

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**MIDDLE EAST/EDUCATION (ME/ED)
UMBRELLA ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS)**

**APS No: APS-OAA-17-000002
MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL EDUCATION**

Issuance Date: September 28, 2017

Closing Date: September 27, 2022

CFDA #: 98.001

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), Middle East Bureau, is setting up an umbrella mechanism to support applications for education in the region based on posted Addenda. Potential awards under this ME/ED/APS are subject to 2 CFR 700 and 2 CFR 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

This umbrella Annual Program Statement (APS) is designed to describe and provide a process through which organizations can work with USAID and to respond to Addenda that:

- Address important education interests and objectives in the Middle East region;
- Advance USAID's strategic priorities and objectives; and
- Bridge humanitarian and development outcomes in areas experiencing protracted crises.

The umbrella APS is not a Request for Applications (RFA) or a Request for Proposals (RFP). Instead, this umbrella **APS lays the groundwork for posting Addenda which will call for applications for more specific education and youth development activities.** In addition, this umbrella APS is not supported by funding at this time. Any funding for any activity proposed under this umbrella APS would have to be requested from a specific USAID Mission, Bureau, or Independent Office to which the Concept Paper will be submitted. Eligibility for these awards is not restricted.

The Middle East Regional Education umbrella APS is a solicitation aimed at fostering a coherent approach to bridge relief with development efforts given the protracted nature of ongoing conflicts in many countries across the region, and simultaneous continual demand for education services. The demand for education services across the region, the desire to collapse humanitarian and development silos, financing and coordination structures, and the role of host governments, requires flexibility in programming. This APS attempts to provide opportunities for problem identification and definition, solution scoping and development, and solution implementation ranging from early childhood into youth and early adulthood interventions.

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USAID and MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL EDUCATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to supporting education, including in conflict and crisis areas. The Middle East region is characterized by both stable and dynamic contexts. The recent pandemic, and current protracted crises in many countries across the Middle East region have contributed to a global discussion on the need for more flexible and responsive programs to address education needs that reduce learning loss, normalize schooling and equitable access to schooling, and help to stabilize communities. There is a need to respond creatively and quickly to better serve populations that have missed many years of schooling, witnessed violence, and desire normalcy in their lives again with education programs. Flexibility and partnerships with local organizations will be essential to ensure relevant education opportunities are provided given the dynamic context.

This Middle East Regional Education Umbrella Annual Program Statement (APS) is designed to catalyze, facilitate and support such programming. It is an effort to put into place education programs that help to bridge ongoing programs and increase stabilization efforts undertaken in the Middle East region. This umbrella APS is intended to inform education stakeholders in the region that should funding become available, USAID intends to put out Addenda to solicit concept papers from interested education partners to work closely with USAID to achieve results in improving support to learning, education, and youth activities in the areas where the opportunity to work in the education sphere is amenable in Middle East countries. Each Addendum will have a specific focus (whether on target group or geographic area).

II. BACKGROUND

According to USAID's 2018 Education Policy,¹ displacement, destruction of infrastructure, and limited access to learning opportunities from human-made or natural disasters can result in entire generations of children and youth missing out on an education, limiting the ability of a country to recover and build its social, economic, and cultural capacity. More recently, the coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated challenges and it is expected that more children and youth between the ages of three and 18, living in marginalized situations, are in need of educational support. Many of the most challenged students in the region are refugees, internally displaced, persons

¹ https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/2018_Education_Policy_FINAL_WEB.pdf

with disabilities, and other populations of concern. Though children and youth affected by crises have the potential to be the future leaders in rebuilding their home countries, only one percent of students displaced by crisis or conflict enroll in some form of post-secondary education. Since 2011, many crises in the Middle East region have had devastating effects on the education system. This umbrella APS aims to fill programming gaps in countries where USAID does not have existing support structures to meet the high demand and need for education services.

