AMENDMENT 1

NOFO Number: 72038820RFA00006
Issuance Date: August 26, 2020
Amendment 1 Issuance Date: October 4, 2020
NOFO Closing Date: October 29, 2020; 10:00 am (Dhaka time)

Dear Prospective Applicants:

This is an amendment to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the proposed program titled: USAID Ecosystems / Protibesh Activity.

The purpose of this Amendment 1 is to:

1. Extend the submission date for Phase 1 to October 29, 2020; 10:00 am (Dhaka time)
2. Revision of SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION
3. Revision of SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION
4. Revision of ATTACHMENT 1: PHASE 2 SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS AND MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA
5. Provide answers to questions submitted under the NOFO

By:

ANDREW DAVID HOLLAND (affiliate)

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Date: 2020.10.04 16:19:20 +06'00'

Andrew Holland, CPCM
Supervisory Agreement Officer
USAID/Bangladesh

I. The NOFO is amended as follows:

1) Changes in "SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION. Add section, "5. Funding Restrictions" as per following:

"5. Funding Restrictions

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.330 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. Construction may be authorized under this award.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer.

Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.4 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228."

2) Changes in **"SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION"** as per following:

(i) Section, **"3. General Instructions, Selection Process and Application Format",** add the following to the first paragraph under "Phase 2" (page 19)

"It is expected that the time between the Phase 1 deadline and the selection of Phase 2 applicants is approximately one (1) to two (2) months."

(ii) Section, **"3. General Instructions, Selection Process and Application Format",** sub-section, **"Submission Format",** add the following to the second bullet: (page 20)

"10 point for Times New Roman and 9 point for Arial font can be used for graphs and charts so long as it remains legible without magnification. Tables, however, must comply with the 12/11 point Times New Roman/Arial requirement, or equivalent."

2) Changes in **"ATTACHMENT 1: PHASE 2 SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS AND MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA"** as per following:

(i) Section, **"I. General Content and Form of Application",** add the following sentence: (page 42)

"Each email submission should not exceed 15 MB in size. Any zip files will not be accepted."

(ii) Section, **"I.1.f Past Performance".** Replace with the following paragraph: (page 44)

"Applicants must submit a past performance table listed up to 5 of contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs during the past three years. Past performance tables can be submitted as an annex not counted in the page limit for the technical application. ”

(iii) Add the following paragraph, **“(g) Other Requirements”** (page 44)

“Please note that there are requirements listed below and in the following section; such as, Branding and Marking Plan, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Security Plan and a Political Economy Analysis that must be submitted only by the ASA or following an award. However, even though these plans are not required as part of the initial application, the costs for implementing these plans or writing reports must be included in the cost application.”

(iv) Replace section, **“2. Cost Application Format”** with the following: (page 44-45)

“2. Business (Cost) Application Format

The Business (Cost) Application must be submitted separately from the Technical Application. While no page limit exists for the full cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A. Prior to award, applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant’s risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.205. Applicants should not submit any additional information with their initial application.
The Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):

a) **Cover Page**
b) **SF 424 Form(s)**

The applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the SF-424 series. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov or using the following links:
Instructions for SF-424 http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424A http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html
Budget Information (SF-424A) https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424B http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html
Assurances (SF-424B) https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application.

c) **Required Certifications and Assurances**

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy:

(1) “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient” document found at http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf

(2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
(3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

d) Budget and Budget Narrative

The Budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and must be broken out by project year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time required to make award, and may result in a rejection of the cost application. The Budget Narrative must contain sufficient detail to allow USAID to understand the proposed costs. The applicant must ensure the budgeted costs address any additional requirements identified in Section F, such as Branding and Marking. The Budget Narrative must be thorough, including sources for costs to support USAID's determination that the proposed costs are fair and reasonable.
The Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:

- Summary Budget, inclusive of all program costs (federal and non-federal), broken out by major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the entire period of the program. See Section H, Annex 1 for Summary Budget Template
- Detailed Budget, including a breakdown by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
- Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the project.

