



USAID | EL SALVADOR
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UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA

**Amendment No. 1 to the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity -
Addendum 5 under El Salvador Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS)
Annual Program Statement (APS) No.: 72051921APS00001**

The purpose of this amendment is to:

- A) provide notification that the subject Addendum is hereby amended. Changes in the Addendum are highlighted in yellow,
- B) provide answers to the questions submitted by interested parties in regards to the to the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity - Addendum 5 under El Salvador Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) Annual Program Statement (APS) No.: 72051921APS00001 and
- C) provide notification of extension of Concept Paper Submission Date to April 25, 2022, 17:00 pm local El Salvador time.

Except as expressly herein amended, the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity - Addendum 5 terms and conditions remain the same.

Issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of Concept Papers. Concept Papers are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID/El Salvador programs.

A. Revised Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity - Addendum 5



El Salvador Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) Annual Program Statement (APS) No.: 72051921APS00001- Addendum 5

Issuance Date: March 1, 2022
Deadline for Questions: March 15, 2022 17:00 local El Salvador time
Closing Date: April 25, 2022
Concept Paper Submission Closing Dates: April 25, 2022 17:00 local El Salvador time
First Round: To be determined
Second Round: To be determined

Subject: El Salvador Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) Annual Program Statement (APS) No.: 72051921APS00001

Program Title: Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity - Addendum 5

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance: 98.001, Foreign Assistance for Programs Overseas

Pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the United States Government, as represented by the [U.S. Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#), USAID/El Salvador, is announcing the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum to the USAID/El Salvador Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) Annual Program Statement (APS), hereafter known as the CDCS APS.

Through this Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity addendum, USAID/El Salvador aims to expand and amplify the Agency's work in DO.2 "Jobs and Income Potential Increased for Likely Migrants," of the USAID El Salvador CDCS 2020-2025. Specifically, the resulting award will directly contribute to Intermediate Result (IR) 2.2 Education outcomes improved, particularly Sub IR 2.2.1 Equitable access to quality education increased and Sub IR 2.2.3 Social-emotional learning improved.

This Addendum disseminates information to prospective Applicants so they may develop and submit Concept Papers in response and ultimately to be considered for USAID/El Salvador funding. This Addendum describes and provides:

- The type of activities for which Concept Papers will be considered;
- Available funding, process and requirements for submitting Concept Papers and Full Applications;
- The Criteria for evaluating Concept Papers; and
- Refers prospective Applicants to relevant documentation and resources.

Issuance of this Addendum does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. Government to make an award, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the

preparation and submission of a Concept Paper or Application(s). The actual number of assistance awards, if any, is subject to the availability of funds, as well as the viability of eventual full Applications received.

Based on the submitted Concept Paper(s), USAID/El Salvador will determine whether to request a Full Application from an eligible organization. To be competitive under this Addendum to the CDCS APS, Concept Papers and Full Applications must be fully responsive to all directions under the CDCS APS except when specifically noted otherwise in this Addendum.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the entire CDCS APS and Addendum opportunity has been downloaded from www.grants.gov and USAID/El Salvador bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty accessing the CDCS APS, please contact the grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

Thank you for your interest in USAID/El Salvador programs.

Sincerely,

Ross Hicks
Agreement Officer
Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance
USAID/El Salvador

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNOUNCEMENT

CALL FOR CONCEPT PAPERS

**Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity
Addendum**

UNDER EXISTING

**USAID/El Salvador Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS)
Annual Program Statement (APS)**

No.: 72051921APS00001

PLEASE NOTE: This is an Addendum to an existing announcement. All interested organizations should carefully review both this Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum AND the full announcement, which can be found here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=332969>. Important information contained in the full worldwide announcement is not repeated in the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum.

This activity is authorized in accordance with Part 1 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Through the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum to the USAID/El Salvador CDCS APS No.72051921APS00001, USAID/El Salvador seeks to reduce dropout rates, improve performance, and help vulnerable children and youth gain better socio-emotional skills for a successful transition to high school, in support of the efforts and strategies led by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Technology (MINEDUCyT).

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/El Salvador anticipates investing approximately \$30,000,000 in this area and supporting one or multiple awards. USAID/El Salvador reserves the right to award more or fewer awards than this estimate and is not obligated to make any awards.

Unless otherwise stated herein, all terms and conditions of the CDCS APS apply (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=332969>).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACT(S)

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADS:	Automated Directives Systems
AO:	Agreement Officer
AOR:	Agreement Officer Representative
APS:	Annual Program Statement
CDCS:	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CFR:	Code of Federal Regulations
CLA:	Collaborating, learning and adapting
DO:	Development Objective
DOC:	Development Outreach and Communications
EGE:	Economic Growth and Education Office
EMMP:	Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan
FAA:	Foreign Assistance Act
GOES:	Government of El Salvador
INJUVE:	Salvadoran Youth Institute
IR:	Intermediate Result
MCC:	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MEL:	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MINEDUCyT:	Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPI:	New Partnerships Initiative
PYD:	Positive Youth Development
PMP:	Performance Management Plan
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SIGES:	Education Integrated Information System
STEAM:	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics
SUB IR:	Sub Intermediate Result
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

USAID/El Salvador is issuing this Addendum to the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) Annual Program Statement (APS) pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. Any potential resulting award(s) will be subject to 2 CFR 700 and 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards and USAID’s Standard Provisions for U.S. and Non-U.S Based organizations per ADS 303.

1. Background

El Salvador is the smallest and most densely populated country in Central America. It is also much more urbanized than most of its neighbors. Seventy-two percent of the country's approximately 6.2 million population live in urban areas. The [2020 Education Census data](#)

reports:¹

- *A total of 280,307 youth ages 8-18 are out of the system, with a large share of those in the upper age range. Forty-one percent (114,819) are ages 17 and 18.*
- *Enrollment rates tend to decrease in each level of education from 82 percent for primary grades (1st-6th grade) to 58.6 percent for lower secondary (7th-9th) and 37.4 percent for upper secondary (10th-12th).*
- *Repetition rates grow in the higher grades for the public system -- 4.6 percent for grades 7th-9th and 5.7 percent for 10th-12th.*
- *Dropout rates also grow as students advance -- 5.6 percent for grades 7th -9th and 8.3 percent for 10th-12th.*
- *The rural (5.7 percent) areas demonstrated the highest rates of dropout compared to the urban region (4.7 percent).*
- *Males have higher repetition rates than females- 3.1 percent for 7th-9th, and 4.4 percent for 10th-12th.*
- *Males have higher dropout rates than females- 5.8 per cent for 7th-9th, and 8.5 percent for 10th-12th.*

The 2020 Multiple Purpose Survey released in 2021 reported 304,267 children and adults 10 years and older lack essential reading and writing skills in rural areas. The national illiteracy rate is 9.6 percent (15.1 percent for rural areas and 6.3 percent for urban).

USAID will focus on the demographics of those most likely to irregularly migrate to the United States. **People in El Salvador average seven years of schooling**, with 7.2 years for boys and 6.9 years for girls.² Children tend to drop out of school in critical transition years of 4th, 6th, and 9th grades. The links between migration, violence, underemployment, and low levels of education are clear: nearly 70 percent of Central American migrants reported only primary levels or less, with 20 percent reporting no formal education. According to IOM³, the average years of schooling of returnees is under nine years⁴. Thus, school retention for high school completion is a key objective to address irregular immigration as most formal sector jobs also require at least a high school degree.

For the purpose of this Program Description, please refer to following terminology:

Student survival rates (as defined by UNESCO & MINEDUCYT): The percentage of a cohort of students enrolled in the first grade of a given level or cycle of education in a given school year who are expected to reach a given grade. Increasing survival rates from 4th to 6th and from 7th to 9th grades will be a priority.

Drop-out rate (as defined by MINEDUCYT): Proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled during the initial school calendar year (January) in a given grade at a given school year who are no longer enrolled at the end of the school year (October).

Repetition rate by grade (as defined by UNESCO & MINEDUCYT): Number of

¹ <https://www.mined.gob.sv/2020/11/19/bases-de-datos-por-estudiantes-censo-escolar-inicial/>

² Directorate General of Statistics and Census of El Salvador [DIGESTYC] (2019). Multiple Purpose Household Survey 2021

³ Encuesta de medios de vida a población migrante retornada en El Salvador en el marco del COVID-19. Published in 2020: <http://mic.iom.int/webntmi/descargas/2020/ronda1/DTMCOVID19R1ESVF.pdf>

⁴ Additionally, and as reference, the average years of schooling among the gang members is seven years, which has remained constant for more than a decade. "The New Face of Street Gangs: The Gang Phenomenon in El Salvador," (J. Cruz, et al.) https://lacc.fiu.edu/research/the-new-face-of-street-gangs_final-report_eng.pdf

repeaters in a given grade in a given school year, expressed as a percentage of enrollment in that grade the previous school year.

Retention (as defined by USAID/El Salvador): Is the measure of students that enroll, continue and finish their academic studies in the same school. It will be reflected in a decrease of dropout rates and increase of student survival rates at a specific level of education (from primary to lower secondary and from lower secondary to high school).

Discussion

Goal four of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) calls for a free, equitable, and good quality primary and secondary education for all girls and boys by 2030, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. To achieve this goal, every child must complete their primary education without dropping out along the way. There is growing evidence of education's significant social and economic returns – including at the upper secondary level – for individuals and entire societies. The list of benefits is impressive: better lives, better health, greater gender equality, greater social cohesion, higher incomes, more tax leverage for governments, and reduced crime and risky behavior among young people. As well, educational benefits include a lower burden on social welfare, health, and justice budgets (UNICEF, 2017). Given these benefits, it is not surprising that the prevention of dropouts has become a priority for most governments worldwide. The prevention of early school leaving is a critical strategy to support adolescents and youth and maximize their chances of making a good transition from primary school to high school and into job placement.

In El Salvador, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in school closures from March 2020 to April 2021 when the Government of El Salvador authorized a safe, gradual, and optional reopening. This closure affected over 1.5 million pre-primary to upper secondary students. Schools in El Salvador were closed for more than 200 days during the pandemic, making it the country with the second most days of school closure in the world - one hundred fifty-eight days was the average in Latin America and the Caribbean. Due to COVID closure of schools, at least 1.6 years of effective learning were lost (World Bank, 2021). As of June 2021, 78 percent of students continued their classes from home (Villeda, 2021).⁵

To date, the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MINEDUCyT) continues to serve most students through a multi-modal approach, relying on virtual and online forms of education, the use of work guides, WhatsApp messaging, radio, and television educational programs. Schools also offer students and their families a blended learning approach, which allows children and youth to attend face-to-face classes on certain days of the week. While these approaches offer school reopening, the MINEDUCyT faces many challenges, especially ensuring that all children and educators continue participating in the hybrid model. Teachers grapple with tracking both hard copy and virtual submission of assignments and maintaining student participation across in-person and virtual environments. Parents are equally challenged, frequently communicating with the schools using WhatsApp yet struggling to connect through online platforms due to a lack of knowledge about technological tools and limited connectivity.

Further stressing the educational system and the students are biosafety requirements. Schools have implemented biosecurity measures and monitoring systems to track attendance,

⁵ FUSADES Social Situation Report, El Salvador, 2020-2021.

participation and determine learning instruments. Despite these practices, children at the primary level have missed crucial moments of readiness and are more vulnerable to early school dropout when combined with other risk factors such as illiterate parents. Identifying risk factors and developing the appropriate mechanisms to ensure a safe learning environment will be critical for the 2022 school year.