Guiding principles include the below:

- Do no harm: Given the complex programming environment, all activities will take into consideration the fact that aid is not neutral. Aid and how it is administered can cause harm or can strengthen resilience and social cohesion in communities. It may be that providing activities for all groups versus targeting is preferable in order to reduce potential for misunderstandings.
- Conflict-sensitive and risk-informed activities: Given the above, all activities will contribute to preventing and mitigating conflict. For example, ensuring equitable access to all levels of education in a safe learning environment will encourage social cohesion, and well-being of students and teachers. To ensure that education stakeholders' needs are met, activities will need to be sensitive to the causes and triggers of conflict, as well as to how it has affected teachers and students' capacities to teach and learn. Program implementation will require an in-depth understanding of conflict and other dynamics that shape the context in the targeted area(s) and how the proposed interventions could exacerbate or mitigate conflict.
- Participatory and community/directorate led activities: All activities will engage relevant leadership in planning processes to reinforce ownership and facilitate the development and implementation of local education plans, policies, and programs. Interventions that build and strengthen existing systems that are productive and inclusive are preferred, as opposed to one-off support.
- Leverage existing partnerships and activities to ensure coordination: To the extent possible, all activities will expand upon those undertaken as part of the humanitarian response from the USG or other donors, development actors, and local governance structures to maximize investment. Planning will include discussing how activities contribute to organized and coordinated programming to ensure that resources are used in the most efficient and equitable way and to avoid duplication of efforts. All activities will integrate humanitarian and development approaches to maximize impact.
- Capacity development at all levels: Capacity development needs vary in all contexts, and there is often a depletion of capacities and unique opportunities to build upon. Strategic and hands-on efforts to ensure local capacities are developed and expanded upon will be integrated into all components of an activity.
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL): Adopting rigorous monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning to enhance understanding of education programming will be required. Output and outcome level indicators (using sex and age disaggregation) will be required. Because data and information are often minimal or unreliable in conflict/crisis situations, and contexts change quickly, continuous learning assessments (CLA) will need to be built into activities to help determine what programming shifts may be necessary. All data and information will be shared with local partners and other relevant stakeholders. Evidence-based methodologies will be used to support flexible designs with an assumed theory of change. There may be a need for rapid assessments to feed into the planning of interventions either before they start or during

phases of implementation.

- Target group considerations: Education activities will need to ensure that the most vulnerable are taken into consideration and that gender and protection analysis is mainstreamed. Plans for tracking these dynamics over the course of the activity will be required. Crisis and conflict affected boys, girls, young men, and young women and youth differently. Vulnerable groups and identities – gender, disability, ethnicity, and language group – may amplify the impact of crisis and conflict by restricting access to schools, hindering the ability to remain enrolled, and limiting time to learn.
- No construction: Though there is clearly need for rehabilitation and/or construction in schools in conflict and crisis settings, this umbrella APS will not support such activities as there are alternative mechanisms that support these activities.
- Curriculum: All school-related activities will need to ensure that curriculum is objective and, hopefully, linked to certification and the nationally approved curriculum.

Finally, there are many resources that exist to guide the design of education activities in conflict and crisis and the below offers a couple:

- USAID Edu-Links resources, <https://www.edu-links.org/>
- Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies, <http://www.ineesite.org/>

III. GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

This umbrella APS will be used support education activities in the Middle East region. Education expansion rates in the MENA region have slowed down over the past two decades, and coronavirus continues to hamper progress. According to UNICEF, one in every five children in the Middle East is not in school, and of these out-of-school children, an estimated number of over 3 million should have been in school if the crises never happened. The Syrian crisis has had an obvious impact on the region. The five top hosting countries in the region are showing an overwhelmingly positive response to the arrival of millions of school-aged children, yet 39% of Syrian children are still out of school in these countries. The Arab States account for 5% of the global population but 32% of the global population of refugees and 38% of the global population of people internally displaced by conflict.

Gender inequalities continue and are exacerbated by conflicts and crises, leaving many behind. Crises increase the vulnerability of children and youth, with girls often more at risk of gender-based violence and child marriage, and boys being forced into child labor or recruitment in armed forces by parties to the conflict. Adolescent girls are 1.5 times more likely to be out of school in lower secondary education in the region and one in five girls in the region are married before the age of 18. For female youth, the unemployment rate is even higher where more than 2 out of 5 in North Africa and more than one third in the Arab States being unemployed.

