



USAID | SOUTH SUDAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Posting Date: November 19, 2021

Response Due Date: December 9, 2021

Closing time: 16:30 Hours Juba Local Time

Request for Information

USAID South Sudan Integrated Youth Engagement Activity (IYEA)

To: All Interested Respondents/Parties:

Pursuant to FAR 52.215-3 Request for Information (Oct. 1997), the United States Government, represented by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) South Sudan Mission, is issuing the subject **Request for Information (RFI)** to all interested public and private entities to provide recommendations and innovative approaches to address the needs of young people, especially vulnerable youth, taking into account the different youth profiles, needs, risks, and challenges in the locations specified in the USAID/South Sudan Strategic Framework (<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Strategic-Framework-SouthSudan-July-2024-public-version.pdf>).

Please note that FAR 52.215-3 provides as follows: (a) The Government does not intend to award a contract on the basis of this solicitation or to otherwise pay for the information solicited except as an allowable cost under other contracts as provided in subsection 31.205-18, Bid and proposal costs, of the Federal Acquisition Regulation. (b) Although "proposal" and "offeror" are used in this Request for Information, your response will be treated as information only. It shall not be used as a proposal. (c) This solicitation is issued for the purpose of conducting market research and request comments and recommendations from respondents to identify innovative approaches to addressing the needs of young people, especially at-risk youth, taking into account the different youth profiles, needs, risks, and challenges in the locations specified in the [USAID South Sudan Strategic Framework](#) over the next five (5) years.

Through this RFI, USAID/South Sudan seeks to solicit public feedback by responding to the questions in **Attachment 1** and to gauge interest from potential partners capable of performing the type of work described in the proposed Draft Design Concept Paper – **Attachment 2**.

Please note: This is NOT a solicitation. This RFI is issued solely for gathering information and innovative ideas for new design planning purposes and does not constitute a Request for Applications (RFA), Request for Proposal (RFP) or Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) or a commitment to issue an RFA/RFP/NOFO in the future. USAID may release a full solicitation at a later date through the U.S. Government portal at www.fbo.gov or www.grants.gov.

Responses to this RFI are not applications or official proposals and will not in any way be deemed to form any binding agreement with the RFI issuing authority. This RFI will not be construed as the U.S. Government commitment to issue any solicitation, award or any other instrument, or pay for any information submitted in response to this RFI request. Respondents are directly and fully responsible for bearing all incurred expenses associated with preparation and submission of their RFI responses.

Any funding proposals submitted in response to this request will not be considered. Responses to this notice must be received no later than the due date and time stated above in this notice. All materials submitted will become the property of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and will not be returned. USAID reserves the right to use information provided by respondents for USAID's own purposes. While it is not the intention to make public any response to this RFI, proprietary and sensitive information must not be sent.

It is the full responsibility of interested party/ies to monitor Government Point of Entry websites, such as beta.sam.gov and Grants.gov, for release of further procurement information related to this RFI. Responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to any organizations in any subsequent procurement. USAID/South Sudan will not respond or provide any feedback to any submissions, including comments or any questions included within their RFI submissions. The RFI submission must be in English, including reference documents and links.

Thank you for your interest in sharing your views and innovative ideas with the USAID/South Sudan Mission.

Sincerely,

Anthony R. Raneses
Contracting and Agreement Officer
USAID/South Sudan

RFI Submission:

USAID/South is issuing this RFI to solicit public feedback by responding to the questions in **Attachment 1** and to gauge interest from potential partners capable of performing the type of work described in the proposed **Draft Design Concept Paper - Attachment 2**. USAID invites interested parties, including non-governmental organizations (including local NGOs) and the private sector.

Eligible interested parties are encouraged to submit information and recommendations for the design of new Integrated Youth Engagement activities by the closing date and time noted on page one. Only email submission is eligible; telephone calls and hard copy submissions are unacceptable.

The RFI submission should be no longer than **five pages**. Respondents must use 11-point Times New Roman font or similar size typeset, 8.5 inch by 11-inch paper, and single-spaced pages for all narrative documents, with each page numbered consecutively. If the respondent has developed relevant reports, these reports may be included, preferably as embedded links. If the reports are not available online, they may be submitted in the attachment/s.

Please do not submit applications, proposals, or resumes, as they will be discarded. Responses will be held confidential. Proprietary information should not be sent. RFI submissions will not be acknowledged; nor will we send any responses. USAID may use any information provided without incurring any obligation.

