USAID | WEST AFRICA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Funding Opportunity Title:	Human Rights for All
Announcement Type:	Annual Program Statement (APS)
Funding Opportunity No.:	APS-624-16-000002
Initial Issuance Date:	October 30, 2015
Deadline for Submission of APS Questions First Round:	November 16, 2015
Deadline for Submission of Concept Papers First Round:	December 14, 2015
Deadline for Submission of APS Questions Second Round:	April 24, 2016
Deadline for Submission of Concept Papers Second Round:	May 22, 2016
APS Closing Date:	October 31, 2016

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The United States Government, as represented by the United States Agency for International Development in Ghana, West Africa (USAID/WA) is seeking concept papers from qualified and eligible organizations for activities to last between 12 to 18 months to build a professional and effective community of human rights defenders and civil society organizations capable of protecting the human rights of all individuals and groups in Cote d'Ivoire in accordance with international human rights norms.

This APS is issued under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA). Awards will be made in accordance with federal regulations and agency policy. See "Section VI: Federal Award Administration Information" for details.

Competition under this APS will consist of a two-step process where applicants first submit a concept paper for initial review. All concept papers received will be evaluated for responsiveness to the application criteria specified in this Annual Program Statement (APS).

USAID will then request applicants successful in the first stage (i.e., selected concept papers) to submit a full application. The full application will offer the applicant an opportunity to explain its technical approach in more detail.

This APS is being issued and consists of this cover letter and the following:

1. Section I, Funding Opportunity Description;
2. Section ll, Federal Award Information;
3. Section Ill, Eligibility Information;
4. Section IV, Application and Submission Information;
5. Section V, Application Review Information;
6. Section VI, Federal Award Administration Information;
7. Section VII, Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s);
8. Section VIII, Other Information; and
9. Annexes

This APS is open for one year, during which it is anticipated that two (2) rounds of review will take place; however applicants are warned that there is no guarantee that funding will remain available after the initial round of review. Over the course of the APS USAID anticipates making a number of awards with a range of estimated values as laid out in the APS. The amount of available funding and the number of awards are subject to change. USAID reserves the right to fully or incrementally fund application(s) as well as to partially fund selected application(s).

Concept papers must be received by the closing date and time indicated at the top of this cover letter and pursuant to the instructions contained in the APS. Any questions concerning this APS must be submitted in writing to Shahid Pervaiz at spervaiz@usaid.gov no later than the dates stated on the cover page of this APS. If it is determined that the answer to any question(s) is of sufficient importance to warrant notification to all prospective recipients, a Questions and Answers document, and/or if needed, an amendment to the APS, will be issued.

Issuance of this APS does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Concept papers are submitted at the risk of the applicant; should circumstances prevent award of an agreement, all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

In addition, final award of any resultant agreement cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award.

If you have any questions, please contact Shahid Pervaiz, Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist at spervaiz@usaid.gov copying me at lnwokora@usaid.gov.

Sincerely,

Leslie-Ann NWokora
Regional Agreement Officer
USAID/West Africa

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SECTION I - FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Section 200, Appendix I, this section includes: (A) a general description of the proposed program; and (B) a statement identifying the authorizing legislation.

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Set forth below is a description of the proposed program, covering:

1. Introduction;
2. Background;
3. Objectives; and
4. Local Capacity Development/Sustainability/Gender

1. **Introduction**

Côte d'Ivoire is a country shaken from a decade of civil war, conflict and corruption. Unrest in the early 2000s and violence following the 2011 Presidential elections broke down many core governmental institutions and eroded public confidence. USAID, in a bilateral agreement with the Ivoirian government, is working to strengthen Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance in Côte d'Ivoire. Current programming has focused on building up key government institutions in order to improve citizen confidence in government and reduce the potential for a resurgence of violence. Programs in Legislative Strengthening, Judicial Sector Support, and Electoral Reform have shown great success in improving service delivery, strengthening the capacity of government institutions and processes, and encouraging more outreach and communication with citizens. With some of these key institutions improved, USAID has identified civil society as a target group for additional support.