Select geographic locations for programming will be provided within posted Addenda. Selection of these areas will be based on a reasonable prospect of success, considering needs, accessibility, insecurity, the presence of armed actors, and the capacity of local councils, among other factors. Applicants must have a solid understanding of proposed geographic areas; conflict dynamics; political shifts; governance structures and policies; intra-household dynamics; notable protection concerns; accessibility and security dynamics; vulnerability profile at household and community levels; breadth, depth, and functionality of education systems, among other important dynamics. All Addenda will require that applicants include robust assessment information from primary and/or secondary sources to justify interventions in the proposed area. As the operating

environment in many Middle East countries is extremely fluid, there will be a need to demonstrate the ability to adjust programming accordingly.

IV. OBJECTIVES

An overarching objective of this umbrella APS is to combine/coordinate humanitarian assistance and development approaches to build resiliency at the household and community levels in the variety of contexts that exist in the MENA region through strengthened education delivery services, youth services, and related capacity building opportunities.

Ensuring that students are learning and on track to transition through and complete school with a recognized certification is of vital importance to sustain progress and bridge humanitarian and development goals for stabilization. To that end, it is anticipated that addendum priority areas will include the following objectives, though this is not a comprehensive list and other demands for education services may be included:

- 1) **Expand equitable access to education.** Of primary importance is reducing factors that hinder inequitable access to education (child labor because of intense poverty, child marriage for girls from larger families with constrained resources, financial barriers to schooling when fees or other costs have to be paid, lack of psychosocial support to children who are affected by the conflict, lack of child protection and a safe learning environment.) Regulations on school and class size sometimes also hinder access. Finally, ensuring that learning can be “recognized” for students who have attended schools that are not sanctioned by the government will be needed. Attention is particularly needed for children who could become further marginalized, such as those experiencing physical disabilities or neurocognitive delays (which likely increased due to the ongoing conflict.)
- 2) **Improve the quality of education.** Educational quality can always be improved, particularly in conflict and crisis situations, and requires additional efforts to address complex issues including integrating relevant soft skills, psychosocial support (PSS), socio-emotional learning (SEL), and life skills that foster children’s inherent resilience and enable their holistic development to realize their full potential. Where necessary and feasible, curriculum can be reviewed to guarantee respect for equity, tolerance, diversity, and peacebuilding. Improving the quality of education requires strong coordination and partnerships between international and local development/humanitarian agency organizations, government ministries and communities to minimize duplication and fragmentation.
- 3) **Ensure certification and accreditation.** Ministries of Education and other partners recognize the importance of certification and accreditation. Credentials assure parents and stakeholders that teachers are qualified to educate children ; teachers are able to develop a career path based on that credential even if they are forced to migrate due to war; and teachers and administrators are equipped with specialized skills to continue students’ learning. Ensuring that students are learning and on track to transition through school is of vital importance to sustain progress, and bridge humanitarian and development goals for stabilization.
- 4) **Provide effective psychosocial support.** The scale and intensity of the pandemic on students and teachers varies, particularly in conflict settings and should be evaluated to determine require psychosocial support programs in schools and nonformal education programs. Teachers trained to recognize the signs of stress, from depression to

aggression, can learn to integrate psychosocial support into their daily work and can be equipped to make referrals for specialized support when needed. Training teachers can be geared towards not only providing well-being support for children, but also for themselves and one another.

- 5) **Train and support teachers.** Displacement, loss of life, forced migration and the inability of the government to provide appropriate or enough support affects teacher availability and recruitment. Management of the teacher workforce is often fragmented, particularly in conflict situations, so efforts to improve the education system effectively require professional development support for teachers. Standardized and relevant teacher training, teaching, and fair remuneration are key inputs to creating a well-functioning education system where children can learn basic competencies.
- 6) **Strengthen and ensure education service delivery.** It will be necessary to assess and address education system weaknesses and build on strengths to ensure school attendance and learning outcomes. This will require hands-on capacity building activities developed with relevant partners that also increase the education system's ability to navigate shocks and sustain progress.