Please submit electronic RFI information by no later than **December 9, 2021, 4:30 P.M., Juba Time**, to: ashotigian@usaid.gov and mloro@usaid.gov.

USAID/South Sudan reserves the right to incorporate any or all comments into the new solicitation document.

I. Cover page not to exceed one (1) page. Respondents must include all of the following information.

1. Organization name and address.
2. Point of contact name, telephone number, and email address.
3. Organizational small business status.

II. Comments and questions on Attachment 1, not to exceed five (5) pages total.

Respondents may respond to any or all of the questions/requests for comments in Attachment 1.

(Note: USAID will not be providing responses to questions submitted. USAID will review all comments and questions and may use them to inform the development of any activity. USAID asks respondents not to send any additional information beyond what is requested and to adhere to the page limits mentioned.)

ATTACHMENT 1

1. Do the proposed activity design goal, objective, and interventions align with the youth needs identified? If not, what are the gaps?
2. Does the proposed activity design reflect an effective plan for youth development support, given South Sudan's current context, and from your experiences in similar country contexts?
3. What aspects of the activity design require clarification and why?
4. What opportunities or challenges do you anticipate in achieving sustainability of this youth activity given the fluid and evolving country context?
5. What is your organization's background and experience in delivering integrated youth development services in South Sudan?
6. What are your experiences working with youth-led and youth-serving organizations in fragile contexts such as in South Sudan?

ATTACHMENT 2

DRAFT DESIGN CONCEPT PAPER

I. OVERVIEW

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in South Sudan is in the process of gathering information to support the design of an anticipated integrated youth engagement support activity. The broad activity purpose is to empower young Sudanese youth to gain the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment and positively contribute to the development of their communities.

II. BACKGROUND

Context and Problem Statement

In a country where over 72% of the population is below age 30, 2.2 million children and youth are out of school. The majority of the out of school population are youth (10-29 years old) and yet the education system does not meet the needs of those in schools, further increasing the risk of school dropout. Young people face many challenges: association with armed forces where many are traumatized, idle and unemployed in the formal economy, and are engaged in dangerous activities. Private sector jobs leading to careers are limited especially in remote communities and the educational opportunities beyond the fourth grade often cannot be accessed. A clear mismatch exists between the skills provided by learning institutions and the ones that employers seek. Adolescent marriage and pregnancy are prevalent, and early childbirth carries higher risks. Limited livelihood options for youth are further worsened by the consequences of decades of violence, making it harder for its young people to reach their full potential and positively contribute to the socio-economic development of their communities.

The issue of out of school youth having limited knowledge and skills necessary to earn a livelihood including employment options remains a challenge that requires concerted efforts to solve.

To date, USAID has implemented basic services including education and health, economic growth, democracy and governance interventions that increase access, promote safety and well-being, promote social cohesions and build a sense of normalcy and resiliency for the people of South Sudan. But youth beneficiaries are not intentionally targeted and still lacking the critical skills for them to effectively function and expand their livelihoods options and lifelong learning and success.

USAID now wants to leverage those investments and intentionally focus specifically on improving community based instructional models that support youth functional literacy, numeracy and soft and life skills including work-readiness learning; expand entrepreneurial and employment opportunities; empower adolescent and youth to make informed reproductive health decisions and; help youth effectively organize and advocate for their participation in

decision-making processes that affect them and their communities.

Using lessons learned from recent interventions and assessments/studies, USAID proposes an integrated youth activity that demonstrates an increase in skills learning and behavior change outcomes. Conducting such an integrated activity at scale in South Sudan could be a daunting task due to the implementation context. Therefore, the Mission seeks a partner (s) who can implement an integrated activity that empowers beneficiaries, 15-29 years of age, with increased measurable functional literacy, numeracy, and soft skills (through a support package) that will enable them make a living and/or continue with training in age-appropriate technical/vocational training.

To achieve the objectives, the IYEA intends to develop **a model of Youth Corps in South Sudan** to work with South Sudanese youth, local partners, and local community leaders to actively engage out-of-school youth (OSY) in workforce and community development activities. Youth Corps participants will include some of South Sudan's most at-risk youth, including formerly incarcerated youth, former gang members, and other marginalized youth.

