



USAID | MOLDOVA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Amendment Issuance Date:

October 6, 2017

Closing Date and Time for Submission Applications:

**October 25, 2017 by
16:00 Kyiv Local Time**

Subject: Amendment No. 01 to Request for Application (RFA) RFA-117-17-000001

Activity Title: Comunitatea Mea / My Community (Moldova)

The purpose of Amendment No. 1 is

1. To change the closing date and time for submission applications to October 25, 2017, 16:00 Kyiv Local Time;
2. To provide answers to the questions received regarding the subject Request for Applications and to make changes to the RFA.
3. To provide a fully revised version of RFA-117-17-000001.

Thank you for your interest in USAID projects.

Sincerely,

____/S/____
Daniel Harter
Agreement Officer

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. A search of the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) yields no evaluations of either the recently completed Chemonics-implemented Local Government Support Project in Moldova or its predecessor local governance project implemented by Urban Institute. If the evaluations of these projects have been completed, could USAID please provide those evaluations to all offerors?

Answer: USAID conducted no evaluation of the Local Government Support Project or of its predecessor implemented by the Urban Institute. USAID only conducted a sector assessment for its internal use to inform the new design.

2. On page 9, the RFA states that “USAID/Moldova envisions providing project assistance to Tier 1 local government throughout Moldova” and notes that “Tier 1 represents 898 communities... [which] includes towns and villages from the Autonomous Region of Gagauzia and Transnistria.” Does USAID envision that My Community will provide project assistance to the Autonomous Region of Gagauzia and Transnistria under this Activity, or is USAID simply noting that the 898 communities are inclusive of those within the Autonomous Region of Gagauzia and Transnistria?

Answer: USAID expects that assistance will be provided throughout Moldova.

3. Page 14 notes under the Component 2 illustrative activity “support innovative transparency and citizen engagement tools through small grants,” that the recipient may set aside a small grant fund of up to \$100,000 to support initiative groups and local governments to institution platforms for civic engagement mechanisms and monitor local government commitment to transparency and access to information. Page 15 goes on to note that, under the Component 3 illustrative activity “Civil Society monitoring and oversight of decentralization reform,” Comunitatea Mea will (also) provide small grants to support CSOs to monitor implementation of the decentralization reform.” Can USAID confirm that the small grants fund referred to on page 15 (under Component 3) is separate small grants referred to under Component 2 and therefore not bound to, or contained within, the \$100,000 ceiling noted for component 2 grants fund.

Answer: The purpose of providing small grants under the two components are different. Component 2 grants focus on implementation of local community innovative transparency tools and to monitor local governments. Component 3 supports monitoring and oversight of the decentralization reform and thus focuses on the central government. For Component 3, no specific monetary ceiling is set, and the mechanism can be grants or other mechanisms as proposed by the applicant. These are two separate areas of grant funding.

4. On page 16 under Component 4, “Expected Results” the RFA cites “at least 20 local governments are assisted with assets evaluation and implementation of asset management.” On page 17 the RFA goes on to state that: “the recipient will assist at least 25 local governments with property evaluation and management.” Can USAID

please clarify if the terms “property management” and “asset management” are being used interchangeably? If so, can USAID please clarify which target they seek to achieve under this component?

Answer: Yes, “asset management” and “property management” are used interchangeably. The recipient is expected to assist at least 20 local governments with property evaluation and management.

5. Page 8 states that “Applicants are expected to partner with UNDP’s Social Innovation Hub...” Can USAID clarify the nature of the partnership it expects offeror’s to establish with the UNDP’s Social Innovation Hub (i.e. resource partner vs core implementing partner)?

Answer: USAID regards UNDP’s Social Innovation Hub as an information resource on existing innovation tools developed in Moldova. The nature of the Applicant’s partnership or coordination with UNDP’s Social Innovation Hub is up to the Applicant.