It is anticipated that combining humanitarian assistance and development approaches will strengthen resiliency in the delivery of education services. This umbrella APS will support evidence-based methodologies and use a holistic and practical approach to identify and overcome key constraints to equitably access education and improve learning outcomes. It will adopt a systems-oriented and capacity-building approach to strengthen education by engaging with relevant actors, initiatives, the private sector, and local governance structures to improve service provision.

In summary, the theory of change is that if communities have support in the short-term and have consistent access to community strengthening social services, in particular inclusive and quality schooling, stabilization can be attained, and resilience to shocks and conflict can be developed. An action research approach will ensure that the creation of rigorous assessments, monitoring, and where feasible, evaluations and learning products will be coordinated with humanitarian and development actors and produced and disseminated in a timely manner to inform current and future programming. Those products may contribute to strategy development for education programming in conflict and crises in the Middle East region.

Anticipated activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- 1) **Expand equitable access to education:**
 - Direct service provision of formal and/or non-formal education that result in literacy, numeracy and basic skills;
 - Provide accelerated learning programs for youth that integrate functional literacy and numeracy with soft skills development and life-workforce readiness skills training and are directly linked to employment opportunities to youth;
 - Develop and use innovative technologies to provide educational content;
 - Develop and institute policies that ensure equitable access to education for all, especially underserved and marginalized groups;
 - Provide targeted interventions for underserved and marginalized boys, girls, and youth e.g. girls, child soldiers, children with disabilities, language, and minority groups;
 - Improving student and teacher safety in school and when traveling to and from schools;
 - Enable social mobilization to promote equitable access for underserved and marginalized

- groups;
 - Youth engagement activities;
 - Provide positive youth development programs to build youth assets that can increase access to education while impacting other positive youth outcomes.
- 2) **Improve the quality of education.**
- Assess student learning needs and tailor curriculum and pedagogy to fill gaps;
 - Basic literacy and numeracy and remedial activities;
 - Enable parent and community engagement in equitable access to safe schooling, or alternative education, including strengthening school management committees and expanding community-based education;
 - Build socio-emotional learning modules into the curriculum to enhance learning outcomes;
 - Enable early warning systems and emergency preparedness plans at school and municipal levels;
 - Enable community-based efforts to ensure that learning environments are free from abuse, exploitation and violence, especially for learners with disabilities, girls and learners from underserved populations;
 - Foster institutional and policy changes that protect education from attack and promote safer learning environments.
- 3) **Ensure certification and accreditation.**
- Provide teachers with knowledge and skills to improve the psychosocial well-being of crisis and conflict-affected learners;
 - Ensure certification, accreditation and regulation of non-formal education services that provide equivalent knowledge and skills to formal basic education;
 - Support remedial learning and test-taking for important years (often 9th and 12th grades);
 - Establish efficient and transparent accreditation and examination systems.
- 4) **Provide effective psychosocial support.**
- Promote well-being of education professionals including teachers, head teachers, and administrators in recognition of the impact of crises and conflicts on their motivation and coping abilities;
 - Integrate reconciliation, social cohesion and conflict resolution themes into the curriculum and extracurricular learning activities including sports and creative arts activities;
 - Establish systems for referring children and adults to services needed outside of the scope of the school;
 - Provide teacher professional development in psychosocial well-being, peace education, conflict-sensitivity and conflict transformation.
- 5) **Train and support teachers.**
- Expand the teaching workforce, especially for females, where there are shortages through recruitment, professional development, and ongoing support and supervision;
 - Ensure educational staffing equity through fair and transparent recruitment, remuneration and deployment policies and practices;
 - Expand the teaching workforce, especially for females, where there are shortages through recruitment, professional development, and ongoing support and supervision;

- Promote well-being of education professionals including teachers, head teachers, and administrators in recognition of the impact of crises and conflicts on their motivation and coping abilities;
- Provide teacher professional development in psychosocial well-being, peace education, conflict-sensitivity and conflict transformation;
- Establish teacher management and payroll information systems to assure the equitable recruitment, qualifications assessment and certification, deployment, remuneration, and supervision of teachers.

6) Strengthen and ensure education service delivery.