Recently, the Ministry of Education released the findings for the “*Diagnostic Test 2021: Getting to know my achievements*”⁶ to understand the socio-emotional status of students during COVID pandemia and the effects on learning. The instrument reached 5,651 public and private institutions - 2,213 and 3,438 respectively, covering more than 500,000 of the 800,000 students enrolled from 3rd to 12th grades. The main findings are:

- *Enrollment and Dropout*
 - *Nearly 32,289 students responded that they do not plan to continue studying in 2022 (6.46 percent).*
 - *Approximately 230,537 students from 7th to 10th grade plan to continue studying in 2022 (46.11 percent).*
 - *Nearly 19,993 (4 percent) students from 7th to 9th grade responded that “they are still not sure if they will continue studying”; however, 8,501 (1.7 percent) plan to work, 2,681(0.54 percent) plan to migrate abroad, and 1,114 (0.22 percent) plan to “start a family” in the future.*
- *Academic Achievement (the gap between private and public sectors). The diagnostic test included a section on student learning during COVID closure of schools.*
 - *Students in public schools fared worse on the diagnostic tests than private school students.*
 - *Public school students, on average, scored 55.8 percent in Mathematics; 57 percent in Social Studies; 60 percent in Natural Sciences; and 48.6 percent in Language.*
 - *Private school students, on average, scored 59.5 percent in Mathematics, 65.4 percent in Social Studies, 67.1 percent in Science, and 55.4 percent in Language.*
- *Socio-emotional development: To determine the degree to which the pandemic affects students’ mental health, the following educational factors were taken into account: positive perceptions of the electronic device and internet connection; ease of online classes; future projection within the educational system; and high levels of behaviors related to self-awareness, self-regulation and responsible decision making.*
 - *9.5 percent of the respondents are affected by high levels of depression, 3.8 percent are at a borderline of depression, and 84 percent are in a normal state of mental health.*
 - *13 percent of the respondents reported high levels of anxiety, 8 percent share that they feel close to an increasing but not yet high level of anxiety, and 79 percent responded with no change in anxiety.*
 - *Students that have better internet connectivity claimed fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety.*

⁶ Diagnostic Test 2021: Getting to know my achievements, MINEDUCyT, October 1, 2021
<https://www.mined.gob.sv/2021/10/01/mined-presenta-resultados-de-pruebas-diagnosticas-2021-conociendo-mis-logros/>

- *Internet Connectivity*
 - *Nearly 431,415 students positively evaluated their internet connection.*
 - *Approximately 41,989 students positively evaluated their electronic device.*
 - *Nearly 357,679 students indicated having difficulties and challenges receiving online instruction.*

Localization and relationship with El Salvador Education priorities

The MINEDUCyT launched its 2019-2024 *Institutional Strategic Plan* in January 2021. The priorities in the plan are:

- *Quality and meaningful learning throughout the years of schooling, with relevant and inclusive pedagogy and curriculum;*
- *Teacher professionalization for the dignity of in-service teachers;*
- *Science, technology, and innovation to positively impact the educational, productive, and academic sectors;*
- *Educational infrastructure with quality and safety standards that favor the teaching-learning processes in sustainable school environments;*
- *A school that promotes education of coexistence, inclusion, and diversity; and*
- *A transformed institution that responds to the needs of the educational territory.*

The MINEDUCyT implements the “*La Alegría de Regresar a la Escuela*” guidelines for returning students to school, ensuring biosecurity efforts that protect teachers and students. The First Lady of El Salvador launched the “*Mi Nueva Escuela*” to improve early childhood education and physical environments and provide teachers with adequate resources and tools for a better education. USAID and MINEDUCyT established a collaborative working group to ensure that local priorities in education will be included in this Activity.

USAID will complete a Rapid Assessment by March 2022 to determine the effects of the pandemic on the education system in El Salvador, specifically on attendance/dropout, instruction and learning, irregular migration of students and their families, and inequalities due to gender, geographic area (rural or urban), socioeconomic status (SES), ethnicity, and disability. Recommendations from the assessment will be critical for the implementation of this Activity.

Behavior science⁷ to protect human capital investments after the COVID-19 pandemic

Recently, donors, including World Bank and USAID, disclosed evidence of designing effective COVID-19 responses using a behavioral science approach. Samantha Power, the USAID Administrator, expressed “*USAID will seek to maximize the impact of the USAID work around the world by applying insights from behavioral science and experimental economics to USAID program design, as well as rigorously assess the potential impact of USAID programming by pursuing the best available evidence to determine cost-effectiveness.*”⁸ While much of the immediate focus has been towards social and behavior change communications to

⁷ A behavioral approach focuses on mindsets, decision making frames, and the social environment. It draws on a variety of disciplines, including Economics, Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology, And Neuroscience, World Bank, Mind, Behavior and Development Unit.

⁸ USAID Priority Reforms, Samantha Powers, November 5, 2021, <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/speeches/nov-4-2021-administrator-samantha-power-new-vision-global-development>

manage the health sector including the pandemic, there are other areas of human capital development and protection where insights and actions can benefit from behavioral science including education⁹.

In 2016, Mette Tier Damgaard and Helena Skyt Nielsen, in their book "Nudging in Education," connected in evidence-based research on field interventions that involve nudging¹⁰. The overview research on nudging interventions and their effects on student outcomes led to enhancing the common knowledge base and being valuable to both academics and policymakers when designing education interventions. The authors concluded:

"The review suggested that effective interventions can provide broad and long-term effects on overall student outcomes. Leveraging behavioural economics and especially cost-effective nudges gently push children, adolescents, parents, and teachers towards better education decisions and greater educational attainment."

"Interventions involving passive decision-making include pure nudges (defaults, framing, and peer group manipulations) and brief psychological interventions (social belonging, identity activation, and mindset interventions). The former involves (small) changes to the decision environment, whereas the latter adds information to the decision environment. The review suggested that, if effective, these two kinds of interventions can have broad and long-term effects on overall student outcomes".¹¹

Relationship with USG priorities

USAID Education Policy

This Activity contributes to Goal Three of the USAID Education policy: "Children and youth, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable, have increased access to quality education that is safe, relevant and promotes social wellbeing." The policy builds on:

- *Millions of children and youth lack access to quality learning opportunities.*
- *Reaching marginalized and vulnerable populations requires a deliberate focus.*
- *Increasing access to quality education in crisis and conflict contexts is paramount.*
- *Disability-inclusive education improves educational outcomes for all learners.*
- *Gender disparities differ across regions, contexts, and education levels and require tailored approaches.*

U.S. Strategy for Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Central America

⁹ Behavioral Sciences to Protect Human Capital Investments During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic, World Bank, May 5, 2020

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/33718/Behavioral-Sciences-to-Protect-Human-Capital-Investments-During-and-After-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

¹⁰ A nudge is any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives. To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid. *Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth, and happiness*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. (2008).

¹¹ Damgaard, Mette Trier & Nielsen, Helena Skyt, 2018. "Nudging in education," *Economics of Education Review*, Elsevier, vol. 64(C), pages 313-342.

In July 2021, the U.S. National Security Council launched the Root Causes Strategy (RCS) to promote a democratic, prosperous, and secure Central America, a region closely connected to the United States by culture, geography, and trade. COVID-19, extreme weather, and severe economic decline compound long-standing challenges in the area, forcing far too many Central Americans to look for the future they desire for themselves and their children outside of their home countries. Their population has lost hope and is fleeing in record numbers. The Strategy is organized under five pillars:

- *Pillar I: Addressing economic insecurity and inequality.*
- *Pillar II: Combating corruption, strengthening democratic governance, and advancing the rule of law.*
- *Pillar III: Promoting respect for human rights, labor rights, and a free press*
- *Pillar IV: Countering and preventing violence, extortion, and other crimes perpetrated by criminal gangs, trafficking networks, and other organized criminal organizations.*
- *Pillar V: Combating sexual, gender-based, and domestic violence.*

This Activity responds to Pillar I directly under Strategic Objective: 3 - “Enhance workforce development, health, and education by increasing access to quality education”. Additionally, it aims to provide youth with appropriate, safe, and accessible educational opportunities; and ensure educational and vocational offerings reflect labor market needs so youth can access decent work upon completion of their studies.

USAID/El Salvador Country Strategy

USAID/El Salvador Country Strategy goal is to “Reduce the Drivers of Irregular Migration by fostering a more self-reliant El Salvador: secure, prosperous, and well-governed.” The strategic vision is to increase the belief among targeted populations to lead safe and prosperous lives, supported by a transparent and accountable government in El Salvador. Over 75 percent of returned migrants cite a lack of economic opportunity as one of the main reasons for migrating. The majority of irregular migrants from El Salvador do not have sufficient education to earn a decent wage. To this point, of adult Salvadorans caught and returned at the U.S. border in 2018, approximately 98 percent only have a high school or less education, with the majority--78 percent--having only a ninth-grade or less education.

USAID is focused on building country ownership, defined as a country’s ability -- including the government, academia, civil society, and the private sector -- to plan, finance, and implement solutions to solve its development challenges. This approach is the cornerstone for how USAID/El Salvador orients awards and country partnerships.

USAID will work actively with New and Underutilized Partners to build trusting relationships, learn from local knowledge, and hold candid conversations to improve programmatic design and outcomes. USAID seeks to work in a co-creation effort with local organizations during the elaboration of a multi-step process to:

- Establish innovative approaches;
- Add value;
- Have a better understanding of the system around a development challenge;
- Develop future work objectives;

- Define partnerships and establish coordination with the Ministry of Education (i.e., MINEDUCyT); and
- Define partnerships and establish coordination with local institutions and other government organizations that share project objectives. This includes, potentially, Youth Institute (INJUVE), private sector, and local government.

2. Purpose/Objectives/Outcomes

USAID/El Salvador proposes to work directly with local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and service providers, which meet the requirements in Section B of the CDCS APS, to increase children and youth's¹² retention in school via access to quality education and improved socio-emotional outcomes. USAID will work closely with the MINEDUCyT to select schools, define training prevention tools, coordinate with the departmental offices, and work with management and pedagogical advisors who work directly with the schools.

USAID will fund at least one new activity to contribute to the Mission's highest-level results by pursuing the following Theory of Change:

IF the education community (families, teachers, principals, and students)

- collaboratively identifies students at risk of dropping out of school, and
- provides individualized, targeted, and universal interventions for the learning and well-being of children and youth to increase access to quality education; and

IF schools are enhanced to address student needs at key transition levels;

IF families understand the value of education and are committed to supporting their children; and

IF children and youth are motivated to continue their studies, possess the academic and social-emotional skills and competencies to access and thrive in a better job market;

THEN potential migrants will succeed first by staying in school when different stakeholders, including parents, community, students, and teachers, work together to coordinate and collaborate in their education.

FURTHERMORE, children and youth will improve their retention and graduation rates in basic education (grades 4th-10th) towards successfully transitioning to high school options.

Expected Outcomes and Outputs

This Activity will advance USAID/El Salvador's efforts in achieving its five-year CDCS

¹²USAID uses the term youth and young people interchangeably and while youth development programs often focus on youth in the 15 to 24 year age range, USAID programs also are likely to engage individuals aged 10-29 as a broader youth cohort, Youth in Development, October 2012.

goal: “Reduce the drivers of migration by better preparing Salvadorans to take advantage of economic opportunities.”

At the highest level, under the El Salvador 2020-2025 CDCS, USAID will endeavor to directly increase student retention survival rates for approximately 100,000 students, and reduce dropout rates in USAID-targeted schools.

Specifically, this Activity will contribute to Development Objective (DO) No. 2: “Jobs and Income Potential Increased for Likely Migrants.” And at the Intermediate Result (IR) and sub-IR levels of the El Salvador CDCS, the Applicant’s assistance will directly contribute to IR 2.2. “Education Outcomes Improved” and sub-IRs IR 2.2.1 “Equitable access to quality education increased” and 2.2.3 “Social-emotional learning improved.”

USAID’s goal for the Activity is to improve student retention and graduation rates in basic education (grades 4th-10th) through evidence-based solutions.

The purpose for any award(s) under this Activity is to promote students' engagement in schools with relevant learning opportunities and to strengthen public schools and the education community (families, teachers, principals, and students) to reduce dropout rates, improve performance, and offer better socio-emotional skills improving transition rates from primary to secondary schooling options (7th- 12th grades) in support of the MINEDUCyT efforts.

This Activity will apply behavioral science to understand how the education community (students, educators, families, communities) and policymakers make decisions to reduce dropout and improve socio-emotional learning. The interventions will have a focus on low cost, easily scalable solutions, effective approaches for low-income students, high impacts of using behavioral science, observing into the value of reforming the system at the classroom level, and looking into the pitfalls and opportunities of providing hybrid learning (online and in-person).

Even though behavioral science for education is in the early stages of application, the Activity will help identify and provide understanding throughout the design, implementation, and monitoring of the four objectives on the reasons and significant challenges towards the following assumptions:

1. A behavioral mechanism can nudge towards inducing active or passive decision-making in students, families, and teachers;
2. Non- educational nudges can affect the decision environment towards reducing dropouts;
3. Socio-emotional learning interventions that target students’ mindsets and beliefs (social belonging, identify activation, and mindset nudges) aim to create self-reinforcing but sub-conscious improvement in motivation and achievement.