2. Background

Cote d'Ivoire is in the process of recovering from over 10 years of civil unrest. Many of the problems leading up to the crisis stemmed from discrimination and hate speech particularly around the right to nationality. As the country looks forward to the 2015 Presidential elections, issues surrounding reconciliation and human rights abuses, both past and current, present a serious risk to the stability that has been maintained since the end of the hostilities in 2010. While there has been some progress towards a return to the pre-2002 "model" country of Cote d'Ivoire, the inability to extensively address issues such as politically driven human rights abuses, and backsliding in areas of SBGV and LGBT rights, increases the risk of a return to instability. A recent rise in incidents targeting LGBT communities and the potential for a rise in hate crimes and discrimination surrounding the elections, shows a deeper problem in how human rights are viewed within the country. A system of overly politicized civil society organizations, a government that lacks of capacity to promote human rights in a comprehensive way, and a lack of a citizen-led platform for collaboration have all hindered the potential for true human rights protectors to institute change and move forward relevant human rights causes. Despite these challenges, pockets of human rights defenders are emerging during a time when Cote d'Ivoire is showing progress in economic growth and stability. Negative media, hate speech, and an overly politicized political system can be counteracted through an organized and strong civil society led human rights campaign, helping to promote rights nationally and to prevent the resurgence of violence.

3. Objectives

Program objectives and guidance governing this program are specified below.

3.1 Program Objectives

The objective of this project is to build the capacity of local human rights organizations while also improving the understanding of their role as advocates, allies, and spokespersons for highly vulnerable, politicized, and underserved populations. This project will build the capacity of local human rights organizations while also improving their understanding of their role as advocates, allies, and spokespersons for highly vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved populations. Analysis of the stakeholder consultations indicates that entities would benefit from targeted capacity building and organizational development assistance: organizational management, advocacy training, and multi-media and communications training, including sensitive message formation and national social campaign planning. Supporting sub grants for local organizations will help to ensure this long-term commitment to human rights.

The goal of this activity is to better equip CSOs to combat human rights abuses, particularly for LGBT and vulnerable populations. Some illustrative activities are listed below. Applicants are encouraged to develop their own creative activities.

1. Train CSOs on universal human rights, including LGBT human rights;
2. Improve the capacity of CSOs to advocate for vulnerable populations;
3. Refine outreach activities and support the development of effective communication plans of CSOs;
4. Train CSOs on transitional justice and victims' rights to push through the pending cases for trial and judgment; and
5. Support direct lines of communication between the GOCI, CSOs, and individuals whose human rights have been violated.

4. Local Capacity Development/Sustainability/Gender

4.1 Local Capacity Development

Local capacity development will be improved through this award by taking steps to ensure that local partners have developed the capacity to properly implement and monitor USAID awards. Further, USAID believes that building capacity of local organizations will ensure sustainability of results.

4.2 Sustainability

Elements of the activity that increase the prognosis for sustaining interventions include: quality planning and designing of activities; evidence-based interventions; widespread buy-in of activities; transfer of critical and relevant skills and knowledge; use of enabling strategies that encourage a learning-by-doing approach; and use of existing talent, resources, mechanisms, and forums for project interventions whenever possible, in order to take advantage of and build on local knowledge and capacities. The interventions of the activity will contribute to: the development of technical competence; enhancing human capacity; improving management systems, infrastructure and relationships with government programs; and promotion of financial independence.

4.3 Gender

Gender is a key element to this program and should be incorporated in every activity. Applicants are expected to go above and beyond the general gender based indicators and should instead clearly outline how gender issues will be addressed and highlighted throughout the program.

B. AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION/APPLICABILITY OF 2 CFR 200

This award is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. 2 CFR 200 is applicable to an award to a U.S. organization made under this APS. The following provision will be included in any award to a U.S. entity resulting from this APS.

APPLICABILITY OF 2 CFR PART 200/700 (JANUARY 2015)
(a) All provisions of 2 CFR Part 200/700 and all Standard Provisions attached to this APS are applicable to the recipient and to sub recipients which meet the definition of "Recipient" in 2 CFR Part 200, unless a section specifically excludes a sub recipient from coverage. The recipient shall assure that sub recipients have copies of all the attached standard provisions.