6. The theory of change proposed by “Comunitatea Mea/My Community” as summarized in the Executive Summary (page 3) is not reflected in the four programming components outlined in Section VI Objectives, Results, Illustrative Interventions and Illustrative Indicators (pages 11-17), particularly in the separation of supply- and demand-side interventions and the asymmetric expected levels of effort assigned to the four main results. Improved service delivery, economic development and financial management will be the result of increased citizen engagement and sound policy development (locally and nationally).
In order for local governance assistance programming to be effective and sustainable, it is critical that there is a dual focus on supporting both the citizenry and the government. The RFA rightly suggests within the Development Context, “[d]emocratic local governance requires the active and informed participation of citizens” (page 5). Citizen participation and confidence in government institutions is critical for a strong, sustainable democracy; where governments are unable or unwilling to fulfill citizen needs, the democratic process is undermined and risks becoming a democratic façade. This is particularly salient in the Moldovan context. Tenuous coalition governments, lackluster reforms and corruption scandals have greatly eroded public confidence. Local governance reform represents an opportunity to reengage disaffected Moldovans and rebuild bridges of trust between the citizenry and government institution; however, Component 2 “Citizens meaningfully engaged in local governance” is only expected to represent 10 percent of the program’s focus—greatly disproportionate to the 65 percent approximated for Component 1 focused on service delivery and infrastructure projects. Can USAID please explain why it allocated its resources as such for an assistance project?

Answer: USAID expects Comunitatea Mea to expand and capitalize on existing civic engagement strengthening activities under USAID’s MIPPP, which works across the country to mentor community-based citizen groups as they identify pressing community problems and seek action from local government or other decision-makers. Thus, a substantial amount of work has already been done at the citizen engagement level. Applicants may choose to work with new communities not part of MIPPP, but the effort allocation is to ensure projects

materialize. Generally, the approximate percentage of effort/focus has been provided to guide Applicants.

7. Effective and sustainable local governance assistance programming requires political buy-in from every level of politics. The RFA notes in the Problem Statement that "...implementation of decentralization reform has been slow...Moldova has undergone several iterations of decentralization reforms, but local self-governance has never been fully realized." (page 4). While the Moldovan government has signaled their readiness to undertake next-steps in this area, the execution of these ambitious decentralization plans (amalgamation, public services reform, pay and performance management system etc.) will be greatly challenged by the current political context and the election calendar (parliamentary election expected in late-2018 and local elections in mid-2019). In order for "Comunitatea Mea/My Community" to create a sustainable reform environment to advance decentralization efforts including keeping local governance reform on the agenda during the campaign cycles and working toward changes in behavior that can withstand possible changes in leadership, a significant programmatic focus must be placed on engaging with a broad spectrum of actors and sectors (local, national and international) that influence Moldova's democratic institutions, processes and culture. However, Component 3 "Decentralization Policy Reforms Advanced" is only expected to represent 10 percent of the program's focus. Additionally, can USAID please explain why such pertinent political dynamics and consequential elections were disregarded in the solicitation?

Answer: The approximate percentage of effort/focus has been provided only to guide Applicants. Sustainable democratic development depends upon citizens actively engaging with their government. For this activity, focusing on that dialogue between citizens and local government leaders is paramount, regardless of who wins in the upcoming elections. Seeing material improvements or better services in their communities reinforces the importance of citizen engagement. In this extremely complex and rapidly changing political environment, the implementer will need to assess how to help materialize the citizen's development objectives, irrespective of which political party or politician is in control.

8. The solicitation as written seems as if it the choice of instrument should be an acquisition mechanism per ADS 304. Can USAID provide an explanation why, if you decided to use an assistance mechanism, the solicitation was written as an acquisition mechanism request?

First, the solicitation was extremely directive in the detailed activity description. If USAID wishes to control the details of the post-award implementation, this seems to be an indication that USAID has a requirement for goods or services to accomplish its own purposes.

Answer: The degree or level of control is not the only reason for selecting an acquisition mechanism. The main purpose of this activity is to support local governments' ability to engage with and respond to the needs of citizens. By stating clearly its expected results, USAID does not intend to mandate a particular approach or specific actions. USAID is not purchasing a specific, defined product or service. Under Comunitatea Mea the implementer

will strengthen local governments' ability to provide basic local governance functions, respond to citizens' needs, and manage financial resources effectively.

Second, infrastructure projects as described under component 1 on page 10-11 and property management systems under component 4 are generally more appropriate for an acquisition mechanism.

Answer: The infrastructure projects are not to be standalone activities. They are to be the culmination of citizen engagement with their local government. Citizen engagement in envisioning, designing and overseeing those infrastructure projects is fundamental to achieving the development objectives of this activity. USAID would like to be very clear about what democratic development it expects to achieve. The program will create platforms for democratic processes where citizens will participate to prioritize their needs through strategic and urban planning, and help them improve governance in their municipalities and identify priorities for infrastructure projects.