Objective 1: An “Early Warning System” established in at least 500 schools enabling education authorities to identify students with specific needs and support them quickly and appropriately

This objective aims to establish an Early Warning System (EWS) in schools to identify students at risk of dropping out of school. The EWS will detect the presence of “red flags,” including specific factors that contribute to dropouts such as attendance, security, and family contexts, behavior, and academic performance. The EWS will build on efforts funded by the Millenium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and UNICEF through the Education Integrated

Information System (SIGES), tracking specific indicators including the “ABCs” of the EWS: Attendance, Behavior, and Course Grades (Mathematics and Language).

The school community will provide follow-up to identify students at risk of dropping out and define strategies and interventions to meet individual and group needs. This objective will incorporate parent-teacher associations (PTAs) or community-based school governance structures to be engaged in primary or secondary education by revising school management and governance systems. A community social mobilization campaign will be developed and launched in these communities to educate on the importance of student retention and reduce irregular migration. Under the USAID Education for Children and Youth Project implemented from 2013-2020, USAID initiated a pilot program in EWS and then expanded this approach to other at-risk schools located in insecure municipalities. This Activity will take into consideration lessons learned and results under this project.¹³

If possible, schools should embed dropout prevention in the regular classroom and practices that address all students. UNICEF recommends using a three-tier approach: For some groups, *individualized* measures are required, including academic reinforcement for low-achievers, mentoring, and parent-student-teachers commitment. For students facing the most complex situations, *tailored individual and intensive support* is necessary, such as additional one-to-one teaching and individual student plans supported by multi-disciplinary teams, including psycho-social support. *Universal support services* within and outside schools will be included to access a broader approach for all children and youth.¹⁴ This Activity will set first response strategies to prevent children and youth from missing excessive amounts of school, causing them to do poorly on their coursework. Stress at home will also lead to withdrawing from classes.

Outcome 1A: The EWS implemented in 500 targeted schools to identify students at risk of dropping out of school.

Illustrative activities

- Contextualize the EWS strategy for the El Salvador school system by selecting main risk factors, dropout predictors, and indicators established in the SIGES, which will include the following:
 - Absenteeism: Not attending virtual or in-person classes or not accessing on time, or a lack of participation;
 - Behavior: Lack of interest, an indication of stress, hyperactivity, impulsivity, inattention;
 - Academic performance: Weak performance, turning poor assignments, or not turning assignments, repetition, over-age¹⁵ students;
 - Socio-economic status: Difficult home/family situation (living conditions, migration, substance misuse, health issues, pregnancy);
 - Learning environments: Lack of internet connectivity and technological supplies;

¹³ USAID Education for Children and Youth Project Final Report: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00X8C4.pdf

¹⁴ UNICEF Early Warning System, 2016.
https://www.unicef.org/eca/sites/unicef.org.eca/files/2018-11/Early%20warning%20systems%20for%20students%20at%20risk%20of%20dropping%20out_0.pdf

¹⁵ “Students who are older than the official school-age range for the educational program they are enrolled in”, UNESCO Institute for Statistics

- Personal socio-emotional factors: A lack of the sense of belonging to the school, bullying, poor perceived level of acceptance by peers and teachers, violent behavior; and
- Teen pregnancy: focus on health care and prevention.
- Develop a student needs assessment and plan in close collaboration with the teachers, students, and families to be implemented under Objective 2.
- Engage families, educators, and students to provide solutions for at-risk students through the three tiers (tailored, targeted, and universal) levels of interventions proposed by UNICEF.
- In coordination with MINEDUCyT, supports the institutionalization of the EWS in public schools nationwide.

Outcome 1B: Governance and school management capacity enhanced in 500 schools to address student needs through a collaborative approach.

Illustrative activities

- Identify gaps, barriers, and conditions in the critical transition years (6th to 7th grade and 9th to 10th grade) for youth at risk of dropping out early in the school year to provide second-chance opportunities.
- Strengthen the use of MINEDUCyT information platforms in the SIGES to monitor progress and review benchmarks.
- Implement a school-community management plan to address the needs of students and families.

Outcome 1C: An awareness campaign developed with families, teachers, and students towards reducing dropout and irregular migration, improving retention and academic performance.

Illustrative activities

- Design and implement an awareness campaign to increase the visibility of dropout problems and mobilize the community to act and engage.
- Seek partnerships with municipalities, NGOs, and the private sector to leverage additional funding and collaborate with the public schools.
- Use social media and other innovative communication approaches to address the importance and value of education.

Outcome 1D: Increase access to education by removing barriers to school participation and learning through alleviation of economic hardship, food insecurity, and technology-related disparities (i.e., digital gap).

Illustrative activities

- Ensure that the reopening of schools reaches the most vulnerable populations, including disabled, LGBTQI+, and indigenous children and youth, and follows a safe operation focused on learning, well-being, and protection.
- Design and implement an incentive program based on socio-economic status, social inclusion, and gender equality, which might include stipends to improve internet accessibility, transportation, meals, soap, or other personal protective equipment (PPE) related supplies for a safe return to school for those students who do not enroll at school due to the economic limitations presented by their families.
- Collaborate with MINEDUCyT to roll out their “Back to School” priorities, ensuring

students return in a healthy manner.

High-Level Results for Objective 1 - Contributions to North Stars¹⁶

- Increase survival rates by 3 percent, approximately 100,000 children in targeted schools.
- Stop an additional 50,000 youth from dropping out of school.

Illustrative Intermediate Results

- Governance and school-community management capacity enhanced in 500 schools to address student needs through a collaborative approach.
- At least 500 schools implementing the EWS.
- At least 500 parent-teacher associations (PTAs) or community-based school governance structures engaged in primary or secondary education supported with USG assistance (Illustrative indicator ES.1 -13).
- At least 5,000 parents, families or community members trained in socio-emotional learning to support children's education with USG assistance (Illustrative indicator Supp-7).
- At least 500 schools and communities implement an awareness campaign to motivate children and youth to continue studying.
- At least 5,000 families engaged in decisions towards improving the education of their children and youth.

Objective 2: Dropout prevention plans implemented in 500 schools using a student-centered focus to meaningful and effective retention, performance, and well-being.

The focus of this objective is to support the school community to provide follow-on to students at risk of dropping out and define strategies and interventions to meet individual and group needs. This Activity will use UNICEF recommendations on three tiers:

1. Tailored (individual at high risk) high-intensity individualized interventions for a few students at high risk regarding attendance, positive reinforcement, academic, behavior, and socio-emotional well-being, for which multi-agency coordination is usually required.
2. Targeted (groups of students at risk) early intervention: additional support for students at-risk regarding attendance, academic, behavior, and socio-emotional well-being.
3. Universal (all students): school-wide regular prevention interventions in academic, attendance, behavior, and socio-emotional well-being support.

Students at risk will receive individualized support through academic reinforcement, mentorship, and life plans. Youth will also have second chance interventions to improve their academic performance and socio-emotional learning. The creation of safe learning environments will reduce violent situations and enhance the resilience of children and youth.

Outcome 2A: Tailored support plan developed for at-risk students through individualized learning approaches.

Illustrative activities

- Implement the “Accelerated Education Strategy” for primary education students to include well-designed tutoring and academic reinforcement programs that utilize

¹⁶ “North Stars” are meaningful changes in the country's prosperity that may have a significant impact on likelihood to increase hope and decrease likelihood to use irregular migration means to the U.S.

volunteers as tutors (peer-to-peer, support groups, and individualized approaches) to promote remedial activities for underperforming students. This output will be implemented through close coordination with other USAID education programs that improve basic foundational skills in Language and Mathematics.

- Support community mobilization campaigns and counseling programs to increase awareness of the importance of supporting vulnerable populations, such as disabled and LGBTQI+ students and students with learning disabilities and/or overage.
- Monitor student academic and social-emotional progress with families.

Outcome 2B: “Second chance” activities implemented for out-of-school children and youth to increase student’s academic performance and improve socio-emotional learning.

Illustrative activities

- Increase the access to public and affordable non-state schools¹⁷ alternatives through flexible modalities for those not enrolling back to school¹⁸.
- Work collaboratively with other donors, including the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), to promote strategies to increase access and quality of out-of-school options.

Outcome 2C: Dropout prevention embedded in regular classroom practices focused on fostering positive relationships, teamwork, collaborative approach, and maintaining high standards of academic performance.

Illustrative activities

- Train at least 1,000 teachers to become mentors and facilitators for better classroom management, including teamwork, collaboration among peers, communication, and coaching.
- Establish a classroom level plan to engage students in using technology and other MINEDUCyT learning platforms (radio, television, student guides, Whatsapp, and Google Classroom) to reduce the digital divide (connectivity, access, and availability) for the marginalized population.

Outcome 2D: Safe return to learning promoted in 500 schools, including referrals to psychosocial support to reduce bullying and improve adaptation for change.

Illustrative activities

- Implement a school management plan with key MINEDUCyT staff at the departmental level, including working with pedagogical advisors to promote resilience.
- Provide counselors, psychologists and behavior scientists with needed skills to a leading role to provide the first line of support to students while partnering with families, teachers, and community leaders.
- Train teachers and students to improve social skills, behavior, communication, and self-esteem.
- Organize a plan for the creation of safe, healthy, and protective educational environments

¹⁷ Affordable Non-State Schools In El Salvador | Education in Crisis and Conflict Network:
<https://www.eccnetwork.net/resources/affordable-non-state-schools-el-salvador-508-compliant>

¹⁸ USAID Education Policy, November 2018,
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/2018_Education_Policy_FINAL_WEB.pdf

with the active participation of children, youth, and their families in support of children's rights.

- Promote anti-bullying, inclusive and respectful interventions towards unacceptable behaviors towards reducing gender-based violence, and promoting gender equality and social inclusion.
- Refer cases for mental health or psychosocial support with multidisciplinary teams when relevant and appropriate.

High Level Results for Objective 2

- At least 28,000 out-of-school youth transition to further education or training through accelerated education in USG assistance programs.
- At least 120,000 targeted students participated in distance learning programming funded with USG education assistance.

Illustrative Intermediate Results

- At least 5,000 education administrators and officials who complete professional development activities with USG assistance (Illustrative Indicator ES.1-12).
- At least 35,000 children and youth receiving psychosocial support
- At least 500 learning school environments supported with USAID have improved safety, according to locally defined criteria (Illustrative Indicator ES.1-51).
- At least 200 counselors and psychologists trained to provide school counseling and psycho-social support to at-risk children and youth.

Objective 3: At least 150,000 students meaningfully engaged with positive youth development activities to increase the attractiveness of education, attendance, and learning.

The focus of this objective is to engage youth and families in Positive Youth Development (PYD) activities to build youth's competencies, soft skills, and abilities to grow and flourish throughout life. PYD is both a philosophy and an approach to adolescent development. PYD views youth as precious assets to be nurtured and developed rather than as problems to be solved. The process that flows from this philosophy works on building mutually beneficial relationships between youth and their family, peer groups, school, workplace, community, government institutions, society, and culture to provide opportunities for youth to enhance their knowledge, interests, skills, and abilities. This Activity will ensure that at-risk students receive academic and social-emotional support to overcome learning difficulties. Children and youth will have the opportunity to be engaged in the community through volunteering and extracurricular activities such as English language, sports, arts, culture, technology, and science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM). Innovative interventions will be encouraged.

Outcome 3A: Evidence-based strategies designed and implemented to motivate 150,000 students in 500 schools to be more resilient and be engaged in community leadership activities.

Illustrative activities

- Design a positive youth program to include student governance, youth voices, civic education, values promotion, and health prevention activities.
- Promote volunteering in community-led activities.

Outcome 3B: Theme-based instruction provided through extended school hours activities.

Illustrative activities

- Based on lessons learned in implementing extracurricular activities programs funded by MINEDUCyT, USAID, and MCC, implement sports, arts, culture, and STEAM activities with a focus on social inclusion and gender equity to be motivated to continue their studies.
- Train at least 2,000 volunteering staff, including community leaders and teachers, to implement extracurricular activities.

Outcome 3C: Career readiness program designed for at least 10,000 lower secondary level students to promote interest in pursuing high school (10th-12th grades) options.

