this would be limited to two pages?

RESPONSE: USAID has removed Annex 2.c and updated the requirements of Annex 2.a as follows:

Annex 2.a: (not to exceed two (2) pages) Draft organogram showing the staffing structure and identifying formal relationships with all project staff, partners and significant sub-awardees.

24. Section D.5(iv)-Technical Application Annexes, page 38 states that Annex 1.a Log Frame will be evaluated as part of the Technical Approach Section and that Annex 3 Draft Y1 Work Plan will be evaluated as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Section. Considering the Log Frame relates to the M&E Plan and the Draft Y1 Work Plan relates to the Technical Approach, can USAID please clarify if the evaluation criteria should be flipped, in that Annex 1.a Log Frame will be evaluated as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Section while Annex 3 Draft Y1 Work Plan will be evaluated as part of the Technical Approach?

RESPONSE: USAID will evaluate both Annex 1 and Annex 3 as part of the Technical Approach section. The NOFO has been amended accordingly.

25. Can USAID please confirm that funds for the baseline, midline, and endline will come from a separate source of funds apart from this Application?

RESPONSE: USAID will fund the baseline evaluation through this Activity. Funds for the midline and endline evaluations will come from a separate source of funds apart from this Application.

26. The solicitation indicates that not all schools received textbooks during the first distribution of textbooks in 2020. Does this "distribution" refer to ABE textbooks, and have there been additional distributions since then? If so, how many additional textbooks have been distributed?

RESPONSE: See answer to question 26 below.

27. Is there a list of the materials distributed by USAID including quantities, and locations?

RESPONSE: Yes, you can refer to [year 4 distribution list](#) and [year 5 planned distribution list](#).

28. Has the National Adult Education Policy been developed and available? If not, can NFE activities be based on community needs and feasibility as stated in Page 11 and the Somalia ABE policy Framework identified in Picture 2 Page 13?

RESPONSE: Yes, the National Adult Education Policy and Framework have been developed, here are the links:

Adult (NFE) Education Policy:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iGx8BsFiG46xslY-AsgSKtJe-ROk3MWyV4_KQ07A/edit?usp=sharing

Adult (NFE) Education Curriculum Framework:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b93v1JHGplOFMGRI7ZgYncMSneyQsQweGj4CfZ_g_d0/edit?usp=sharing

29. Page 27 of the NOFO states: "The estimated start date will be on or about May 30, 2023." Please confirm that the start date should be May 30, 2024. Otherwise, please provide the envisioned start date.

RESPONSE: Confirmed, May 30, 2024. The NOFO has been amended accordingly.

30. On Page 26 Section B.1, USAID indicates that "Opportunity modules may include the ability to expand to additional geographic districts, increase the number of beneficiaries, work in newly liberated areas or regions, and/or the ability to provide more holistic services or additional services as part of current programming (such as workforce training or wrap-around services)." In addition, Section D.5 (i) the solicitation requests that the technical application describe how it would address each of the four different options. However, in section D. 6, the solicitation asks offerors to budget for only two of the four opportunity module options. Given that the selection of how and when to use the opportunity module will be made later, would USAID consider allowing plug figures for the opportunity modules instead of requiring detailed budgets for each?

RESPONSE: Summary-level budgets are required for each of the two opportunity modules. The NOFO has been amended accordingly.

31. Page 31 of the NOFO states: "This NOFO requires a minimum of 5% cost share of the projected core award amount for the recipient of the award. Applications that do not meet the minimum 5% cost share requirement are not eligible for award consideration and their application will not be evaluated. The award will include a cost share of 5% of the core program. Each opportunity module, when activated, will

increase the total cost share by 5% of the opportunity module's budget." Please confirm that applicants only need to propose 5% of \$30 million at this stage (\$1.5 million) as opposed to 5% of \$40 million (inclusive of the \$10 million for opportunity modules).

RESPONSE: Applicants are required to propose 5% of the \$30 million USAID-contribution for the core program, and a 5% cost share in the summary level budget for each opportunity module.

32. With regards to Annex 1 – Summary Budget Template:

- a. Would USAID find it acceptable for the applicant to add a Consultant category? Otherwise, please advise where Consultant costs should be included.

RESPONSE: Applicants may choose to include such costs in the detailed budget within the line item that best fits your technical and management approach.

- b. Would USAID find it acceptable for the applicant to add a Cost share row?

RESPONSE: Applicants may add a cost share line item to the budget.

33. The NOFO requests several cost documents from the applicant (e.g. Certifications, NICRA, etc.). Are these items required from proposed subrecipients, or only from the prime applicant?

RESPONSE: The cost documents are required from the Prime Applicant and proposed Subrecipients where applicable.

34. Can USAID kindly share the current local compensation plan (LCP)?

RESPONSE: Attached.

35. Can USAID provide the exchange rates (KES/USD) and (SOS/USD) that applicants should use for the cost application?

RESPONSE: Please use the exchange rate at the time of application submission.