(b) For any sub awards made with Non-US sub recipients the Recipient shall include the applicable "Standard Provisions for Non-US Nongovernmental Grantees." Recipients are required to ensure compliance with monitoring procedures in accordance with OMB Circular A-133.

[END OF SECTION I]

SECTION II – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

A. ESTIMATE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/West Africa intends to award between $400,000 and $700,000 under this Annual Program Statement (APS), for approximately 2 - 3 grants lasting from twelve (12) to eighteen (18) months. The majority of grants will be between $200,000 and $700,000 over twelve to eighteen months, although USAID will consider awarding smaller or larger grants. The maximum award amount for any one grant is not expected to exceed $1 million. However, in exceptional circumstances, this amount may be adjusted depending on the grant timeframe, the applicant's institutional capacity, the geographic scope of the proposed program, and the type and extent of partnership or other teaming arrangements that are proposed. USAID reserves the right to fund any one or none of the applications submitted.

USAID is using this APS as a mechanism that gives applicants freedom and time to propose innovative solutions to identified development issues and gives USAID flexibility in the timing, number and amount of activities to fund, if any, in line with the specified goals

B. START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance anticipated herein is between twelve (12) months and eighteen (18) months. The estimated start date for the first award(s) under this APS is on or about March 2016.

C. TYPE OF AWARD

USAID/West Africa will use cooperative agreements, as the Annual Program Statement (APS) themes and activities will require substantial involvement by USAID. USAID's Substantial Involvement may include:

- USAID approval of the recipient's Annual Work/Implementation Plans;
- USAID approval of key personnel funded under the Agreement;
- USAID approval of the program's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plans, including indicators;
- USAID approval of sub-recipients (sub-grants/sub-awards) and corresponding activities;
- USAID monitoring to permit direction and redirection because of interrelationships with other projects; and
- USAID branding and marking plan must be received and approved before awards may be made.

D. SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT:

Recipients must be registered on the System for Award Management (SAM) website (www.sam.gov) before they can receive any funding. Recipients will be provided further information regarding registration upon being selected for award.

[END OF SECTION II]

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

1. General: This APS is issued worldwide as a public notice to ensure that all interested and qualified organizations have a fair opportunity to submit applications for funding. Eligible organizations include:

- Registered U.S. and non-U.S. private non-governmental organizations,
- Registered U.S. and non-U.S. non-profit organizations,
- For-profit organizations willing to forego profit, and
- Public international organizations.

Types of organizations could include foundations, faith-based organizations (FBOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), civil society organizations (CSO), Colleges and Universities, private organizations and international non-governmental organizations, professional associations, and other international organizations.

Other U.S. Government departments and agencies may not apply for USAID funding under this APS.

All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law.

2. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. private non-profit organizations may apply for USAID funding under this APS. Foreign government-owned parastatal organizations from countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts are ineligible.

3. For-Profit Organizations: Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. for-profit organizations may apply for USAID funding under this APS. Potential for-profit applicants should note that, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400(g), the payment of fee/profit to the prime recipient under grants and cooperative agreements is prohibited. Forgone profit does not qualify as cost-sharing or leveraging. However, if a prime recipient has a (sub)-contract with a for-profit organization for the acquisition of goods or services (i.e., if a buyer-seller relationship is created), fee/profit for the (sub)- contractor is authorized. Non-U.S. for-profit organizations in countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts are ineligible.

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

5. Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs): A local or indigenous PVO, which by definition is a non-U.S. PVO operating in the same foreign country in which it is organized, that is not already registered with USAID is eligible to receive funding, however, such organizations

are encouraged to consider registration. In accordance with 22 CFR 203, a U.S. PVO and an “International PVO" which by definition is a non-U.S. PVO that performs development work in one or more countries other than the country in which it is domiciled, must be registered with USAID to be eligible to receive funding. For more information on registering with USAID as a PVO, please see: http://idea.usaid.gov/ls/pvo.

6. Public International Organizations (PIOs): A Public International Organization (PIO) is an international organization composed principally of countries, or any other organization that USAID designates as a PIO. For a complete list, see http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/308maa.