Illustrative activities

- Design a hybrid (online and in-person) career readiness program to reach at least 10,000 students that includes:
 - Personal choices focused on interest and opportunities regarding high school options (career counseling);
 - Education and occupation, with an emphasis on acquiring the knowledge and practical life skills needed to successfully enter the workforce (relationships, time management, financial literacy, critical thinking, soft skills, stress management, and communication); and
 - Entrepreneurship targeted to youth interested in continuing a productive pathway.
- Promote accessibility to the disabled population to acquire basic skills by using adaptations (e.g., Braille, sign language).
- Promote equal opportunities for boys and girls and target support to adolescent girls, particularly pregnant girls, young mothers, and young fathers.

Outcome 3D: A training program for lower secondary level students implemented to promote English language competencies and skills for better job placement opportunities.

Illustrative activities

- Building on previous MCC and MINEDUCyT initiatives to improve English language skills, develop training opportunities and certification programs for at least 600 teachers to enhance their teaching methodologies.
- Provide training to approximately 8,000 students to improve their skills and competencies.
- Use new approaches to promote the improvement of the English language in public schools.

High-Level Results for Objective 3

- At least 100,000 learners in primary level schools or equivalent non-school-based settings reached with USG education assistance (Illustrative Indicator. ES.1-3) through extracurricular activities.
- At least 50,000 learners in secondary level schools or equivalent non-school-based settings reached with USG education assistance (Illustrative Indicator. ES.1-3) through workforce readiness or extracurricular activities.

Illustrative Intermediate Results for Objective 3 (50,000 secondary level students)

- At least 30,000 individuals receiving soft skills/TTE training through USG/life skills

- through USG-assisted programs (Illustrative Indicator. YOUTH-1)
- At least 10,000 youth who complete USG-assisted leadership programs (Illustrative Indicator. YOUTH-6)
- At least 8,000 students improve their English language skills and competencies.

Objective 4: A scalable, comprehensive, research-based prevention and intervention process using behavior science designed for students at risk of dropping out of basic education.

The focus of this objective is to use evidence to monitor progress and propose improvements for timely decision-making. This Activity will impact different actors on human capital, including but not limited to: teachers and students, communities and households- that will result in changes and adaptations in their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior towards improving student outcomes. Therefore, the Applicants must present an integrated approach for supporting psychosocial interventions, behavioral science, and socio-emotional learning for teachers, students, and families.

Stakeholders will participate in defining the goals and methodology for the data collection on an ongoing basis. Key local partners will discuss and analyze results, including academia, think tanks, financial institutions, and the MINEDUCyT. The Activity will be well-positioned to influence policymakers and education authorities towards innovation, sustainability, scaling, and ownership.

Outcome 4A: Collection and use evidence to improve socio-emotional skills and reduce student dropout.

Illustrative activities

- Explore the different factors and decisions affecting and influencing students to drop out of school and identify success factors that led students to remain in school and earn their education certification.
 - a) pull (out of school motivations like pursuing a job or forming a family),
 - b) push (school-related consequences on attendance or discipline, teacher's connections), and
 - c) falling out (disconnections in students not caused by school or outside pulling factors, sense of hopelessness).
- Use behavioral science approaches to provide the evidence on how the interventions impacted the education community including families, teachers and students to reduce negative effects on human capital; increase the ability to process information and norms towards decision making; and enable the environment to improve student retention and social-emotional learning.
- Collaborate with MINEDUCyT to use data and information for decision-making towards socio-emotional learning and improve student retention. Illustrative indicators to be analyzed:
 - Enrollment: Completion of the academic year and enrollment to next year
 - Dropout: Root cause analysis
 - Student engagement: Academic performance, behavior changes, participation in community and youth development activities
 - Students and parents' attitudes: Positive attitude towards schooling and dropout prevention—the supportive environment at home and in the classroom.

- The efficiency of processes and tools: EWS indicators
- Socio-emotional learning: Teamwork, collaborative approaches, communication skills, and soft skills
- Irregular migration: Desire to migrate to another country or the urban areas
- Undertake analysis of the EWS existing tracking tool to promote practical and evidence-based strategies towards improving student survival¹⁹ rates.

Outcome 4B: School community (principals, teachers, students, and parents) engaged in the evaluation of school indicators and community activities to promote an equitable and inclusive education system.

Illustrative activities

- Share results with the schools, the MINEDUCyT central and departmental level, and other stakeholders to guide decision-makers and schools on dropout prevention and irregular migration.

High-Level Results for Objective 4

- Education system strengthened through USG-assisted policy reform to implement the EWS and socio-emotional learning (Illustrative Indicator. ES. 1-59)

Illustrative Intermediate Results for Objective 4

- At least 30 organizations engaged in decision-making activities to demonstrate the impact of human capital investment to reduce dropout rates and improve retention.
- At least three studies/evaluations/ rapid assessments were completed to inform different stakeholders on the importance of socio-emotional learning towards reducing dropout rates.
- At least three evidence-based briefs for decision making disseminated.

The crosscutting activities resulting from this Addendum will contribute to the intended CDCS results associated with IR 2.1.

1. Stop an additional 48,000 youth from dropping out of school.
2. Increase in survival school retention rates in USG-assisted schools.

3. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

Applicants will develop an Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (AMELP), in accordance with ADS 201.3.4-10. The purpose of the Monitoring Plan is to allow everyone involved in the implementation of the Activity to:

- Assess progress made in meeting the proposed goal and purpose as agreed to in the Cooperative Agreement and bilateral agreement with the GOES.
- Identify whether the project activities are progressing as planned and the results and outcomes that are being achieved, in a way that allows identifying the causes to correct activities that are not progressing as expected.

Suggested sections of the AMELP are: i) Introduction (overview/logic model) ii) Monitoring Plan (performance and context indicators) iii) Beneficiary Feedback Plan (according

¹⁹ Survival rate by grade is the percentage of a cohort of students enrolled in the first grade of a given level or cycle of education in a given school year who are expected to reach a given grade, regardless of repetition, UNESCO, Sustainable Development Goals

to ADS 201.3.4.10) iv) Evaluation Plan (illustrative evaluation questions) v) CLA Approach (see link below) vi) Data Management Plan (ADS 2793.1) vii) Roles and Responsibilities. Guidance to prepare del AMELP is available at: <https://usaidlearninglab.org/monitoring-toolkit>.

The MEL plan must be prepared in a way that can help the Mission to answer the CDCS's Learning Question:

“What are the key determinants and obstacles affecting whether a student/learner is equipped to a) succeed academically, b) progress through grade levels, and c) become substantially more employable, increasing the likelihood of secure/resilient livelihoods?”

The CLA approach must be aligned with the Agency Learning Agendas more related to this Activity. [PYD Learning Agenda](#): What processes or strategies are critical for the adaptation of reliable and valid PYD tools to different contexts? What are the barriers to and facilitators for including vulnerable or marginalized populations in universal PYD programs? How effective are tailored PYD programs at serving the needs of vulnerable or marginalized populations? [Education in Crisis and Conflict Learning Agenda](#): Which education interventions are the most effective in improving student well-being in crisis and conflict contexts? What is the impact of well-being interventions on student learning outcomes in crisis and conflict settings? What education delivery modalities are the most effective at improving equitable access to education in crisis and conflict contexts? What is the contribution of accelerated education to equitable access, learning outcomes, retention, and completion in crisis and conflict contexts?

Monitoring, evaluation, and CLA for activities should emphasize the systematic process of collecting and analyzing performance data and other information to track progress toward planned results. Monitoring and evaluation should influence the planning of activities, decision-making, and the allocation of resources and inform changes as needed. It is also important to collaborate with and across implementing partners to manage the relationship among activities, or between activities and a project, to achieve higher-level outcomes. A CLA Toolkit can be found at: <https://usaidlearninglab.org/cla-toolkit>.

All people-level indicators must be disaggregated by sex and age, in absolute numbers and percentages to facilitate comparisons, and the Applicant must provide gender-impact analyses of these indicators. Sex disaggregated data on student and school achievement should be systematically and periodically reported and analyzed as a basis for identifying gender-specific patterns of school attendance and desertion as tools for the design of activities that respond to the differing constraints for young men and women for school completion, school retention, and skills development.

Applicants should integrate cross-cutting CDCS objectives and priorities in the following areas:

- Private Sector Engagement,
- Partnering with and building the capacity of local partners,
- Partner coordination and collaboration in the three urban hubs, and
- Government collaboration, leadership and improving public perceptions of government.

As coordination and collaboration around these efforts is incumbent for all actors, the Mission expects that all applicants discuss the integration of coordination and collaboration as part of the award. In particular, applicants must detail how they will seek potential activity

synergies, align results, prepare reporting, and minimize confusion with AORs/CORs, implementing partners and beneficiaries. Applicants are expected to anticipate inter-activity management challenges and opportunities and advise AORs and CORs and the Mission's Regional Office of Assistance and Acquisition on leveraging potential synergies, taking advantage of opportunities, and resolving challenges.

Applicants are expected to contribute to USAID/El Salvador's commitment to a multifaceted CLA approach to development. The CLA approach is based on the understanding that development efforts yield more effective results if they are coordinated and collaborative; if they allow testing what seem like promising new approaches that seek to generate improvements and efficiencies; and build on what works and eliminate what doesn't. USAID also anticipates that a strong focus on adaptive management techniques as expressed through staffing skills, structure and culture, business processes, and stakeholder engagement will be particularly important in the implementation of the proposed activity, in order to track and adjust to the opportunities to operationally integrate with other activities working in related efforts. Thus, USAID anticipates a CLA approach that tailors CLA to the needs and opportunities of the proposed activity(ies), while leaving open options for future evolution in its interpretation and application.

Please refer to Section A of the CDCS APS for further information on Shared Responsibility and CLA that applies to this Addendum.

Adaptive and Flexible Approach in a likely evolving Country Context

Applicant's proposed technical approach should be flexible to provide support for unanticipated needs and initiate support in new contexts or with new local partners as needs arise. Applicants should consider structured 'Pause and Reflect' discussions with USAID to revisit assumptions, review progress, and make course corrections, if necessary, to strengthen programmatic response and promote sustainability. This includes engaging periodic check-ins, between relevant stakeholders including USAID, prior to submitting implementation plans to discuss progress as well as changes in context that may impact implementation. Therefore, implementation plans under the resulting award(s) will be viewed as living documents that will be revised as necessary in consultation with USAID.

USAID recognizes the importance of thinking critically and when required, shifting strategic decisions to respond to emerging development challenges. Applicants are expected to incorporate and maintain flexibility and adaptability in their proposed activities to ensure responsiveness to evolving local and contextual dynamics, including responding to a change in interactions with Government contacts, to take advantage of opportunities and to mitigate challenges for successful activity implementation. Interventions may require an adaptive technical approach that regularly reassesses and re-evaluates the operating environment where the activity works and adjusts program planning, and implementation as necessary.

Applicants are expected to provide ideas for program modifier categories as deemed appropriate for their proposed activity. It entails the ability to adapt the technical approach to better achieve the results of the activity. Applicants should employ a management approach that is proactive in identifying and taking advantage of programmatic opportunities. This requires a high degree of flexibility and willingness to adjust the activity's technical approach to incorporate new, innovative interventions. Unforeseen opportunities or exigencies may entail

implementing interventions in other programmatic spheres under the broad mantle of the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity. Program modifiers will be reviewed and approved by USAID as part of implementation plan discussions.

4. Coordination and Complementarity

Given the Mission's strong school-community-based approach, the Activity must plan for collaboration with other USAID/El Salvador activities, including but not limited to:

Coordination with other education and migration projects

- Current awards managed by Economic Growth and Education (EGE) office, USAID/El Salvador, including:
 - **Opportunities.** This Activity contributes to the prosperity of Salvadoran youth by increasing access to quality education directly related to local employment opportunities for those who have academic potential and desire but lack financial resources. This alliance will provide a path to greater school engagement, enhanced life skills, employment, and non-violent conflict resolution. These skills promote a stronger sense of community, thus reducing violence and mitigating the drivers of irregular migration. Students who benefit from this Activity will be proposed candidates to participate in the Nuevas Oportunidades Project.
 - **High Impact Soyapango:** This activity contributes to improving the quality of life of families in Soyapango through articulating the key sectors to increase the opportunities for economic and social development of the municipality.
 - **Education and Coexistence (E&C Project):** This project aims to assist public schools and communities in reducing violence in the country's most vulnerable municipalities by modifying attitudes and developing educators' (families and teachers) skills to promote positive behavioral changes and improve the quality of life of the communities.
- Future awards managed by EGE, USAID/El Salvador, including
 - Awards made through the **Higher Education for Leadership, Innovation, and Exchange (HELIX) APS Addendum** will reduce irregular migration by increasing the sense of rootedness through safe, inclusive, quality basic education and more effectively preparing children and youth to be economically productive citizens. The HELIX Activity will work with in-service teachers in providing better foundational skills in mathematics and language.
 - Awards made through the **CDCS Workforce Development APS Addendum** will improve human capital to increase potential and decrease key factors for irregular migration.
 - Awards made through the **Private Sector Engagement Addendum** will pursue and support partnerships with the private sector to increase the sustainable impact of USAID's development assistance programs and more effectively address critical development challenges in El Salvador or within the region, including El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.