The Detailed Budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

1) **Salaries and Allowances –** Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. The applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.
2) **Fringe Benefits –** (if applicable) If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the

Budget Narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

3) **Travel and Transportation –** Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant's normal travel policies. When appropriate please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative.
4) **Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment & Supplies), Services, and Real Property –** Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The Budget Narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.
5) **Subawards –** Specify the budget for the portion of the program to be passed through to any subrecipients. See 2 CFR 200.330 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. The subrecipient budgets must align with the same requirements as the applicant's budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.
6) **Construction – If applicable**

7) **Other Direct Costs –** This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.
8) **Indirect Costs –** Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200.414. The application must identify which approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate methods:

Method 1 - Direct Charge Only
Eligibility: Any applicant
Initial Application Requirements: See above on direct costs

Method 2 - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)
Eligibility: Any applicant with a NICRA issued by a USG Agency must use that NICRA
Initial Application Requirements: If the applicant has a current NICRA, submit your approved NICRA and the associated disclosed practices. If your NICRA was issued by an Agency other than USAID, provide the contact information for the approving Agency. Additionally, at the

Agency's discretion, a provisional rate may be set forth in the award subject to audit and finalization. See USAID's Indirect Cost Rate Guide for Non Profit Organizations for further guidance.

Method 3 - De minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)

Eligibility: Any applicant that has never received a NICRA

Initial Application Requirements: Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate an indirect rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The applicant must describe which cost elements it charges indirectly vs. directly. See 2 CFR 200.414(f) for further information.

Method 4 - Indirect Costs Charged As A Fixed Amount

Eligibility: Non U.S. non-profit organizations without a NICRA may request, but approval is at the discretion of the AO

Initial Application Requirements: Provide the proposed fixed amount and a worksheet that includes the following:

- Total costs incurred by the organization for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year.
- Indirect costs (common costs that benefit the day-to-day operations of the organization, including categories such as salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting, or that benefit and are identifiable to more than one program or activity, such as depreciation, rental costs, operations and maintenance of facilities, and telephone expenses) for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year
- Proposed method for prorating the indirect costs equitably and consistently across all programs and activities of using a base that measures the benefits of that particular cost to each program or activity to which the cost applies.

If the applicant does not have an approved NICRA and does not elect to utilize the 10% de minimis rate, the Agreement Officer will provide further instructions and may request additional supporting information, including financial statements and audits, should the application still be under consideration after the merit review. USAID is under no obligation to approve the applicant's requested method.

9) **Cost Sharing –** The applicant should estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources to be provided over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting award.

e) Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407

Inclusion of an item of cost in the detailed application budget does not satisfy any requirements for prior approval by the Agency. If the applicant would like the award to reflect approval of any cost elements for which prior written approval is specifically required for allowability, the applicant must specify and justify that cost. See 2 CFR 200.407 for information regarding which cost elements require prior written approval.

1) Approval of Subawards

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization
- DUNS Number
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.331(b)
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation.

II. Answers to all Questions received are provided below:

1. (Page 20, "Submission Format") Will USAID allow font smaller than 12-point Times New Roman or 11-point Arial in graphics, charts, and tables, so long as it remains legible without magnification?

USAID Response: 10 point for Times New Roman and 9 point for Arial font can be used for graphs and charts so long as it remains legible without magnification. Tables however, must comply with the 12/11 point Times New Roman/Arial requirement, or equivalent. The NOFO is modified accordingly. However, please note, instructions and merit review criteria in Phase 2 are subject to change.

2. (Page 44, Attachment 1, Section I(f), "Institutional Capability and Past Performance") Can USAID kindly confirm that past performance tables in Phase 2 can be submitted as an annex not counted in the page limit for the technical application?

USAID Response: Yes, this is possible. The NOFO is modified accordingly. However, please note, instructions and merit review criteria in Phase 2 are subject to change.

3. (Page 10, Section A) Can USAID confirm that the applicant can form a consortium with subrecipients outside of the $1 million budgeted for sub-grants?

USAID Response: Yes, the applicant can form a consortium with sub-recipients outside of the $1 million budgeted for sub-grants as long as it is necessary to achieve the results set in the Program Description.

4. (Page 12, "Authorizing Legislation") Will USAID confirm that advance funding will be available based on the language under "Authorizing Legislation"?

USAID Response: Payment mechanism will be determined later for the ASA based on the applicable standard policies and practices.

5. (Page 19, Section D(3), “General Instructions, Selection Process and Application Format”) Could USAID kindly inform applicants the expected time between the Phase 1 deadline and the selection of Phase 2 applicants?

USAID Response: Approximately one (1) to two (2) months. The NOFO is modified accordingly.

6. Would USAID kindly provide the latest USAID/Bangladesh LCP?

USAID Response: Please see below table for USAID/Bangladesh current LCP.

BANGLADESH FSN EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION PLAN All rates include Base Pay, Meals, Bonus, Housing, Transportation, Misc., and exclude Employers Provident Fund Contribution at 10% and Annual Medical Benefits		
GS 11-12	3,164,510	7,924,120
GS 9-10	2,026,734	4,664,016
GS 7-8	1,117,491	2,709,251
GS 5-6	710,307	1,475,066
GS 3-4	460,252	1,025,746
GS 1-2	340,651	676,871

*Rates are per annum for a 40-hour week
** Effective October 27, 2019

7. On page 43, USAID states that the mobilization plan should not include names and resumes of key staff. Can USAID please confirm that candidates may be named within the Cost Application submitted in Phase II?