7. Pre-Award Risk Assessment: In order for an award to be made under this APS, the USAID Agreement Officer must make a positive risk assessment determination, as discussed in ADS 303.3.9. This means that the applicant:

- Possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management competence to plan and carry out the assistance program to be funded;
- Will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID;
- Has a satisfactory record of performance;
- Has a satisfactory record of business integrity; and
- Is otherwise qualified to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.

Failure to meet these thresholds will lead to removal from consideration of an award.

8. New Partners: USAID encourages applications from new partners. However, resultant awards to these organizations may be delayed if USAID must undertake necessary pre-award reviews of these organizations to determine a risk assessment for the organization, as stated above. These organizations should take this into account and plan their implementation dates and activities accordingly.

9. Multiple Applications: Applicant organizations may submit more than one application.

10. Local Organizations and Sub-Agreements: Local organizations (lead host-country investigators or institutions) may enter into sub-agreements with technical-assistance providers locally or based in other countries including the United States. However, sub-agreements are limited to less than 50% of the total award budget.

Recipients are not required to register with USAID or have previous experience with USAID. When considering making an award to an organization with limited or no previous USAID experience, USAID might determine to conduct a pre-award survey which is a risk assessment to determine the organization’s capabilities to complete the proposed activities.

B. COST SHARING OR MATCHING

Cost sharing (matching) refers to the non-USG resources a recipient contributes to the total cost of an agreement. Cost-sharing is suggested but not required for applications submitted in response to this APS. USAID encourages applicants to propose cost sharing to demonstrate their commitment to the proposed activities and to promote sustainability, as appropriate. This is particularly pertinent to international or non-local partners, as these entities may have opportunities to leverage other resources to support USAID program goals in partnership with USAID. Cost share should consist of allowable costs under the applicable USG cost principles (see 2 CFR 200.29 and Required As Applicable Standard Provision No. 14 for Non-US Nongovernmental Recipients).

[END OF SECTION III]

SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

For the purposes of this APS, the term “applicant” is used to refer to the legal entity or organization submitting the application.

A. ADDRESS TO REQUEST APPLICATION PACKAGE

The application package can be accessed at www.grants.gov. Applicants may also contact Shahid Pervaiz via email at spervaiz@usaid.gov for copies of the application package if they have accessibility problems.

B. CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applications received under this APS will be reviewed based on the merit criteria set forth in Section V of this APS. The application process will be completed in two-stages:

Stage One
- Applicants are required to submit short concept papers and budget as per the instructions described in Section IV B.1 (below).
- USAID/West Africa will only review concept papers using the criteria detailed below.
- Applicants should submit their concept paper via e-mail to spervaiz@usaid.gov.
- USAID/West Africa will notify applicants, if appropriate, based on the initial merit review, via email to request them to expand the concept paper into a full application as describe in Section IV.B.2 (below).

Stage Two
- USAID/West Africa will invite the Applicants whose concept papers received the highest rating to participate and submit an application for the second stage.

Note: Do NOT submit a full application unless requested to do so by USAID.

B1. Content and Form of Concept Paper Submission

Concept papers shall be submitted electronically and by the deadlines, as specified on the cover page of this Annual Program Statement. Concept papers should be prepared according to the structural format set forth below.

Applicants will prepare and submit a concept paper not to exceed five pages and a budget, not to exceed 1 page. The Concept Paper (including cover page) and Budget format is as follows:

B1.a. Cover page - The cover page must include: 1) APS Number APS-624-16-0000XX;
2) The project title;
3) Name of applicant organization;
4) Point of contact for organization (contact name, title, telephone number and email address); and
5) Total budget estimate

B1.b. Concept paper body (5 page limit) – Concept papers should follow the format below:
1) Present a specific problem statement;
2) Present proposed solution/technical approach;
3) Present a basic implementation plan;
4) Present a basic organizational structure of the project; and
5) Identify tangible expected results of the program.