5. Geographic Focus

The USAID CDCS utilizes an urban-hub place-based approach that focuses on the areas with the greatest likelihood of out-migration. These hubs are the locations with the most violent crime, high levels of unemployment, and the most potential for economic growth and job creation. These are also the locations where the majority of likely migrants live and work. Activities under this Addendum will be focused at least in one of the three urban hubs defined by the CDCS (e.g., San Salvador, San Miguel, and/or Santa Ana), as well as the targeted demographic (individuals under 40 with less than \$400 per month in income or at risk of dropping out of school; and/or likely to be subjected to violence). This Activity will be implemented through El Salvador bilateral funding.

The Applicant shall propose a methodology for scaled-up work in 500 schools and will support these schools for at least three years during project implementation. It is expected to reach at least 100,000 4th-6th grade students and 50,000 7th-9th students and their families. The Applicant should propose how to integrate programming through affordable non-state schools. Please refer to the El Salvador Case Study on Affordable non-state schools²⁰.

6. Cross-cutting principles/Special Considerations

Proposed interventions under this Activity should incorporate the following guiding principles and U.S. policies.

Youth in Development Policy

The goal of the USAID Youth in Development Policy is to “Improve the capacities and enable the aspirations of youth so that they can contribute to and benefit from more stable, democratic, and prosperous communities and nations.” As many youth aspire to higher levels of learning and as higher education institutions seek to better engage with youth in their communities, it is essential to include the Youth Policy as a reference in developing higher education activities. The proposed Activity will use the PYD framework to engage with Salvadoran youth and develop relevant interventions to achieve the Activity’s objectives and purpose. It is expected to engage youth and their families, communities, and governments to be empowered to reach their full potential. This approach builds skills, assets, and competencies; fosters healthy relationships; strengthens the environment, and transforms systems.

Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Gender will be a cross-cutting issue addressed in this Activity and will maintain a gender focus through implementation. This Activity will systematically consider the gender aspects and implications of specific interventions. Applicants must build gender into the work plan following USAID requirements. This includes examining:

- What are the different constraints that girls and boys face, their different needs and responsibilities, and the way socio-emotional learning impacts access and retention in the education system;
- What would be the approach, strategies, description of interventions, and expected results to seek to overcome inequalities of opportunities between sexes; and
- How to establish a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to improve the underlying

²⁰ Affordable Non-State Schools In El Salvador | Education in Crisis and Conflict Network:
<https://www.eccnetwork.net/resources/affordable-non-state-schools-el-salvador-508-compliant>

causes that push children and youth to drop out from school, taking into account, as appropriate, the views of bilateral, multilateral, and private sector partners, as well as civil society.

Accordingly, USAID policy (Automated Directives System [ADS] 201.3.9.3 and 201.3.11.6) requires the consideration of gender roles and relationships in all stages: planning, implementation, and assessing and learning. Consequently, this Activity will:

- Complete gender assessments as an aid to planning and addressing gender issues (this can be completed following award);
- Ensure opportunity for equitable participation in the planning of and access to program benefits by both women and men;
- Incorporate gender-equity targets for participation and benefit in all activities and indicators;
- Collect sex-disaggregated data and monitor gender impacts to ensure that inequalities are addressed; and
- Integrate gender in all aspects of program development, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Training activities will address the gender dynamics that ensure equal participation from male and female participants to ensure as much gender parity as possible. This Activity will ensure that stakeholder engagement is gender-sensitive and that both girls and boys are represented throughout the activity cycle, including: (1) taking into account the particular constraints that girls face, (2) engaging girls and ensuring they are willing and able to participate in activities, and (3) ensuring that a wide range of girls' and women's perspectives are promoted. Progress in all related activities will be measured and verified using disaggregated indicators by sex. Monitoring and evaluation tools should include questions to elicit information that allows differentiation of impacts based on gender.

People with Disabilities

USAID is committed to including people who have physical and cognitive disabilities and those who advocate and offer services on behalf of people with disabilities to promote a climate of nondiscrimination against and equal opportunity for people with disabilities and promote inclusion of people with disabilities within USAID programs.

Social Inclusion

USAID's social inclusion policies aim to avoid discrimination against vulnerable populations such as children, youth, returned migrant students, men, and women in the process of or in need of reinsertion to society, indigenous peoples, and members of the LGBTQI+ community in programs which USAID funds. This commitment extends from the design and implementation of USAID programming to advocacy for and outreach to vulnerable populations and the integration of the guidelines throughout.

Impact, Feasibility, and Scaling-up

The Applicant will describe how the theory of change, outcomes, and outputs will reduce drop-out rates in schools located in high-risk communities. The involvement of local partners (host government and local organizations) and beneficiaries (teachers, families, and students)

will demonstrate the positive impact towards decreasing irregular migration. The proposed approach should have well-defined and achievable objectives. It will include the combination of partner assets, resources, and expertise to significantly increase access to education to vulnerable populations. Financial and technical approaches must be viable. The Applicant will include whether and how the proposed approaches can be scaled²¹ or replicated in a manner that would offer a broader set of impacts at the national, departmental, or school-community levels. Scaling-up refers to an increase in the geographic or demographic reach of the Activity to expand availability of aspects (or the whole) that have proven successful.

While nearly all development organizations recognize the importance of scaling, some organizations are 'hardwiring' it from the beginning as a core part of their work, objectives, and activities. This activity aims for impact at scale, but it's rarely possible to do this alone. The Applicant shall address the approaches, objectives, and partnerships throughout the concept paper development and co-creation.

Sustainability

Sustainability is integral to the design of proposed activities. Interventions must be strategically justifiable and demonstrate if, why, and how the development outcomes may be sustained beyond the award's performance period with USAID. Innovative approaches supported by the Activity must be sufficiently robust and command enough broad constituencies to hold up through political elections and changes in administration. The Applicant's approach to implementation should also be sufficiently flexible to adapt to changes in priorities or leadership within critical institutions and counterparts.

Innovation in Development

Innovation refers to novel business or organizational models, operational or production processes, or products or services that lead to substantial improvements (not incremental "next steps") in addressing development challenges. Innovation may incorporate science, research, evidence-based, and technology but is often broader, to include new processes or business models. Most importantly, innovations undertaken by this Activity will be aligned to USAID's Digital Strategy 2020-2024 under Sub-IR 3.1: Vulnerable or underserved groups are capable of using, contributing to, and benefiting from digital ecosystems. (<https://www.usaid.gov/usaid-digital-strategy>)

Stakeholder Engagement

Recognizing that the U.S. government cannot solve this challenge alone, this Activity brings together stakeholders. It encourages them to support the education system in El Salvador towards improving student retention and socio-emotional learning. It is expected that the Activity will work closely with MINEDUCyT departmental and central levels. Will develop collaboration with civil society organizations, companies, foundations, business councils, and others to bring in new, creative resources and expertise to address the diverse barriers to school retention. Additionally will work with academic institutions under the Helix mechanism such as universities, think tanks, civil society, and other organizations to develop evidence on school dropout and socio-emotional learning.

²¹ Scaling-up refers to increasing proportionately the availability of an intervention that has been shown to have proven success.

Environmental Compliance

The Activity will comply with 22 CFR 216 requirements, the Initial Environmental Examination Recommendations, and any national environmental laws and regulations.

Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) LAC-IEE-21-71 covers activities expected to be implemented under the successful Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning Activity.

USAID has determined that a categorical exclusion and negative determination with conditions apply to this Activity. The Negative Determination with Conditions was assigned due to sub-awards, grants, subgrants, small-scale construction, refurbishment, rehabilitation, or renovation, and purchase and provision of school equipment for science, technology, and innovation laboratories.

Please refer to Section A.4 and A.5 of the CDCS APS for further information on cross-cutting policies and Agency Initiatives.

Communication Strategy

Communications and public perception are critical to the achievement of USAID El Salvador's development objectives to improve security, increase prosperity and strengthen democratic governance. Together with our partners, GOES and the communities in which we work, USAID promotes an increased level of hope for Salvadorans living a good life at home, measured by improvements in educational and economic opportunities, security and government. Each activity will contribute to this shared objective. Each activity will provide a communications strategy demonstrating how the partner and activity will utilize communications to achieve results and how the activity contributes to higher level objectives of increased hope and improved public perceptions. USAID El Salvador/DOC will coordinate with communications leads of all partners regularly to align efforts, refine local hub messaging and national campaigns, and encourage partners' continued understanding and development of communications products that prioritize CDCS communication goals.

New Partnerships Initiative (NPI)

USAID/El Salvador highly supports NPI and welcomes partners that would comply with this Initiative under this Addendum.

USAID/El Salvador strongly encourages local and locally established organizations to submit concept papers. We will favorably evaluate qualified applicants that form alliances with qualified local partners to the greatest extent possible, including management plans that identify a local partner responsible for an objective(s) of the activity. Capacity assessments and the strengthening of local organizations should be a component when necessary. The efforts under this activity aim to build and strengthen the capacity of local organizations to provide responsive and quality services for victims, to address the long-term sustainability of programming.

The goal of the NPI is to increase USAID's development impact by elevating local leadership, fostering creativity and innovation, and mobilizing resources across the Agency's programs.

The NPI initiative will advance this goal by diversifying its partner base and changing how the Agency partners, based on three key principles:

1. Elevating Local Leadership. The Agency will:
 - o Work through local actors and systems;
 - o Engage traditional partners in strengthening local capacity; and
 - o Identify partnerships with new and underutilized locally-established partners (LEP) with deep roots in-country.
2. Fostering Creativity and Innovation. The Agency will partner with new, underutilized, and non-traditional non-profit and private sector organizations to take advantage of the full marketplace of ideas for strengthening sustainable development.
3. Mobilizing Resources. The Agency will work with organizations that are able to leverage their own private and other non-USG funding to achieve and scale development outcomes.

Please refer to Section A.4 and Section C.2 of the CDCS APS and Section C of this Addendum for further information on NPI.

END OF SECTION A

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Issuance of this Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning Activity Addendum does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor do those commit the U.S. Government to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of questions, comments, suggestions, Concept Papers, and/or Full Application. Applicants submit Concept Papers/Applications at their own risk, and all preparation and submission costs are at their expense.

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID/El Salvador anticipates awarding one or multiple award(s) under this Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum to the CDCS APS. The actual number of assistance awards, if any, under this Addendum is subject to the availability of funds and the interests and requirements of USAID/El Salvador, as well as, the viability of eventual Applications received. Subject to funding availability, USAID/El Salvador intends to provide approximately \$30 million in total USAID funding to support activities focused on Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning. Actual funding amounts and length of awards are subject to availability of funds, award type, and activity proposed (including the extent to which the proposed activity responds to the Programmatic Focus identified in Section A).

Awards pursuant to this addendum may result in a variety of assistance instruments outlined in ADS 303.3.24 and ADS 303.3.25 such as:

- a) Grants and Cooperative Agreements, including renewal awards which allow to adapt within the five year maximum period of performance to changing contexts, lessons learned during implementation and allowing scalability of pilot activities;
- b) Simplified grants for small awards on a cost reimbursement basis may be appropriate for new local organizations that propose innovative solutions;
- c) Fixed Amount Awards which allows payments upon the successful completion of milestones and may represent a less administrative burden to new partners.

2. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Successful Recipient

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

3. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Award

The period of performance of individual awards may vary. The performance period may be between one year up to five years.

RENEWALS: Awards made under this addendum may be eligible for annual renewals providing a possibility of a subsequent award to receive additional support for the project for succeeding periods, activities, or milestones if so determined by USAID. The overall period of the cooperative agreement, including all renewals, will not exceed the five (5) year period of performance of the award under this addendum. USAID will inform the awardee no later than 4 months before the end of the period of performance of the initial award if the said awardee is eligible to apply for a renewal award. The recipient will submit a renewal request no less than 3 months prior to the end date.