9. Based on the above, we would like to respectfully suggest that USAID consider reviewing this solicitation, including one option to split up the project one as an acquisition mechanism to provide the support for goods and services and the second as an assistance mechanism to accomplish some of what is in the RFA as is but also to take into account the comments/questions posed in #1 and #2 above.

Additionally, to achieve meaningful impact and results, we believe there must be political components to this project given the electoral calendar and political will needed for this project to succeed and get local buy in and ownership for sustainability purposes.

Answer: During design, USAID considered splitting the activity, but because the main purpose of this activity is to support local governments' ability to engage with and respond to the needs of citizens, it was not feasible and would undermine the purpose. Local government engaging with citizens necessarily envisages building buy-in from those leaders to meet the needs of the citizens. Also, where local government leaders request such assistance this demonstrates buy-in which is key for sustainable results. USAID envisions that activities under Component 3 will engage central and local authorities as well as civil society organizations to create a sustainable reform environment, thus ensuring a political buy-in for any legislative and institutional changes. There is a demonstrable demand and ownership for this project on behalf of the local governments that are key for sustainable results. Also the implementer will need to regularly assess the political operating environment to pivot programming to respond to windows of opportunities or unanticipated changes. Also see answers to Question 8 above.

10. Section I.V, page 9 ("Geographic Coverage and 'Focus' Beneficiaries") begins with the statement "USAID/Moldova envisions providing project assistance to Tier 1 local government throughout Moldova" (emphasis added). Later in the same paragraph, the RFA says that My Community "assistance will be able to focus in the South." Can USAID please clarify this apparent inconsistency?

Answer: USAID/Moldova envisions providing assistance to communities throughout Moldova, however in competitively selecting target beneficiaries, the implementer should prioritize communities in the South due to more prevailing signs of poverty in the region.

11. Section I.V, page 9 contains a sub-heading that reads “Geographic Coverage and ‘Focus’ Beneficiaries.” Two paragraphs later, the RFA refers to “‘principal’ beneficiaries.” Can USAID please confirm that these two terms are equivalent?

Answer: Yes, these terms have been used interchangeably.

12. Section I.V, page 9 (“Geographic Coverage and ‘Focus’ Beneficiaries”) states “USAID/Moldova envisions providing project assistance to Tier 1 local government throughout Moldova. Tier 1 represents local authorities of 898 communities that are responsible for providing community services to citizens. This includes towns and villages from the Autonomous Region of Gagauzia and Transnistria.” We interpret this to mean that although there are areas of the AR that meet the criteria to be Tier 1 local governments, the My Community project is not expected to provide services in these particular places within the AR. Can USAID please confirm this understanding?

Answer: The program is expected to provide assistance to municipalities, towns and villages that meet the criteria of a Tier 1 local government.

13. Paragraph 2 of Section I, I. Executive Summary (page 3) states that the Comunitatea Mea program will provide assistance to “up to 100 communities” while paragraph 5 of the same section states “100 local governments.” Could USAID please clarify whether the program should provide assistance to a total of 100 communities or select an appropriate number of communities, up to 100?

Answer: The program should provide assistance to up to 100 communities that will be selected on a competitive basis.

14. Section I, V. Detailed Activity Description (page 9) references “a recent EUCOM Humanitarian Assistance Assessment from December 2016.” Could USAID please make this report available to all applicants?

Answer: The report cannot be disclosed as this is an internal document.

15. Was a mid-term or final evaluation of the USAID Moldova Local Government Support Program conducted? If so, would USAID please release any and all relevant evaluations?

Answer: USAID did not conduct a mid-term or final evaluation of the Local Government Support Project.

16. Can USAID provide any clarity on how extensive it envisions engagement with communities in Transnistria?

Answer: The program is intended to extend the assistance to communities from Transnistria where possible and feasible. The individual assistance package for each municipality will be tailored based on the needs and feasibility.

17. May applicants adjust and/or expand upon the expected results contained within the RFA?

Answer: The applicants may expand but not adjust substantially the expected results such as to change the intent of the designed activities.