- Partner with host country institutions to provide or scale-up education including formal, non-formal, accelerated or complementary education programs that result in literacy, numeracy, and basic skills;
- Reduce the financial barriers to education through the provision of scholarships, cash-transfers, or teaching and learning materials;
- Provide technical assistance to education institutions to analyze allocation and distribution of education resources and to reform education financing policies to ensure equitable access;
- Partner with government and/or civil society organizations to assess institutional capacity, policies and priorities for expanding access to safe, equitable learning;
- Institutionalize emergency preparedness and/or early warning systems into national education policies and plans;
- Foster conflict-sensitive and evidence-based policies that redress access and learning inequities and contribute to crisis-prevention, including education personnel hiring policies, patterns of resources allocation and distribution, hatred-free and demilitarized curriculum, and the geographic distribution of education services;
- Develop monitoring and evaluation systems that provide regular and reliable data to inform education policy prioritization;
- Establish education management information systems (EMIS) for tracking progress on indicators of equitable access, resources, and learning outcomes;
- Establish private education regulatory framework;
- Delegitimizing violent ideology in curriculum;
- Systems building (local level engagement with teachers and principals, community engagement (parents) so tools are there to provide education when service delivery is uneven.

V. CONCEPT PAPER INSTRUCTIONS

A. General Approach

Concept papers submitted under this umbrella APS must respond to the specific Addendum requests. Concept papers need to propose strategies for implementing realistic activities and how they will respond to risks in carrying out these activities. Local partners are encouraged to be able to build off existing work that is being carried out as well as to be able to respond quickly to evolving situations. Concept papers will be evaluated based on the criteria and considerations set forth below.

B. Specific Instructions

In order to submit a Concept Paper under this umbrella APS, **an applicant must use the Concept Paper Template that will be provided in the Addenda and follow the directions and requirements set forth in that template.** Applicants should only submit the information and materials specified in the template. Concept Papers submitted in any other format will not be accepted or reviewed. Applicants cannot submit any alternative document or narrative as a substitute for a Concept Paper. In addition, and as noted in the Concept Paper Template, **all concept papers MUST be in English and submitted electronically via email.**²

VI. CONCEPT PAPER EVALUATION CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATIONS

Any Concept Paper submitted under this umbrella APS in response to an addendum should propose an activity that satisfies the definition and exhibits the characteristics set forth in Section II of this APS. In addition, the following criteria, and considerations, many of which reflect the characteristics discussed in Section II, will be used to review and evaluate concept papers submitted under this APS.

A. Background

The proposed activity must demonstrate an understanding of the context and existing challenges for activities in specific geographic areas and an awareness of existing opportunities for partnerships to plan and program activities. Proposed activities must also align with USG strategic priorities in the targeted areas.

B. Activity Strategy and Approach

The activity strategy and approach should be specific, complete, and presented concisely. It must include a clear description of the conceptual approach, including proposed alliances if applicable, and the general strategy (i.e. methodology and techniques) being proposed. The target population must be clearly identified in terms of number, location, and current status. It should outline specific, focused activities, and make a convincing case about how their mix and balance will achieve the objectives. It should clearly reflect the interests of partners and discuss existing resources, assets, and expertise in the implementation of activities.

C. Institutional Capability

The Applicants must offer evidence of their technical resources and expertise in addressing relevant education problems and issues described in the Addendum. Experience with similar activities, especially in targeted geographic areas, should be discussed.

D. Coordination

The concept paper should provide an overview of how the proposed activities will sequence,

² Please note that if an applicant submits materials not specifically requested in the template, or submits any material that exceeds the page limits specified in the template, USAID reserves the right, at its option, to reject the entire submission or to disregard any information beyond the specified page limits.

layer, and integrate with other planned or ongoing initiatives (both those of the applicant and those of other partners/donors) in the area of operation. Explanation of partner institutions, organizations or beneficiary groups into the program planning and implementation will be required.

E. Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)

A description of methods to monitor and measure results, collect data, and apply analysis and learning from it will be needed. The MEAL system and plan should facilitate flexibility in activity implementation to allow corrections and ensure the identification of successful approaches. It should also address how the Applicant will monitor and evaluate despite the access and security challenges posed by the context.