Funding of any renewal period or expansion of activities is contingent on the following:

- Availability of funds;
- Satisfactory progress towards meeting the award objectives;
- Submittal of required reports; and
- Compliance with the terms and conditions of the award, including the conditions for renewal.

If informed by USAID, an Awardee will submit a detailed annual work plan for the renewal period along with a detailed budget to be considered for the renewal opportunity.

Any renewals are at the sole discretion of USAID.

4. Type of Instrument

USAID has a number of assistance award types to choose when providing funds to successful Applicants. The type of award and terms and conditions included therein is based upon recipient organization type, programmatic factors, and other due-diligence matters (including responsibility determinations). The types of awards are defined in Section F of the CDCS APS.

USAID reserves the right to make or not to make awards through this Addendum. The actual number of assistance awards, if any, under this CDCS APS Addendum is subject to the availability of funds, the interests and requirements of USAID, and the viability of applications received. There is no predefined minimum or maximum number of partners or partnerships USAID will support through this Addendum. However, USAID will not provide funds under this Addendum for products and services that it would otherwise purchase through a contract. If USAID identifies opportunities to strengthen or fund a Concept Paper or application by connecting it with other USAID mechanisms, other potential funders, and/or external partners, USAID may make that Concept Paper or application available internally or externally for appropriate consideration.

END OF SECTION B

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility is unrestricted. This Addendum is open to all entities that meet the eligibility criteria set forth in Section C of the CDCS APS.

USAID/El Salvador highly supports NPI and welcomes partners that would comply with this Initiative. NPI defines “Implementing Partners” as U.S. and non-U.S. non-governmental organizations that can design and implement assistance activities outside the United States. [New Partnerships Initiative Key Definitions | U.S. Agency for International Development \(usaid.gov\)](#).

USAID/El Salvador strongly encourages a partnership approach that leverages the required technical expertise of a variety of diverse partners needed to achieve the activity objectives. If any qualified organization is unable to technically respond to the entire activity, then we encourage these organizations to submit a concept paper to achieve an objective of the activity or pursue an alliance with another organization.

What is a “New” Partnership?

A “new” or “underutilized” partner is an organization that has received less than \$25 million cumulatively in direct or indirect awards from USAID over the past five (5) years.

What are the basic requirements of an NPI partnership?

In addition to aligning with the specific development objectives and requirements in this Addendum, NPI partnership proposals must reflect one (1) of the following four (4) forms:

- a. Direct awards to new and underutilized organizations that are local entities in El Salvador or countries for which the Applicant is applying (if and when regional activities are solicited);
- b. Direct awards to new and underutilized organizations that are LEPs in El Salvador or countries (if regional activities are authorized) for which the Applicant is applying;
- c. Sub-awards to new or underutilized partners via prime awardees that serve in a limited mentorship role; OR
- d. Direct awards to partners underutilized with respect to opportunities to leverage private/non-U.S. Government funding.

Please refer to Section C.2 of the CDCS APS for further information on NPI’s forms of engagement and Transition Awards.

All Implementing Partners must be legally registered entities under applicable law and eligible under the relevant laws to receive funding from a foreign source. Individuals, unregistered, or informal organizations are not eligible to be Implementing Partners.

All eligible interested organizations are restricted to submitting **only one Concept Paper as the Prime Applicant**. If more than one Concept Paper is received with the same Prime Applicant, USAID will seek written clarification from the relevant entity regarding which Concept Paper should be considered for review. If clarification is not resolved within five (5) business days, all Concept Papers submitted by the Applicant will be deemed ineligible.

Note: Please note that Applicants can serve as sub-awardees or supporting partners on multiple Concept Papers.

Prime Applicants must not require exclusivity agreements with proposed alliance members, sub-partners, or key individuals.

USAID may not make an award to an Applicant until the Applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM registrations as detailed in Section H of the CDCS APS and, if an

Applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the Applicant is not qualified to receive an award and may use that determination as a basis for making an award to another Applicant. USAID reserves the right to make no award under this Addendum at any stage of the process. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. **Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.**

Applicants must comply with applicable local laws, including on taxation. USAID advises prospective Applicants to consult local counsel on these issues in the Concept Paper phase.

Responsibility Determination:

The successful applicant(s) will be subject to a responsibility determination assessment and potentially a Pre-award Survey. The Recipient must be a responsible entity. The AO may determine a pre-award survey is required to conduct an examination that will determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.208).

Please refer to Section C of the CDCS APS for additional information on eligibility requirements that apply to this Addendum, which includes guidance on Concept Notes/Applications with Proprietary Data.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

USAID/El Salvador has established a suggested recipient cost share of at least fifteen percent (15%) of projected award amount for each award. Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to the implementation of activities at the country level. This may include contribution of staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306.

Proposed cost share, if provided, will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

3. How to Work with USAID

More information on how to work with USAID may be found at <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid> and <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/trainings-how-work-usaid>. Information is also available in Spanish.

END OF SECTION C

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Agency Point of Contact

Any questions regarding this Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum must be submitted to Ms. Ileana Párraga, at iparraga@usaid.gov, no later than the closing date for questions specified in the cover page of this Addendum.

If an award is made, the AO will appoint an AOR at that time to provide technical and administrative oversight of the specific award during implementation.

2. Concept Paper Instructions

Applicants are required to follow the Application and Submission Information instructions set forth in Section D.3 of this Addendum and submit Concept Papers using the Concept Paper Template in Attachment 1 of this Addendum. The Eligibility Certification Form in Attachment 2 must also be completed and submitted if applicable.

3. Content and Format of Concept Paper Submission

Applicants should submit only the information and materials requested, and in the format specified in Attachment 1 of this Addendum. Concept Papers MUST be written in the English language and submitted electronically via e-mail in a Microsoft Word document (*.docx) and in PDF format (to include any required signatures).

- Concept Papers shall not exceed five (5) pages, using 1" page margins with 12-point font.
- Clarity and specificity are important, as is ensuring that the narrative in the Concept Paper addresses the points outlined in this Addendum used to review the Concept Paper. During the merit-review process, USAID may reject funding for those Concept Papers that are vague or merely restate language found in this Addendum.

USAID will not accept Concept Papers that are more than five (5) pages in length.

The Concept Paper (including any Supporting Information) must be submitted to: iparraga@usaid.gov. Concept Papers must be submitted by the deadline in order to be considered. Please indicate in the e-mail subject line "Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum" when submitting the Concept Paper.

Certification Language for Submissions in Concept Papers:

Applicants must include the following certification: "I understand that USAID may share this concept paper for appropriate consideration internally as part of the due diligence process, or if USAID identifies opportunities to strengthen or fund an application by connecting with other USAID mechanisms."

[Applicant's signature]

IMPORTANT NOTE: Any concept papers that do not follow the instructions may be disqualified and not be reviewed.

4. Application Process

Section D.2 of the CDCS APS outlines two examples of the phased-processes that may be considered to review concept papers received under this Addendum. USAID/El Salvador will determine the review process to follow depending on the activity proposed and the needs of the Mission.

USAID/El Salvador will notify potential Applicants of changes to the requirements or in the review-process timeline, etc. through a written amendment to this Addendum via grants.gov.

Please refer to Section D of the CDCS APS for further instructions on Critical Requirements Prior to Award, Funding Restrictions and Conflict of Interest that apply to this Addendum.

END OF SECTION D

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Evaluation of Concept Papers

Once a Concept Paper has been submitted in response to this Addendum, USAID/El Salvador will conduct a review of the Concept Paper as stated in Section E of the CDCS APS and as follows:

- A. Mandatory Compliance with the three critical requirements specified in Section C.1 of the CDCS APS.** USAID will review compliance with these three critical elements for a “yes” or “no” compliance. If a Concept Paper does not comply with all three critical requirements, the Concept Paper will be rejected and excluded from the process.
- B. Merit Review Criteria:** If Applicants meet the three mandatory requirements listed in Section C.1 of the CDCS APS, the concept paper will be evaluated in accordance with the merit review criteria specified in Section E.2 below.

If a Concept Paper does not meet the objectives of this Addendum and receives inadequate ratings against the merit-review criteria specified in Section E.2 below, then USAID will reject the Concept Paper and the process ends for that Applicant(s).

Conversely, USAID/El Salvador may invite a subset of concept paper applicants that provide greater impact to engage in co-creation or oral presentations, to work through areas of weakness and to respond to USAID/El Salvador’s questions and clarify aspects of the concept paper that are not clear. If an applicant does not succeed at the co-creation phase, the process will end at this stage and the applicant will be notified accordingly.

- C. Request for full Application:** USAID/El Salvador will only request full applications from applicants invited to continue in the application process. If USAID/El Salvador decides to continue with the proposed activities and if Applicants successfully comply with the requirements to reach this stage of the process, USAID/El Salvador will request a full application from the apparent successful applicant(s). Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the merit review criteria incorporated in the RFA.

2. Merit Review Criteria and Considerations

USAID/El Salvador will use the following criteria to evaluate Concept Papers in response to this Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum. Any Concept Paper submitted in response to this Addendum should propose an approach that satisfies these criteria and exhibits the characteristics set forth below.

Concept Paper Review

CRITERION	
Introduces key behavioral science principles, communication strategies and family-centered engagement best practices to reduce dropout rates at grades 4th-9th. Concisely defines how behavioral science principles will be introduced during the design, test, implementation and scale-up phases.	Yes ☐ No ☐
Clearly describes the engagement and collaboration with local entities to improve student retention and socio-emotional learning.	Yes ☐ No ☐
The proposed Activity describes the engagement and alignment with the Ministry of Education's priorities towards increasing student retention.	Yes ☐ No ☐

The review of concept papers against the above merit review criterion will result in one of the following outcomes:

- 1) The concept does not meet the concept review criterion and will no longer be considered.
- 2) The concept meets the concept review criterion but will be considered for *"evergreening" purposes.
- 3) The concept meets the concept review criterion and the applicant is requested to submit a full technical application.
- 4) The concept meets the concept review criterion and the applicant is invited to engage in-depth and specific co-creation discussions or oral presentations, aimed at building a high impact partnership. After successfully completing co-creation discussions or oral presentations, applicant(s) will be invited to submit a full application

USAID/El Salvador will only request full applications from applicants invited to continue in the application process. Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the merit review criteria incorporated in the RFA.

* **Evergreening**

If USAID identifies opportunities to strengthen or fund a concept note or application by connecting it with other USAID mechanisms, other potential funders, and/or partners, USAID may make that concept note or application available internally for appropriate consideration. Concept notes or applications that are evergreened will remain available for potential consideration for a period of up to one year after the close date of the specific addendum. Therefore, applicants should be willing to:

- a. Co-create the activity by sharing their proposed approach with other organizations;
- b. Consider sub-award arrangements; and

c. Combine the technical and administrative contributions of another organization, as may be necessary.

Evergreening can result in an award in any of the following scenarios:

- The evergreened concept is further developed for potential award at a later date under the initial funding opportunity.
- The applicant is encouraged to resubmit the concept under a separate funding opportunity.
- Evergreened concepts are made available to other Missions/OUTs for potential development and award.

END OF SECTION E

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The USAID AO is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. Applicants are prohibited from charging or incurring costs to the proposed award prior to receipt of either a fully executed award or a specific, written authorization from the AO. USAID will administer awards in accordance with Parts 700 and 200 of Title 2 of the CFR, and Standard Provisions for U.S./non-U.S. organizations.

2. Type Of Award

USAID has a number of assistance award types to choose when providing funds under this Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity Addendum to successful Applicants. The type of award and terms and conditions included therein depends upon the type of recipient organization, programmatic factors, and other due-diligence matters (including responsibility determinations). The types of awards are defined in Section F of the CDCS APS.

3. Substantial Involvement

If a Cooperative Agreement is awarded, the intended substantial involvement will be determined based on the programmatic requirements of the award, as further outlined in ADS 303.3.11. Some examples of potential areas of substantial involvement during performance of the award are outlined in Section B.5 of the CDCS APS.

The level of substantial involvement between the Mission and recipient in implementing the activity will be defined based on the programmatic requirements of the proposed activities and will be negotiated prior to award.

4. Reporting Requirements

Resulting awards under this addendum will incorporate specific reporting requirements, including Financial and Performance Reporting, and the frequency required.