18. On page 28, the list of items to be addressed in the program description subsection of the technical approach includes “implementation timeline” and “proposed plan for effective rapid launch of activities”. May these requirements be addressed in the implementation plan subsection of the technical approach in order to reduce duplication?

The RFA notes a timeline is to be included in both the program description and the implementation plan. Can you USAID please clarify what differentiates these two timelines or confirm that it can be presented once in either section?

Answer: Yes. Please see the amended RFA. The requirement to submit a timeline as part of the Program Description has been removed from the RFA.

19. Per page 27 of the RFA, USAID desires an Activity Logical Framework to be filled out by the applicants.
- Does USAID have a preferred format for the Activity Logical Framework? (For instance, are applicants expected to follow USAID’s template: <http://usaidprojectstarter.org/content/logical-framework-template-basic>)
 - Will USAID consider increasing the page limit for the MEL Plan from 5 pages to 10 pages to allow sufficient space to meet the requirements?

Answer: With the revision of ADS 201, USAID no longer requires a specific format for a Logical Framework, however the inputs, outputs, outcomes, and theory of change should be evident in whatever framework chosen. The MEL plan page limit remains as stated in the RFA.

20. On page 28, the list of items to be addressed in the program description includes “discussion of relevant and meaningful indicators at each level”. May this requirement be addressed in the MEL Plan in order to reduce duplication?

Answer: Yes, it may; as long as the relationship between interventions, outcome and expected results are clearly stated and explained in the narrative.

21. On Page 28, the RFA requests that the Program Description include “Discussion of relevant and meaningful indicators at each level – intervention, outcome, ER ... each intervention must correspond to an outcome and each outcome must correspond to an Expected Result”

Interventions and Expected Results are explicitly stated throughout Sections V and VI, but ‘outcomes’ are not. Are applicants expected to propose their own outcome statements (and the associated indicators)?

Answer: Yes. Applicants may propose their own outcomes and additional indicators to measure their proposed interventions in addition to illustrative indicators included in the program description.

22. The RFA (p. 14) refers to up to \$100,000 in “small grants” to “support initiative groups and local governments to institutionalize platforms...” under Component 2. On p. 15, the RFA refers to the program providing “small grants to support CSO to monitor implementation of the decentralization reform....” Is the overall amount for all small grants expected to be \$100,000 or is that only the plug figure for small grants in Component 2?

Answer: \$100,000 is the ceiling for the total amount of small grants under Component 2. See Answer to Question 3.

23. On page 38, within the description of the evaluation criteria for management approach and personnel, the sentence ends with “and their ability to operate independently and effectively to deliver the results of the program”. Can USAID please specify to whom or to what “their” refers?

Answer: “Their” refers to the Applicant. The RFA has been revised.

24. With respect to the Chief of Party education requirements on Page 29, may a COP candidate with additional years of experience equivalent to a Master’s degree be considered qualified?

Answer: The RFA has been revised as follows: S/he will have a master’s degree (or foreign equivalent) in a discipline related to government, management, city planning, city management or foreign assistance development, or s/he will have a bachelor’s degree (or foreign equivalent) in a discipline related to government, management, city planning, city management or foreign assistance development and an additional 5 years overseeing/managing international development projects.

25. The “Comunitatea Mea” RFA clearly describes NDI as an integral and indispensable local partner in implementation of “Comunitatea Mea,” regardless of prime implementing partner. Please confirm (1) that NDI will be treated as a common property resource and (2) that NDI will be excluded from being a named partner on any and all applications in response to the RFA. The “Comunitatea Mea” RFA clearly describes CALM as an integral and indispensable local partner/beneficiary in implementation of “Comunitatea Mea,” regardless of prime implementing partner. Please confirm (1) that CALM will be treated as a common property resource and (2) that CALM will be excluded from being a named partner on any and all applications in response to the RFA.

Answer: This question is unclear. This is an unrestricted full and open competition. No implementing partner assisted USAID in the design of this procurement.

26. Page 31 of the RFA notes that “local staff should be fluent in English.” Does this requirement extend to all local staff, or just local staff serving as Key Personnel?

Answer: Key personnel and technical staff should be fluent in English.

27. Can USAID please provide a Local Compensation Plan for reference.

Answer: USAID will only provide the maximum rate for the LCP, which is \$55,614. See Answer to Question 40.