VII. CONCEPT PAPER REVIEW PROCESS

Once a Concept Paper has been submitted under the Middle East Regional Education umbrella APS, the technical and/or program officer serving as the USAID Addendum Point of Contact (POC) will arrange for the appropriate technical office to conduct an initial review of the concept paper using the criteria above. Concept papers will be reviewed by the pertinent technical officer(s) at the USAID Mission/B/IO.³ The Addendum POC will notify the applicant within 45 calendar days of the closing date stated in the Addendum as to whether or not USAID wishes to engage in more in-depth and specific activity discussions.

During the initial review of the Concept Paper, the pertinent USAID technical office may contact the applicant to clarify elements of the concept paper, request additional information, or discuss other aspects of the proposed activity.⁴ The purpose of the initial review and related communication is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further activity development discussions and efforts. The initial review and communication will result in one of three outcomes:

1. A decision to forego further consideration of the activity proposed in the Concept Paper;
2. A decision to provide the applicant an opportunity to submit a revised Concept Paper (this is very rare); or
3. A decision to engage in more in-depth and specific activity development discussions aimed at responding to the Addendum.⁵

Note: A decision to engage in more in-depth and specific alliance development discussions is NOT a commitment to funding, nor is it a commitment to requesting a full application. It is simply a decision to move forward in the collaborative and joint effort to develop a program.

Consistent with the terms and objectives of this APS, the activity development discussions must include direct communication between USAID and the core partners to the activities. Such

³ Other USAID personnel may also participate in reviewing the concept paper; however, concept paper reviews must involve one or more pertinent technical officers, or someone designated by the technical office as having the relevant technical knowledge and expertise.

⁴ USAID also has the right and option to request a revised Concept Paper.

⁵ This decision may include or be conditioned upon the submission of a revised concept paper.

communication may take place in conjunction with other activity partner discussions or separately. Collaborative discussions among the various core partners will be the standard practice. Similarly, USAID may also want or need direct and independent discussions with the applicant, prospective awardee or prospective implementing partner(s).

If the in-depth and specific activity development discussions do not result in the identification and development of activities worthy of further pursuit, the Addendum POC will not request a full application and will instead inform the applicant that USAID is no longer interested in the proposed activity.

On the other hand, if the more in-depth discussions enable the partners to jointly develop and design a promising activity, and the Addendum POC decides a full application is warranted, s/he will inform the applicant of that determination and decision. At that point, an Agreement Officer for the specific Addendum POC will provide the necessary additional instructions, technical requirements and specific evaluation criteria for a full application. USAID technical officers will continue to communicate with the applicant regarding the substance of the activity.

VIII. PURPOSE OF APS, APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY AND AWARD CONSIDERATIONS

The Middle East Education umbrella APS describes and provides a process through which organizations can work with USAID in the education sector to address important interests and objectives, advance USAID's strategic priorities and objectives, and bridge humanitarian and development outcomes, results and impact. The umbrella APS provides a pathway for potential partners to submit Concept Papers and, when requested, full applications or other materials needed to enter into an award agreement with USAID based on posted Addenda.

USAID intends that this umbrella APS will be used by Missions and B/IOs to provide for full and open competition for any award that advances proposed activities that are responsive to the terms herein. Awards under this APS may take the form of grants, fixed amount awards, cooperative agreements, leader with associate awards, or collaboration agreements.⁶

***Note:** This umbrella APS does not satisfy the requirements for competition for procurement of goods and services through acquisition instruments. USAID will not provide funds under this umbrella APS for products and services that would be purchased through a contract.*

Addendum POCs with support from technical officers (and, if appropriate, others designated and approved by the technical officers) at USAID Missions and B/IOs are responsible for reviewing concept papers and, if applicable, full applications under this APS.⁷ USAID Missions and B/IOs are also responsible for management of the award process and any award agreements that might result from the review of the full applications. Questions regarding the application process can be directed to: me.education.aps@usaid.gov

⁶ For definitions and descriptions of these types of agreements, please see [AAPD 04-16](#) and [ADS 303](#).

⁷ Other USAID personnel may also participate in reviewing the concept paper or full application; however, concept paper and full application reviews must involve one or more pertinent technical officers, or someone designated by the technical office as having the relevant technical knowledge and expertise.