USAID Response: No. Named candidates within the Cost Application submitted in Phase II are not permitted. Applicants include only the key personnel’s position titles, qualifications and roles and responsibilities of the proposed key staff in the mobilization plan in Phase II. Names and

CVs of key personnel will be submitted only by the ASA and approved at the post award stage.

8. For the submission of application files for Phase 2, can USAID confirm if there is a maximum file size
that the Mission can accept?

USAID Response: Each email submission should not exceed 15 MB in size. Please do not send zip files. The NOFO is modified accordingly. However, please note, instructions and merit review criteria in Phase 2 are subject to change.

9. Attachment 1, p. 44, Section 2: The NOFO states:" All forms of the Cost Application must be submitted as a single PDF, Word.Doc or Excel file and emailed as an attachment in the same email as the Technical Application as explained in Section D.4."

a. Can USAID please confirm that offerors should submit the cost application as 1) a PDF of the full cost application, and 2) an Excel file of the budget?

USAID Response: In Phase 2, the selected applicants will submit full cost applications.

b. Can USAID please confirm that application files may be split (and named appropriately) if the size of the full application prohibits them from being emailed as single files?

USAID Response: Applicants should try to combine all files into a single readable and searchable file.

c. As it is not our normal practice, can USAID please confirm that applicants are to submit technical and cost volumes in the same email?

USAID Response: Applicants who are selected for Phase 2 can submit technical and cost volumes in the same email as long it is appropriately marked. The NOFO is modified accordingly. However, please note, instructions and merit review criteria in Phase 2 are subject to change.

10. In Attachment 1, p. 44, 1.(f), the NOFO states: "Applicants must submit a past performance table of all cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs during the past three years." Some offerors may have hundreds of contracts in such a list. Will USAID consider limiting the number of contracts to be listed to 10?

USAID Response: Yes, this is possible. The number of previous contracts/agreements reduced to 5. The NOFO is modified accordingly.

However, please note, instructions and merit review criteria in Phase 2 are subject to change.

11. Can USAID provide an approximate time period between submission of Technical Approaches for
Phase 1 and notification of selection for Phase 2?

USAID Response: Approximately one (1) to two (2) months. The NOFO is modified accordingly. However, please note, instructions and merit review criteria in Phase 2 are subject to change.

12. On page 10, USAID states that "It is envisioned that the applicant would issue a limited number of sub-grants, up to a total of approximately $1 million over the life of the activity, to environmental NGOs to support fieldwork, build their capacity, and to further activity objectives in and around Sylhet and the Sundarbans." Is this grants budget limited to $1 million or can it be higher?

USAID Response: USAID may consider accepting a higher budget allocation for sub-grants if the applicant's proposed technical approach demonstrates that this is necessary to meet the goal and results of USAID/Ecosystems or Protibesh Activity. USAID will assess eligibility of the selected sub-grantees and how they will contribute to the overall results and sustainability of the activities proposed under USAID Ecosystems or Protibesh Activity.
Section (v)b indicates that the sub-grant manual will need to be developed by the recipient and cleared by the AOR.

13. Page 36, USAID states "Hence, we encourage USAID implementing partners to have the capacity to dispatch resources, realign budgets, redirect funds, support the rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance, and respond to direction from USAID to address unanticipated events that may impact the success of Protibesh Activity, or support new activities that could enhance its results." Does the applicant need to address their implementation strategy for implementing the Crisis Modifier and/or Emergency Response as part of Phase 1?

USAID Response: Proposing Implementation strategy for implementing the Crisis Modifier and/or Emergency Response is not required.

14. It is our current understanding that: (1) Phase 1 Applications are due on October 11, 2020; (2) Phase 1 Applications will be evaluated and successful applicants will then be notified to proceed to a Phase 2 Technical Application; (3) Applicants will have 15 days from date of notification to complete the full Phase 2 Technical Application. Please confirm that the above understanding is correct and also advise:

· What is your estimate of evaluation and administrative processing time between submission of Phase 1 Applications and notification to submit Phase 2 Applications?

USAID Response: The understandings are correct. It would take approximately one (1) to two (2) months. The NOFO is modified accordingly. However, please note, instructions and merit review criteria in Phase 2 are subject to change.

15. May applicants provide an acronym list as an attached annex included within the single Technical Application file? If not, is it acceptable to USAID for applicants to spell out acronyms on first use and from then on use the acronym by itself?