5. Additional Information

- ADS Chapter 205 - Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/205.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mab.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for U.S. organizations:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303maa.pdf>

- ADS Chapter 318 Intellectual Property Rights:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1876/318.pdf>
- Grant and Contract Process:
<https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/grant-and-contract-process>
- El Salvador CDCS public version in English:
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CDCS-El_Salvador-external-version-April30.pdf
- El Salvador CDCS public version in Spanish:
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CDCS-El_Salvador-Espanol-Actualizado_Abril_23_1_1.pdf

END OF SECTION F

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

Points of contact (POC) for questions while the funding opportunity is open.

USAID/El Salvador
Ms. Ileana Párraga
Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

Email: iparraga@usaid.gov

END OF SECTION G

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID/El Salvador reserves the right to fund any or none of the Concept Papers submitted under this addendum to the CDCS APS.

Value Added Tax (VAT). The VAT charged in El Salvador is to be excluded from the price of the Award and is generally not an allowable cost under the Award. The Awardee is responsible for working with the GOES to obtain the VAT exemption. USAID will provide the Awardee with the documentation to initiate this process. Please refer to Section H of the CDCS APS for further information that applies to this Addendum.

END OF SECTION H

[END OF ADDENDUM No. 2]

Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template

A. General Information *(Information in this section - Items 1-10 - may be included in the Cover Page, which does not count towards the page limit, but must not exceed one page.)*

1. Proposed Activity Name/Title: _____

2. Certification, with Explanation, of Eligibility Under USAID Priority/ Programmatic Focus Area *(Statement certifying that the Concept Paper complies with the 3 critical requirements specified in Section C.1 of the CDCS APS)*:

3. Proposed Period of Performance *(i.e., start date and end date)*: _____

4. Total Program Amount *(in USDs)*: _____

5. Total Amount of Funding Requested from USAID and total amount of cost-share proposed (if applicable), including from what source(s): _____

6. Applicant Organization Name: _____

7. Applicant Contact Person *(name, phone, e-mail)*: _____

8. Full Address for Applicant Organization: _____

9. Type of Organization *(e.g., U.S., non-U.S., multilateral, private, for-profit, non-profit) date of incorporation, etc.)*: _____

10. **(If Applicable) Name(s) of Partner(s) Organization(s)** *Applicants that are applying as Mentors/Primes will name local Subpartners here*: _____

B. Concept Introduction *(approximately ½ page): Identify the problem you will address, link it to one or more of the focus areas of the Addendum and briefly describe your work for tackling this problem. Describe why there is a need for your concept, how it differs from alternatives, and any relevant partner-specific considerations for the problem or solution. Explain how the program advances sustainable development for the country.*

C. Beneficiaries *(approximately ½ page): Describe the types of benefits your work will produce and the types and range of people (i.e types of vulnerable populations) who will benefit from this work, including beneficiary organizations from the government or civil society. Was the concept designed with input from these beneficiaries? Has it been, or can it be, adapted to reach target beneficiaries, in accordance with the CDCS geographic focus, i.e urban hubs?*

D. Geographic Location (approximately less than ½ page): In what location(s) are you proposing to operate? Describe key elements of, and actors in, the geographic location(s) in which you propose to work. What are the biggest challenges and opportunities? Please provide a brief description of previous work experience in the urban hubs, per CDCS geographic focus and the list of municipalities.

E. Intervention approach (approximately one [1½] page): Describe how this intervention will produce the desired impact in the focus area(s) identified. Be sure to include information to describe how the behavioral science approach is considered in the design, implementation and monitoring of the proposed Activity, how it is potentially scalable, and evidence to support it as a tested solution or as an intervention likely to have a significant development impact, and how it will be sustained. The Concept Paper should describe how the Ministry of Education's priorities will be addressed regarding increasing student retention.

This section should include the Applicant's approach to embed as many of the cross-cutting principles included in Section A, as feasible as possible in accordance with the proposed activity. Given that substantial partnerships are anticipated between implementing organization(s) at every stage of the proposed activities, describe your organization's strategy for equitably engaging with these partners in implementation. Also indicate how you plan to build the capacity of these partners as applicable.

E.1 Adaptive and Flexible Technical Approach (approximately ½ page): Include discussion of how the proposed activity demonstrates an adaptive and flexible technical approach in a likely evolving country context.

F. Intervention Results (approximately one [1] page): Describe the anticipated results, targets, and/or impact of your activity. What are the key, quantifiable metrics related to your project's performance or expected performance? Describe how your proposed approach will result in (or contribute to sustainable outcomes beyond the lifetime of the award, including how your organization's approach will obtain new or existing resources, capacities, and investments.

G. (If applicable) Roles of Partners (approximately ½ page): Describe and define the role of other entities in the partnership. A brief synopsis of how each partner will engage within a partnership should be included. This must include a description of the contributions, if necessary, or sub-partners if submitting a mentorship program proposal. If your organization is not proposing any partners, this section can be empty.

H. Capacity of the Applicant(s) (approximately ½ page): Describe your organization's technical, financial, and managerial capacity and expertise to carry out the proposed work and that of any partners. Describe if you have previously done similar work, or worked in the same location(s).

[Signature of individual with authority to legally bind the organization]

END OF ATTACHMENT 1

Attachment 2 - Eligibility Certification Form
NOT counted towards the page limit for Concept Papers

(Applicants should identify the NPI modality offered. The list below provides a summary of the potential scenarios, per Section C.2. of the CDCS APS)

- ☐ We certify that we meet the criteria at Section C. 2.a. **Direct awards to new and underutilized organizations that are local entities in the host country or countries for which the Applicant is applying.** New and underutilized partners may apply for direct funding via specific Addenda issued under this APS. Applicants are eligible if they have received less than \$25 million cumulatively in direct or indirect awards from USAID over the past five (5) years.

- ☐ We certify that we meet the criteria at Section C. 2.b. **Direct awards to new and underutilized organizations that are locally established partners (LEPs) in the host country or countries for which the Applicant is applying.**
LEPs are organizations that generate significant private development assistance and support effective program models through locally-led operations that strengthen partner country capacity and commitment for sustainable development. U.S.-based or international partners are eligible if they have (1) received less than \$25 million cumulatively in USAID funding over the previous five (5) years; and (2) currently have additional, non-U.S. Government funding streams that exceed total funding received worldwide from USAID. (*e.g.*, if an applicant has implemented \$5 million in USAID funding, it must demonstrate at least \$5 million in funds worldwide from sources other than the U.S. Government).

- ☐ We certify that we meet the criteria at Section C. 2.c. **Sub-awards to new or underutilized partners via prime awardees that serve in a limited mentorship role.**
NPI recognizes the important role and capacity that “established partners” (defined as those that already have a financial relationship with USAID above the NPI thresholds established in the CDCS APS) bring to local organizations around the world. NPI acknowledges that many local partners lack the capacity, or desire, to comply with the stringent requirements associated with awards from the U.S. Government. This modality will allow established partners to build the capacity of local partners to meet the requirements to become a USAID direct awardee or provide them the support they need to implement programs on behalf of USAID that have measurable impact. Established partners will play a support role to build the capacity of new and underutilized partners (*e.g.*, through technical oversight, compliance support, and mentoring). The prime will

not directly assist project beneficiaries. NPI envisions two modalities of support under this approach:

- ❑ We certify that we meet the criteria at Section C. 2.○ **Modality 3a: Local Entity Sub-Awardees That Move to Direct Awards:** Prime awardees must pass a minimum of 50 percent of the total funding of their awards to local sub-awardees, with a goal of moving them to qualify for direct awards. In appropriate cases, USAID might pursue prime / mentor awards with a provision for transition awards to some local entities during the life of the award.
- ❑ We certify that we meet the criteria at Section C. 2.○ **Modality 3b: Local and Locally Established Partner Sub-Awardees:** Prime awardees must pass a minimum of 75 percent of the total funding of their awards to sub-awardee local partners or LEs. An award could also have a structure in which the prime partner receives a declining percentage of the value of the award year-on-year (e.g. from 25 percent in Year 1 to 20 percent in Year 5).
- ❑ We certify that we meet the criteria at Section C. 2.d. **Direct Awards to Partners to Leverage Private/Non-U.S. Government Funding:** NPI also seeks to support partnerships with organizations that can leverage their own private (or non-U.S. Government) funding, in recognition of the important dual-role that many established partners have as both implementers and fundraisers. Organizations of all types (non-profit, private-sector, host governments, *etc.*) can apply. Awardees must propose additional leveraged funds worth a minimum of 50 percent of the total value of the award they seek from USAID; this cannot include in-kind contributions but can include non-Federal grants and external awards.

USAID may consider a leverage ratio lower than 1:2 (“1” represents the applicant’s leverage, “2” represents USAID’s funding) if the applicant proposes a compelling partnership that will appreciably contribute to the CDCS strategy and the lower ratio is due to Covid-19 and the resulting economy. In this case, the applicant will need to propose how it will attempt to increase its leverage amount throughout implementation and as the economy improves. Lower ratios may be considered, depending on the activity proposed.

END OF ATTACHMENT 2

B. The following are the Questions and Answers to the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning activity - Addendum 5 :

COVER PAGE

1- We submit for approval of the USAID authorities, the extension of the deadline for submission of the Concept Note, from April 4 to April 22, 2022.

USAID Response:

An extension to the closing date has been granted through April 25, 2022.

2- Could USAID consider an extension of the deadline to submit concept papers to April 25, 2022?

USAID Response:

An extension to the closing date has been granted through April 25, 2022.

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1- P. 10. The Solicitation notes the completion of a rapid assessment by March 2022. Can USAID/El Salvador please share this Rapid Assessment with applicants?

USAID Response:

The rapid assessment presentation has been attached to this document.

2- P.14. States “USAID’s goal for the Activity is to improve student retention and graduation rates in basic education (grades 4th-10th)”, then later on the same page states “The purpose for any award under this Activity is to... offer better socio-emotional skills improving transition rates from primary to secondary schooling options (7-12 grades)”. Can USAID/El Salvador clarify the target population of students under this activity (Grades 4th-10th or 7th-12th)?

USAID Response:

The target grades for this Activity are 4th-9th grades.

3- In various points throughout the solicitation document (pg. 10, pg. 19, pg. 21), the terms “behavior science” and “behavioral science” are used interchangeably. Could USAID please clarify which term should be used and specify their definition of the correct term?

USAID Response:

Behavior Science and Behavioral Science can be used interchangeably. Currently, USAID is drafting a definition of the correct term. Meanwhile, please refer to the following cites presented in the APS Addendum to fully understand the terminology:

- 7A behavioral approach focuses on mindsets, decision-making frames, and the social environment. It draws on various disciplines, including Economics, Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology, Neuroscience, World Bank, Mind, Behavior, and Development Unit.
- 8 USAID Priority Reforms, Samantha Powers, November 5, 2021, <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/speeches/nov-4-2021-administrator-samantha-power-new-vision-global-development>
- 9 Behavioral Sciences to Protect Human Capital Investments During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic, World Bank, May 5, 2020 <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/33718/Behavioral-Sciences-to-Protect-Human-Capital-Investments-During-and-After-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- 10 A nudge is any aspect of the choice architecture that alters people's behavior in a predictable way without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives. To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid. Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth, and happiness. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. (2008).

4- Can USAID provide any additional information on the “30 organizations” (Outcome 4B, Illustrative Intermediate results for Objective 4, pg. 22) to be “engaged in decision-making activities to demonstrate the impact of human capital investment to reduce dropout rates and improve retention”?

USAID Response:

The Applicant can propose the 30 organizations (private and public entities including donors, civil society, local and international institutions, and private sector entities) that could engage in decision-making activities towards improving student retention.

5- More specifically, can USAID describe the type(s) of organization(s) it envisions being included in these decision-making activities?

USAID Response:

The Applicant can propose the 30 organizations (private and public entities including donors, civil society, local and international institutions, and private sector entities) that could engage in decision-making activities towards improving student retention.

6- Does USAID expect the Student Retention and Socio-Emotional Learning Activity and the Basic Education Quality Advancement Addendum under the Higher Education for Leadership, Innovation, and Exchange (HELIX) APS to work in the same schools?

USAID Response:

Based on MINEDUCyT needs and USAID priorities in the urban hub municipalities, applicants are expected to develop schools selection criteria which will be approved by the MiNEDUCyT and USAID.