A. Eligible Applicants

The following list of potential applicants is not exhaustive and is provided for illustrative purposes only. USAID welcomes applications from many types of organizations including U.S. and non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), faith-based organizations, international organizations, foundations, colleges and universities, civic groups, regional organizations, etc. All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. An individual cannot apply as an applicant.

In addition, for the following groups the criteria below also apply:

U.S. and Non-U.S. Non-Profit Organizations: Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. private non-profit organizations may apply for USAID funding under this APS.

U.S. and Non-U.S. For-Profit Organizations: In accordance with 22 CFR 200.400 potential for-profit applicants should note that USAID policy prohibits the payment of fee/profit to the prime recipient under assistance instruments, and as 22 CFR 200.101 states that, unless specifically excluded, all requirements applying to recipients also apply to sub-recipients if they meet the definition of “recipients”; therefore, fee/profit under assistance type awards is also prohibited for sub-recipients. Forgone profit does not qualify as cost-sharing or leveraging. If a prime recipient has a (sub)-contract with a for-profit organization for the acquisition of goods or services (i.e., if a buyer-seller relationship is created), fee/profit for the (sub)-contractor is authorized. A for-profit local organization may still want to apply for grant funding under this APS even though it is foregoing profit on the alliance activities. As determined by the needs of the alliance and development objectives, grant funds may be used to build the capacity of the local organization, whether it is for-profit or non-profit.

U.S. and Non-U.S. Colleges and Universities: Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. colleges and universities may apply for funding under this APS. USG and USAID regulations generally treat colleges and universities as NGOs, rather than governmental organizations. Hence, both public and private colleges and universities are eligible. Non-U.S. colleges and universities in countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts are ineligible.

B. Considerations Regarding the Pursuit and Award of USAID Funding

Issuance of this Middle East Regional Education umbrella APS does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Prospective applicants should be aware of the following considerations:

- **Issuance Period:** The Middle East Regional Education umbrella APS will post Addenda to request concept papers and related funding requests and each Addenda will provide a specific date by which concept papers must be received. Concept papers, letters of interest and/or full applications received under this APS, but unable to be negotiated and awarded prior to the end of the fiscal year in which they are received, may be considered for award within the following fiscal year. It is expected that the

programs supported by a proposed activity will have a period of performance from 12 to 36 months.

- **Award Discretion: USAID reserves the right to make or not to make awards through this APS.** The actual number of assistance awards, if any, under this APS is subject to the availability of funds and the interests and requirements of Missions and Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) as well as the viability of proposals received. There is no pre-defined minimum or maximum number of activities USAID Missions and B/IOs will support through this APS. However, *USAID will not provide funds under this umbrella APS for products and services that would be purchased through a contract.*
- **USAID Funding Sources: The Middle East Regional Education umbrella APS is simply a vehicle for soliciting and receiving concept papers and, if requested, full applications should education funding become available.** Addenda posted will include anticipated funding amounts. **Note:** Potential substantive and resource support DOES NOT constitute any sort of commitment to fund a subsequently proposed alliance.

If the applicant organization is a “traditional implementing partner,”⁸ such as an NGO, higher education institution (HEI), contractor or other organization that has received or is considered appropriate to receive federal funding under grants, fixed amount awards, cooperative agreements, and/or leader with associate awards, the applicant organization needs to be aware of the following requirements:

1. For U.S. organizations, 22 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700, OMB Circulars and USAID Standard Provisions are applicable to any award that may result from this umbrella APS. **Please refer to <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf> for governing regulations, standard provisions, and required certifications that will need to be submitted by applicants at the time of award.** For non-U.S. organizations, Mandatory Standard Provisions mentioned in USAID’s Automated Directive System (ADS) 303 are applicable.
2. In order to be eligible to receive U.S. Government funding, organizations must meet certain requirements. **While these requirements do not have to be met in order to submit a concept paper under the umbrella APS, they will need to be met if the applicant is requested to submit a full application.** The requirements are:

a) Registration Matters

- All first-time applicants for USAID funding are subject to a pre-award survey to verify that the applicant has proper procedures in place to receive USAID funding (ADS 303.3.8)
- Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

⁸ If USAID has designated the applicant organization as a non-traditional partner, and the Agency and non-traditional partner are considering the use of a collaboration agreement, the Addendum POC will provide additional guidance during developing the collaboration agreement.