USAID Response: Acronym list should be included within the page limit of the technical approach. Alternatively, applicants may spell out the acronyms on the first use and then use the acronym by itself. However, there should be careful attention dedicated to not making the application or paragraphs acronym heavy.

16. Regarding formatting requirements on page 20 of the RFA: May applicants use a smaller, readable font for text boxes, tables, and graphics?

USAID Response: Please see the response above, no. 2

17. Page 10 of the RFA states "It is envisioned that the applicant would issue a limited number of sub-grants, up to a total of approximately $1 million over the life of the activity, to environmental NGOs to support field work, build their capacity, and to further activity objectives in and around Sylhet and the Sundarbans." Can USAID confirm that these sub-grants may also be used for co-management organizations?

USAID Response: Sub-grants can be made to co-management organizations per the Grants Manual that will be approved by USAID post award. However, co-management organizations will need to be government approved entities, and should constit of a financial management plan.

18. Page 22 of the RFA states that attention should be paid to "cross-cutting themes under the USAID Mission Strategy". Is this in reference to the 2011-2019 CDCS, or another document for USAID/Bangladesh? Could USAID please clarify how these cross-cutting themes overlap with the Guiding Principles listed on pages 12-14 of the RFA?

USAID Response: Yes, USAID is referring to the 2011-2019 CDCS. USAID is in the process of revising its CDCS. All guiding principles mentioned on pages 12-14 of the RFA fall within the premises of the development objectives and intermediate results of the 2011 – 2019 CDCS, and will continue to do so in its successive versions unless USAID decides otherwise. The 2011-2019 CDCS and the activities implemented to meet its goal and development objectives also comply with the guiding principles such as the USAID Policy on Indigenous Peoples that were launched in the year 2020.

19. Page 22 of the RFA states that the technical approach should outline "Criteria for selecting beneficiaries and an illustrative list of partners, as well as…". Does this mean that there should be criteria for the illustrative list of partners, or only for selection of beneficiaries?

USAID Response: For both. Criteria and benchmarks should be proposed for beneficiaries and partners that signifies graduation of these stakeholders from assistance beyond activity period, and that achieved results will continue to sustain. Applicants may choose to add how natural or man-made hazards or epidemics could impact these criteria.

20.. On page 43 of the RFA, under the 4th bullet on the mobilization plan in Phase 2: "Names and resumes of Key Staff shall not be included and will not be considered". As highly qualified candidates are of critical importance to the success of the project and since applicants must provide updates on results of recruiting efforts, if an applicant has key staff names to provide, may those names be included in Phase 2?

USAID Response: Providing key personnel names in Phase 2 is not permitted. USAID will evaluate only the qualifications and roles and responsibilities of the proposed key personnel in Phase 2. Phase 2 Applicants will be required to include the recruitment plan in the mobilization plan, which will be evaluated. Only the ASA will submit the actual key personnel names and CVs. Approval of such will be during the post award stage.

20. As CMO and eco-tourism needs often involve construction, could small scale construction be permitted under the award, as needed? Similarly, would physical works for habitat restoration be permitted?

USAID Response: Yes, this is permitted, and must follow USAID's environmental compliance procedures.

21. Pages 10-11 of the RFA indicate expansion is possible to other Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) under threat, since there are co-managed KBA Protected Areas outside of the initial target sites. Would it be acceptable to propose potential expansion sites in Phase 1?

USAID Response: Yes, this is acceptable, and must follow the criteria set on Page 10 (Geographical Focus). Selected sites must also comply to USAID's Biodiversity Policy mentioned on Page 13, and Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Code criteria mentioned on Page 14.

21. Are site locations limited to KBAs as globally defined, or is it possible to include other Protected Areas?

USAID Response: In addition to the initially targeted KBAs mentioned in the Program Description, other Protected Areas or KBAs can be added as long as fund resources are allocated effectively and the technical approach demonstrates it to be necessary to meet the overall goal and results set in the Program Description of the NOFO. The NOFO indicates on Page 10, "Proposed forest and aquatic sites must be recognized for their biodiversity resources, represent relatively intact ecosystems, be under threat from human activity, and have significant linkages with the broader landscapes. The Activity may include other communities and regions where significant impacts are occurring to KBAs, and to share lessons from the initial targeted sites and communities."

Selected sites must also comply with USAID's Biodiversity Policy mentioned on Page 13, and Sustainable Landscapes and Biodiversity Code criteria mentioned on Page 14.

22. Could USAID confirm that there will be a second round of questions and answers following release of the Phase 2 solicitation?

USAID Response: This will be determined during Phase 2 as deemed necessary.

[END OF AMENMEDT 1]