28. On page 11 of the RFA USAID states “*the Recipient is expected to acquire the services of an independent and appropriately licensed Architecture/Engineering (A/E) firm, as necessary.*” Does USAID expect the firm to be identified and included in the proposal?

Answer: This is up to the Applicant to decide.

29. The RFA states that up to \$100,000 may be set aside to “*Support innovative transparency and citizen engagement tools through small grants*” within Component 2. Can USAID please provide a limit amount and/or range for the “*small scale community infrastructure projects*”, included in Component 1, as well as for the “*small grants to support CSO to monitor implementation of the decentralization reform*” within Component 3?

Answer: This is up to the Applicant to decide. The approximate percentage of effort/focus has been provided to guide Applicants.

30. Can USAID confirm what level of detail, in the budget and in documentation, is required for major sub-recipients versus minor sub-recipients?

Answer: The RFA has been revised to remove the reference to major sub awards. The requirement has been revised as follows: (Sub) contractor/recipient financial plans should follow the same cost format as submitted by the Applicant.

31. On page 21, the RFA states the “estimated start date will be on or about January 1, 2017”. Could you please confirm the estimated state date of this project?

Answer: The start date will be confirmed with the Apparent Successful Applicant once they are identified.

32. On page 10, the RFA states that that, “The maximum USAID contribution per [infrastructure] project must not exceed \$500,000, per USAID policy.” Under Component 1 (pp. 11 – 13), the RFA notes that the component consists of approximately 65% of the scope, including infrastructure projects. Does USAID have a suggested overall percentage of the budget or recommended dollar amount to be earmarked for infrastructure investments?

Answer: Not at this time. This is up to the Applicant to decide. See Answer to Question Number 29.

33. we are likely to become beneficiaries of another program funded by USAID and implemented in Moldova. Although, we've been selected for collaboration within this project, we didn't sign a contract yet and didn't decide on the activities that will be funded by this project. Thus, we have three questions based on what presented above: Could we apply for "Comunitatea Mea" funding opportunity (RFA-117-17-000001) announced by USAID with a project related to elections? In case is no, is there a possibility to apply together with another organization (with expertise in government efficiency projects) with which we will create a consortium for implementation of the project. In case if yes, is there a conflict of interest and/or funding overlaps if we've been selected as beneficiaries within another program?

Answer: Any organization that meets the Eligibility Requirements stated in Section III of the RFA is eligible to apply. USAID is accepting applications in response to the Program Description in Section I of the RFA. USAID encourages and welcomes organizations to consider partnerships, but prefers non-exclusivity. USAID does not have enough information to determine if there is a funding overlap or conflict of interest.

34. Could USAID please confirm: a. The ceiling specified under section II.1 (\$20,500,000, page 3) is only the Federal contribution. b. The minimum required cost share is 10% of the Federal contribution proposed by the Applicant

Answer: Correct, the \$20,500,000 is the Federal contribution. USAID confirms the minimum required cost share is 10% of the Federal contribution proposed by the Applicant.

35. Section IV.C.2.1 (Technical Application Instructions, page 27) states "The cover page will include: ... Title of proposed program; total dollar amount of funds requested..." Since the cost and technical applications should be submitted separately, please confirm that the dollar amount requested should only be included on the cover of the Cost Application.

Answer: USAID has removed the requirement to include the dollar amount of funds requested on the technical application cover page.

36. Section IV.C.2.6.a (instructions for Staffing Plan) refer to the project organizational chart both as an annex (page 29: "A one-page project staffing organizational chart may be included as an Annex that does not count against the page limit") and as part of the staffing plan (page 30: "Other information required in the Staffing Plan includes: Organizational chart for the program team, including sub-awardee staff, if applicable.") Please confirm that the organization chart may be placed in an annex.

Answer: USAID confirms that the organization chart may be placed in an annex.

37. Please confirm that a matrix of planned LTТА and STТА can be included as an annex that will not count against the page limitation for the technical proposal.

Answer: Charts and graphs count towards the 30-page limit for the technical application unless specified in the RFA.

38. Section IV.C.5 (page 28) states “Applicants shall include a draft implementation plan that describes how and when specific core activities will be developed over the life of the activity. Applicants must present a detailed explanation for the first year, with illustrative key activities, benchmarks, and results for the remaining years.” Given that the implementation plan is included in the 27 page limit, please confirm that a detailed Work Plan (Gantt chart) can be included as an annex that will not count against the page limitation.