7- If so, can USAID provide more information surrounding the expected collaboration between the two Activities?

USAID Response:

USAID expects that the two Activities will collaborate in jointly achieving the following results under the Development Objective: Increasing Jobs and Income for Likely Migrants.

Intermediate Result 2.2: Education Outcomes Improved

Sub-IR 2.2.1 Equitable Access to quality education increased

Sub- IR 2.2.2. Literacy and Numeracy Skills Improved,

Sub IR 2.2.3 Social-emotional learning improved.

It is expected that both Activities will maintain frequent and open communications, and establish working processes to avoid duplication of efforts.

8- In the 3D Outcome of objective 3 of the Addendum there is an illustrative activity that says "Provide training to approximately 8,000 students to improve their skills and competencies". And in the Illustrative Intermediate Results states "At least 10,000 students improve their English language skills and competencies." What would be USAID's expected range of students improving their English language skills and competencies, 8,000 or 10,000 students?

USAID Response:

This section has been amended to read: At least 8,000 students improve their English language skills and competencies.

9- Result 1D contemplates "Design and implement an incentive program based on socio-economic status, social inclusion, and gender equality, which might include stipends to improve internet accessibility, transportation, meals, soap, or other related supplies". But at the same time, there is a commitment to scalability and sustainability of the strategies and this is difficult due to the permanent existence of resources after the project. Is the sustainability of economic and resource incentives required even after the 5 years of the project?

USAID Response:

The Applicant can propose the Sustainability Plan based on the context, challenges, and opportunities. The strategies presented are expected to demonstrate sustainability after the project ends.

10- Is it possible to make educational infrastructure that supports the objectives of USAID in the Addendum 5?

USAID Response:

USAID will not consider educational infrastructure under this Addendum

11- Where can we find the list of schools selected for this Addendum?

USAID Response:

The Applicant is expected to propose the selection school criteria for MINEDUCyT and USAID's approval.

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

No questions

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1- P. 35 “USAID/El Salvador has established a suggested recipient cost share of at least fifteen percent (15%) of projected award amount for each award.” Can USAID please confirm that this cost share is required? Additionally, can USAID/El Salvador please confirm that Cost Share is not included in the merit review for the Concept Paper?

USAID Response:

Cost Sharing is a requirement under this addendum, however it is not a separate factor in the merit review criteria.

2- Can USAID provide more information on the expected 15% cost share (pg. 35, Cost Sharing or Matching) for this Activity?

USAID Response:

USAID/El Salvador has established a cost share requirement of at least fifteen percent (15%) of projected award under this addendum.

3- Specifically, does USAID wish to see only the names of organizations partaking in the cost share included on the Cover Page (Pg. 46, #5)?

USAID Response:

Mandatory Concept Paper Template, #5. Total Amount of Funding Requested from USAID:

This refers to the total amount of Federal Funds (USAID funds) that the applicant is requesting for implementation of the proposed activity through its concept and;

Total amount of cost-share proposed (if applicable), including from what source(s), refers to the amount of cost-share that the applicant is contributing towards the achievement of results under the activity and which are the sources (the applicant, partners, both etc.)

4- Does USAID wish to see a break-down of quantified in-kind of cash contributions by organization?

USAID Response:

A breakdown of proposed cost share is not required at the concept paper stage.

5- Could USAID please specify how Attachment 2, “Eligibility Certification Form,” should be submitted?

USAID Response:

Attachment 2 - Eligibility Certification Form can be submitted either with the concept paper or in a separate document, as it does not count towards the page limit for Concept Papers.

6- Should it be submitted as a separate attachment?

USAID Response:

Attachment 2 - Eligibility Certification Form can be submitted either with the concept paper or in a separate document, as it does NOT count towards the page limit for Concept Papers.

7- If it is to be submitted as a separate attachment, what document type (PDF or Word) should be used?

USAID Response:

Attachment 2 - Eligibility Certification Form can be submitted either with the concept paper or in a separate document, as it does NOT count towards the page limit for Concept Papers. There is no formatting requirement; it can be submitted either in PDF or word format.

8- Under this NPI many applicants will be new/"underutilized" members. Cost-sharing can be a burden to new members due to administrative, compliance, etc. reasons. Would USAID consider a smaller cost share than what is established in the Addendum 5?

USAID Response:

USAID/El Salvador has analyzed all aspects when establishing the cost share requirement of at least fifteen percent (15%) of the projected award under this addendum, and considered it as an important element that contributes to the achievement of results. Please note that In-kind contributions are allowable as cost share in accordance with 2 CFR 200.306 for U.S. organizations and in accordance with the Standard Provision, "Cost Share" for non-U.S. organizations.

9- Can USAID please confirm that a "Certification, with Explanation, of Eligibility Under USAID Priority/Programmatic Focus Area" should also be included on the Concept Paper Cover Page?

USAID Response:

Yes, as stated in No. 2 a statement certifying that the Concept Paper complies with the 3 critical requirements specified in Section C.1 of the CDCS APS is required

10- Can USAID please confirm that both this "Certification, with Explanation, of Eligibility Under USAID Priority/Programmatic Focus Area" and "Eligibility Certification Form" are separate and required components of submission?

USAID Response:

USAID confirms

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1- What information is required to be submitted in supporting information

USAID Response:

Attachment 2 - Eligibility Certification Form

2- P. 35. Can an organization be a prime applicant on one application and a non-exclusive sub-applicant on another application?

USAID Response:

All eligible interested organizations are restricted to submitting only one Concept Paper as the Prime Applicant. Please note that Applicants can serve as sub-awardees or supporting partners on multiple Concept Papers. Prime Applicants must not require exclusivity agreements with proposed alliance members, sub-partners, or key individuals.

3- Can USAID/El Salvador confirm the M&E considerations are not part of the Concept note submission nor the evaluation criteria?

USAID Response:

M&E considerations are not part of the concept paper submission stage. Please note that the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template are being modified through this amendment. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

4- In Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template, pages 46-47, no Management and Staffing Plan is included in the prescribed sections nor page count. However, on page 41, Evaluation Criterion 3 indicates that all applicants will be assessed on their Management and Staffing Plan “that results at a minimum in:

- The ability and commitment to mobilize rapidly and start work.
- Proposed key personnel staff in accordance with qualifications established in this addendum.
- A realistic staffing plan to achieve the objectives.”

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

5- Could USAID please clarify whether the Mandatory Concept Paper Template or the Evaluation Criterion 3 should be followed?

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

6- If Evaluation Criterion 3 is to be followed, might USAID consider re-issuing an updated outline to reflect the inclusion of the Management and Staffing Plan established under Evaluation Criterion 3?

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

7- Further, if Evaluation Criterion 3 is to be included, might USAID provide a description of the “qualifications established in this addendum” for key personnel, as these qualifications have not been included in the addendum.

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

8- In Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template, pages 46-47, no Management and Staffing Plan is included in the prescribed sections nor page count. However, on page 41, Evaluation Criterion 3 indicates that all applicants will be assessed on their Management and Staffing Plan “that results at a minimum in:

- The ability and commitment to mobilize rapidly and start work.
- Proposed key personnel staff in accordance with qualifications established in this addendum.
- A realistic staffing plan to achieve the objectives.”

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

9- 8.1 Could USAID please clarify whether the Mandatory Concept Paper Template or the Evaluation Criterion 3 should be followed?

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

10- 8.2 If Evaluation Criterion 3 is to be followed, might USAID consider re-issuing an updated outline to reflect the inclusion of the Management and Staffing Plan established under Evaluation Criterion 3?

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

11- 8.3 Further, if Evaluation Criterion 3 is to be included, might USAID provide a description of the “qualifications established in this addendum” for key personnel, as these qualifications have not been included in the addendum.

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

12- 8.4 Finally, if Evaluation Criterion 3 is omitted, might USAID provide an updated list of Merit Review Criteria and Considerations?

USAID Response:

Yes, this amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

13- In reference to the above APS. Page 41 of the APS references the third evaluation criteria as being the Management and Staffing Plan, complete with proposed Key Personnel, however the “Mandatory Concept Paper Template” on page 46 does not include a section for a Management and Staffing Plan, nor any mention of Key Personnel. Can you kindly confirm the following, therefore:

That named Key Personnel are not required for submission of the Concept Note response.
A Management and Staffing Plan is not required for submission, and that the evaluation criteria will be updated to reflect organizational capacity rather than management and staffing.

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

14- P.41 Can USAID/El Salvador share how the management and staffing plan evaluation criteria will be judged since there is no section devoted to the management or staffing plan within the requested format of the Concept Paper?

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

15- P. 41. USAID/El Salvador states "the proposed sub-criteria of proposed Key Personnel, in accordance with the qualification established in the addendum." Can USAID/El Salvador provide the qualifications for Key Personnel? Can USAID/El Salvador confirm Key Personnel required for concept note submission?

USAID Response:

This amendment modifies the Merit Review Criteria for evaluation of concepts as well as the Concept Paper Template. Please refer to SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION and Attachment 1 - Mandatory Concept Paper Template.

OTHER INFORMATION:

1- I have several questions in relation to fund an applicant and its partners active projects in Guatemala and Mexico which focus 100% on access, enrollment and retention for OOSC at primary education.

USAID Response:

USAID's goal for the Activity is to improve student retention and Socio-Emotional Learning in El Salvador, this is not a Regional activity.

2- These two active projects have matching fund with two trusted implementing organizations (UNHCR and BuildOn/US NGO). The applicant is covering 50% from the project total budget and the implementing partner the other 50%.

USAID Response:

The projects mentioned in question No. 1 are being implemented in Mexico and Guatemala, USAID's goal for this Activity is to improve student retention and Socio-Emotional Learning only in El Salvador.

3- What is the possibility for USAID to cover only the applicant's portion in these projects? We are looking to submit on behalf of the applicant only. These two projects budgeted for total around \$4.5 M (the applicant portion only).

USAID Response:

USAID's goal for the Activity is to improve student retention and Socio-Emotional Learning in El Salvador, this is not a Regional activity.

4- The applicant is in discussion to build abroad partnership with USAID El Salvador at country level and HQ level. Therefore, we are requesting to have different type of collaboration in submission for grants. How it could work with you? And what is your advise?

USAID Response:

The mechanisms currently available for implementation of activities are the addenda under the El Salvador CDCS APS.

5- The applicant does not implement it self, our modality to receive an Interest of Expression from potential partners who will implement the project on the ground. Could USAID and the applicant build a partnership according to this modality and to implement project through the third party?

USAID Response:

The applicant can identify partnerships with new and underutilized locally-established partners (LEP) with deep roots in-country.

6- Can USAID/El Salvador provide an approximate calendar for the co-creation, full proposal stage, and the anticipated start date of this opportunity?

USAID Response:

We cannot provide an estimate at this point in time. USAID/El Salvador maintains continuous communication with applicants throughout the process.

ATTACHMENT I

List of Municipalities per Urban Hubs March 2022

1. Urban Hub: Western (18 municipalities; including the major city Santa Ana):

Ahuachapán Department: Ahuachapán, San Francisco Menéndez
Santa Ana Department: San Antonio Pajonal, Santiago de la Frontera, Texistepeque, Candelaria de la Frontera, El Porvenir, Chalchuapa, San Sebastián Salitrillo, El Congo, Coatepeque, Santa Ana
Sonsonate Department: Armenia, Caluco, Izalco, San Julián
Chalatenango Department: Nueva Concepción
La Libertad Department: San Pablo Tacachico

2. Urban Hub: Central (27 municipalities; including the capital city San Salvador):

La Libertad Department: San Matías, San Juan Opico, Quezaltepeque, Colón, Antiguo Cuscatlán, Comasagua, Santa Tecla, Zaragoza, San José Villanueva, Huizúcar, Nuevo Cuscatlán, La Libertad
San Salvador Department: Nejapa, Apopa, Tonacatepeque, Cuscatancingo, Ayutuxtepeque, Delgado, San Salvador, Soyapango, Mejicanos, Ilopango, San Marcos, Santo Tomás, Santiago Texacuangos, Panchimalco, Rosario de Mora

3. Urban Hub: Eastern (28 municipalities; including the major city San Miguel):

Usulután Department: Berlín, San Agustín, San Francisco Javier, Jiquilisco, Puerto El Triunfo, Alegría, Santiago de María, Jucuapa, Tecapán, Ozatlán, Usulután, San Dionisio, Santa Elena, California, Jucuarán, Concepción Batres,