



USAID | WEST BANK/GAZA

Issue Date: Friday, April 7, 2017
Deadline for Questions/ Clarifications: Tuesday, April 18, 2017
Closing Date: Friday, May 12, 2017
Closing Time: 12:00 AM Jerusalem Time

Subject: USAID/West Bank and Gaza Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Request for Applications (RFA), Number: RFA-294-17-000002

Program Title: The Education for the Future Activity

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)'s West Bank and Gaza Mission (WBG), is seeking applications from eligible institutions for the implementation of the "Education for the Future Activity", detailed in Section A of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Request for Applications (RFA). Please see section C of this NOFO for eligibility requirements.

Subject to the availability of funds, an award will be made to that responsible Applicant whose application best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity and the selection criteria contained herein. While one award is anticipated as a result of this RFA, USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

For the purposes of this RFA the term "Grant" is synonymous with "Cooperative Agreement"; "Grantee" is synonymous with "Recipient"; and "Grant Officer" is synonymous with "Agreement Officer". Eligible organizations interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this funding opportunity thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and evaluation process.

To be eligible for award, the Applicant must provide all information as required in this funding opportunity and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this RFA. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. Potential Applicants should regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity. Applicants will need to have available or download the Adobe™ program to their computers in order to view and save the Adobe™ forms properly. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the RFA has been downloaded from the internet in its entirety and USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the RFA, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

The successful Applicant will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the activity objectives. Please read each section of the RFA.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

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 comments/suggestions or an application. Applications 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 programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Gilpin', is written over the printed name.

Jason Gilpin
Agreement Officer
USAID/West Bank and Gaza

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED IN THIS NFO

ADS	Automated Directives System
AO	Agreement Officer
AOR	Agreement Officer Representative
BEO	Bureau Environmental Officer
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
COP	Chief of Party
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
EDSP	Education Development Strategic Plan
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IR	Intermediate Result
LOC	Letter of Credit
LTD	Leadership and Teacher Development Activity
MOEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSN	Model School Network Program
M/OAA	USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance
NIET	National Institute for Education Training
NICRA	Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OFAC	Office of Foreign Assets Control
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCA	Partner Contracted Audit
PD	Program Description
PWD	People with Disabilities
RF	Results Framework
RFA	Request for Applications
RMP	Rapid Mobilization Plan
TEC	Technical Evaluation Committee
TEIP	World Bank Teacher Education Improvement Activity
TES	Teacher Education Strategy
TIN	Taxpayer Identification Number
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
USG	United States Government
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WBG	West Bank and Gaza

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Program Description is to stipulate the various components of the Education for the Future activity and their relationship to higher order goals, and to clarify the context within which this activity will be implemented. USAID builds on prior successful activities that have focused on improving the quality of basic education including the Model Schools Network, the Leadership and Teacher Development activity and the School Support Program.

The central problem this activity seeks to address is:

Quality of education is the main challenge facing the Palestinian education system at all levels. Students persistently demonstrate low achievement rates in international and national examinations, especially in Arabic, English, math, sciences and technology. Rote memorization is still prevalent, with few opportunities for students to utilize higher order thinking skills. Graduates at all levels lack competencies, behaviors and attitudes that are deemed necessary for success in the 21st century. Decision making is heavily centralized and the organizational structures are hierarchical and compartmentalized, which limit the ability of the system to learn and evolve. The outcomes of the education system at large do not meet the needs of the labor market and limit the prospects for socio-economic development.

The core goal and objectives of this activity area:

Goal: Improve the quality of teaching and learning at the basic education level in governmental schools in the West Bank.

Objectives:

- IR.1 Improved Teaching and Learning Practices in Schools
- IR.2 Improved Educational Leadership and Management Capacity of MOEHE
- IR.3 Increased Engagement of Students In Non-Formal And Supplementary Education Opportunities

The Education for the Future activity is expected to reach more schools in the West Bank; provide training to teachers, principals and supervisors; and engage in technical assistance at various levels in support of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education strategic development and decentralization plans.

A.2 BACKGROUND

Education System in West Bank and Gaza

Following the signing of the Declaration of Principles (the Oslo Accord) between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization on September 13, 1993, responsibilities for Education in the

West Bank and Gaza were subsequently transferred from the Israeli authority to the newly established Palestinian Authority (PA). The new PA created the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE), which started operating in August 1994. The main challenge the MOEHE faced in its first year was the existence of two different educational systems, the Jordanian system in the West Bank, and the Egyptian system in Gaza. To address this, the MOEHE focused on, and took some important steps towards, unifying the two systems and bridging the gap between the two geographical areas.

A major achievement during the 1994–1995 school year was conducting, for the first time under full Palestinian control, the secondary school matriculation exam (the *Tawjihi*) simultaneously in the West Bank and Gaza (Abu-Duhou, 1996). The MOEHE also started working with the donor community to build new schools, rehabilitate existing ones, and launch the development of the first Palestinian curriculum.

To define its priorities and areas of focus, the MOEHE started developing national strategic and action plans. The first Education Development Strategic Plan (EDSP I) (2003-2008) focused on measurement of students' achievements using national standardized tests and utilization of performance indicators for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The Ministry adopted an emergency plan to improve students' achievements which included the implementation of a number of unified periodic tests for all students (Saleh, 2010). The following strategic plan EDSP II (2008–2012) aimed at increasing access to all education levels (access), to improving the quality of teaching and learning (quality), developing the capacity for planning and management and improving financial and management systems (management). The EDSP II was extended by one year (until 2013) to align itself with the national planning cycle. During that period, the MOEHE benefited from the establishment of a new funding modality, the Joint Financing Arrangement (JFA1), which greatly enhanced the implementation capacity of the Ministry's systems, districts and schools (MOEHE, 2014).

In February 2014, the Ministry launched EDSP III (2014–2019); subtitled “Palestine 2020: a Learning Nation,” the EDSP III calls for a learner centered strategy. The EDSP III introduced the notion of High-Priority Reform Tracks. These include curriculum reform, ministry management reform, and school restructuring to standardize the number of grades that schools offer, corresponding to the education levels of grades 1-4, 5-9, 10-12, 1-9, 1-12 and 5-12 to the extent possible. These three reform tracks were prioritized as they are deemed foundational for a well-functioning public education system.² A new strategic plan was drafted in late 2016 (EDSP IV) to align the MOEHE plans with the National Policy Agenda (2017–2022). The new plan emphasizes the importance of developing early childhood education programs, expansion and improvement of pre-school education, improving basic and secondary education, and improving the transition from education to employment³.

¹ The Joint Financing Agreement (JFA) was signed on November 11, 2010, by the PA and five development partners (Norway, Ireland, Finland, Germany and Belgium) to provide assistance to the education sector through pooling of resources and harmonization of procedures to support MOEHE priorities.

² Narrative of Key Reform Policies, Targets, Strategies and Interventions in 2017, MOEHE; pp. 4

³ National Policy Agenda (Final Draft) 2017 - 2022; pp. 24

Access to Education

The PA, with substantial assistance from the donor community, has built schools and educational rooms in all regions of the West Bank and Gaza, making education accessible to all, even to Bedouin communities and those living in very remote areas. Currently, there are challenges in terms of access to education in certain areas like East Jerusalem, part of Hebron, Area C and Gaza. Generally speaking, the PA has achieved remarkable success in terms of improving access to education in the geographic area under its control. The average annual increase in number of classrooms constructed is 1.7% while the average annual increase in student population is 0.9%⁴; meaning the system is not only coping with the population increase but also expanding facilities to reduce crowdedness and improve the educational environment. Education in public schools is almost free (only small registration fees are collected from each student annually), and education is compulsory for grades 1-10. The United Nations Refugee and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) provides free education to refugees (25% of all school students) for grades 1-9. Private schools charge tuition fees that are affordable to middle class households, and they cater for only 10% of all students⁵. The PA distributes textbooks to all students annually at a highly subsidized price of NIS 2 per textbook.

Curriculum

The Curriculum Development Center produced a comprehensive plan in the form of the First National Curriculum document, which was ratified by the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) under Decision No. 3-3-255, dated 31 March, 1998. Beginning in 1999, the Ministry convened Palestinian academics and educators to help write a new curriculum for primary and secondary education. Starting in school year 2000-2001, the MOEHE introduced new textbooks for two grades every year (starting with Grades 1 and 6); a process that was formally completed in 2006 for all grades.

Moreover, training workshops were organized for all teachers on techniques for the better utilization and implementation of the new curricula. Since launching the new Palestinian curricula, the Ministry has been careful to include technology as a subject for students in grades 5 to 12. It also developed and implemented programs relating to the effective employment of information technology in education (Ramahi, 2015). A new process to review and reform the curriculum began in 2015. The MOEHE presented the following reasons for reviewing the curriculum, which are important to underscore as they give indications about the status of the education sector as perceived by the MOEHE:

1- The Need to Update the Existing Curriculum of 2000:

- a) Textbooks date back to fifteen years ago and contain outdated content.
- b) Results of the national and international exams showed low students' attainment levels.
- c) Field studies indicated a weakness in life skills within the Palestinian curriculum. It showed a lack in linking concepts with life contexts and modes of thinking.

⁴ Education Strategy 2014-19: A Learning Nation; MOEHE pp. 38

⁵ Educational Statistics Yearbook for Scholastic Year 2015 - 2016; MOEHE; pp. 14

- d) Too many themes and books are overcrowded with concepts.
- e) Opinions of various components in society as well as experts on the need to develop the curriculum based on the findings of the stakeholders' satisfaction survey.

2 - The Need to Keep Pace with the Latest Knowledge Advances:

- a) Accelerated technological advancement and innovations, which require a change in students' trends, orientations, preparedness, capacities and needs.
- b) Emergence of modern trends in teaching and learning, following developments in different areas of life—particularly in IT--which transformed the world into a global village.
- c) New trends for the role of teachers, which consider teachers not as conveyors of knowledge, but rather planners and guides of the learning process. Moreover, new trends appeared in the training of teachers based on modern pedagogic theories.
- d) Appearance of new trends in developing curriculum, which were influenced by scientific and technological advancements, based on findings of empirical research and experimentations in education. Furthermore, technical, electronic and humanitarian approaches have been introduced and feed into the knowledge structure.

3- Future Needs of Individuals and Society, these needs include:

- a) Needs of the Palestinian society to fulfill the requirements of sustainable development.
- b) The need for new scientific specializations that highlight the focus on vocational and technical education as well as opening of new horizons for new professions in order to combat unemployment.
- c) Strong need to consolidate a system of national values and ethics to ensure unity and cohesion within Palestinian society.⁶

Textbooks for grades 1-4 were introduced by the MOEHE in September 2016 and efforts are underway to introduce new textbooks for grades 5-9 by September 2017. New textbooks for grades 10-12 will be introduced by the MOEHE by September 2018. To clarify, USAID has not been involved in textbook development and the Education for the Future activity is not intended to include any kind of textbook development, other than the supplementary materials that are needed to implement coding and non-formal educational activities. That said, the reasons given above for reforming the curriculum give clear indications about the shortcomings found in the existing curriculum.

Quality of Education

Quality of education is the main challenge facing the Palestinian education system at all levels.

⁶ Reference Framework for Preparation of National Curricula Prepared by: Curriculum Reform Task Force, Final Draft/ May 2016; pp. 8 - 9

Pre-School:

Most pre-schools in the West Bank and Gaza are private. The Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) in pre-schools has increased from 55.1% in 2014 to 57.3% in 2015. Percentage of children enrolled in governmental pre-school classrooms increased from 0.7% in 2014 to 1.2% in 2015⁷. This increase remains low and indicates the need to improve access to government kindergartens and increase enrollment in general. The pre-school sector suffers from problems other than poor enrollment. The monitoring and supervision by official institutions is weak and their role is limited to issuing licenses, which leads to an inadequate level of services. Providers have varying curricula and different programs and no efforts have been made to develop standardized and integrated programs.⁸ In an effort to provide a vision and long-term plan for the sector, the MOEHE in collaboration with non-governmental institutions prepared the National Early Childhood Development Strategy in 2012. The MOEHE also stressed in the EDSP III and the draft EDSP IV the importance of enrollment in pre-schools for proper intellectual development of children. In a recent development, the MOEHE made pre-school education compulsory at the (K) level (age group four to six), and pledged to standardize curriculum for that level and consider interventions to train teachers and license pre-schools.

Basic Education:

Basic education encompasses grades 1-10. The new Education Law, which has not been ratified yet, stipulates that basic education shall include grades 1-9, though education is compulsory for grades 1-10. Indicators for access to basic education are generally impressive for the West Bank and Gaza, especially when compared to regional indicators. In 2015, Net Enrollment Rate (NER) in basic education (6-15 years old) was 93.8% (males 92.8% and females 94.9%), and GER 95.9% (males 94.7% and females 97.2%). Enrollment rates indicate there is no significant discrepancy in male and female enrollment in the basic education cycle, which is not the case for the secondary cycle (see below). A clear discrepancy in male/female enrolment is reflected in the Survival Rate for grade 10, which indicates 75.2% for males and 94% for females in 2015⁹. Regarding teachers' professional development, the 2015 Annual Report indicates an increase in the percentage of qualified basic education teachers (per the MOEHE standards) from 44.2% in 2014 to 56.6% in 2015¹⁰. This increase is attributed to the training offered by the National Institute for Educational Training (NIET) and the change in the MOEHE recruitment policy which allows hiring only of those who are qualified to teach per MOEHE standards of qualification. That said, more efforts are needed to train the remaining 43% of basic education teachers who still need to be qualified per the Teacher Education Strategy (TES) of the MOEHE. Unlike the impressive achievements in access to education, monitoring reports still show challenges in quality of education. Rote memorization is still prevalent, with few opportunities for students to utilize higher order thinking skills. Most questions asked by teachers in classrooms still focus on remembering. Such questions comprised 65% in 2014 and 67.7% in 2015 of all questions asked by teachers. However, the percentage of questions that measure higher order thinking skills were as low as 13% in 2014 and 12.5% in 2015; while the percentage

⁷ Annual Report 2015; MOEHE pp. 13

⁸ National Early Childhood Development Strategy; MOEHE pp. 7.

⁹ Annual Report 2015. MOEHE; pp. 25

¹⁰ Annual Report 2015; MOEHE pp. 31

of meta-cognitive questions was 3% in 2014 and 2.3% in 2015, indicating a serious problem in quality of classroom teaching and learning.¹¹

Students persistently demonstrate low achievement rates in international and national examinations, especially in math and sciences. Students' achievements in Math and Science in the Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) exam, conducted in 2011, were below the international average score. Anecdotal information gathered from teachers and some MOEHE officials indicate that results of the Unified Exams and National Exams in core subjects were disappointing. The national tests' samples include students in grades 4 and 10 in Arabic language, mathematics and science. The results revealed that the average score of grade 4 students was 59 (out of a scale of 100) in Arabic language, 33 in math, 47 in science, while the average of grade 10 students was 51 in Arabic language, 29 in math, and 43 in science. Standardized tests are the third-level of indicators for student achievement. In math, the average achievement of grade 4 students (on a scale of 100) was 46; the average achievement of grade 8 students was 39. In Arabic language, grade 7 students achieved an average of 60, and grade 9 students achieved an average of 35 in science.¹²

Secondary Education:

A pattern developed over the past few years shows decreasing enrollment in secondary education. Secondary level NER has decreased from 62.7% in 2014 to 61.1% in 2015. Boys' enrollment is significantly lower than that of girls. In 2015, NER for males in secondary cycle was 53.3%, while that for female students was 69.3%. Transition Rate from basic education to secondary education is 88% (85.3% male; 90.5% female).¹³ Gross enrollment rate in secondary education is 70% (60% male; 80% female). These figures underscore the challenge facing the education sector in attracting and keeping boys in secondary education.

In addition, the percentage of enrollment in the vocational stream (industrial, agricultural, hospitality, and home economics) in the West Bank and Gaza in 2015 stood at 2.1% (males 4.2% and females 0.6%) of all grade 11 students¹⁴. The reasons for these low rates of enrollment were parental preference for the academic stream instead of the vocational stream, and the lack of vocational schools; in addition, the absorption capacity of the vocational school system is weak due primarily to insufficient facilities and schools (MOEHE, 2015). Most students enroll in humanities and social sciences; about 70% of grade 12 students sit for the literary stream matriculation exam (Tawjihi), 21% sit for the scientific exam, 1.18% sit for the vocational stream exam, and the rest take the commerce, agricultural, hotel management, home economics, and religious streams exams.¹⁵ This distribution of students poses challenges to any society attempting to induce an inclusive socio-economic development and build a modern, knowledge-based economy.

¹¹ Annual Report 2015; MOEHE; pp. 35

¹² Education Strategy 2014-19: A Learning Nation; MOEHE; pp. 63

¹³ Annual Report 2015, MOEHE; pp. 47 - 52

¹⁴ Annual Report 2015, MOEHE; pp. 65

¹⁵ Annual Report; MOEHE; pp. 49

Tertiary Education:

Quality of education is also a challenge for institutions of higher education. While about 40% of university graduates are unemployed, employers complain about the quality of university graduates. According to a study on skill gaps conducted by Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD) and Care International, the skill gap in the West Bank and Gaza is described as follows, “Currently, private sector firms express concern in finding the necessary technical skills, but greater concern in finding the needed personal and organizational skills. Specifically, employers believe that skills in the field of their respective industry, oral communication, technology and marketing using social media are the most urgently needed technical skills. Among personal skills, employers identify communication and interpersonal effectiveness, work ethics, customer-oriented skills, integrity and transparency and adaptability as most urgent.”¹⁶ The lack of these skills can be traced back to deficiencies in the basic and secondary education system, where education is mostly textbook-based and meager attention is paid to application of knowledge to real life context, developing interpersonal skills, and nurturing of values. Tertiary education has also been criticized for not offering students skills needed by the job market at the local, regional and global levels.

Financing

The PA uses mainly the monthly net clearance revenues transferred by Israel to cover around 85% of the education wage bill and the remaining balance is covered from donor countries (mainly the EU, the World Bank and Arab countries). Expenditures on education were 17% of total public expenditures in 2015¹⁷ and around 5% of nominal GDP. The total amount spent on education in 2015 was \$655 million. There are 47,487 employees on the payroll of the MOEHE, 38,000 employees in the West Bank and 9,486 in Gaza.¹⁸

The Joint Financing Agreement (JFA) was signed on November 11, 2010, by the PA and five development partners (Norway, Ireland, Finland, Germany and Belgium). In June 2011, the JFA came into effect after all preconditions were met. The JFA aims to support the MOEHE in the implementation of the EDSP. The MOEHE submits an annual plan with an itemized budget to the Joint Financing Partners (JFP) for their review. After elaborate negotiations the JFPs commit resources to an agreed upon plan and budget. Other funding sources of the MOEHE strategic plan include the Ministry of Finance, local contributions, as well as other external donors. According to the MOEHE’s Annual Report 2015, the percentage of development funds from the Ministry of Finance, Single Treasury Account, dropped from 60.8% in 2014 to 33.1% in 2015. Development funding by the JFPs, on the other hand, has increased from 44% in 2014 to 54% of total development expenditures on education in 2015¹⁹. For 2017, the total development budget for education is estimated at \$148 million, whereby the JFPs will contribute 25.9%, MOF 47%, local donors 7% and external donors 20%.²⁰

¹⁶ Skill gaps and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (January 2015); AWRAD and Care International and funded by DFID; PP 7 - Executive Summary.

¹⁷ Annual Report; MOEHE pp. 86

¹⁸ Further details on financing education could be found on the Ministry of Finance web site www.pmf.ps

¹⁹ Annual Report 2015; MOEHE; 86 - 87

²⁰ Narrative of Key Reform Policies, Targets, Strategies and interventions in 2017; MOEHE; PP. 16

Teacher Education

The development of the MOEHE TES began in early 2007, continuing until May 2008 when the TES was formally launched. The TES was conceived as a result of a large-scale school survey conducted by the MOEHE in 2006-2007 which found that 72% of all teachers did not possess the minimum academic and/or educational qualifications to teach. A variety of agencies and organizations contributed to the implementation of the TES. The percentage of qualified teachers increased from 44.2% in 2014 to 56.6% in 2015²¹. This increase in the percentage of qualified teachers is attributed mainly to the teacher training programs run by the NIET, and the MOEHE's new policy of hiring teachers who meet the qualification standards of the Ministry.

Educational Technology and Facilities

Educational technology and facilities (libraries, computer labs, and science labs) provide essential infrastructure for the teaching and learning process to use practical means instead of the predominant theoretical methods. IT is a rapidly expanding field with a significant impact on education. The MOEHE launched and implemented several IT initiatives during EDSP II and intends to deepen the inclusion and usage of IT in the coming years. The integration of educational technology and facilities in the teaching and learning process remains a significant challenge.²² In 2015, only 8% of all school classes utilized digital tools (laptops, LCD projectors, tablets, smartphones, TVs, VCRs, etc.) in teaching, 22% used non-digital (audio recorders, maps or posters, educational games, etc.) teaching tools, and 11% used specialized teaching tools in science labs, computer rooms, sports and arts, etc.²³

Education Administration and Decentralization

The MOEHE has considered improving the administration of the education system as an important pillar in the various education development strategies that were put together over the past two decades. The EDSP III and EDSP IV highlight areas for improvement in education administration (including organizational restructuring) and the need to gradually decentralize decision making to district and school levels. The MOEHE faces jurisdictional challenges emanating from the complex political situation. The continuing challenges in Israeli-controlled East Jerusalem, parts of Hebron, and Area C, in addition to the MOEHE's lack of authority in Gaza have reduced the MoEHE's ability to assure support and quality for all schools in the West Bank and Gaza.

²¹ Annual Report 2015; MOEHE, pp. 13

²² Education Strategy 2014-19: A Learning Nation; MOEHE; pp. 66

²³ Annual Report 2015; MOEHE pp. 41

Overview of USAID West Bank and Gaza Prior Work in Education²⁴

Instruction in the West Bank and Gaza has traditionally relied on rote memorization, is lecture-based, and does not offer a dynamic learning environment. These instructional methods undermine cooperative behavior and curtail expressions of tolerance, dialogue, and civility among learners. The lack of discourse and engagement in rote learning reduces the capacity of learners to work in teams and solve problems in a participatory, collaborative way. Rote learning²⁵ stifles creativity and penalizes innovative and critical thinking and broad-based student engagement. Education in the West Bank and Gaza has not been oriented to produce the necessary traits, behaviors, and skills needed in today's marketplace and to respond to the sophisticated needs of a modern economy.

Since 2005, the USAID/West Bank and Gaza Mission, and its partners, have implemented nine activities across higher education, basic education, and the non-formal education sector. In higher education and basic education, USAID has supported programs that directly impact the quality of instruction in the classroom, including the Palestinian Faculty Development Program (PFDP), the Model Schools Network (MSN), the Masters of Art in Teaching, the Leadership and Teacher Development (LTD) activity, and the School Support Program (SSP). In the higher education and non-formal sectors, USAID has supported activities that impact the employability of youth and students, including the Access to Success activities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) activity, Youth Entrepreneurship Development (YED) activity and the Partnership with Youth (PWY) activity.

The MSN activity was designed to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning by focusing primarily on school leadership, the use of technology in education, and classroom instruction methods. The activity was launched in 2007 in response to the MOEHE TES. The TES relied on residential upgrading of teachers at universities. However, there were two main challenges with this approach: first, universities had limited facilities in which they could train only so many teachers at a time, and second, the instruction provided at universities was modeled on traditional pedagogic approaches, with limited opportunities for practical training, thereby undermining the training's effectiveness.

The MSN offered a different approach that was strategically oriented to address schools as the unit of change and model a scalable, sustainable program for teacher professional development by introducing cluster-based training and support. The MSN activity built the capacities of school leaders and teachers with a focus on how to improve teaching practices at the classroom level. From 2007 to 2009, the MSN worked in 17 private schools. From 2009 to 2012, it expanded its work to 40 public schools. Up until then, instruction—whether it was the university,

²⁴ For further details on USAID work in the area of education in the West Bank and Gaza, please see Data for Education programming in Asia and the Middle East (DEP/AME): Case Study on USAID West Bank and Gaza Education Programs; EDDATA II; November 2016.

²⁵ See recent study: The Difference Between Rote Learning and Meaningful Learning;
<https://www.oxfordlearning.com/difference-rote-learning-meaningful-learning/>

secondary or basic level—was considered an interaction dominated by lecture, in which students were passive receptors of knowledge and learning. The very idea that schools and classrooms could or should be dynamic learning environments was not widely accepted until the MSN activity demonstrated the efficacy of new instructional techniques. These techniques, based primarily on experiential, project-based learning and child-friendly, student-centered practices, took some time to take hold. The MSN success was demonstrating the efficacy of both the model for teacher training—that is, through cluster-based workshops; and the efficacy of the content—that is, the experiential learning and emphasis on pedagogic best practices.

The LTD activity commenced in 2012, designed to work with the MOEHE to institutionalize the teacher training and professional development programs introduced under the MSN. Early in the LTD activity, the decision to work primarily through the NIET paid dividends. NIET received a much-needed boost in its capacity to serve as a national training center, building up its core cadre of national trainers and drawing on the ranks of educators and university professors to professionalize and certify a cadre of national trainers. Secondly, NIET, with the support of the LTD activity and technical assistance from the University of Massachusetts, refined and streamlined the diploma curriculum to fit within the school year and respond to the relevant needs of school teachers and principals. The refined curriculum reflected school leadership and teaching competencies and standards. Under it, the diploma program became far more than participation in one-off workshops; it became a pathway for school principals and teachers to explore and experiment with new techniques in pedagogy, classroom management, school leadership, and community engagement, while focusing their efforts on positively affecting student learning outcomes and teaching practices.

USAID designed LTD with the understanding that lasting behavior change could not come from participation in a training program or completion of a project alone; the education system would need to align to support and reinforce these behaviors at the school and classroom level. Thus, the LTD activity also focuses on the workings of the MOEHE and districts as part of a broader effort to sustain the pedagogic and school leadership reforms introduced through the diploma program.

LTD seeks to reform the work of the districts in two meaningful ways. The first is to help each district function as a coordinated and cohesive unit through the establishment of district leadership teams. The second is to help the MOEHE identify the barriers and constraints in administrative management systems through a functional audit of the Ministry and districts.

In early 2013, LTD introduced the concept of district leadership teams which are comprised of the district director and heads of several units (planning, administration, finance, supervision, etc.). District leadership teams take on the functions of cross-unit planning, coordination, and communication. Collectively the teams meet to review and provide feedback on schools' improvement plans, to organize district-wide conferences, and to coordinate activities of district officers who plan to visit schools. The district leadership teams are also responsible for developing and monitoring the implementation of the district education plan. The district leadership team was formally recognized as an administrative structure within each district through formal communique by the Ministry, signed by Minister Khawla Shakhshir on 20 July, 2014.

A functional audit conducted by the LTD activity of MOEHE's administrative management systems has begun to lead to meaningful reform. The functional audit, completed in December 2014, identified an array of administrative redundancies, inefficiencies and bottlenecks that conspired to reduce the effectiveness of the Ministry in delivering its education services to schools, teachers and students. The functional audit examined workflow and information sharing practices across many of the Ministry divisions and the operations of the districts. The findings of the audit have led in part to the participation of LTD leadership on the committee that has successfully re-drafted the PA education law to reduce these systemic weaknesses and inefficiencies. This is a substantial piece of legislation that, if passed, will codify wholesale reforms to the management of the education sector, including the roles of districts and the curriculum and schooling systems.

A.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In a world that's becoming increasingly complex, where success is driven not only by *what you know*, but by what you *can do* with what you know, it's more important than ever for students to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to solve tough problems, gather and evaluate evidence, and make sense of information. These are the types of skills that students need to learn, but are hard to acquire from the formal Palestinian education system.

The Palestinian education system exhibits a number of structural and systemic challenges that continue to constrain learning outcomes. Though achievement levels are slightly improving, Palestinian students continue to perform significantly below the median score in math, sciences, and English according to the 2011 TIMSS and the 2011 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS).

Despite measurable successes in training of in-service teachers and growing evidence of improvements in teaching methods, 43% of teachers remain unqualified to teach per the Ministry's standards and only 60% of qualified teachers are using effective teaching methods. Teaching in hundreds of schools continue to be teacher-centered, rely mostly on memorization and rote learning, and do not encourage students' higher order thinking and utilization of meta-cognitive skills. Technology in education is under-utilized, though it started to gain momentum recently. Extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are limited in scope and frequency of occurrence. Relations with private sector, civil society, and local communities are generally weak. The involvement of the private sector is of particular importance for vocational education, yet linkages between the two sectors are almost non-existent. Also, non-governmental organizations are often implementing small projects without leaving sustainable impact. Parent involvement in educational and schools matters remains rather weak despite evidence suggesting that the more parents are involved, the better educational outputs are produced.²⁶

Scant attention is paid to issues like interpersonal skills, community service, social entrepreneurship, volunteerism, leadership, and personal development of attitudes, behaviors, values and ethical standards. These issues are compounded by a heavily centralized system with

²⁶ Education Strategy 2014-19: A Learning Nation; MOEHE; pp. 87

minimal delegation of authorities to the district and school levels. Administrative compartmentalization reduces information-sharing among divisions and units, and limits the capacity of the system to learn and evolve.

A.3 ACTIVITY SUMMARY

The Education for the Future activity will be the flagship activity for the USAID West Bank and Gaza Mission in basic education. The predecessor activities serving basic education are scheduled to end in June 2018 (LTD), and March 2017 (SSP). Education for the Future will build on achievements of prior basic education programming and offer continuity of school-based reform efforts started under the MSN activity and later enhanced under the LTD and SSP activities. Since 2012, the LTD activity has reached 300 schools, and will add 150 additional schools by 2018, in addition to the 50 schools participating in the SSP activity. Education for the Future will reach an additional 400 schools, making a total of 900 schools supported by USAID, which constitutes 52% of all public schools in the West Bank.

The Education for the Future activity will continue the focus on teacher and principal professional development, introduction of information technology (IT) in education, reforming educational supervision, developing testing and assessment²⁷ policies and procedures, and continue efforts to decentralize decision making to districts and schools. Education for the Future will expand upon the LTD package of assistance to introduce interventions that will improve the supervision system and train supervisors to assume a constructive new role in support of reforming teaching and learning practices. In addition, Education for the Future will utilize coding and computational thinking in classroom activities through a collaborative effort with universities and IT university students.

Illustrative interventions include:

- Training and professional development of MoEHE staff (from central and district levels), principals, supervisors and teachers in close collaboration with NIET and relevant MOEHE departments;
- Introducing new interventions that enhance digital literacy, computational thinking and the teaching and learning of IT including coding languages;
- Providing in-kind resources to improve school educational environment and support educational leadership at the school and district levels, and;
- Assisting the MoEHE in implementing the new guidance on testing and classroom assessment and provide technical assistance to establish an Item Bank (database for model testing questions).

²⁷ Jon Mueller defines authentic assessment as “a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills.” This type of evaluation checks students’ understanding and knowledge through circumstances that model real-world situations in which those skills are typically required; Jon Mueller Website.

A.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND COMPONENTS

Goal: The goal of this activity is to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the basic education level in governmental schools in the West Bank.

Objectives:

- IR.1 Improved Teaching and Learning Practices in Schools
- IR.2 Improved Educational Leadership and Management Capacity of MOEHE
- IR.3 Increased Engagement of Students In Non-Formal And Supplementary Education Opportunities

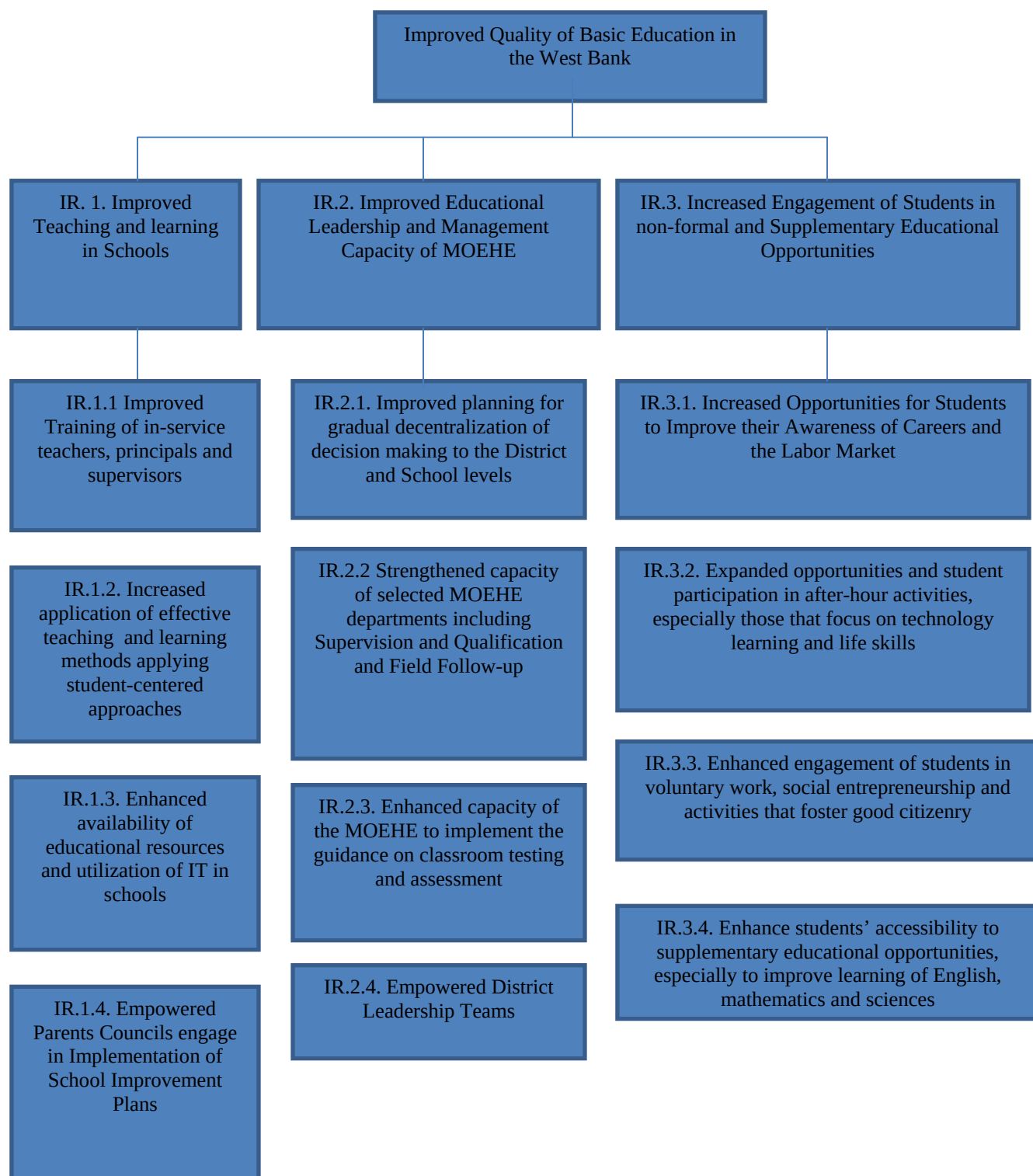
Intermediate and sub-intermediate results are illustrated in the below Results Framework.

Development Theory:

The theory of change predicts that learning outcomes of students, their technical and personal competencies, and their civic engagement will improve if:

1. Teachers enact learner-centered instructional practices acquired in trainings; and
2. Principals, supervisors, and district teams enact methods of supportive instructional supervision learned in trainings; and
3. Schools, districts and central Ministry departments collaborate to actually meet MoEHE standards for effective schools; and
4. Schools use resources (technical assistance, training, technology and other in-kind assistance) offered by the activity to facilitate and improve teaching and learning; and
5. Institutional capacity is enhanced and policies and systems are developed to enable a broad-based reform of education; and
6. Non-formal and supplementary education complements formal education and fills in critical gaps in students' competencies and civic engagement opportunities.

Results Framework:



A.5. ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The Activity has two major components:

Component 1: Introduce school-based reforms that have a direct impact on improving students' learning outcomes, competencies, and civic engagement.

This component will achieve two intermediate results:

IR.1 Improved Teaching and Learning Practices in Schools

The Recipient will work with the MOEHE to implement the Standards for Effective Schools issued and endorsed by the MOEHE. The Recipient will select 400 schools to participate in the activity, based on criteria and a process of selection to be agreed upon with the MOEHE and USAID. The Recipient will propose in its application criteria for selection of schools and a process for selection. Teachers in selected schools who teach grades 1–10 (or 1-9 if the new Education Law is ratified) will be selected to receive training at NIET, based on the criteria and process to be agreed upon by MOEHE, NIET and USAID. NIET oversees training of teachers through a modular program that combines theory and practice. Priority will be given to teachers of English, Arabic, Mathematics, Sciences and Technology. Teachers of other disciplines will be accepted based on need and availability of training resources. The Recipient will assess the need to develop new training modules for those teachers who teach disciplines other than the ones aforementioned. The Recipient will also discuss the possibility of partnering with the JFPs in financing the training of teachers at NIET, after securing the endorsement of the MOEHE. The JFPs have covered the costs of training hundreds of teachers over the past few years.

Principals of selected schools will have to enroll in and complete the Leadership Development Program offered by the NIET. This is a one year accredited professional development program that school principals need to take to develop competencies in collaborative leadership, strategic planning, management of human and financial resources, self-assessment and building teams, managing community relations, introducing IT in education and development of student friendly learning environment. The capstone of this program is a project for developing certain aspects of a school, utilizing skills learned in the training program.

The Recipient will further develop the Supervisors Training Program. In collaboration with the Supervision and Qualification Department of the MoEHE, the LTD activity developed modules for training of supervisors. These modules need further development to align with the same educational concepts and approaches endorsed in the training of teachers and principals.

The ultimate goal of these training programs is to have teachers, principals and supervisors in agreement on the approaches to be taken to reform teaching and learning practices in schools. The guiding principles of this process are laid out in the Standards for Effective Schools, and contemporary theories in education that promote learner-centered approaches to teaching and learning. The Recipient will consider new ways to shift classroom practices to focus more on active and experiential learning, inquiry-based and participative methods, and competency based classroom assessment.

To facilitate classroom teaching and learning, and realize well-defined educational objectives, the Recipient will promote the utilization of IT in education. The Recipient will train teachers on using educational resources including materials available on the internet, and provide schools with equipment such as laptops, LCD projectors, interactive boards, and wireless internet routers. Teachers will be supported to digitally prepare lessons, use available educational portals, videos, and animations to facilitate deep learning and boost classroom interaction between teacher and students and among students.

To enhance a culture of collaborative leadership and advance strategic planning at the school level, the Recipient will support the development, and partial funding, of School Improvement Plans (SIPs), for all targeted schools. School Improvement Teams (principals, teachers, school administrative staff, and supervisors) and district leadership teams need to cooperate to develop multi-year SIPs and annual operational plans. The recipient will provide in-kind assistance in support of the approved SIPs.

To complement all other school-level activities, the Recipient should plan on conducting minor renovation activities to targeted schools facilities. The renovations might include works that will necessitate adherence to the International Building Code (IBC) and would need an Environmental Mitigation Plan and Climate Change Analysis. Applicants need to adhere to instructions on environmental matters as stipulated in the Instructions to Applicants section in the RFA. Minor renovations could include replacing electricity wirings and fixtures in the computer lab, installation of stair rails for safety purposes, ramps for disabled students (if needed), shading in the playground, replacement of water fountains or maintenance of sanitary units, etc. Some of these activities are usually included in the School Improvement Plans, but in some cases, such activities need to take place to complement other activities planned in the school (e.g. wirings to enable the use of laptops and LCD projectors in classrooms).

Each school participating in the Education for the Future activity will have a parents' council. The Recipient will provide orientation sessions to parents' councils to clarify roles, duties and authorities²⁸. Parents' councils can help in fundraising for school activities, enhance community relations, participate in strategic planning, and facilitate implementation of SIPs.

Activity Indicators

The following are the required indicators. The Recipient should propose additional indicators in its application.

IR.1 Improved teaching and learning practices in schools

- Percentage increase in students' academic performance attributable to new teaching and learning practices

²⁸ See the study on Reality of Community Participation and its Role in the Educational Reform process; MOEHE, Sept. 2016

- Percentage improvement in students' utilization of 21st²⁹ skills⁺⁺
- 3.2.1-14: Number of learners in primary schools and/or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance
- 3.2.1-14a Number of males
- 3.2.1-14b Number of females
- New Number of males age 10-14
- New Number of females age 10-14
- New Number of males age 15-19
- New Number of females age 15-19
- New Number of learners with disabilities

IR.1.1 Improved training of in-service teachers, principals and supervisors

- 3.2.1-3: Number of education administrators/officials who complete professional development activities with USG support (male and female)
- Number of primary school educators who complete professional development USG supported activities.
- Percentage of basic cycle teachers enrolled in professional development activities

IR.1.2 Increased application of effective teaching and learning methods applying student-centered approaches

- Percentage of trained teachers using effective teaching and learning practices in the classroom
- Degree of students' active involvement during lessons³⁰
- Percentage distribution of questions posed by teachers in classrooms: memory, application and knowledge utilization, higher order thinking skills, affective questions, meta-cognitive questions³¹
- Degree of utilizing diversified educational techniques in teaching and learning

IR.1.3 Enhanced availability of educational resources and utilization of IT in schools

- \$ value of IT equipment provided to schools
- Number of laptops provided to schools for utilization in classrooms
- Percentage of teachers who utilize IT in classroom teaching at least once a day
- Degree of utilizing teaching aids and tools in teaching and learning³²

29 For reference: 21st-Century Competencies and Their Impact: An Interdisciplinary Literature Review; David Finegold and Alexis Spencer Notabartolo

30 Indicator used by MOEHE. See Annual Report 2015 pp.56 for details.

31 Indicator used by MOEHE. See Annual Report 2015 pp.35

32 Ditto pp.60

IR.1.4 Empowered parents' councils engage in implementation of school improvement plans

- 3.2.1-18: Number of parent teacher associations (PTAs) or community governance structures engaged in primary or secondary education supported with USG assistance
- Degree of local community participation in school activities and events

IR.3 Increased engagement of students in non-formal and supplementary education opportunities

Currently, teaching methods in Palestinian schools are heavily dependent on textbooks. These textbooks are overcrowded with content³³. Teachers are required to complete a discrete number of chapters per semester and supervisors ensure that teachers adhere to this rigid annual teaching schedule. Testing and assessment is also textbook-based which only serves to check on memorization of content, not mastery of the subject. There is little room for teachers to diverge from textbook teaching, to utilize other relevant sources of information, or use enriching materials to affect deep learning. The MOEHE, through the Curriculum Center, is currently working on introducing new textbooks for grades 1-12 that have less, but more relevant, content and offer room for more classroom interaction. Also, new guidance has been issued by the Minister of Education for the school year 2016/2017 on classroom assessment³⁴ that encourages assessment of students' learning rather than their capacity for memorization. There is, however, a long way to go before this new guidance is implemented and its impact is assessed.

The absence of active learning, coupled with limited co-curricular and extracurricular activities have deprived students the ability to develop certain cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills. A growing body of evidence recognizes the importance of soft skills in predicting long-term life outcomes, including labor market outcomes as well as social and health behaviors (Heckman et al, 2006; Kautz et al., 2014). Soft skills refer to a broad set of skills, behaviors, and personal qualities that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, relate well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals³⁵. These skills are applicable across sectors and complement the acquisition of other skills such as technical and academic skills. A report published by USAID in November 2016, found that the soft skills most likely to increase odds of youth success across all key workforce outcomes include: self-control, positive self-concept, social skills, communication, and higher order thinking skills.³⁶

Not surprisingly, these skills are the ones sought after by employers and are considered crucial for success in the 21st century but are not offered by the Palestinian education system³⁷. Most education systems in the world are struggling to enhance students' employability, competitiveness and good citizenry. Attainment of these skills is optimal when it takes place

³³ Reference Framework for Preparation of National Curricula Prepared by: Curriculum Reform Task Force, Final Draft/ May 2016; pp. 8 - 9

³⁴ Instruction by the Minister of Education on new principles for classroom assessment (Arabic); November 1, 2016.

³⁵ The Economist Intelligence Unit - Driving the skills agenda: Preparing students for the future; 2015

³⁶ Key Soft Skills for Cross-Sectoral Youth Outcomes, Youth Power Report, USAID, November 2016:

³⁷ Skill gaps and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (January 2015); AWRAD and Care Intl. and funded by DFID; PP 7 - Executive Summary

within the formal education system, however, when that is not happening, non-formal and supplementary education could be useful to partially fill in the gaps.

USAID worked closely with the MOEHE and a number of other partners (including Save the Children and International Youth Foundation) to introduce career guidance and counselling in a number of public schools in the West Bank. Teachers and counsellors were trained, manuals were developed and special psychometric tests were introduced to help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and their preferable career path. Students demonstrated great interest in this activity, and the MOEHE expressed intent to scale-up the activity to all public schools. The Recipient must find ways to implement career counselling and labor market awareness in all participating schools.

Introduction of computational thinking methods and coding in schools is another area that the MOEHE and USAID are keen on implementing in participating schools. The aim of this activity is to train students on problem solving using, in this case, IT tools (coding languages), and enhance analytical thinking, teamwork, and exposure to the IT world. A pilot coding program was recently launched under the LTD activity in 150 schools in the West Bank, in collaboration with university faculty and IT students. The teaching of coding takes place after-hours for students in grades 7–9. The Recipient should consider lessons learned from that pilot and plan for implementation of a coding activity in all participating schools.

Incorporation of other ideas into this activity for teaching IT to school students with the intention of realizing educational objectives is encouraged. The Recipient will create opportunities for non-formal education to fill some of the gaps in the formal education system, such as soft skills³⁸ and critical thinking, and the development of positive values, attitudes and behaviors. The Recipient will lead/foster a shift in pedagogy as needed to enable students to acquire the fundamental competencies of the 21st century³⁹ and to upgrade these competencies over time through self-learning and continuing education efforts. Learning to learn becomes a vital requirement in a fast-changing world. Modern economies are learning economies, and industries in developing countries need workforces that are well trained and capable of constantly upgrading and learning new skills. The knowledge society and modern work life require knowledge, attitudes, and skills different from those of the past. There is a growing need for creativity, imagination, complex communication skills, integrative thinking and adaptability. The improvement in quality of education needs a shift in what is taught and how it is taught. Non-formal education, through after-hour and out-of-school activities, is an important complement to efforts undertaken to reform formal education. Investing in education pays off in terms of human development and democratic institution building. An educated citizenry that is capable of making informed decisions, voicing opinions, and holding elected officials responsible is essential for democracy to survive and flourish. Educating a country's population promotes a

38 Soft skills refer to a broad set of skills, behaviors, and personal qualities that enable people to navigate their environment, relate well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals. (Heckman et al., 2006; Kautz et al., 2014)

39 Creativity/innovation; Critical thinking; Information literacy; Problem solving; Decision making; Flexibility and adaptability; learning to learn Research and inquiry; Communication; Initiative and self-direction; Productivity; Leadership and responsibility; Collaboration; ICT operations and concepts; Digital Citizenship; Media literacy; See footnote # 28 for more details.

more responsible government. This role of education in creating good citizens is often overlooked. Activities that promote voluntary community work, service learning, and social entrepreneurship should be encouraged at an early age. The Recipient will undertake interventions that contribute to realizing this objective of promoting good citizenry in formal and non-formal settings.

Activity Indicators:

The following are the required indicators. The Recipient should propose additional indicators in its application.

IR.3 Increased engagement of students in non-formal and supplementary education opportunities

- Percentage of students' participating in supportive extra-curricular activities (annually)⁴⁰
- Percentage of students in targeted grades who express improvement in their awareness of the careers and labor market

IR 3.1 Expanded and well developed non formal education programs implemented and sustained

- Number of students who received career counselling
- Number of teachers and counselors trained on the new/modified manuals (e.g. careers counseling)
- Number of public and private civil society institutions engaged in and supported non formal education programs.
- Number of non-formal education programs supported by private civil society organizations (financial and/or in-kind) disaggregated.
- Number of civil society partnerships in support of non-formal education programs.

IR.3.2 Expanded opportunities for student participation in after-hour activities, especially those that focus on technology learning and life skills

- Number of students who participated in after-hour activities focused on technology
- Number of students who participated in after-hour activities focused on life skills

IR.3.3 Enhanced engagement of students in voluntary work, social entrepreneurship and activities that foster good citizenry

- Number of students who participated in voluntary work and social entrepreneurship and activities that foster good citizenry

⁴⁰ Used by MOEHE. See Annual Report 2015 pp.62

IR.3.4 Enhance students' accessibility to supplementary educational opportunities, especially to improve learning of English, mathematics and sciences

- Number of students who benefited from supplementary English education activities
- Number of students who benefited from supplementary mathematics activities
- Number of students who benefited from supplementary science activities
- Number of teachers/educators trained on the newly/modified supplementary education manuals and tools.
- Percentage improvement of the students' performance in English, mathematics and sciences as reflected in class exam scores.

Component 2: Strengthen the management capacity of the MOEHE to enhance school-based reform efforts

This component will achieve one Intermediate Result:

IR.2 Improved Educational Leadership and Management Capacity of MOEHE

Improving the management of the education system has been a pillar in all education development strategies issued by the MOEHE. Recurring issues in this area include: MOEHE organizational structure and job descriptions, government spending on education, degree of employee satisfaction with physical infrastructure at work, employing technology in administrative work, and community participation in school life.⁴¹

A Functional Audit was conducted in 2014 by the USAID LTD activity and a team of specialists from the MOEHE to assess areas for improvement in management systems at three levels: the central ministry, district, and school levels. The thematic group on Governance and Administration adopted the findings and recommendations of the Functional Audit as a document of reference for future interventions in the area of management and systems development. For the focus of the Education for the Future activity, the areas of particular interest in the Functional Audit Report are those that have direct impact on the daily functions of schools, districts and MOEHE directorates.

In general, the areas that USAID seeks to develop under the Education for the Future activity are the following: decentralization of the decision making power from the central level to districts and schools (especially in areas that complement ongoing development work at the school level); use of electronic administrative systems for improved efficiency; expanding the technical responsibilities of district leadership teams in support of school development; changing classroom assessment to better gauge students learning; and changing the roles of the Supervision and Field Follow Up Departments from inspection and summative evaluation of teachers and principals to a more supportive supervision and mentoring role. USAID, through its activities, has made advancements in these areas; however, they require further development in

⁴¹ Education Strategy 2014-19: A Learning Nation pp. 85 - 93

close collaboration with MOEHE. The Recipient will assess previous work in the area of management and capacity building and develop a plan for building on what has been achieved to continue the development effort in selected areas that relate most to supporting school-based reform. The Recipient will consult with the thematic group on Governance and Administration on progress made in planning for decentralization and actual decisions made thus far.

Activity Indicators

The following are the required indicators. The Recipient should propose additional indicators in its application.

IR.2 Improved educational leadership and management capacity of MOEHE

- Percentage of actual achievement compared with the planned annual milestones for improving the management capacity of MOEHE
- Percentage of improvement of the daily functions at the central ministry, district and school levels
- Percentage increase of the stakeholders' positive perception about MOEHE leadership and management capacity

IR.2.1 Improved planning and implementation for gradual decentralization of decision making to the district and school levels

- Percentage of actual achievement of annual targets for decentralization (MOEHE Annual Report)
- % improvement in satisfaction of district staff regarding degree of actual decentralization of decision making to the district level
- % improvement in satisfaction of school principals regarding degree of actual decentralization of decision making from the ministry and district levels to school level

IR.2.2 Strengthened capacity of selected MOEHE departments including Supervision and Qualification and Field Follow-Up

- Number of new / improved systems developed and adopted
- Number of new guidelines issued and disseminated to districts and schools

IR.2.3 Enhanced capacity of the MOEHE to implement the guidance on classroom testing and assessment

- Number of participating schools implementing new guidance on classroom assessment

IR.2.4 Empowered District Leadership Teams

- Percentage improvement in satisfaction of members of District Leadership Teams regarding their empowerment (roles, responsibilities and authorities).

A.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

A.6.1 Monitoring

In close coordination with USAID, the Recipient will develop a rigorous Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan that aligns with ADS 201.3.5. The plan will include a comprehensive strategy for monitoring and reporting progress made towards the activity goal and results. The Recipient will also establish appropriate methods and tools for collecting, analyzing and reporting performance data throughout the life of activity. In accordance with the results framework and the associated indicators per result, the M&E plan will include appropriate indicators and targets, indicator definitions, means of verification and analysis of indicator data to determine activity performance and results. The Mission and the Recipient will ensure that all data collected and reported comply with data quality standards that include validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity.

Based on prior experience, the Recipient should coordinate closely with MOEHE on the design and implementation of the M&E Plan to ensure future cooperation in data collection. The MOEHE Assessment and Evaluation Department can provide data to use in M&E reporting, and participate in analysis of collected information to assess the impact of the activity.

The Recipient's achievement will be monitored through regular Data Quality Analyses (DQAs), review of quarterly and annual reports, and semi-annual portfolio reviews. The designated Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) will report against these indicators through the USAID Annual Performance Plan and Report. This information will be used to inform management decisions on future activity implementation.

A.6.2 Evaluation

The USAID/WBG Mission will conduct an independent third-party performance evaluation managed and financed by USAID, external from the Recipient's budget. The Mission will determine at a later date what type and at what interval in the activity's performance the evaluation will be initiated. For example, in the case of mid-term performance evaluation, it may be conducted during the third year of implementation. Evaluation recommendations and findings will inform USAID on the progress, achievements towards objectives, the quality of the activity performance and if any amendments or improvements are needed in the activity description or work plans. Additional evaluations, assessments, or reviews may be initiated at the Mission's discretion.

A.6.3 Learning and Adapting

The volatile political and security situation in the West Bank, the potential for unexpected changes in the working environment, and the uncertainty of development funding could make medium and long term planning a difficult task. Application of adaptive management is critical in such circumstances to keep moving forward and realize the objectives of the program. Developing scenarios, contingency plans and rolling budgets are familiar practices in the USAID/West Bank and Gaza Mission. Nonetheless, USAID encourages the application of adaptive management practices even in stable working environments. The purpose of adaptive management is to make adjustments to the planning and implementation cycle in real time to take advantage of opportunities or circumvent unexpected obstacles.

To be able to practice adaptive management the Recipient will establish a solid M&E system, continually assess progress, and identify emerging patterns that could necessitate adaptation of plans or changing implementation methods. Also, the Recipient will track MOEHE policies and plans, other donors' work, and beneficiaries' feedback on activities. (Note: There are many examples of USAID skillful utilization of learning and adapting strategies summarized in the 2015 Case Study on USAID West Bank and Gaza Education Programs.)

The Recipient will incorporate learning and adapting principles⁴² in the interventions under this activity. The Recipient will utilize the M&E plan and process to track the implementation of the interventions and assess their validity and relevancy of these interventions: The following learning and adapting measure should be incorporated in the design of the various interventions under this activity⁴³:

- Identifying knowledge gaps in the theory of change of the activity or in the technical knowledge base and identifying and implementing ways to fill these gaps.
- Planning for opportunities to review progress on the implementation of the interventions. These opportunities may focus on challenges and successes in implementation to date, changes in the operating environment or context that could affect programming, opportunities to better collaborate or influence other actors, and/or other relevant topics.
- Collaborating with other actors in the field. Collaboration activities may include joint work planning, regular partner meetings that facilitate knowledge sharing, and/or working groups organized along geographic or technical lines.
- Using the knowledge and learning gained from implementation to reflect on performance, monitoring data, evaluations, knowledge about the context, and other sources to adjust interventions and approaches as needed.

⁴² <https://usaidlearninglab.org/faq/collaborating-learning-and-adapting-cla>

⁴³ Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 201, Program Cycle Operational Policy.

A.7 Coordination and Collaboration

USAID Mission and USAID-funded Activities

The Recipient will review available documentation to understand and apply lessons learned under the MSN activity, the LTD activity and the SSP. Given the size of investment and efforts made to develop training modules, the Recipient will utilize teacher, principal and supervisor training modules developed under the LTD. The LTD activity worked closely with the NIET to develop teachers' and principals training modules⁴⁴ and worked with the Supervision and Qualification department to develop supervisors training modules. Other training materials were developed for the Field Follow-Up Department, district leadership teams and others. The Recipient will coordinate with LTD to determine what needs to be developed further and utilize what is available to the extent possible. Also, the Recipient will review, utilize, and further develop as needed the tested M&E tools developed and used under the LTD and SSP activities. Coordination with LTD and SSP teams, to the extent practicable, is considered essential for purposes of building on prior efforts, utilizing professional networks and relationships, understanding sensitivities, avoiding redundancy and effecting synergies.

Acknowledging the equal value of USAID technical knowledge which may be of benefit in implementing Education for the Future, coordination between USAID and the Recipient is crucial to the success of this activity. Given the regulatory environment governing operations in the West Bank, the Recipient will maintain close coordination with USAID to ensure adherence to all rules and regulations and the application of best management practices.

USAID/WBG Mission is currently procuring technical services to implement an Early Grade Reading (EGR) activity in the West Bank. The objective of the EGR is to expand USAID/WBG's efforts to support the MOEHE to enhance learning outcomes for Palestinian children at the primary level by improving Arabic reading instruction, policies and practices at the government, community and school levels. The Recipient will coordinate with the EGR Contractor and the MOEHE to facilitate elements of the EGR Statement of Work that are conducive to the Education for the Future Program Description, and vice versa.

As well, the USAID/WBG Mission is also currently seeking partnership with an organization to implement a Pre-Service Teacher Education Program. The goal of the Pre-service Teacher Education Program is to improve teaching practices and competencies to meet national standards for pre-service teacher education. The Recipient will coordinate with the Recipient of the Pre-Service Teacher Education Program to facilitate elements of the Pre-Service Teacher Education Program Description that are conducive to the Education for the Future Program Description, and vice versa.

Building Partnerships

Coordination and collaboration with the MOEHE is essential for the success of the activity. The MOEHE is both a counterpart and beneficiary of the activity, and all efforts should be made to

⁴⁴ Modules are available for review on the following link (in Arabic): <http://www.niet-moe.com/>

align objectives and implementation plans with MOEHE priorities. Recognizing that the MOEHE is a large institution, the Recipient will build professional relationships at various levels and across many directorates and departments. The JFPs have been partners to USAID under the LTD and SSP activities and have funded teacher training efforts. Maintenance of the relationship with the JFPs is important not only to leverage resources, but also to coordinate on matters of mutual interest. Coordination with other donors and organizations working in the education sector is also important, given the many interested parties working in the West Bank. UN agencies like UNESCO and UNICEF are active participants in the education sector, at the policy and activity levels. UNRWA⁴⁵ shoulders the burden of providing education to Palestinian refugees who constitute about 25% of all school students in the West Bank and Gaza.⁴⁶ The World Bank has a teacher training activity; the pilot stage of the Teacher Education Improvement Activity (TEIP) is an intervention comprising two main components: *Component 1* aims at: (i) improving the quality and relevance of the school experience element of pre-service teacher education (i.e., the Teaching Practicum); (ii) developing the practicum as an integral and integrated component of the pre-service education and training (PRESET) programs; and (iii) bringing PRESET programs and their teaching practicum arrangements into line with good internationally accepted practices. The aims of *Component 2* are: (i) to support the development and delivery of modules for upgrading the qualifications of large proportion (75%) of grades 1 to 4 practicing teachers who do not meet the new requirements for teacher certification; and (ii) to facilitate the transition of these unqualified teachers, the vast majority of whom are ‘subject-matter teachers,’ to becoming ‘class teachers’ capable of teaching an integrated curriculum at the grades 1-4 level. The Recipient will coordinate with their World Bank counterparts to ensure USAID’s funded work complements and strengthens, not duplicates, TEIP efforts.

Coordination and collaboration with local authorities (municipalities) could be useful in certain localities where the local authority has contributed to or is planning to contribute to local schools. Several municipalities have pledged to dedicate some tax revenues (especially the education tax) to finance the procurement of IT equipment – mainly tablets to students – based on an agreement reached with the MOEHE. The Recipient will seek more information on the mentioned agreement from the MOEHE and will collaborate with local authorities where possible.

A.8 Analysis

A.8.1 Inclusiveness Analysis

USAID programming in the education sector has focused on inclusion and wide participation of stakeholders and beneficiaries in the education development process. The Education for the Future activity shall continue with that approach, and find creative ways to engage not only decision makers, ministry staff, and beneficiaries, but also parents, community leaders, the private sector, civil society organizations, and others as needed. The Recipient shall apply gender-sensitive approaches and involve disadvantaged groups, like students with special needs, in the various activities of the Education for the Future activity.

⁴⁵ Just to clarify that UNRWA schools are outside the scope of this activity.

⁴⁶ Educational Statistical Yearbook for Scholastic Year 2015 - 2016

Palestinian education has achieved equality between men and women in terms of access to basic and secondary school education as well as to higher education; girls made up 50% of basic school students and 56% of secondary level students in 2015–2016.⁴⁷ Retention of boys in secondary level grades is a challenge with more boys dropping out after completing the basic education level. Transition rates from basic education cycle to secondary education cycle are 85% for males and 93% for females, while GER for males in the secondary cycle is 60% and females is 78.7%.⁴⁸

Equal access is an important principle in designing new activities. It refers to the degree to which women and men have equal opportunities to benefit from resources and services offered by the activity, such as training, capacity-building, and in-kind assistance. Even though women in West Bank and Gaza account for nearly 60% of the workforce in the education sector, they can still face societal and cultural barriers that can limit their equal access to professional opportunities and resources relative to men. USAID ongoing education programs have found creative means for offering equal access to males and females such as offering trainings for days and times that do not prevent married or pregnant women, who typically have additional domestic responsibilities, to easily attend and complete all program requirements. Another example is the implementation of localized, school-based professional development, which mitigates undue burdens that women might otherwise face when traveling to and from trainings, such as limited public transportation after sunset or long delays at military checkpoints.

Female empowerment is another principle. As a pillar of gender equality, empowerment refers to the extent that the activity increases women's capacity (i.e., self-efficacy) to realize their professional goals. A study of working conditions among Palestinian teachers found that women are almost twice as likely (64.6%) than men (36.3%) in wishing to continue their teaching job⁴⁹. This finding suggests that female teachers would be more eager to gain training and upgrade their knowledge and skills—resources of human, social, and professional capital—needed to advance their move up the career ladder over the longer term.

The Recipient will monitor, among other things, students' dropout and retention rates, absenteeism and incidents of violence disaggregated by gender. Evaluation reports of prior activities (like LTD and SSP) have anecdotally indicated a better than average improvement in retention rates and a reduction in absenteeism and violence in targeted schools. The Recipient will also monitor numbers of trainees and beneficiaries from the various components of the activity disaggregated by gender, and make adjustments to try to ensure equitable access to training and other opportunities to both males and females.

According to USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (March 2012)⁵⁰ and Education from a Gender Equality Perspective Report (May 2008)⁵¹, training teachers to understand how their perceptions or expectations of male and female students may influence how they assess students' progress is important and must be incorporated in activity design and

⁴⁷ Educational Statistical Yearbook for Scholastic Year 2015 – 2016; pp. 30, 33

⁴⁸ Educational Statistical Yearbook for Scholastic Year 2015 – 2016; pp. 51

⁴⁹ Riyada Consulting and Training. (2011) Palestinian teachers' working conditions. Report for UNESCO & MoEHE.

⁵⁰ <https://www.usaid.gov/policy/gender-equality>

⁵¹ <https://www.usaid.gov>

implementation. Teachers' perceptions could influence how they mark examinations and provide feedback to students. Training teachers in inclusive teaching practices to help them integrate students who have been marginalized due to poverty, ethnicity, language, or gender discrimination is a major priority when it comes to teachers' capacity building.

Therefore, the Recipient should consider the following concepts and illustrative examples in the development of interventions:

- Train teachers to advocate for, and influence, application of laws, policies and practices that support equitable gender progress in classrooms.
- Mainstream gender inclusiveness into the teacher training curriculum in order to alter gender stereotypes that discriminate against girls and women.
- Train teachers in mainstreaming gender issues in classroom activities, projects and papers by encouraging students to prepare gender-responsive and gender-sensitive papers.
- Enhance teachers' responsiveness to the needs of boys and girls with disabilities.
- Accommodate the needs of female teachers to encourage their participation in professional development activities and contribution to policy development.
- Introduce gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Examine institutional practices, activities and work plans through a gender lens.
- Accommodate gender considerations in the development of policies and regulations.

The Recipient shall also design and implement activities that engage students with special needs in school-based interventions. The Recipient shall review USAID policy directives on disability, mainly the ones listed below, and comply with the directives – as applicable - in the design and implementation of interventions under the Education for the Future activity. To clarify, Education for the Future takes a holistic approach to school-based reform, and engaging students with learning disabilities in activities is an important component of the overall approach. That said, Education for the Future is not designed to exclusively tackle learning disabilities or offer special education solutions at a national level; these are specialized interventions that go beyond the general scope of this Activity.

- ADS 302-303 ON ACCESSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
- The full text of the USAID Disability policy paper 1997 can be found at the following website: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDABQ631.pdf

A.8.2 Youth Analysis

There is no internationally accepted definition of the youth age group and many organizations have come up with their own definition. USAID has determined that youth are those falling in the age group 14-29. As the Education for the Future activity targets only basic education grades 1-10, most students in these grades fall in the age group category of 5–16 years. Students in grades 8–10 fall in the age group (14-16) which makes them “youth” per definition.

Our USAID-funded education programs focus on changing the deeply rooted practices of rote memorization, that do not allow much room for critical thinking, synthesis of information and construction of knowledge based on research. USAID programs train teachers, principals and supervisors on using learner-centered approaches in teaching that promote experiential learning and encourage students to challenge given facts, do their own research, practice independent learning, and use higher order thinking. By doing this, students obtain skills in critical thinking, tolerance, and positive future that helps prevent violence and conflict.

Furthermore, teachers are trained to use more collaborative learning and allow students to work in groups, and do joint learning projects, which have important ramifications on students behaviors. Learning in such an environment trains students to respect each other's opinions, enhances tolerance of differences, strengthens communication and negotiation skills, and normalizes diversity. The change in behaviors, attitudes and values is the most effective weapon to counter violent extremism. Nurturing a culture of dialogue, tolerance and respect of the other will certainly impede the proliferation of radical ideologies that feed on exclusivity, superiority of one line of thinking, and hatred of the others.

Component 1 includes youth development activities, mainly those related to non-formal and supplementary education. Career counselling activities, coding, training in soft skills and community service activities are illustrative examples of interventions that are integral to the activity and contribute to achieving its objectives. Outcomes of these interventions should lead to individuals who utilize higher order thinking (problem solving, critical thinking and decision making)⁵², understand the job market, demonstrate positive behavior and engage in voluntary and community work. These youth targeted interventions will build competitiveness and good citizenry, two important outcomes that schools should aim for to contribute to society's formulation of a strong human capital.

A.9 Sustainability

The Recipient must provide for the sustainability of the results of the interventions that the Education for the Future activity will achieve. The Recipient must work within existing systems and bodies to avoid creating duplicate systems and regulatory bodies. The Recipient must ensure that participant schools and the MOEHE are able to sustain interventions at nominal or no additional cost. In addition, the Recipient must consider policies and regulations necessary for enforcing and maintaining any introduced standards, practices and procedures. The Recipient will develop systems and build the capacity of the human resources to utilize and maintain the systems. Capacity building for the management level is an essential part of sustainability.

USAID/WBG's approach to sustainability in education activities has been to model a reform, create buy-in, visibly lead, showcase the successes and develop pathways to scalability and sustained implementation. This Ministry-driven, Ministry-owned approach is embedded in all activities and integrated across all components of each activity. The Mission designed each of its activities as innovative models for service delivery that the MOHE and other counterparts could replicate and eventually sustain. USAID/West Bank and Gaza education activities are not intended to supplant Ministry services; rather they serve to demonstrate practical and effective models to be adopted, owned, and institutionalized by Palestinian counterparts. The Recipient is advised to review the 2015 Case Study of West Bank and Gaza Education Programs, as it

⁵² KEY SOFT SKILLS FOR CROSS SECTORAL YOUTH OUTCOMES; USAID's YouthPower: Implementation, YouthPower Action; November 2016; pp. 4

documents important lessons learned over the years in implementing education activities in the West Bank and Gaza. That said, the Recipient can propose different approaches to sustainability as long as strong evidence-based justifications are provided.

A.10 Key Personnel

The Recipient will provide the following key personnel positions:

1. Chief of Party (COP)
2. Program Manager / Technical Specialist
3. Compliance Manager
4. M&E Manager

The Recipient must include a well-thought out comprehensive staffing plan (organizational chart) that incorporates and justifies clearly articulated roles and responsibilities for all key staff. In addition, the location of the staff must be indicated.

All key personnel below must possess full professional proficiency in spoken and written English. Must be able to use the language fluently and accurately, and be able to read all styles and forms on all levels pertinent to professional needs.

1. Chief of Party (COP)

The Chief of Party will be responsible for the overall management of the activity. S/he will plan interventions to realize the objectives of the activity, ensure integrity of operations, manage to budget, liaise with USAID and stakeholders, lead a team of professionals and represent the activity in meetings and events. S/he will submit progress reports, deliver speeches or executive presentations, and present to USAID creative ideas and alternative solutions to problems. S/he is responsible for nurturing an organizational culture of learning, responsiveness and adaptive management. Besides administrative and office work, he/she will spend time in the field checking on activity implementation and meeting partners and beneficiaries to foster relations and expand professional networks.

The COP must have demonstrated effective organizational development, relationship building, partnership-building, managerial adaptability, team-building and communications skills. Also, the COP must have relevant and successful organizational experience in the types of interventions being proposed.

The COP must have at least a Master's degree in a relevant field (education, international development, public administration etc.) more than 10 years of progressively responsible experience implementing similar activities, as well as relevant management experience managing a team of professionals. Prior experience in the MENA region and a working knowledge of Arabic is a plus. Prior work experience in the West Bank and Gaza is desirable.

2. Program Manager / Technical Expert

The Program Manager/Technical Expert will be responsible for providing technical input to guide planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. S/he will also be responsible to liaise with counterparts and partners at the technical level, provide opinion on the soundness and feasibility of new approaches, train staff in educational concepts and upgrade their technical competencies, and manage an effective learning process to make adjustments as needed.

The Program Manager/Technical Expert must have at least a graduate degree in education or a relevant field, and at least 10 years of experience managing educational programs.

In addition to English language proficiency (3/3 on FSI's language proficiency scale), professional working proficiency in spoken and written Modern Standard Arabic is required. The Program Manager must be able to use the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics.

3. Compliance Manager

The Compliance Manager will be responsible for compliance with all applicable USG terms and conditions stipulated in the Cooperative Agreement and any other guidance provided by the Agreement Officer. The Compliance Manager must have experience being responsible for systems and internal controls to effectively manage, monitor and report on sub-awards. S/he must have experience and demonstrable knowledgeable in implementing USAID regulations and requirements. The Compliance Manager must have at least a bachelor's degree in business administration, public policy, law or relevant field. The Compliance Manager must have at least five years of experience implementing similar activities.

4. Program Monitoring and Evaluation Manager

The Program Monitoring and Evaluation Manager must have demonstrated capability to monitor, evaluate and report on the range of activities described in the Program Description. S/he will be responsible for preparing a Performance Monitoring Plan, with appropriate indicators and an effective data collection system. S/he will be responsible for data analysis, reporting on actual achievements in light of set targets, highlighting emerging patterns and offering clear reports on findings and conclusions. S/he will collect quantitative and qualitative data, use scientific methods to ensure high quality of data, and design a reporting system that provides insights to decision makers on activity performance and areas that need management's attention. S/he needs to have demonstrable knowledge in evaluation methodologies for educational activities.

Also, the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Manager must have relevant and complementary qualifications, skills and experience to monitor and evaluate the interventions implemented by both the applicant and its sub-awardees.

The Program Monitoring and Evaluation Manager must have at least a relevant bachelor's degree, and at least 5 years of experience monitoring and evaluating similar

activities. Knowledge of Arabic and prior experience in the West Bank and Gaza, and/or the region, is desirable.

[END OF SECTION A]

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SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

Subject to funding availability, USAID intends to provide approximately \$ 24,513,769 in total USAID funding over a five year period. The ceiling for this program is \$24,513,769. Actual funding amounts are subject to availability of funds.

USAID intends to award one (1) Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. USAID reserves the right to fund any one or none of the applications submitted. USAID may make an award on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions. Therefore, each initial application should contain the Applicant's best terms from a technical and cost standpoint.

B.2 Period of Performance

The period of performance anticipated herein is five (5) years. The estimated start date will be upon the signature of the award.

B.3 Accountability

The Recipient will be fully responsible for all funds disbursed to it under the award. Funds will be denominated and disbursed in the U.S. Dollars. All funds are subject to audit.

USAID's West Bank & Gaza (USAID/WBG) Recipients and significant sub-recipients are subject to special audit and vetting requirements as specified in Section F.6.10, in addition or as supplement to the audit requirements as mandated under the annual appropriation law and in accordance with the regulations under 2 CFR 200, as well as referenced at Section F.6.11 for vetting. All awards for U.S. and non-U.S recipients will be subject to annual financial audits. In addition, U.S. sub-recipients will be subject to annual financial audits should the sub-recipients incur expenditures of federal funds totaling \$500,000 or more during its fiscal year. Non-U.S. sub-recipients will be subject to annual financial audits should the sub-recipients incur expenditures of federal funds totaling \$300,000 or more during its fiscal year. USAID/WBG has the discretion to audit sub-recipients at a lower threshold if deemed necessary.

The Recipient must comply with all applicable U.S. laws and regulations. Failure to comply with applicable U.S. law and regulations may result in termination of award and/or disallowance of costs.

B.4 Substantial Involvement

USAID/West Bank Gaza anticipates a close working partnership with the implementing partner for this award. USAID will exercise substantial involvement under this Cooperative Agreement in the following ways:

- a. Approval of the Recipient's Implementation Plans by the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR);
- b. Approval of Specified Key Personnel as concurred on by the AOR and approved by the Agreement Officer (AO);
- c. Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation;
 - (1) Collaborative Involvement. USAID/WBG's representative (the AOR) will serve on an Advisory Committee together with the Recipient and Ministry staff. USAID's representative will have concurrence on the selection process of participating governmental and non-governmental Higher Education Institutions, and concurrence on the final selected HEIs).
 - (2) Concurrence on the substantive provisions of sub-awards. 2 CFR 200.308 requires the Recipient to obtain the Agreement Officer's prior approval for the subaward, transfer, or contracting out of any work under an award. This is generally limited to approving work by a third party under the agreement. USAID also reserves further approval rights for sub-awards or contracts, specifically concurrence on the substantive provisions of the subawards, including vetting of subawardees in accordance with the West Bank/Gaza Mission Order 21 and/or any amendment(s) to it thereafter.
 - (3) Approval of the Recipient's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan by the AOR.
 - (4) Monitoring by the AOR to authorize specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other activities. Ongoing USAID technical expertise will be provided through the period of performance, due to the USAID Mission's experience in working in the Palestinian education sector. Also, due to coordination and collaboration as described in Section A.7, USAID monitoring will be required throughout the period of performance to continually facilitate its funding with that of other donors and activities.
 - (5) Agency Authority to Immediately Halt a Construction Activity. The AO may immediately halt a construction activity if identified specifications are not met. Specifications will be identified and must be approved via subaward or subcontract approval by the AO for any construction under this award.

B.5 Title to Property

Property Title under the resultant Agreement shall vest with the Recipient in accordance with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.

B.6 Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for this program is “937” defined as the United States, the Cooperating Country (Israel, West Bank and Gaza), and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, and excluding prohibited sources.

USAID’s rules for the source of goods other than “restricted goods,” are described in ADS 312 [<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1876/312.pdf>]). The nationality of suppliers of goods and services (other than delivery services) is described in ADS 314 [<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1876/314.pdf>]). These rules do not apply to procurement by the Recipient with cost-sharing or program income funds.

For an accurate identification of developing countries, advanced developing countries, and prohibited sources, please refer to Automated Directive System (ADS) 310 entitled “Source and Nationality Requirements for Procurement of Commodities and Services Financed by USAID”.

B.7 Purpose of the Award

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject Activity is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the “The Education for the Future” activity which is authorized by Federal statute.

The Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the activity 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. The Recipient using its own unique combination of staff, facilities, and experience, has the primary responsibility for employing whatever form of sound organization and management techniques may be necessary in order to assure proper and efficient administration of the resulting award.

B.8 Program Income

Program income is not anticipated under this award. Nonetheless, if any program income is generated under this award it will be added to USAID funding (and any cost-sharing that may be provided), and used for program purposes. However, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.307, if the successful Applicant is a for-profit organization, any program income generated under the award will be deducted from the total program cost to determine the amount of USAID funding. Program income will be subject to 2 CFR 200.307 for U.S. NGOs or the Standard Provision entitled “Program Income” for non-U.S. NGOs.

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 Eligible Applicants

Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), U.S. Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), and U.S. and non-U.S. for profit firms (provided they forgo profit) may participate in this funding opportunity.

Additionally, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400(g) and 2 CFR 700.13, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allowable and allocable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the Agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700, Relevant OMB Circulars, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for for-profit organizations), may be reimbursed under the Agreement.

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The successful Applicant(s) will be subject to a responsibility determination assessment that may entail a pre-award survey, by the Agreement Officer (AO). In the instance of a pre-award survey the AO will establish a formal survey team 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 activity and comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

USAID welcomes applications from organizations which have not previously received financial assistance from USAID. Applicants are encouraged to utilize local expertise and local institutions whenever possible in implementing the activity.

C.2 Cost Share

USAID does not require cost sharing under this RFA. Nonetheless, USAID recognizes that cost sharing may be an important element of the USAID-Recipient relationship. Accordingly, USAID welcomes Applicants who will pledge their own resources towards the activities for which they seek USAID funding.

If a cost share application is accepted and made part of an award, contributions must be supported by adequate documentation, be allowable under the applicable cost principles and meet the criteria set forth in 2 CFR 200.306. In-kind contributions are allowable as cost sharing in accordance with 2 CFR 200.306. Cost sharing contributions may include volunteer services provided by professional and technical personnel; valuation of donated supplies, equipment, and other property; and, use of unrecovered indirect costs.

Funds that are paid by the Federal Government through another source may **not** be used by an organization in cost share calculations (see 2 CFR 200.306). Cost share contributions must be

reported on a periodic basis on payment forms, and USAID has the right to reduce its share of funding if the cost share reported is less than the agreed upon percentage or amount contained in the award. Grantees should be prepared to distinguish in their reporting the outputs and outcomes that result from cost share contributions versus USAID monies. If a difference remains after an award has expired, the Recipient may be required to refund the difference.

USAID does not apply its source and nationality requirements or the restricted goods provision established in the Standard Provision "USAID Eligibility Rules for Goods and Services" to cost sharing contributions. The AO may authorize the Recipient to attribute cost sharing contributions from sub-recipients to the prime award.

See Section E.2 for more information on how applicant cost share will be considered in evaluation of applications.

C.3 Risk Assessment

In order for an award to be made, the USAID Agreement Officer must evaluate the risks posed by applicants as outlined in 2 CFR 200.205 and ADS 303.3.9. This means that the Applicant must possess, or must have the ability to obtain, the necessary management and technical competence to conduct the proposed activity, and must agree to practice mutually agreed-upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided or funded by USAID.

In evaluating the risks posed by Applicants, USAID uses a risk-based approach and may consider:

1. Financial stability;
2. Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in this part;
3. History of performance. The Applicant's record in managing Federal awards, if it is a prior Recipient of Federal awards, including timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements, conformance to the terms and conditions of previous Federal awards, and if applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards;
4. Reports and findings from audits performed under Subpart F—Audit Requirements of this part or the reports and findings of any other available audits;
5. The Applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities; and
6. That the Applicant is otherwise qualified to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., Nondiscrimination, Lobbying, Debarment/Suspension, Terrorist Financing, etc.). In the absence of a positive risk assessment, an award can ordinarily not be made. Awards to potential new Recipients may be significantly delayed if USAID must undertake necessary pre- award reviews of these organizations to make an adequate risk assessment. These organizations should take this into account and plan their implementation dates and activities accordingly.

C.4 Number of Applications

Organizations may submit only one application per Organization or Consortium of multiple organizations, under this RFA. In the instance of a consortium, see Section D.5.

[END OF SECTION C]

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SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 Agency Point of Contact

Ms. Shirine Tourk Agbarieh
Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
Office of Contracts Management
USAID/West Bank & Gaza
e-mail: sagbarieh@usaid.gov
Phone: +972 03 511-4871

And

Mr. Jason Gilpin
Agreement Officer
Office of Contracts Management
USAID/West Bank & Gaza
e-mail: jgilpin@usaid.gov
Phone: +972 03 511-4874

Questions and Answers:

All questions regarding this RFA should be submitted in writing ONLY to sagbarieh@usaid.gov with a copy to jgilpin@usaid.gov.

Questions regarding this RFA should be submitted by email no later than Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 4:30 PM Jerusalem Time to provide sufficient time to address the questions and incorporate the questions and answers as an amendment to this solicitation. After all written questions/inquiries are received; the Mission will post an amendment on grants.gov to disseminate answers. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this RFA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment to this RFA, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant.

D.2 Content and Form of Application Submitted:

Each Applicant must furnish the information required by this RFA. Applications must be submitted in two separate parts: (a) Technical Application, and (b) Cost/Business Application.

- (a) Soft Copy. Offerors must submit their technical and cost proposals via e-mail to the following addresses: sagbarieh@usaid.gov with a copy to jgilpin@usaid.gov by the stated closing date and time specified in the Cover letter.
- (b) Hard Copy. In addition Offerors must also submit their hard copy technical proposals to one of the following addresses:

***Hand Carried Address:**

Mr. Jason Gilpin, Agreement Officer
Ms. Shirine Tourk Agbarieh, Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
USAID/West Bank and Gaza
Office of Acquisition and Assistance,
10th Floor, 25 Hamered Street,
Tel Aviv, Israel
Phone: +972-3-511-4874 or +972-3-511-4874

OR

Courier Address:

Mr. Jason Gilpin, Agreement Officer
Ms. Shirine Tourk Agbarieh, Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
USAID/West Bank and Gaza
9700 Tel Aviv Place
Washington, D.C. 20521-9700

Number and type of printed copies

DOCUMENT	TECHNICAL PROPOSAL # OF COPIES	COST PROPOSAL # OF COPIES
Original	1	1
Paper copies	4	2
Text accessible CD-ROM	1	1

If an Applicant experiences difficulties with submission, please contact the POC for this RFA Ms. Shirine Tourk Agbarieh at the e-mail address: sagbarieh@usaid.gov . *Please note office hours for delivery are Monday through Friday, 8:30am until 4:30pm, excluding local and U.S. holidays observed by the U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv.

All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the application format. Applications which are submitted late or are incomplete run the risk of not being considered in the review process. To facilitate the competitive review of the applications, USAID will consider only applications conforming to the format prescribed below. Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of the RFA.

Applicants must take into account the merit review criteria provided in Section E and must include the Representations and Certifications provided in the RFA. In the event Representations and Certifications are not submitted with the Application, they must be completed before final award is made.

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose, should mark the title page with the following legend:

“This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this Applicant as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government’s right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets”. Mark each sheet of data it wished to restrict with the following legend::

“Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application.”

Applicants should retain for their records one (1) copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany it.

D.3 Application Submission Procedures

Applications must be submitted with the name and address of the Applicant and the RFA number (referenced above) inscribed there-in, in hard copy (see instructions above) and via e-mail to sagbarieh@usaid.gov with a CC to jgilpin@usaid.gov.

Applicants may upload applications to <http://www.grants.gov>; however, USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions. **Therefore, USAID requires that all applications be submitted in both hard copy AND electronically (e-mailed) to sagbarieh@usaid.gov with a CC to jgilpin@usaid.gov.**

Applicants must ensure that the applications are received at USAID/West Bank and Gaza in their entirety. No addition or modifications will be accepted after the submission date. E-mail attachments should be compatible with MS Word™, PDF™ (Adobe Acrobat™ with Optical Character Recognition) and/or Microsoft Excel™ with **25 MB limit** per e-mail. Please convert your documents to one of these formats before sending them to USAID/West Bank and Gaza, or provide scanned copies of pages if they include signatures or forms. USAID/West Bank and Gaza cannot accept zip files, as they will be blocked by USAID's firewall. In addition to the aforementioned guidelines, the Applicants are requested to take note of the following:

1. After Applicants have sent their applications electronically, they should immediately check their email systems to confirm that the attachments intended to send were indeed sent. If Applicants discover an error in their transmission, they should send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name if submitted via grants.gov

that it is a "corrected" submission. Please do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

2. If Applicants send their applications by multiple emails, please indicate in the subject line of the email whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of multiple emails (if more than one is sent) and of attachments (e.g. "No. 1 of 4", etc.). For example, if the cost application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line which says: "[organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".
3. Applicants should request a receipt confirmation to ensure that the application was received to the correct e-mail address. USAID will confirm receipt of all applications actually received within 1 business day of receipt.

USAID's preference is that the technical application and the cost application be submitted as single email attachments, e.g. that the Applicant consolidates various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending them. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear. All applications received by the submission deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the RFA and the application format. No addition or modifications will be accepted after the submission date.

D.4 Technical Application Format

The technical application will be the most important factor for consideration in selection for award of the proposed Cooperative Agreement. The technical application should be specific, complete and presented concisely. The application should demonstrate the Applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this activity. The application should take into account the requirements of the activity and evaluation criteria found in this RFA.

The Technical Application must be in **English** and must be no more than 30 pages, in Times New Roman 12pt., compatible MS Word™, PDF™ (Adobe Acrobat™ with Optical Character Recognition) and with budgets as text accessible, Excel™ spreadsheets that show all corresponding formulas and calculations. In case of any conflicts between the .doc and .pdf versions of the application, the pdf version will govern as it will be the version presented to the Technical Evaluation Panel. **Applicants are advised that any pages exceeding any of the prescribed limits below will not be considered for evaluation.**

Additionally, a listing of required appendices is included below. Appendices do not have a page limit, however, ONLY information listed in section "h. Appendices" is allowed and will be reviewed. Detailed information should be presented only when required by specific RFA instructions.

Page Limits Apply as follows:

NOT included in the 30 page limitation are the following:

- Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Acronym List (Optional)
- Executive Summary
- Resumes/CVs for proposed key personnel
- Appendices A, B, C, D only as specified in Section D.4.i below.

INCLUDED IN THE 30 PAGE LIMITATION are the following:

- Technical Approach
- Key Personnel
- Institutional Experience and Management Plan
- Past Performance

The technical application must include the following sections:

a. **Cover Page**

The Cover Page should include the following:

1. Activity title;
2. Notice of Funding Opportunity reference number;
3. Name of organization (s) applying for the agreement;
4. Any partnerships; and
5. Contact person, telephone number, fax number, address, and types name(s) and title(s) of person(s) who prepared the application, and corresponding signatures.

b. **Table of contents** that follows the technical application format outlined herein.

c. **Acronym list** (optional)

d. **Executive Summary (1 page or less)**

1. Briefly describe the organization, including goal(s), purpose(s), target beneficiaries, anticipated results and outcomes;
2. Briefly describe the relationship and/or coordination of the proposed parties involved with implementation of the activity.

e. Technical Approach

In this section, the Applicant must demonstrate its understanding of the local context, technical requirements and development issues that the Activity aims to address; challenges, risks and opportunities related to achieving the objectives outlined in this activity description; and awareness of the roles of key stakeholders in implementation of the activity. The application should present a vision for the future of the sector, and how this Activity will help to achieve that vision, as well as USAID goals and objectives.

The application must, at a minimum, provide a full description of the proposed approach that spells out a credible strategy for achieving, or exceeding the objectives outlined in this activity description. Applicants are to thoughtfully assess the Program Description and propose solutions that take into account the development constraints and how the activity will be sustainable after USAID assistance is concluded. Applicants shall demonstrate an understanding of prior USAID programming in the area of education development in the West Bank and Gaza and lay out plans for forging linkages with ongoing programs and building on prior successes and accomplishments. Substantive attention to inclusiveness, sustainability and youth should be integrated into the proposed approach.

Applicants must submit an illustrative Activity M&E Plan (see Section F.3) in which they will conduct cost-effective and results-oriented monitoring that will provide USAID/WBG and the activity itself information to track progress, improve performance and effectiveness, as well as inform planning and management decisions. The illustrative Activity M&E Plan will demonstrate how interventions will have an integrated, gender and youth aware approach. The draft Activity M&E Plan must include a description of the methodology for gathering and analyzing baseline data and for gathering outcome data or impact/results during each year of Activity implementation and it must identify the specific indicators used to measure output, outcome and impact.

Applicants are expected to submit an illustrative first year Implementation Plan and a Gantt chart of illustrative activities for the first year of implementation that corresponds to the technical approach being proposed.

f. Key Personnel

- 1) Key Personnel are those considered essential to the work being performed under this activity, and must be approved by USAID/WBG prior to their employment. The Applicant must propose well-qualified key personnel who will be responsible for managing and carrying out the Activity. The Applicant must describe the individual's previous qualifications, experience and capabilities, which demonstrate his/her capacity to successfully carry out the proposed activity.
- 2) Applicants are required to include curriculum vitae (CVs) of the Key Personnel implementing the Activity as part of an Appendix B to the application. The Applicant must include a brief summary for each of the key personnel, including the extent and nature of

their experience in facilitating similar activities. Please see Section A.10 of this RFA for Key Personnel responsibilities. The total number of key positions must not exceed five positions. The Applicant will clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the Key Personnel positions, and provide a detailed explanation regarding how the education, capabilities, and experience of proposed Key Personnel will effectively contribute to a successful implementation of the activity and achievement of the activity's objectives. Applicants must also submit three (3) references, with complete contact information (including e-mail addresses), for each proposed Key Personnel candidate

- 3) Applicants are not expected to identify known non-key personnel. However, the Applicant may discuss examples of identified non-key personnel throughout their application if they so choose.

g. Institutional Experience and Management Plan

1) Institutional Experience

Applicants must demonstrate technical and managerial expertise that directly benefits the technical approach and reflect comparative advantages to implementing the proposed approach.

Information in this section should include (but is not limited to) the following:

- i. Brief description of organizational history/expertise;
- ii. Pertinent experience and representative accomplishments in developing and implementing programs of the type required under the proposed RFA;
- iii. Relevant experience with proposed approach;
- iv. Institutional strength as represented by breadth and depth of experienced personnel in activity relevant disciplines/areas;

Similar information must be provided for every proposed partner organization that would represent 25% or more of the total proposed cost of the award.

2) Management Plan

Applicants must also propose a management plan and describe how the proposed structure will contribute towards achieving the objectives and results described in their proposed Technical Application. Delineation of roles, responsibilities, authority, and processes for decision making within Applicant's in-country team and between the home office and the field must be spelled out clearly. The plan will demonstrate how the Applicant will efficiently and effectively use the human, technical, and organizational resources at hand to accomplish their proposed activity. It should also identify potential challenges in the management of the activity and recommend ways to overcome those challenges. If the applicant proposes a local or international organization to work as a sub on the implementation of the activity, the applicant should clearly describe how the sub fits into the management structure of the activity and articulate the line of authority.

Applicants must also submit a staffing plan as appendix D that lists all proposed positions under the activity, including Key Personnel (requiring USAID approval) and support staff. The

applicant must specify whether the position is full-time, part-time, or intermittent, the position location, and the planned person months or days each position will devote to the activity. The staffing plan must demonstrate how it will attribute to the implementation of this activity. The Applicant must justify the underlying rationale for determining the staffing configuration. Brief position descriptions must be included.

Applicants should strive to use local expertise to the maximum extent practicable. The management plan must also demonstrate understanding of the necessity of local partnerships and coordination with ministries, leading local NGOs, universities, other activities and stakeholders. The Applicant should describe how the activity will coordinate with other activities and stakeholders to ensure complementarity of activities and avoidance of duplications.

h. Past Performance

Applicants must demonstrate successful implementation of similar activities in the West Bank and Gaza and /or in the region. Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the culture, socio-economic conditions, geo-political issues and security conditions in the West Bank and Gaza, which could affect the technical approach, management plan and implementation of activities. Also, since the Recipient will work closely with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE), this requires an understanding of the structure, mandate, and internal institutional dynamics of government ministries. Applicants' past performance should demonstrate successful prior working relationships with government ministries.

Applicants must describe all programs/projects/activities in which the primary Applicant (as well as any partners substantially involved in implementation i.e. receiving 25% or more of the total proposed activity cost) implemented similar programs over the past five (5) years.

Detailed and specific past performance information should be provided as explained below under "Appendix A" – Relevant Past Performance Information. The Applicant should address any relevant performance issues related to past performance.

USAID may contact references and use the past performance data regarding the organization, along with other information to determine the applicant's past performance. The Government reserves the right to obtain information for use in the evaluation of past performance from any and all sources inside or outside the Government.

i. Appendices

Appendices must include and are limited to ONLY the following (Appendices are separate documents from the 30 page Technical Application page limitation):

1. Appendix A - Relevant Past Performance Information

Applicants must provide evidence of relevant past performance and clearly describe examples of successful development and implementation of activities similar to what is required under

this RFA. Applicants must submit a list of the five most relevant donor funded contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, etc. Include the following for each award:

- Name of awarding organization or agency;
- Address of awarding organization or agency;
- Place of performance of services or program;
- Award number;
- Amount of award;
- Period of Performance (begin and end dates of services/program);
- Name, current telephone number, current fax number, and email address (if one is available) of a responsible technical representative (project officer, activity manager or other contact person) of that organization or agency; and
- Brief description of the program.

Similar information should be provided for every partner organization that would represent 25% or more of the total proposed activity cost.

2. Appendix B - Resumes for Key Personnel

This section should include resumes for all Key Personnel candidates. Each resume may not exceed three (3) pages in length and the experience section must be in chronological order starting with most recent experience. Each resume for the proposed Key Personnel positions must be accompanied by a signed Letter of Commitment from each candidate indicating his/her: (a) availability to serve in the stated position, in terms of days after award; (b) intention to serve for a stated term of the service; and (c) agreement to the compensation levels which correspond to the levels set forth in the cost application.

3. Appendix C - An illustrative Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E Plan)

4. Appendix D – Staffing Plan

5. Appendix E- Illustrative First Year Implementation Plan

D.5 Cost Application Format

The Cost or Business Application is to be submitted under a separate cover from the Technical Application. The Cost/Business Application is also to be submitted in Excel format. The Applicant is requested to submit a budget broken down by activity years with an accompanying detailed budget narrative (in Word) which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the activity as further detailed below.

IMPORTANT: The Applicant must sign and submit with the cost application Standard Form Number SF-424 and SF-424A. These standard forms can be accessed electronically at Grants.gov.

Certain documents are required to be submitted by an Applicant in order for the Agreement

Officer to make a determination of responsibility. However, it is USAID policy not to burden Applicants with undue reporting requirements if that information is readily available through other sources. There is no page limit on the Cost Application. However, unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective cost application in response to this RFA are not desired. Elaborate art work, expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

If the Applicant has established a consortium or another legal relationship among its partners, the Cost/Business application must include a copy of the legal relationship between the parties. The agreement should include a full discussion of the relationship between the Applicant and Sub-Applicant(s) including identification of the Applicant with which USAID will treat for purposes of Agreement administration, identity of the Applicant which will have accounting responsibility, how Agreement effort will be allocated and the express agreement of the principals thereto to be held jointly and severally liable for the acts or omissions of the other.

The following sections describe the documentation that Applicants for an assistance award must submit to USAID/West Bank and Gaza as part of the cost application. While there is no page limit for this portion, Applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary details to address the following:

- a. The budget must have an accompanying detailed budget narrative and justification that provides in detail the total activity amount for implementation of the activity the Applicant is proposing. The budget narrative should provide information regarding the basis of estimate for each line item, including reference to sources used to substantiate the cost estimate (e.g. organization's policy, payroll document, vendor quotes, etc.).
- b. A budget for each activity year with an accompanying detailed budget narrative which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the activity. The budget must be submitted using Standard Form 424 which can be downloaded from the following web site at: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>
- c. A breakdown of all costs associated with the activity according to the costs of, if applicable, headquarters, regional and/or country offices.
- d. The Applicant must submit a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement NICRA if the organization has such an agreement with an agency or department of the U.S. Government. If no NICRA the Applicant should submit the following:

Reviewed Financial Statements Report: A report issued by a Certified Public Account (CPA) documenting the review of the financial statements was performed in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services, and an acknowledgment that management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation. The applicant must also state the he or she is not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements; or

Audited Financial Statements Report: An auditor issued report documenting that the audit was conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS), the financial statements are the responsibility of management, provides an opinion that the financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the company and the results of operations are in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework (or issues a qualified opinion if the financial statements are not in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework).

- e. **Cost Share (if used):** The Applicant should estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources to be mobilized over the life of the Agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting Cooperative Agreement.
- f. The cost application must outline the roles and responsibilities of activity staff vis-à-vis budgeting, monitoring, and reporting on the financial status of the activity. How the activity will track costs incurred, including costs for labor, equipment, supplies, and facilities must also be described. Applicants who intend to utilize sub-contractors or sub-recipients should indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown. Extensive contracts/agreement financial plans should follow the same cost format as submitted by the primary Applicant. A breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization, sub-contract or sub/awardee involved in the activity should be provided as well.
- g. The cost/business application should contain the budget categories as shown on the SF-424A form:

Direct Labor: Direct salaries, wages and annual increases for all personnel proposed under the application shall be in accordance with the Applicant's established personnel policies. To be considered adequate, the policies must be in writing, applicable to all employees of the organization, is subject to review and approval at a high enough organizational level to assure its uniform enforcement, and result in costs which are reasonable and allowable in accordance with applicable cost principles. The narrative should include a level of effort analysis specifying personnel, rate of compensation, and amount of time proposed. Anticipated salary increases during the period of the agreement should be included.

Allowances must be broken down by specific type and by person and must be in accordance with the Applicant's established policies.

Fringe Benefits: Fringe benefits should be based on the Applicant's audited fringe benefit rate, supported by a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or historical cost data. If the latter is used, the budget narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g. unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, FICA, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

Supplies and Equipment: Differentiate between expendable supplies and nonexpendable equipment, (NOTE: Equipment is defined as tangible nonexpendable personal property including exempt property charged directly to the award having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit, unless the Applicant's established policy establishes nonexpendable equipment anticipated to be required to implement the activity, specifying quantities and unit cost).

Travel and Per Diem: The narrative should indicate number of trips, domestic and international, and the estimated unit cost of each travel in accordance with the Technical Application. Proposed per diem rates must be in accordance with the Applicant's established policies and practices that are uniformly applied to federally-financed and other activities of the Applicant.

Other Direct Costs: This could include any miscellaneous costs such as office rent and utilities, communications, transportations, supplies, public outreach, audits, report preparation costs, passports, visas, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than the Applicant's normal coverage), etc. The narrative, or supporting schedule, should provide a complete breakdown and support for each item of other direct costs.

- h. **Proposed Sub-awards (contracts/grants) (if any):** Applicants who intend to utilize subawardees who will be substantially involved in implementation (i.e. receiving 25% or more of the total proposed activity cost), should indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown, as well as all the information required herein for the Applicant. **Subawards cost applications should follow the same cost format as submitted by the Applicant.**
- i. **Monitoring and Evaluation.** It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all costs associated with the implementation of the Activity M&E Plan are included in the Cost application. However, per Section A.6.2, the Applicant must not budget USAID funds for any performance evaluation or impact evaluation, as this will be externally ordered and funded by the USAID Mission.
- j. **Organizational Information:** Applicants are also required to provide the following organizational information (If applicable):
 - Type of Organization;
 - The name and title of individuals authorized to sign the Cooperative Agreement;
 - Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), if applicable;
 - System for Award Management (SAM) registration status;
 - Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number;
 - Letter of Credit (LOC) Number, if applicable; and
 - Estimated costs of communications products that are anticipated under the Cooperative Agreement.

- k. Applicants when requested must submit any additional evidence of responsibility deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. The information submitted should substantiate that the Applicant:
- Has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award;
 - Has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the Applicant, nongovernmental and governmental;
 - Has a satisfactory record of performance. Past relevant unsatisfactory performance is ordinarily sufficient to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance;
 - Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics; and
 - Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a Cooperative Agreement under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO).
- l. Applicants that have never received a grant, cooperative agreement or contract from the U.S. Government are required to submit a copy of their accounting manual.
- m. Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).
- n. The Applicant shall complete the certifications in Section D.7. Required Certifications and sign and date in the signature space provided. The signed and dated printout must then be submitted with the application as an annex to the cost application. Original signed hardcopy of the certifications will be requested from the successful applicant prior to the agreement award.
- o. The successful Applicant must be a responsible entity. The AO may determine a Pre-Award Survey is required and if so, would establish a formal survey team 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 activity and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The successful Applicant(s) will be subject to a responsibility determination assessment (Pre-award Survey) by the Agreement Officer (AO).

D.6 Potential Request for Additional Documentation

Upon consideration for award or during the negotiations leading to an award, Applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make an affirmative determination of responsibility.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Applicants should **not** submit the information below with their applications! The information in this section is provided so that Applicants may become familiar with additional documentation that may be requested by the Agreement Officer:

Prior to award, the successful Applicant should submit any additional evidence of responsibility deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. The information submitted should substantiate that the Applicant:

- Audited financial statements for the past three years that have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID.
- Bylaws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable.
- Copies of organizational travel, procurement, financial management, accounting manual and personnel policies and procedures, especially regarding salary, promotion, leave, differentials, etc., and indicate whether such policies and procedures have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the Federal Government. If so, provide the name, address, and phone number of the cognizant reviewing official.

D.7 Required Certifications:

In addition to the certifications included in the Standard Form 424, Applicants are requested to note that in accordance with ADS 303.3.8 USAID will require the submission of the following certifications prior to award:

- a. A signed copy of ADS 303mav Certifications, Assurances and other Statements of the Recipient (<https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy>) which includes:
 1. Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs (This assurance applies to Non-U.S. organizations, if any part of the program will be undertaken in the U.S.);
 2. Restrictions on Lobbying (2 CFR 200.450);
 3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers (ADS 206)
 4. Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons
 5. Certification Regarding Terrorist Funding (AAPD 04-14).
 6. Certification of Recipient
- b. Other certifications and statements found in ADS 303mav, Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions (<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>) which includes:
 1. A signed copy of Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking, (ADS 206.3.10) when applicable;
 2. A signed copy of Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking (ADS 206.3.10) when applicable;

3. A completed copy of Representation by Organization Regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Criminal Conviction;
4. Other Statements of Recipients.

c. Dun and Bradstreet and SAM.gov Requirements

USAID may not award to an Applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements. Each Applicant is required to:

- a. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient.;
- b. Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and
- c. 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.

It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time.

[END OF SECTION D]

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SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1. Criteria

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the Technical Evaluation Criteria set forth below. Thereafter, the cost application of all Applicants submitting a responsive application will be separately evaluated for reasonableness, allowability, and allocability. While technical criteria are paramount, cost considerations may also be a factor for award.

The technical application must set forth in detail the conceptual approach, methodology, and techniques for accomplishment of the stated activity objectives. The application must define results and benchmarks for monitoring progress in achieving the results.

E.2. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed to ensure they have met all the required elements as set forth in Section D to be determined by the Agreement Officer to be responsive to the RFA. The application must be directly responsive to the terms, conditions, guidelines and provisions of this RFA to be assured for consideration. Applications not conforming to this RFA may be categorized as not meeting the minimum requirements of the Government, thereby eliminating them from further consideration.

All technical applications deemed responsive to the RFA will be evaluated for merit by a USAID Selection Committee. The Agreement Officer will make award to the Applicant whose application is judged to be the most advantageous in accomplishing USAID's foreign assistance objectives.

Inclusion of cost share in the application may be considered to break a tie if all technical and cost factors between two applications are otherwise equal

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Responsive applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria. The evaluation factors are listed in a descending order of importance.

Technical Approach 40%

Extent to which the proposed technical approach and Activity M&E Plan convincingly demonstrate a clear understanding of the objectives and the immediate results of the activity and a realistic, results-oriented approach to achieve them.

Key Personnel 20%

Extent to which the proposed staff and staffing approach, including the proposed Key Personnel, convincingly demonstrate the ability to successfully and effectively implement the proposed program description.

Institutional Experience and Management Plan 20%

Extent to which the Applicant's institutional experience including the proposed management plan convincingly demonstrates the ability to effectively implement this activity.

Past Performance 20%

Extent to which the applicant convincingly demonstrates successful implementation of relevant work in the field of education.

Applicants are reminded that the U.S. Government is not obligated to make an award on the basis of lowest proposed cost or to the Applicant with the highest technical evaluation score.

E.2. Cost Evaluation

Cost has not been assigned a weight; however, the cost applications of the most highly ranked technical applications will be evaluated for cost effectiveness including the level of proposed cost share. Other considerations are the completeness of the application, adequacy of budget detail and consistency with elements of the technical application. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability which will be considered in any responsibility determination.

Prospective Applicants are forewarned that an application with the lowest estimated cost may not be selected if award to a higher priced application affords the government a greater overall

benefit. All evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined, are significantly more important than cost. However, estimated cost is an important factor and the estimated cost to the Government increases in importance as competing applications approach equivalence and may become the deciding factor when technical applications are approximately equivalent in merit.

Cost estimates will be analyzed as part of the application evaluation process. Proposed costs may be adjusted, for purposes of evaluation, based on results of the cost analysis and its assessment of reasonableness, completeness, and credibility.

[END OF SECTION E]

SECTION F: AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this funding opportunity cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures, and any other final approvals to make an award, if any are required, are granted. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

F.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Following selection for award, the Recipient will receive an electronic copy of the notice of award signed by the Agreement Officer which serves as the authorizing document. USAID will issue the award to the contacts specified by the Applicant in its application documents and/or the Authorized Individuals submitted by the Applicant.

2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, applicable OMB Circulars (i.e., A-21 for Universities or A-122 for Non-Profit Organizations, and A-133), ADS 303 and Standard Provisions for U.S. and Non-US Non-governmental Organizations are applicable. Resulting awards to U.S. Non-government Organizations will be administered in accordance with Chapter 303 of USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS 303), 2 CFR 200, and Standard Provisions for Non-Governmental Organizations. Please see the following links for additional information:

- a. 2 CFR 200 is available at: [2 CFR 200](#)
- b. OMB Circulars are available at: [OMB Circulars](#)
- c. Provisions for U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations are available at: [Standard Provisions for U.S. Organizations](#)
- d. Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations are available at: [Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Organizations](#)
- e. ADS 308 is available at: [ADS 303](#)
- f. Potential for-profit applicants should note that USAID policy prohibits the payment of fee/profit to the prime Recipient under grants and Cooperative Agreements. However, if a prime Recipient has a subcontract 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 subcontractor is authorized.
- g. The USAID Inspector-General's "Guidelines for Financial Audits Contracted by Foreign Recipients" is available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/591maa.pdf>

F.3. Reporting Requirements

F.3.1 Financial Reporting

Financial Reports must be submitted in accordance with 2 CFR 200.327. Reporting requirements, such as the format, number of copies, information to be included, due dates and distribution will be developed in consultation with the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) after the issuance of the award

F.3.2 Program Reporting

a) IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Purpose: The implementation plan details how the Recipient will use this time effectively to achieve the award's objectives. The implementation plan serves as a detailed guide to activity implementation and, once approved, represents an agreement as to the nature and timing of discrete tasks and interventions. Discrete tasks include training events, workshops and seminars, outreach events, and information dissemination activities such as publications and reports. It is essential that the document be concise so as to ensure that it will be a simple reference tool for the implementer to track progress against the approved implementation schedule, and for USAID to monitor and evaluate performance through the implementation plan year and to ensure that award objectives are accomplished on time, on budget, and in accordance with expectations. Each annual implementation plan will form the basis for an annual management review conducted by USAID and activity staff to assess activity directions, priorities, achievements, and prior year implementation results, as well as management and implementation impediments, and to make recommendations for revisions, as appropriate.

Implementation Plan Standards: Implementation plans will identify a logical sequence of steps to be undertaken to implement each activity component and must include an associated timetable. The Recipient may not include activities in the implementation plan that fall outside the parameters of the program description. The Recipient's annual implementation plan will describe how the Recipient intends to organize the upcoming fiscal year's work including setting activity priorities and how the Recipient will organize responsibilities amongst Recipient staff to ensure accomplishment of the tasks. The implementation plan will address how the Recipient will make effective use of any time during which counterparts are not readily accessible or actively engaged such as holidays.

The implementation plan, at a minimum, is to include:

- A systematic presentation (i.e., Gantt chart) of activities to be accomplished under the different components and sub-components, on a monthly basis;
- The proposed location of the activity;
- The anticipated outputs and outcomes from each activity conducted;

- The anticipated level of effort required from activity technical staff and financial resources required to complete the tasks;
- The identification of any assumptions used in preparing the implementation plan, as well as suggested alternatives if necessary;
- The anticipated risks with regard to achieving the anticipated objectives of the activity and how they will be mitigated; and
- Any specific award terms or conditions that interfere with maximizing the developmental impact of the award.

Timing: Within 90 days following award, the Recipient must submit the first annual implementation plan, which will cover the time period from the date of award to September 30, 2018. Attached to the initial implementation plan, the Recipient will provide a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E Plan). USAID will provide written comments to the Recipient. The Recipient will revise and submit the revised implementation plan no later than 15 days after receipt of comments. If acceptable, the USAID Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) will provide a written approval of the final implementation plan to the Recipient. Failure to have an approved implementation plan in place may be viewed as a failure to comply with essential terms and conditions of the award. Significant revisions to the approved implementation plan will require the additional written approval of the AOR (and may require a revision to the approved activity M&E Plan).

Subsequent Annual Implementation plans: Subsequent annual implementation plans will cover each fiscal year (October 1 – September 30) and are due no later than 30 days before the beginning of each USG fiscal year (October 1), to ensure that the new implementation plan will be in place prior to commencement of the new fiscal year. These plans will follow the same format as the initial implementation plan and should also include an updated M&E Plan, if appropriate. The subsequent annual implementation plan shall include activity adjustments reflecting lessons learned from prior year implementation.

b) MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN (M&E Plan)

Purpose: The Recipient is required to have an M&E Plan capable of tracking and documenting progress against activity components. The M&E Plan should cover the entire life cycle from the award date through the estimated completion date. The M&E Plan should reflect the award progress over the life of the activity and it is considered a critical tool for planning, managing, documenting, and evaluating performance. The M&E Plan should be reviewed and validated annually, and revised if appropriate.

Note: The M&E plan is only meant for the purposes of review of incremental progress towards the stated objectives of the Program Description. A performance evaluation will be conducted externally by the Mission's M&E Contractor as stated in Section A.6.2.

The M&E Plan will include:

1. Activity Briefer: and introduction about the activity deliverables/results and explanation of various M&E parts of the document.
2. A Results Framework (RF) and simplified Foreign Assistance Framework that reflect the objectives described in the award;
3. The indicators that will be used to assess progress towards the activity goals and intermediate results;
4. Methodology and plan for data collection, review, analysis, reporting and internal control system, and the parties responsible for data collection and analysis. Indicators tracking table that includes all indicators with targets for various fiscal years, sex disaggregation, and baseline data or the plan and timeline for gathering the baseline data;
5. The estimated cost associated with implementing this activity M&E Plan;
6. The Data Quality Assessment (DQA) plan and procedures; and
7. The Evaluation Plan and how the evaluation results will be used to inform activity implementation; and
8. A description of how gender considerations will be integrated into activity implementation and the monitoring and evaluation.
9. Performance Indicators Reference Sheet (PIRS).

Timing: Within 60 days after award attached to the Implementation Plan.

c) QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORTS:

Purpose: The Recipient will submit quarterly performance reports and financial allocation summaries to USAID to reflect progress and activities of the preceding quarter. The report will describe the tasks completed in the last quarter relative to what was anticipated by the approved implementation plan, and will assess overall impact to date relative to the performance indicator targets.

The quarterly reports will highlight any issues or problems affecting the schedule or impact of services provided by the Recipient. The reports will include financial information on the expenses incurred, available funding for the remainder of the activity and any variances from planned expenditures. All data and output reporting will disaggregate data by gender.

Quarterly performance reports will present progress on all activities and will include the following information, at a minimum:

1. Brief outline of purpose and approach;
2. Overall status of progress towards objectives (narrative);
3. Status of overall progress per the approved indicators as defined in the M&E Plan ;
4. Summary of completed activities and progress towards results under this award during the timeframe of the report;
5. List of reports/deliverables completed in the reporting period;

6. Explanation of quantifiable outputs of the tasks, if appropriate and applicable;
7. Reasons why established targets were not met, if appropriate;
8. Description of any short-term consultants' progress and observations, identifying any significant issues, and a description of follow-on activities;
9. Status of budget expenditures and analysis of any cost overruns or high unit costs (the Recipient shall immediately notify USAID of developments that have a significant impact on award-supported activities);
10. Identification of problems, delays or adverse conditions that impair the ability to meet the objectives of the award, including a statement of the action taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation;
11. List of major activities planned for the next quarter;
12. The use of Small and Disadvantaged Business relative to the target identified;
13. Any relevant constraints or impediments that have affected or will affect Program performance, including any terms and conditions contained in the award;
14. Programed USAID approvals, waivers or deviation requests anticipated during the next quarter;
15. An attachment with a list of activity M&E indicators from GeoMIS that reflect progress against the indicators.
16. Confirmation that TraiNet reporting requirements are up to date and that relevant activities and data have been entered in to Geo-MIS (a list of activities added or updated in Geo-MIS during the quarter should be attached); and
17. The status of required audit processes including for sub-awardees, if applicable.

Timing: Reports must be submitted to the AOR within 30 days after the end of each USG Fiscal Year quarter (12/31, 3/31, 6/30, 9/30).

d) ANNUAL REPORTS

Purpose: The annual report will cover all of the items included in the quarterly reports, with a focus on results over the entire award fiscal year. The annual report will be used by USAID to assess the status of the activity in relation to the time remaining for performance. Each annual report will include an assessment as to whether the objective of the award will be accomplished within the remaining time and available resources.

In addition, the Recipient should include an assessment as to the effectiveness of the M&E Plan in measuring impact including:

1. The status of evaluation activities including the establishment of baseline data;
2. The appropriateness of the data collected to measure activity impact;
3. The identification of unanticipated challenges in the collection of evaluation data;
4. The appropriateness of the overall activity M&E Plan to measure impact and any proposed revisions thereto;
5. Practical or political factors that should be considered when analyzing the performance data; and
6. The effectiveness of the evaluation activities to inform programming.

Timing: The Recipient must submit annual reports in lieu of the 4th quarterly report each year to the AOR and to the Agreement Officer. The annual report must be submitted no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year other than the last year of contract performance, when the final report will be submitted.

e) DEMOBILIZATION PLAN

The Plan will include, at a minimum, an illustrative Property Disposition Plan addressing all requirements under contractual and local law for the transfer of property; a plan for the phase out of the award's operations; a delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the award; and a timeline for completing all required actions in the Demobilization Plan, including the submission date of the final Property Disposition Plan to the Agreement Officer. Both the illustrative and final Property Disposition Plans must include the inventory schedule required by 2 CFR 200.313, a plan for the disposition of property to eligible parties and a timeline for the disposition of such property. In addition, the Recipient will describe how all required prime and sub-award audits will be conducted after the demobilization of the Recipient. The Demobilization Plan must be approved in writing by the AOR and the Agreement Officer.

Timing: Not less than four months prior to the completion date of the award, the Recipient must submit a Demobilization Plan.

g) FINAL REPORT

The final report will provide a summary description of all work performed under the award and a substantive discussion of results achieved (as measured by performance indicator). The final report should include the final status of each component objective, the status of indicators relative to the established targets, lessons learned, ways to resolve any constraints identified, any opportunities for further refinement, enhancement, logical extension, or expansion of the completed work and how it fits into USAID's strategic objectives and any perceived problems, vulnerabilities, or weaknesses in the assistance provided, with recommendations for addressing the identified weaknesses.

The final report must also contain an index of all reports and informational products produced under this activity. Along with the Final Report, a CD-ROM depository must be submitted, containing all written documents, reports and presentations. The depository must be organized in a user-friendly and searchable manner.

Timing: A draft final report must be provided not less than sixty days prior to the end of the award period. USAID will provide written comments concerning the accuracy and completeness of the report to the Recipient. The Recipient will revise and submit the final report no later than 15 days after receipt of comments.

h) GEOGRAPHIC MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (Geo-MIS)

In support of USAID/WBG's Geo-MIS initiative, the Recipient will provide Geo-MIS-related information on all USAID-funded activities.

a. **System Access:** Registration for access to and questions regarding the use of the Geo-MIS web site and reporting are to be directed to USAID/WBG/SPA and the AOR. The AOR will arrange for Geo-MIS training, lead the M&E Plan development efforts and data quality assessments/verifications of Geo-MIS data. Details on reporting forms and format are published at www.usaidgiswbg.com.

b. **Data Entry:** Initial Geo-MIS reporting must be submitted in the online system located at www.usaidgiswbg.com within 30 days from approval of the Implementation Plan. The Recipient is urged to update data in the online Geo-MIS system regularly. This includes information entered on new activities, current activity updates (e.g., activity-related fields of data, program related fields/narratives and M&E indicators), and activities closed.

c. **Reporting:** The Recipient's regular quarterly and annual reports must include a section on Geo-MIS providing a confirmation that relevant activities and data have been entered into Geo-MIS with a summary of actions (e.g., data entry and updates, Geo-MIS activities added, updated or closed) conducted during the reporting period.

The Recipient's final report will reflect that all activities have been fully Geo-MIS reported. Final AOR approval of close-out of the Cooperative Agreement will not be provided until such reporting has been completed. Geo-MIS data updates must be submitted through the internet application available via the Mission Geo-MIS system at: www.usaidgiswbg.com. Reports must be submitted via e-mail to the AOR.

d. **Training:** The Recipient staff will be provided Geo-MIS training by USAID/WBG/SPA. This training will be directed toward basic functions of the Geo-MIS and enabling the Recipient to report its work through the system and to use it as a Management Information System (MIS tool) including how to add/update and verify activities and program related info on a quarterly basis. The Recipient must appoint a member of its staff for training, as responsible for executing the Geo-MIS reports, to serve as liaison with USAID, and will participate in the Geographic Information Services (GIS) working group(s).

F.3.3 Reporting Schedule

The following programmatic reporting requirements shall be made part of any award issued under this RFA:

Type of Document/ Report	Due Date	Distribution
Quarterly Financial Report	30 days after the end of each fiscal quarter	AOR;AO;FMO
Implementation Plan	Within 60 days after award and thereafter every year by September 1	AOR
Monitoring and Evaluation Plan	Within 60 days after award and will be attached to the Implementation Plan	AOR
Quarterly Performance Reports	Within 30 days of the end of each fiscal quarter	AOR
Annual Performance Report	Will be submitted in lieu of the fourth quarterly performance report	AOR and AO
Demobilization Plan	Not less than four months prior to the completion date of the award	AOR and AO
Final Report	90 calendar days after the expiration or termination of the award	AOR and AO
Geographic Management Information System Reporting- Geo-MIS Reporting	After approval of the implementation plan with follow on reporting as activities require, but at least quarterly.	AOR and Geo-MIS Manager

F.4. Branding and Marking Requirements

Applicants are not required to submit a Branding and Marking plan with their applications.

However, Applicants are requested to note that in accordance with **2 CFR 700.16** USAID will require the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan prior to award. The Marking Plan may include a request for approval of one or more exceptions to the marking requirements in **2 CFR 700.16**. The AO evaluates the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (including any requests for exceptions) for approval consistent with the regulations contained in **AAPD 05-11, 2 CFR 700.16**, and **ADS 320**.

F.5. Environmental Compliance:

1. The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all

activities. The Recipient's environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs.

2. In addition, the Recipient must comply with the local environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between the local environmental regulations and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.
3. No activity funded under this Cooperative Agreement will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as "approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.")
4. The Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) for this activity contains recommendations for Categorical Exclusion for Non-environmental impacting technical assistance, training, analyses, studies, workshops, and document and information transfer as per 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i), (iii), and (v), as "education, technical assistance, or training programs," "analysis, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings," and "document and information transfer", respectively. Small-scale repair, rehabilitation, and construction activities qualify for a Negative Determination with conditions per 22 CFR 216.3(a)(2)(iii).

For all Negative Determination with conditions activities, the Recipient shall perform environmental screening process for each activity and develop appropriate Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP). The EMMP shall be prepared as early as possible during the planning/design stage and shall consider all phases of the activity implementation. The EMMP shall be approved by the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) and the Mission Environmental Officer (MEO) prior to any implementation. Mitigation and Monitoring measures shall consider all phases of the activity (planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning). Mitigation and Monitoring measures shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- Apply best management and good engineering practices, and incorporate environmentally sound design principles.
- Develop appropriate dust, noise, and waste control measures. Mitigation measures shall be developed to eliminate/reduce any health, noise, pollution, or any other negative impacts as a result of activities related to excavation, construction, demolishing, etc. Final disposal of waste (including waste generated as a result of excavation) shall be transferred to appropriate and approved locations. Top rich soils shall not be wasted.

- Use of appropriate health and safety measures to protect the health and safety of both workers and the general public.
- Protect archeological and cultural heritage sites.
- Protect water sources from any contamination.
- Protect rare species.
- Appropriate storage locations for construction material and construction equipment taking into consideration health, safety, and nuisance issues.
- Appropriate storage for hazardous construction material.

The EMMP must include monitoring the implementation of the conditions and their effectiveness. The EMMP must clearly state monitoring and reporting responsibilities.

5. As part of its initial Implementation Plan (IP), and all IPs thereafter, the Recipient, in collaboration with the USAID Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this Agreement to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation. The Recipient shall integrate the EMMP (which should also include climate change risks, please see below) into the initial Implementation Plan and subsequent Annual Implementation Plans, with any necessary adjustments to activity implementation in order to minimize adverse impacts on the environment.
6. If the Recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, the Recipient shall inform the AOR and prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.
7. Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.
8. The Recipient will be responsible for periodic reporting to the USAID AOR, as specified in the Schedule/Program Description of this award.

Climate Change Considerations and Requirements

1. In 2014 President Obama signed Executive Order 13677 which requires all US agencies to factor climate change into their foreign assistance planning and manage the associated climate risks.
2. This activity must be robust in face of potential climate change impacts. Therefore, the Recipient shall identify expected climate change impacts over the life of the activity's expected benefits and demonstrate how these risks will be reduced in order to ensure

sustainability of the activity's objective and benefits. The Recipient must make sure that the planners and design engineers are working with appropriate data sets and appropriate design criteria that consider climate change projections (for temperature increase, precipitation and flooding, sea level rise, extreme weather events including winds and other storms).

3. The Recipient shall identify opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and propose emissions approaches where possible. For example, this may include opportunities such as energy efficient equipment, solar energy, etc.
4. The Recipient shall perform screening for climate change risk as early as possible during the planning/design stage. Climate Change analysis and considerations shall be reported under in the EMMP.

F.6. Standard Provisions

All mandatory Standard Provisions specified in section F.2 of this NFO shall be incorporated into the resultant award. The Provisions indicated below in full text should be specially noted by the prospective Applicants.

USAID/WEST BANK AND GAZA SPECIAL PROVISIONS

F.6.1 SUBCONTRACTING WITH GOVERNMENT OR QUASI-GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

No subcontracting with any government or quasi-government entity shall be conducted under this Agreement unless a specific waiver is approved for this purpose.

F.6.2 CAPITAL ASSISTANCE (611e REQUIREMENTS)

Prior to committing any USAID funds for capital assistance activities proposed under this Agreement, including mechanical items and other equipment that will be purchased for use by local partners, the Recipient will provide USAID with sufficient information to determine that Palestinian counterpart institutions and communities have the capacity to maintain and utilize the assistance effectively. Upon review and analysis of information provided, USAID West Bank and Gaza will advise the Recipient when and if all AID regulations for proceeding with capital assistance have been met.

F.6.3 PROHIBITION AGAINST SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM

- (a) The Recipient is reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the Recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws.

- (b) One of the applicable orders is Executive Order 13224, dated September 24, 2001. The website of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the Department of Treasury contains the text of that order and a list of the individuals and entities designated thereunder. It also contains lists of individuals and entities designated under other anti-terrorism statutes, regulations and Executive Orders. See <http://www.treasury.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sdn/>.
- (c) USAID reserves the right to review, and either approve or reject, the following subawards if proposed under this contract/agreement: (i) any contract or subcontract in excess of \$25,000 with a non-U.S. organization or individual; and (ii) any grant or subgrant to a non-U.S. organization or individual, regardless of the dollar value. Furthermore, the written consent of USAID is required before certain other forms of assistance may be provided to a non-U.S. organization or individual. These include in-kind assistance such as renovation of an NGO's facilities, repair or replacement of a company's equipment, and certain training activities. The details of these requirements are described in notices issued by USAID/West Bank & Gaza from time to time. No approval (or failure to disapprove) by USAID shall relieve the Contractor/Recipient of its legal obligation to comply with applicable Executive Orders and laws.
- (d) USAID reserves the right to rescind approval for a subaward in the event that USAID subsequently becomes aware of information indicating that the subaward is contrary to U.S. law or policy prohibiting support for terrorism. In such cases, USAID's Contracting Officer will provide written instructions to the Contractor/Recipient to terminate the subaward.
- (e) USAID reserves the right to terminate this contract/agreement if USAID determines that the Contractor/Recipient is involved in or advocates terrorist activity or has failed to comply with any of the requirements of this provision.
- (f) This provision, including this paragraph (f), shall be included in all contracts, subcontracts, grants and subgrants issued under this contract/agreement. Upon request, the Contractor/Recipient shall promptly provide to USAID's Contracting/Agreement Officer a copy of the pages from each subaward that contain this provision
- (g) The Contractor/Recipient agrees to promptly notify USAID's Contracting Officer Representative (COR)/Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) in the event of any change in the identity of its "key individuals" or in the identity of "key individuals" of any Recipient of a subaward described in paragraph (c). For purposes of this requirement, "key individuals" means (i) principal officers of the organization's governing body (e.g., chairman, vice chairman, treasurer and secretary of the board of directors or board of trustees); (ii) the principal officer and deputy principal officer of the organization (e.g., executive director, deputy director, president, vice president); (iii) the program manager or chief of party for the USAID-financed program; and (iv) any other person with significant responsibilities for administration of USAID-financed activities or resources. Note that this definition differs from the definition of "key personnel" under contracts and cooperative agreements.

- (h) Before awarding any grant or similar instrument providing [cash or in-kind assistance under this contract][cash assistance under this agreement], the Contractor/Recipient shall (1) obtain from the proposed subawardee the certification required under USAID's Acquisition and Assistance Policy Determination 04-14 (AAPD 04-14), "Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementation E.O. 13224 (Revision 2)," and (2) provide a copy of the certification to USAID's Agreement/Contracting Officer.

F.6.4 PROHIBITION AGAINST CASH ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

U.S. legislation provides that none of the funding under this Award may be "obligated or expended with respect to providing funds to the Palestinian Authority." In accordance with that prohibition, the Recipient shall not provide any cash to the Palestinian Authority; to any ministry, agency or instrumentality of the Palestinian Authority; to any municipality or other local government unit; or to any full-time or part-time employee or official of any of the foregoing entities. This restriction applies to payments of any kind, including salaries, stipends, fees, honoraria, per diem, and so forth.

This restriction does not prohibit the provision of in-kind assistance, such as technical assistance, training, equipment, supplies, or the construction of public works to the extent it is not otherwise prohibited by U.S. law or the terms of this Agreement.

This provision shall be included in all contracts, subcontracts, grants and subgrants or any other instruments or awards issued under this Agreement. The Recipient shall promptly provide to USAID's Agreement Officer a copy of the pages from each subaward that contains this provision.

F.6.5 RESTRICTION ON FACILITY NAMES

- (a) No assistance shall be provided under this Agreement for any school, community center or other facility that is named after any person or group of persons that has advocated, sponsored or committed acts of terrorism. This includes any facility that has "shuhada" or "shaheed" ("martyr" or "martyrs") in its name, unless an exception is approved by the USAID Mission Director. In any case where assistance is proposed for a facility that is named after, or is planned to be named after, a person or group of persons, the Recipient shall provide to USAID's Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) written information about the person(s) or group and shall not proceed with the assistance unless or until the AOR has provided written approval therefore. This restriction applies to all forms of cash or in-kind assistance, including construction services, equipment, supplies, technical assistance, and training.
- (b) In case of any failure to comply with this restriction, USAID may disallow any or all costs incurred by the Recipient with respect to the facility and, if necessary, issue a bill for

collection for the amount owed. This is in addition to any other remedies that may be available to USAID for such noncompliance.

- (c) This provision, including this paragraph (c), shall be included in all contracts, subcontracts, grants and subgrants issued under this agreement. Upon request, the Recipient shall promptly provide to USAID's Agreement Officer a copy of the pages from each subaward that contains this provision.

F.6.6 VALUE ADDED TAX AND CUSTOMS DUTIES

Pursuant to agreements with the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Government of Israel (GOI), all imports and expenditures under this award by the Recipient and by non-local subgrantees and subcontractors (as defined below) will be exempt from Value-Added Tax (VAT) and customs duties imposed by the PA and from customs duties imposed by the GOI. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 51 of OMB Circular No. A-122, Attachment E, such VAT and customs duties shall not constitute allowable costs under this award. No exemptions from VAT imposed by the GOI are available through USAID. Therefore, Israeli VAT is an allowable cost under this award, except for VAT from which exemptions are available to the Recipient directly.

The Recipient and any non-local subgrantees or subcontractors shall make reasonable efforts to avoid Palestinian VAT at the point of sale by obtaining 0% VAT exemption. USAID will assist the Recipient to obtain zero percent (0%) VAT status from the PA. The Recipient shall use this exemption to avoid paying any PA VAT to local subcontractors and vendors by obtaining approval from the PA VAT Department for suppliers to issue 0% VAT invoices.

In cases where Israeli and Palestinian VAT cannot be avoided, the Recipient shall obtain original VAT receipts from the vendors. Receipts must be submitted to USAID's Financial Management Office on a monthly basis to enable USAID to process refund claims with VAT authorities. The Recipient is responsible for ensuring that subgrantees or subcontractors comply with this requirement. All VAT claims for the subgrantees and subcontractors shall be submitted to USAID through Recipient. *(Please refer to VAT Guidance dated April 2, 2003 issued to USAID WBG Contractors and Grantees attached as Attachment F)*. Receipts for subgrantees and subcontractors must be addressed to the program name /Recipient to enable USAID to claim refunds.

Recipients that already have exemption mechanisms in place with the GOI and/or the PA should continue to follow those procedures. Any refund of taxes received directly by the Recipients which were allowed as award costs, should be credited either as a cost reduction or cash refund, as appropriate, to USAID.

"Non-local subgrantees and subcontractors" means subgrantees and subcontractors that are present in the West Bank or Gaza solely for the purpose of performing work financed by USAID or other tax-exempt foreign donors."

F.6.7 REPORTING OF FOREIGN TAXES

- a) The awardee must annually submit one report by April 6 of the next year. The reporting period will cover from October 1 to September 30.
- b) Contents of Report. The reports must be in the format provided in Annex A and contain:
 - 1. Recipient name.
 - 2. Contact name with phone, fax and email.
 - 3. Award number(s); separate report needs to be provided for each award.
 - 4. Amount of foreign taxes assessed by the Palestinian Authority on commodity purchase transactions valued at \$500 or more financed with U.S. foreign assistance funds under this agreement during the prior U.S. fiscal year.
 - 5. Only foreign taxes assessed by the foreign government in the country receiving U.S. assistance are to be reported. Foreign taxes by a third party foreign government are not to be reported. For example, if an assistance program for the Palestinian Authority involves the purchase of commodities in Israel using foreign assistance funds, any taxes imposed by Israel would not be reported.
 - 6. Any reimbursements on the taxes reported in (iv) received by the Recipient through March 31. Any refund from the Palestinian Authority that is received directly by the awardee should be reflected. For refunds processed by USAID, we will fill in the VAT refunded amount. If a VAT refund receipt was provided to USAID for refund processing the awardee will need to provide the month under which the claim was submitted to USAID and the serial number of the invoice as included in the claim.
 - 7. Reports are required even if the Recipient did not pay any taxes during the report period.
 - 8. Cumulative reports may be provided if the Recipient is implementing more than one program in a foreign country.
- c) Definitions. For purposes of this clause:
 - 1. "Agreement" includes USAID direct and country contracts, grants, cooperative agreements and interagency agreements.
 - 2. "Commodity" means any material, article, supply, goods, or equipment.
 - 3. "Foreign government" includes only a Palestinian Authority entity.
 - 4. "Foreign taxes" means value-added taxes and custom duties assessed by a foreign government on a commodity. It does not include foreign sales taxes
- d) Where. Submit the reports by either of the following means:

E-mail attachment (preferred): 579vat@usaid.gov or fax to 972-3-511-4888, attention Issa Hanna.
- e) Subagreements. The awardee must include this reporting requirement in all applicable subcontracts, subgrants and other subagreements.
- f) For further information see <http://www.state.gov/m/rm/c10443.htm>.

F.6.8 PROHIBITION ON ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

- a) U.S. legislation provides that none of USAID's funding "may be used to provide equipment, technical support, consulting services, or any other form of assistance to the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation." In accordance with this prohibition, the Recipient shall not provide any assistance to the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation.
- b) This provision, including this paragraph (b), shall be included in all contracts, subcontracts, grants and subgrants issued under this grant.

F.6.9 USAID/WEST BANK AND GAZA MISSION NOTICES

The Recipient will comply and adhere to all USAID West Bank and Gaza notices to Contractors and Grantees. The notices are posted on the USAID/West Bank Gaza website under Partners resources and can be found at the following link: [USAID West Bank & Gaza Notices](#)

F.6.10 USAID/WEST BANK AND GAZA AGENCY CONTRACTED AUDITS (ACA)

Since Fiscal Year 2003, the U.S. Congress has mandated in its annual appropriations laws that USAID will ensure that Federal and non-Federal audits of all Contractors and grantees, and significant sub-Contractors and sub-grantees, under the West Bank and Gaza (WBG) Program are conducted at least on an annual basis.

The Contractor and significant subawardees under this award are thus required to adhere to this requirement and are subject to audit at least annually under the WBG Agency Contracted Audit (ACA) program. The USAID/WBG/Office of Financial Management (OFM) is responsible for managing the Mission's ACA program. USAID/WBG/OFM will annually solicit information from Contractors with regard to their program implementing subawards to identify those subawardees which are subject to audit.

To fulfill the annual audit requirements, USAID/WBG will contract with an independent audit firm that has been approved by the Regional Inspector General/Frankfurt to perform these audits and will issue an audit notification letter to the Contractor outlining the process, period of audit and time frame. The financial audit will be conducted within generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) and will focus on the program activities contained within this award.

By signing this award, the Contractor affirms it will comply with Mission audit guidelines and requirements and will cooperate fully with the audit firm selected by USAID. Failure to comply with the Mission audit procedures or respond to an initiation of an audit, or failure to cooperate with the Mission financial management staff or selected audit firm on the annual audit may be cause for action by the Mission. The Contractor and all sub-awardees must maintain complete records and proper documentation pertaining to their awards for auditing purposes.

F.6.11 USAID/WEST BANK AND GAZA MISSION ORDER NO. 21

The Contractor must comply with the Mission's updated anti-terrorism policies and procedures as stated under the revised Mission Order No. 21 (Mission Notice No. 2007-WBG-26) and any amendments thereafter. The Mission Order No. 21 can be accessed through the following URL: [Mission Order No. 21](#)

F.6.12 PROHIBITION ON PROVIDING FEDERAL ASSISTANCE TO ENTITIES THAT REQUIRE CERTAIN INTERNAL CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS - REPRESENTATION (APRIL 2015)

(a) In accordance with section 743 of Division E, Title VII, of the Consolidated and further Continuing Resolution Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235), Government agencies are not permitted to use funds appropriated (or otherwise made available) under that or any other Act for providing federal assistance to an entity that requires employees, subawardees or contractors of such entity seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting such employees, subawardees, or contractors from lawfully reporting such waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information.

(b) The prohibition in paragraph (a) of this provision does not contravene requirements applicable to Standard Form 312, Form 4414, or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

(c) By submission of its application, the prospective Recipient represents that it does not require employees, subawardees, or contractors of such entity seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting such employees, subawardees, or contractors from lawfully reporting such waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information.

F.6.13 COOPERATING COUNTRY NATIONALS (CCNs) EMPLOYED BY THE RECIPIENT TO WORK EXCLUSIVELY UNDER THIS USAID AGREEMENT

The USAID-funded program implemented under this program is for a specified period. Accordingly, USAID considers Cooperating Country Nationals (CCNs) employed by the Recipient and working exclusively under the resultant USAID Cooperative Agreement to be employed for a specified fixed period (a specified period employee). The Recipient, however, at its sole discretion, may employ CCNs and direct them to work exclusively under the Cooperative Agreement for an unspecified period (as a permanent employee), in accordance with allowances and provisions established under local law.

If the Recipient elects, at its sole discretion, to employ unspecified period CCNs, and directs them to exclusively work under the fixed period of the award, the Recipient (and not USAID)

will be responsible for the payment of any benefits, severance or otherwise, that may be due and owing to such employees under local law if the Recipient then elects to terminate their employment at any time during the award.

F.6.14 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONNEL COMPENSATION

a) Direct salaries and wages for each year of the award shall be in accordance with the organization's established personnel policies and the applicable cost principles. To be considered adequate, the policies must be in writing, applicable to all employees of the organization, be subject to review and approval at a high enough organizational level to assure its uniform enforcement, and result in costs which are reasonable and allowable in accordance with applicable cost principles.

b) The reasonableness of salaries under the resultant Agreement will be evaluated applying the factors set forth in the applicable cost principles (2 CFR 200, Subpart E) This guidance will be considered in making the determination as to reasonableness.

c) Annual Salary Increase

(1) International Staff: One annual salary increase of not more than 5% (including promotional increase) may be granted after the employee's completing of each twelve months of satisfactory services under this Agreement.

(2) CCN Staff: One annual salary increase of not more than 5% (including promotional increase) may be granted after the employee's completing of each twelve months of satisfactory services under this Agreement.

F.6.15 SECURITY CONDITIONS

The Recipient must be aware of security conditions in the West Bank and Gaza, and by entering into a contract with USAID, assumes full responsibility for the safety and security of its employees. Prior to commencing work, the Recipient must ensure that it has adequate procedures in place to advise its employees of situations or changed conditions that could adversely affect their security. In order to keep abreast of security conditions in the region, the Recipient must seek information from all available sources for all areas in which its employees work or travel.

The Recipient acknowledges that security conditions are subject to change at any moment, that the U.S. Government cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information that it may provide to the Recipient and that USAID assumes no responsibility for the reliability of such information. The Recipient has the sole responsibility for managing all travel plans identified in the contract's approved budget for its employees and/or their dependents traveling to post if allowed by the Recipient's personnel internal policies while adhering to the contract's terms and conditions.

The Recipient will also be responsible for its U.S. citizen employees, consultants and ensuring its subcontractor employees are registered with the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment

Program (STEP) and for immediately notifying USAID West Bank and Gaza and the American Citizen Services section in the event a U.S. citizen employee does not return from travel or does not report to work as expected. In the event that USAID requests the Recipient to do so, the Recipient's Chief of Party (COP) will assume responsibility for contacting all of its employees, consultants and sub-contractors.

The Recipient must provide to the USAID AOR the name, nationality, current address, and current home and/or cellular telephone number of the COP, an alternate designated employee and a designated headquarters employee. The Recipient will be responsible for ensuring that the information on file in the USAID West Bank Gaza's Partner Contact List is up-to-date so that in the event of an emergency, the COP or an alternate representative can be reached immediately and s/he can rapidly contact all other affected employees.

SECURITY PLAN

The Recipient must develop a security plan to safeguard all activity operations and to comply with all United States Government regulations, prevailing industry practice and local law. Within 30 days of award, the security plan will be submitted to USAID for review only. Guidance as to the content of this plan will be provided by USAID following award.

Due to the extremely fluid nature of the operational environment in the West Bank and Gaza, it is expected that the Recipient of the award will remain in close contact and collaboration with the AOR and other appropriate USAID Officers. This collaborative involvement will address informational needs such as analyses, evaluations, assessments, and responses to public information requests in order to maintain flexibility for program success.

Dissemination of any press releases or success stories is subject to the AOR's written approval.

LIFE SUPPORT AND SECURITY SERVICES

The Recipient will be responsible for maintaining the security of its personnel, materials and equipment. All employees of the Recipient must meet the requirements of their work-site,] which may include, but not limited to background checks, security/restricted area clearances, drug-free workplace, safety training and/or any other company safety and security requirements.

The Recipient will provide for the costs associated with its security plan and budget for security costs as part of its application. The budget shall delineate and justify the reasonableness of all costs. The Recipient shall provide a coherent, overall integrated security plan that demonstrates that the Recipient has undertaken a thoughtful review of their security needs and includes analyses of the elements of an appropriate security system.

F.7 Funding Restrictions

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400(g) and 2 CFR 700.13, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allowable and allocable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the Agreement program and are in accordance with applicable

cost standards (2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700, Relevant OMB Circulars, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for for-profit organizations), may be paid under the Agreement.

F.8 Construction

This award may require construction or minor renovation, as determined by the program description and subsequent implementation plans. If construction or minor renovation is required, all work must comply fully with International Building Code standards, which will be supplied to the Recipient prior to design and construction.

[END OF SECTION F]

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT

Shirine Tourk Agbarieh
Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
Office of Contracts Management
sagbarieh@usaid.gov
USAID West Bank and Gaza
Tel Aviv, Israel

[END OF SECTION G]

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SECTION H – OTHER INFORMATION

H.1 Annexes

Annex A: VAT Guidance

Annex B: Mission Order No. 21

[END OF SECTION H]

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U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

**ANNEX A: VAT Guidance dated April 2, 2003 issued to USAID WBG
Contractors and Grantees**

APRIL 2, 2003

NOTICE FOR USAID CONTRACTORS AND GRANTEEES

SUBJECT: VAT GUIDANCE

As per the guidance provided to all contractors and grantees in our letter of July 30th, 2002, VAT is an extremely sensitive and important issue for our Mission. Careful attention must be paid to avoiding VAT whenever possible and, failing that, obtaining valid VAT receipts so that USAID may seek VAT refunds from tax authorities. Failure to do so could put the Mission's programs in jeopardy and possibly lead to a USAID determination that VAT costs are unallowable.

USAID will reimburse contractors and grantees for Israeli and Palestinian VAT if and only if the following procedures are followed:

1. For Grantees, reasonable efforts must be made to avoid Israeli and Palestinian VAT at the point of sale whenever possible. This includes taking all reasonable steps to obtain a 0% VAT exemption from the Palestinian Authority before making any further purchases. Grantees that already have exemption mechanisms in place with Israel and/or the PA should continue to follow those procedures.
2. For grantees that recently received a 0% VAT exemption from the Palestinian VAT department, they are required to pass these exemptions to their partners (i.e. suppliers, vendors, and contractors), by sending a letter to the VAT Department notifying it about the partner, description of the transaction and the amount of the transaction before the purchase is completed.
3. For both Contractors and Grantees, in cases where Israeli or Palestinian VAT cannot be avoided at the point of sale, original VAT receipts must be obtained from all vendors that are legally authorized to issue such receipts. To be considered valid and acceptable, receipts must conform to the requirements stated in the checklist attached to this notice. Receipts shall be submitted to USAID's Financial Management Office on a monthly basis, no later than the fifteenth day after the end of the month. This will enable USAID to process refund claims with VAT authorities on a timely basis.

Financial Management Office
Att. VAT Coordinator, USAID
c/o American Embassy
71 Hayarkon Street,
Tel Aviv 63903

Failure to comply with both of these requirements may result in a determination that the VAT costs in question are unallowable under your contract or grant, in which case those costs would be financed from your organization's own funds.

Given that USAID will be reimbursing VAT expenses in contractor and grantee billings that are charged as disbursement to the contracts/grants, the refunds, once received, will be recorded as off-sets to the applicable contract or grant by USAID.

Please note that separate procedures will be provided for processing refunds for contractors and grantees under Letter of Credit (LOC) method of payment.

Please submit the original VAT receipts and one copy to USAID. In addition, contractors and grantees must retain on file copies of receipts and related documentation reflecting their VAT submissions to USAID. This is needed to avoid the risk that VAT costs may be questioned during an audit and possibly disallowed.

In addition, we have attached for your use 2 matrixes, one for the Israeli and one for Palestinian VAT submissions. Please keep the following guidance in mind when submitting this document to USAID:

1. Report the VAT invoices in the correct chronological order. i.e. start from the first of the month through to the 30th.
2. Provide a hard and electronic copy of the form with the respective receipts attached to each one in order to avoid confusion.
3. The electronic copy has to be sent to ilpavat@usaid.gov.
4. Attach all related supporting documents to each receipt with that invoice.
5. Submit this form, receipts and supporting documents no later than the 15th of the following month.
6. You will notice that we have entered some figures already on the matrix. This is just to provide you with an example and to activate the formulas. Kindly replace those with your own figures.
7. For any specific issues with regards to the VAT, please contact Ms. Abeer Odeh, our Supervisor Financial Analyst, at 03-511-4806, 050 259407, and 059 246777 or at e-mail aodeh@usaid.gov.

The requirements discussed in this notice apply to not just prime contracts and grants, but also subcontracts and sub-grants with non-local entities – that is, entities that are present in the West Bank or Gaza solely for the purpose of performing work financed by USAID or other tax-exempt donors.

USAID provided some guidance with regards to this issue in July 2002. However, some partners have failed to report their VAT in a timely manner. Therefore, we hereby request that all Contractors and Grantees report to us by COB noon April 21st, 2003, all pending invoices from January 1st, 2002 until the present.

We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Attachments:

1. VAT Invoices Required Attributes
2. VAT Refund Sheet – Includes 2 documents for the Israeli and the Palestinian VAT respectively.

Palestinian VAT Return Sheet
 Organization Name:
 Contract / Agreement Number:
 Period Covered:

[illegible]

[illegible]

07/30/2002

NOTICE FOR USAID CONTRACTORS AND GRANTEES
Subject: VAT GUIDANCE

As discussed at previous meetings with contractors and grantees, VAT is an extremely sensitive and important issue for our Mission. Careful attention must be paid to avoiding VAT whenever possible and, failing that, obtaining valid VAT receipts so that USAID may seek VAT refunds from tax authorities. Failure to do so could put the Mission's programs in jeopardy and possibly lead to a USAID determination that VAT costs are unallowable.

The Mission is continuing its dialogue with Palestinian VAT authorities to effect broad implementation of a 0% VAT procedure whereby VAT expenses would be avoided at the point of sale. In the meantime, for both Israeli and Palestinian VAT, USAID will reimburse contractors and grantees for incurred costs in accordance with the payment provisions of their agreements; provided, however, that the following procedures are followed:

1. Reasonable efforts must be made to avoid Israeli and Palestinian VAT at the point of sale whenever possible. Those contractors and grantees that have exemption mechanisms in place should continue to follow those.
2. In cases where Israeli or Palestinian VAT cannot be avoided at the point of sale, original VAT receipts must be obtained from all vendors that are legally authorized to issue such receipts. To be considered valid and acceptable, receipts must conform to the requirements stated in the checklist attached to this notice. Receipts shall be submitted to USAID's Financial Management Office on a monthly basis, no later than the fifteenth day after the end of the month. This will enable USAID to process refund claims with VAT authorities on a timely basis.

Failure to comply with both of these requirements may result in a determination that the VAT costs in question are unallowable under your contract or grant, in which case those costs would be financed from your organization's own funds.

Since USAID will be reimbursing VAT expenses in contractor and grantee billings, the refunds, when received, will be deposited to the account of USAID.

In addition to submitting original VAT receipts to USAID, contractors and grantees must retain on file copies of receipts and related documentation reflecting their VAT submissions to USAID. This is needed to avoid the risk that VAT costs may be questioned during an audit and possibly disallowed.

The requirements discussed in this notice apply to not just prime contracts and grants, but also subcontracts and subgrants with non-local entities – that is, entities that are present in the West Bank or Gaza solely for the purpose of performing work financed by USAID or other tax-exempt donors.

If you have any questions, please contact Robert Bonnaffon (03-511-4880) or Leonel Pizarro (03-511-4852)

Attachment: a/s

VAT INVOICES REQUIRED ATTRIBUTES

ISRAELI VAT INVOICES

The following information is required on Israeli VAT invoices in order for them to be accepted for purposes tax refunds:

- Vendor's name
- Invoice date
- Vendor's tax identification number (TIN)
- Tax invoice number
- Document must be an original, copies are not accepted
- The document must indicate on its face that it is a tax invoice...a hishbunit mas, or in Hebrew: חשבונית מס

PALESTINIAN VAT INVOICES

The following information is required on Palestinian VAT invoices in order for them to be accepted for purposes of tax refunds:

- The purchaser's name and address
- Name of the vendor
- The document must state "Authorized Dealer" and then the dealer number. For example:
- The document must state on its face that it is a "Tax Invoice" and an invoice number. For example: فاتورة ضريبية
- The invoice must state on its face "Original". For example: النسخة الاصلية

END OF ANNEX A