Answer: All components of the implementation plan count towards the page limit. It’s up to the Applicant on how they choose to present the Implementation Plan.

39. Section IV.C2.6.a) (Page 30) of the RFA mentions “If the Applicant plans to collaborate with other organizations for the implementation of this activity, the services to be provided by each organization shall be described. [Note: indigenous organizations receiving sub-awards or technical assistance from the project would be considered recipients, and therefore should not be included in the proposal]” Could USAID please confirm that the intent of the “note” section is: local beneficiaries should not be named in the proposal and can be presented as a lump sum amount; and local implementing partners (not beneficiaries) should be named and described?

Answer: USAID confirms that local beneficiaries should not be named in the proposal. USAID also confirms that local implementing partners should be named and described.

40. Section IV.D.(1) (page 34) of the RFA mentions “Salaries for locally employed staff should not exceed the Local Compensation Plan for USAID/Moldova.” Considering that this is a cooperative agreement, and the second and third paragraphs of that section imply that the applicant can propose the salary in accordance with market research and its own established written personnel policy and practice, could USAID please confirm that the LCP ceiling does not apply to this NOFO?

Answer: The LCP ceiling does not apply, but rather acts as a guide for determining the reasonableness of certain proposed rates. USAID expects that all personnel salaries proposed are fair and reasonable. USAID has removed the reference to the LCP from the RFA.

41. Could USAID please confirm: a. “2. Certifications, Assurances and other Statements of the Applicant,” required by Section IV.E.2 (page 35) refers to Parts I-IV of ADS 303mav; b. “5. Statutory and Regulation Certifications,” mentioned in Section IV.E.5 (page 36) refers to Parts V and VI of the ADS 303mav.

Answer: Completing all sections in ADS 303 may fulfill the requirements noted in Sections IV.E.2 and Section IV.E.5.

42. Can USAID please confirm whether it intends to issue a letter of credit to the successful applicant? If not, will another advanced financing mechanism be available to the successful applicant?

Answer: This will be determined once the Apparent Successful Applicant is determined.

43. Section IV, C(7). Institutional Capability (page 31) states that the applicant should provide past performance information for “major partnering organizations that will be directly involved in program implementation.” Could USAID please clarify how “major partnering organization” is defined?

Answer: The RFA has been revised to remove the reference to major partnering organizations. The revised RFA reads as follows: The applicant should provide similar information for partnering organizations that will be directly involved in program implementation.

44. Can USAID confirm that bidders shall follow their established written policies in procedures in relation to personnel compensation as outlined and in accordance with 2 CFR 200.430, and not the local compensation plan (LCP) as described on page 34 of the RFA? In accordance with this section of 2 CFR 200, we respectfully request that USAID remove the requirement to establish rates below the LCP and the requirement for three years of salary history, as we will follow our established written personnel policies and procedures.

Answer: Yes, applicants should follow their established personnel compensation policies to determine fair and reasonable salaries for staff. See Answer to Question 40.

45. In Section IV, B. Application Materials and Submission Information (page 25-6), USAID indicates it prefers that the technical application and the cost application be submitted as two separate emails, inclusive of attachments. Could USAID please confirm that a file size limit of 10MB for these attachments is acceptable?

Answer: USAID confirms that a message size up to 15 MB is acceptable.

46. Section IV, C(1). Application Format (page 26) states “[T]he cover page, table of contents, acronyms list, executive summary, and annexes will not count toward the page limitation of the Technical Application.” Can USAID confirm that charts and graphs are excluded from the 30-page limit for the technical application?

Answer: Unless otherwise stated, charts and graphs count towards the 30-page limit for the technical application.

47. Could USAID please confirm that the three references for each proposed key personnel may be excluded from the three-page limit for key personnel résumés?

Answer: No, references count towards the three-page limit of the resumes for key personnel. Please note there is no format specified for references.

48. Section IV, C(2). Technical Application Content (page 27) states that the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan should include “the Activity Logical Framework filled in by the applicants.” Given that the MEL plan is limited to five pages, can USAID please confirm that applicants may include the Activity Logical Framework as an annex?

Answer: The Activity Logical Framework counts toward the 5-page limit for the MEL plan. See Answer to Question 19.