III. ACTIVITY PROPOSED GOAL

The Integrated Youth Engagement Activity supports South Sudanese communities to develop, promote and strengthen the skills and assets of youth, and to create an enabling environment for the youth to be productive and positively contribute to their communities. The purpose of this activity is to support and empower at-risk out-of school youth *ages 15-29 gain the necessary skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to their communities.:*

IV. PROPOSED OBJECTIVES

The activity has four main objectives:

1. Increase access to functional literacy¹, numeracy, soft skills, and life skills² programs for at-risk³ and out of school youth
2. Expand entrepreneurial, employment and vocational opportunities for youth.
3. Empower adolescent and youth to make informed reproductive health decisions
4. Improve conflict resolution skills and engagement needed to enable youth to peacefully pursue livelihood opportunities.

V. EXPECTED RESULTS/OUTCOMES

¹ **Functional literacy:** the capacity of a person to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective function of his or her group and community and also for enabling him or her to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his or her own and the community's development-accessible at: <http://gaml.uis.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/08/gaml4-functional-literacy-numeracy.pdf>.

² **Soft skills:** personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects. **Life skills:** are a set of abilities, attitudes and socio-emotional competencies that enable individuals to learn, make informed decisions and exercise rights to lead a healthy and productive life and subsequently become agents of change. retrieved at: <https://www.unicef.org/india/media/2571/file/Comprehensive-lifeskills-framework.pdf>

³ At-risk youth include school dropouts, orphans, demobilized soldiers, youth in the street, child mothers, GBV survivors, pastoralist youth, etc.

Theory of Change:

***IF** youth have improved skills necessary to earn a livelihood, advocate for their inclusion and participation; **AND** adolescents and youth-responsive reproductive health services are available, **THEN** South Sudanese youth will be better equipped to be productive, responsible, and resilient citizens.*

The activity will support interventions that lead to the following four results/outcomes:

1. Improved age-appropriate functional literacy, numeracy, soft and life skills for youth
2. Increased number of youth with improved employability as a result of the enhanced skills and access to opportunities
3. Improved access to integrated youth-responsive sexual and reproductive health information and services.
4. Improved participation of youth in civic and political engagement, policy and decision making in their communities.

USAID seeks innovative ideas that demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Innovative approaches that empower and strengthen youth assets, including improving work readiness skills and entrepreneurship skills.
- Innovative ways to strengthen functional literacy, numeracy, soft skills, and life skills for youth both in rural and semi-urban settings and with a particular focus on young women.
- Innovative approaches that promote an enabling environment for young people to engage in civic education and socio-economic decision-making.
- Ways that build synergies with current USAID investments in its geographic focus areas (the 13 counties in the USAID/South Sudan Strategic Framework) by engaging, collaborating and coordinating with existing USAID partners in those locations.
- The activity engages with youth and local youth NGOs and uses [adaptive management](#) approaches to target interventions to reach youth in remote areas within the USAID geographic focus areas.
- The ideas demonstrate effective integration of conflict-sensitivity, trauma -informed, and gender-responsive approaches as cross-cutting themes throughout the technical approach. It proposes approaches and specific activities that will strengthen gender equality and adhere to Do No Harm principles.
- Support youth-serving non-state actors including private sector entities to deliver quality, accessible youth development services including through a YouthCorps Model.

Illustrative activities that could be implemented:

- Use community-based structures, youth-friendly spaces and engagement centers to promote functional literacy, numeracy, soft skills, and life skills.
- Facilitate activities that empower and strengthen youth, including provision of demand driven work readiness and entrepreneurship skills.
- Specific support for adolescent and youth in sexual and reproductive health interventions, including activities to enhance health seeking behaviors and healthy practices through peer learning and role modelling groups (drama, sports, music, games, radio clubs).
- Empower youth to participate in civic activities within their communities through information sharing,
- Use youth-friendly spaces and engagement centers to support civic engagement, peace building, social cohesion, skills training, information sharing, awareness sessions, community dialogue, psychosocial support/wellbeing activities, and social behavior change.
- Support youth networks and/or establish a cohesive network for the establishment of a youth support system within communities.
- Support youth-led income generation projects as well as access to community managed resources savings and internal credit mechanisms through mentorship and coaching opportunities.
- Entrepreneurial opportunities (entrepreneurial skills, agricultural support, marketing networks, value addition, start-up kits etc).

[END OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION]