

Funding Opportunity Title: Peacebuilding and Economic Resilience in Host Communities in Northern Cote d'Ivoire and Northern Ghana

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0010339

AN INCOMPLETE APPLICATION PACKAGE WILL BE DISQUALIFIED. MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE ALL DOCUMENTS REQUESTED WITH THE APPLICATION. YOU MAY WITHDRAW AND RESUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION BEFORE THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE. ONLY ONE APPLICATION IS ACCEPTED PER APPLICANT. MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS FROM THE SAME ORGANIZATION WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION OF THE ORGANIZATION.

Question Deadline: April 26, 2024

FAQ Posted: May 7, 2024

Application Deadline: June 11, 2024

PLEASE NOTE THAT A REVISE NOFO HAS BEEN POSTED TO THE GRANT OPPORTUNITY. The revised NOFO has modified the target geographies for the program to include Northeast Region in Cote d'Ivoire, in addition to North Central Region in Cote d'Ivoire and Upper West and Upper East Regions in Guinea. The up-to-date NOFO language can be found under the SFOP0010339 opportunity on MyGrants.

Question: Can you please advise on how to apply for this opportunity?

Answer: All application submissions must be made electronically via MyGrants at <https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com/>, which requires registration by the applying organization. For assistance with MyGrants/SAMS Domestic accounts and technical issues related to the system, please contact the ILMS help desk by phone at +1 (888) 313-4567 (toll charges apply for international callers) or through the Self Service online portal that can be accessed from <https://afsism.service-now.com/ilms/home>. Customer support is available 24/7.

Question: Is CSO considering a follow-up project to continue work on this program following the 12-month initial timeframe listed in the NOFO?

Answer: CSO may extend the award up to 2 additional years, with additional funds of up to \$1,973,000 for each additional year, contingent on funding availability, CSO priorities, good performance of the recipient, and Department of State management approval.

Question: Should the proposed project take place in Côte d'Ivoire *and* in Ghana, or is there an option to choose one of these two countries?

Answer: This program aims to achieve its stated objectives in all target geographies that are specified in the NOFO, including North Central Region and Northeast Region in Cote d'Ivoire and in Upper East and Upper West Regions in Ghana. While proposals that only address program objectives in one country are eligible, they will be evaluated against key criteria listed in Section VI of the NOFO, which include that proposed programs are "responsive to the solicitation," that their "objectives are necessary and collectively sufficient to place the effort on a sustainable path to achieving the goal by the end of the program," and that "activities are clearly related to the objectives and goals, and collectively sufficient to achieve the objectives."

Question: Does the proposed program have to cover the entire target geography, or can applicants focus on one of the two countries?

Answer: This program aims to achieve its stated objectives in all target geographies that are specified in the NOFO, including North Central Region and Northeast Region in Cote d'Ivoire and in Upper East and Upper West Regions in Ghana. While proposals that only address program objectives in one country are eligible, they will be evaluated against key criteria listed in Section VI of the NOFO, which include that proposed programs are "responsive to the solicitation," that their "objectives are necessary and collectively sufficient to place the effort on a sustainable path to achieving the goal by the end of the program," and that "activities are clearly related to the objectives and goals, and collectively sufficient to achieve the objectives."

Question: Will the call consider focusing solely on one country or if activities in both Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire will be mandatory or prioritized.

Answer: This program aims to achieve its stated objectives in all target geographies that are specified in the NOFO, including North Central Region and Northeast Region in Cote d'Ivoire and in Upper East and Upper West Regions in Ghana. While proposals that only address program objectives in one country are eligible, they will be evaluated against key criteria listed in Section VI of the NOFO, which include that proposed programs are "responsive to the solicitation," that their "objectives are necessary and collectively sufficient to place the effort on a sustainable path to achieving the goal by the end of the program," and that "activities are clearly related to the objectives and goals, and collectively sufficient to achieve the objectives."

Question: Does the implementing organization need to be legally registered and have an office in the target countries?

Answer: The prime applicant need only be able to legally operate in the country or countries where they propose to implement the activities for which they are directly responsible. If an applicant's project design includes partnering with or sub-granting to another organization, then that sub-partner should be able to legally operate in the country or countries where they propose to implement the activities for which they are responsible.

Question: In the case of a consortium, does the prime applicant have to be registered/have operations in both Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana?

Answer: The prime applicant need only be able to legally operate in the country or countries where they propose to implement the activities for which they are directly responsible. If an applicant's project design includes partnering with or sub-granting to another organization, then that sub-partner should be able to legally operate in the country or countries where they propose to implement the activities for which they are responsible.

Question: Are INGO consortia eligible (i.e. all partners in the consortium are INGOs)?

Answer: Organizations may form consortia and submit a combined proposal. However, only one organization must be designated as the lead applicant. The lead applicant must meet the eligibility criteria listed in the NOFO.

Question: Page 16 the NOFO states “the successful applicant will already have in place at least one partnership with regional institutions and/or organizations.” What does CSO mean by “regional institutions and/or organizations”?

Answer: With regards to the statement “the successful applicant will already have in place at least one partnership with regional institutions and/or organizations,” (page 16 of the NOFO), the term “regional institutions and/or organizations” refers to organizations based in Cote d’Ivoire and/or Ghana. A successful applicant will have partnerships with local organizations in Cote d’Ivoire and in Ghana. This may be a single partner operating in both countries or it may multiple partners each operating in either Cote d’Ivoire or Ghana, or some combination thereof.

Question: How many key personnel should be included in the application? What key personnel are desired?

Answer: CSO does not provide specific guidance on which key personnel should be included in applications. Applicants should specify the personnel who will be responsible for, and who have the relevant qualifications to implement the main aspects of the project, which could include (but may not be limited to) the program manager, relevant technical and project managers, relevant financial and operations management professionals, and personnel that will lead project research needs (including the initial assessment and monitoring, evaluation, and learning).

Question: Is there a minimum requirement/recommendation for the number of direct beneficiaries to target in total or what percentage of target beneficiaries should be women/youth?

Answer: There is no specific minimum requirement or recommendation for the number of direct beneficiaries to target in total or the percentage of beneficiaries that are women or youth (please note that youth refers to individuals between the ages of 18 and 35). Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria listed in Section VI of the NOFO.

Question: Can refugees and asylum seekers be included among direct beneficiaries when justified in social cohesion activities for an entire community? Is receiving small financial compensation for attending trainings or participating in dialogue activities considered being a direct beneficiary?

Answer: The strategic aim of all activities should be to benefit communities hosting refugees and asylum seekers. In the course of implementing these activities, especially those that aim to build social cohesion between host communities and refugee/asylum seekers, individuals who are refugees and asylum seekers may comprise direct beneficiaries of program assistance.

Question: Under Objective 3, “provide conflict resolution and peacebuilding training to target beneficiaries and other relevant at-risk stakeholders” (NOFO, page 7) what does CSO mean by “other relevant at-risk stakeholders”?

Answer: Other relevant at-risk stakeholders comprise indirect beneficiaries (i.e. refugees and asylum seekers) as well as any other local stakeholders whose exclusion from such activities may threaten social cohesion or increase intergroup tensions. Other relevant stakeholders may also comprise local government or traditional leaders who already engage in peacebuilding work and demonstrate an ability to maximize the impact of these activities for target beneficiaries.

Question: Will the applicant be expected to coordinate with any security, military, or Department of Defense actors?

Answer: SPCPS implementing partners are expected to coordinate with all U.S. government actors engaged in activities in the target geographies, including security, military, and Department of Defense actors, for the purposes of deconflicting efforts and ensuring efficiency of U.S. government support. The implementer will not be expected to share field-level or tactical information with security stakeholders. Coordination may take place in regional capitals and does not need to be public or visible.

Question: What kind of in-country visibility would be required for this program?

Answer: This program will require a high level of in-country visibility. As a pilot program, this should include sharing insights and lessons from implementation widely with other stakeholders working in the region. The specifics of in-country visibility for this program will be negotiated with CSO during the drafting of the cooperative agreement, which will include an in-country visibility plan.