49. Section IV, C(2). Technical Application Content (page 27) also states that the cover page of the technical application should include the “total dollar amount of funds requested.” Could USAID please confirm that we should include the total amount of funds requested on the technical application cover page even though the technical and the cost applications are to be submitted separately in two emails?

Answer: USAID has removed the requirement to include the dollar amount of funds requested on the technical application cover page.

50. To ease comparison of proposals, would USAID provide an overall plug figure or ceiling amount expected for the value of all small-scale infrastructure projects under Component 1?

Answer: This is up to each Applicant to decide.

51. Would USAID clarify if the funds for the small-scale infrastructure projects are in addition to the \$20.5M ceiling for this cooperative agreement?

Answer: The stated funding level is the funding level for the entire program.

52. Would USAID confirm that the amount of funds requested should be included on the cover page of the Technical Application (as stated on page 27 of the RFA)?

Answer: USAID has removed the requirement to include the dollar amount of funds requested on the technical application cover page.

53. Please confirm that text boxes, tables or graphics can use a font smaller, and different from the body text (instructed to be size 12 font) provided it is easily read and legible.

Answer: Text boxes, tables or graphics can use a font smaller than the body text, but not smaller than size 10 font provided it is can be easily read.

54. How does USAID define a major sub-awardee or partner for the purposes of cost application requirements related to NICRA and financial plans of sub-awardees (referred to on pages 33 (Section D “Contractual) and 34 (Section D (9)) of the RFA)?

Answer: The RFA has been revised to remove references to "major" subcontract/recipient. The requirement applies to any subrecipient/contract.

55. Which of the following may be counted toward cost-share requirements?

1. In-kind or cash contributions from other donors, foundations, or other non-USAID or USG entities that expand or deepen the program's work
2. Donated time, materials, travel, event costs from partners and stakeholders
3. Private sector contributions toward program activities (in-kind, space, time, etc.)
4. Local government matching for grants, e.g. for infrastructure

Answer: All cost-share that meets the requirements in 2 CFR 200.306 can be counted toward cost-share.

56. Given the extensive requirements for the Technical Approach and Personnel and Management Approach, will USAID please increase the page limit for these sections of the technical application from 27 pages to 30 pages?

Answer: The page limit remains unchanged.

57. If the page limit can't be increased, then will USAID allow a Gantt chart for the implementation plan to be submitted as an annex?

Answer: All elements of the implementation plan count towards the page limit. See Answer to Question 38.

58. In addition, will USAID allow a staffing plan matrix to be submitted as an annex?

Answer: Charts and graphs count towards the 30-page limit for the technical application unless specifically stated otherwise in the RFA.

59. May text in charts, tables, and graphics be in Times New Roman, 10 point font?

Answer: Please see answer to Question 53.

60. Is there a limit to the size of submission email files that can be accepted by the USAID Moldova server?

Answer: Messages of up to 15 MB are acceptable.

61. On page 27, the requirements for the cover page include "total dollar amount of funds requested". Will USAID please confirm that applicants should provide this cost information within the technical application?

Answer: USAID has removed the requirement to include the dollar amount of funds requested on the technical application cover page.

62. On page 28, under Personnel and Management Approach, the first sentence requests "estimated amount of time to be devoted to each relevant activity" in relation to key personnel and other team members. Can USAID please confirm whether providing the level of effort per component area would be responsive to this request?

Answer: This is up to the applicant to propose based on its approach.

63. On page 28, under Personnel and Management Approach, there is a discussion of program organizational charts (in the plural). Page 29 references a one-page project staffing organizational chart. Will USAID confirm that applicants may provide multiple program and project staffing organizational charts in the annex?

Answer: Applicants shall include organizational charts for the applicant, sub awardees and partners.

64. May applicants provide additional annexes for review by the evaluation committee?

Answer: No.

65. Will USAID confirm that Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements are required only for the prime applicant?

Answer: Any organization, whether the prime or sub, that has a federally negotiated indirect cost rate must submit the NICRA to support it.

66. Will USAID confirm that past performance information and references are required only for the prime applicant?

Answer: Past performance information and references should be submitted for the prime applicant and subawardees. Past Performance information will be reviewed as part of the Apparently Successful Applicant risk assessment and is not evaluated at the merit review stage.