- i. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application;
 - ii. Provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and
 - iii. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. To obtain information regarding the preceding, see the respective links: <http://www.dnb.com> and <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.
Note: the DUNS number must be submitted with the application (it is required on the SF-424).
- Please allow several weeks for processing through SAM.GOV.
 - Some domestic organizations may also need to register as a U.S. Private Voluntary Organization (PVO). Applicants may determine if they meet the definition for a PVO and find registration instructions here (<http://www.usaid.gov/pvo>). Registration is not required before application submission but, if required, must be completed before funding can be disbursed.

b) Applications for Federal Assistance

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A, Cost application Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-425, Federal Financial Form
- Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient

Note: The family of SF-424 standard forms can be found at:
<http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>.

The SF-425 can be found at:
http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/grants_forms/SF-425.pdf
and http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/standard_forms/SF-425_instructions.pdf.

Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient form can be found at:
<http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303may>

Note to All Prospective Applicants: USAID may also amend this APS from time to time, as necessary or appropriate. Any such amendments can be found at www.grants.gov.

IX. FULL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS⁹

If the Addendum POC's review of the applicant's concept paper, and the ensuing activity development discussions, result in a decision to request a full application, the Agreement Officer for the relevant Mission/B/IO will provide specific requirements and instructions for the full application. All applications must be in English and submitted electronically via email as instructed by the USAID Agreement Officer.

⁹ As noted earlier in this umbrella APS, **non-traditional partners** entering into a collaboration agreement with USAID will receive separate guidance consistent with the development of such an agreement.

DO NOT SUBMIT A FULL APPLICATION UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED TO DO SO BY USAID.

If USAID requests a full application, the application must include all the information requested in a Concept Paper as well as the following:

1. Letter(s) of support or commitment from all partners for all proposed activities.
2. Implementation schedule, including details regarding when and how activities will be applied.
3. Detailed MEAL plan clearly demonstrating how desired outcomes and results will continue to be shared, used and applied.
4. Detailed budget and financial plan with major line items and a narrative description of what the resources will be used for. Cost-share resources should be distinguished from other resource contributions, including private sector resource contributions.
5. Statement outlining gender and disability integration issues and how the applicant proposes to address the issues.
6. Branding and marking plans.
7. Security plan.

Additional requirements will be specified by the Mission/B/IO Agreement Officer.

Note: An invitation to submit a full application does not constitute an award; USAID may choose to not fund applications even after they have been requested. If that happens, a USAID Agreement Officer will communicate the reasons for such a decision.

X. AWARDING OF ALLIANCES BASED ON THE FULL APPLICATION PROCESS

Following the application review by the Addendum POCs and technical teach, applicants will be advised that USAID has the discretion to award without discussion; award a portion of the award; or not award at all.

If USAID is interested in funding the application, the Mission or B/IO will complete its due diligence regarding partner organizations deemed core to the activity, determine whether other partner organizations warrant some degree of due diligence as well.

In addition, the requirements for reporting on the activity will be determined in a collaborative manner among partners and should be outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding. An annual performance monitoring plan, using established baseline data and specific, measurable targets and indicators, will be agreed to by the partners and should be documented in the MOU.¹⁰

Following favorable negotiations, USAID may award a grant, cooperative agreement, leader with associates, fixed amount award, collaboration agreement or other type of assistance award to the entity the alliance partners have identified as the appropriate recipient of USAID funding to conduct activities that support implementation of the Addendum. The precise type of award

¹⁰ Requirements for evaluations and financial and other reporting may also be set forth in award agreements executed with USAID.

and award agreement will depend upon the nature of the entity seeking to receive and manage USAID funding, as well as the nature of the activities to be conducted under the alliance.¹¹ See USAID ADS 303 <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf>.

¹¹ For definitions and descriptions of these types of agreements, please see [AAPD 04-16](#) and [ADS 303](#).