67. Are there any page length requirements for information to be provided in response to the request on page 36 for “Examples of accomplishments and results in developing and implementing similar programs” and “Explanation of how lessons learned will be applied in achieving the goals of the program”?

Answer: While the cost application does not have a page limit, please note the requirement to submit a matrix of past performance information (not to exceed 1 page per award). Unnecessarily elaborate and lengthy presentations are not desired.

68. On page 35, can USAID confirm that an Evidence of Responsibility meets the requirements for “3. Additional Information”?

Answer: It is up to the applicant to determine what additional information to provide as evidence of financial responsibility deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a positive risk assessment to manage USG funds.

69. Could USAID confirm that “Environmental Compliance” mentioned on page 47, is only required of the apparently-successful applicant?

Answer: The recipient will be responsible for ensuring environmental compliance. Applicants should take the IEE into consideration when developing their application.

70. Please confirm that the following sentence from page 33, under Personnel/Labor, applies to key personnel only: “Any proposed salary increase must be sufficiently justified and supported with the organization’s personnel policies (to be provided as annex to the cost application)”.

Answer: USAID confirms.

71. Please confirm that salary history for named, non-key personnel does not need to be included in the proposal.

Answer: USAID confirms.

72. Please confirm that salary histories for key personnel can be presented in the form of 1420 Biodata forms.

Answer: There is currently no requirement for biodata forms. Biodata forms, among others, can be used to justify salary, but are not required. It is up to each applicant to submit the necessary justification.

73. On page 34 of the RFA under item (1), USAID states that the maximum daily rate for senior locally hired specialists is \$213 under USAID contracts. Given that My Community will be a Cooperative Agreement, please confirm whether the maximum daily rate of \$213 is applicable to this opportunity.

Answer: The LCP ceiling does not apply; however, USAID expects that all personnel salaries proposed are fair and reasonable. See Answer to Question #40.

74. Are applicants expected to propose a plan and budget for a midterm and final evaluation?

Page 43 of the RFA notes that “USAID may elect to organize and carry out an independent performance evaluation...” Will USAID confirm that offerors should not budget for an external evaluation in their cost proposal?

Answer: USAID will bear the cost of these evaluations.

75. Confirmation of Source & Origin Compliance Requirements -- The authorized USAID Principal Geographic Code for this activity is 935 and is defined as any area or country including the recipient country but excluding any country that is a prohibited source. Please inform which countries are presently considered as prohibited sources for Comunitatea Mea.

Answer: Please refer to “List of Prohibited Source Countries”, A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 310 located at <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/310mac.pdf>

76. Resumes for each key personnel are limited to 3 pages. In addition, a minimum of 3 references for each proposed key personnel is required. Please confirm that the references are not included in the 3-page limit of the resumes.

Answer: References are part of the resume, and thus part of the 3-page limit. Please see Answer to Question 47.

77. Please confirm that USAID wants the executive summary to appear before the table of contents and acronyms list (per guidance on pages 26 and 27 of the RFA).

Answer: The order of submission is up to the Applicant.

78. Given the page limitations for the program description, can a timeline be presented in an annex and not count against the 30 page limit for the technical application?

Answer: The timeline should be presented as part of the Implementation Plan. The RFA has been revised to remove the requirement to submit the timeline as part of the Program Description.

79. Please confirm that past performance information is to be submitted as part of the Cost Application, as noted on page 36 of the solicitation.

Answer: USAID confirms.

80. Page 36 notes that applicants are to submit a matrix of past performance information, not to exceed one page per award. Please confirm that this one page limit is in reference to each past performance reference (i.e. contract or cooperative agreement) to be presented and is not in reference to an overall limit for each awardee/subawardee's entire matrix of past performance references?

Answer: USAID confirms that applicants should submit a matrix of past performance information not to exceed one page per award.

81. Small business subcontractors - Our small business subcontractor/vendor for services has a FSA MOBIS (PSS) contract and no NICRA. Are GSA MOBIS rates acceptable for services per ADS 303?

Answer: It is up to the Applicant to make this determination in accordance with their internal policies and procedures. Please follow the instructions in the RFA.

82. On page 33, you reference SF 424B (Budget information and Assurances - Non Construction Programs). As there is a large construction component, should we still use this form?

Answer: Applicants are to use SF 424B (Budget information and Assurances - Non Construction Programs).