B1.c. Budget format (1 page limit) – budgets must be presented in a table and follow the format below:
1) Personnel;
2) Fringe Benefits;
3) Travel;
4) Equipment;
5) Supplies;
6) Program Direct Costs;
7) Other direct/indirect costs (indirect costs are only authorized for organizations with a NICRA);
8) Summary of total costs.

These costs must be in a summary format for the entire period of the proposed activity.

No further details regarding the concept paper or budget will be required until and unless a full application is requested by USAID.

Concept papers that are incomplete or not directly responsive to the terms, conditions, and provisions of this APS may be eliminated from further consideration. Concept papers shall be prepared in English or French. Concept papers in any other language shall be eliminated from further consideration.

Concept Papers will be evaluated according to the criteria described in Section V. If applicants are successful at the Concept Paper stage, USAID will request the applicant to submit a Full Application in line with the format described below and any additional instructions from the Agreement Officer. Instructions from the Agreement Officer will include a deadline for the submission of the Full Application. The Full Application will offer the applicant an opportunity to explain the technical approach in more detail. The Full Applications will be evaluated according to criteria described in Section V.

B2. Content and Form of Full Application Submission

For those applicants requested to submit full applications, the exact due dates for full applications will be communicated separately when full applications are requested.

The full application should be submitted in two parts: a. Merit Review Application, and b. Cost and Other Relevant Information Application. These parts shall be prepared according to the structural format set forth below.

NOTE: Those with successful concept papers will receive additional instruction from the Agreement Officer. This guidance should be considered as sample instruction only and is indicative of what the applicant can expect if and when invited to submit a full application. B2.a. Merit Review Application Requirements and Format B2.a.i. Requirements: The Technical Application should:

a. Be written in English or French;

b. Be written on letter/A4 size paper and legible (illegible applications will not be considered);

c. Be single spaced and paginated with each page consecutively numbered;

d. Not exceed fifteen (15) pages (not including the cover page, executive summary, and other attachments). Pages in excess of this stated limit will not be considered.

B2.a.ii. Format: The Full Technical Application should include:

a. Cover Page
b. Executive Summary
c. Merit Review Application Body
d. Annexes:
1. Draft Workplan
2. Draft M&E Plan
3. Letters of support from all sub-partners
4. Resumes and letters of commitment for proposed key personnel.
5. Relevant past experience during the past three years

Cover Page: A single page with the names of the organizations/institutions involved in the proposed application, with the lead or primary applicant clearly identified. In addition, the Cover Page should include information about a contact person for the prime applicant, including this individual's name (both typed and his/her signature), title or position with the organization/institution, address, e-mail address, and telephone number. Also state whether the contact person is the person with authority to contract for the applicant, and if not, that person should also be listed. This does not count against the page total for technical application.

Executive Summary: The executive summary must summarize the key elements of the applicant's technical application, including, but not limited to, the problem to be addressed, the proposed technical approach, and any cost-sharing and/or public- private partnerships, if applicable.

Merit Review Application Body: The Merit Review Application Body will contain the main parts of the technical application and shall include the following sections:

a. Technical Approach
b. Implementation Plan
c. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
d. Personnel and Management Approach

The basic purpose of this Technical Application Body is to provide the information necessary to allow USAID to fairly and completely evaluate the applicant under each of the technical evaluation criteria specified in Section V of this APS. Additional specified guidance for each Section of the Technical Application Body is set forth below.

a. Technical Approach

Applicants must address the requirements of the program description and objectives, expected results, and guiding principles. This subsection should describe in detail the proposed technical strategy and approach and comprehensively address how the applicant will achieve the objectives outlined in the Program Description over the one to three-year life of the activity. Applicants must provide a comprehensive yet concise summary of the proposed overall strategic and technical approach. This section must also set forth in sufficient detail the conceptual approach, methodology, and techniques for the implementation and evaluation of program activities and should demonstrate responsiveness to the Ivorian context.

b. Implementation Plan

The implementation plan should clearly outline links between the proposed results, conceptual approach, performance milestones, and a realistic timeline for achieving the program results. Applicants will be expected to reflect their understanding of how to strengthen systems and processes that ensure rule of law, strengthen the role of civil society in development, or empower citizens to exercise their rights and fulfill their responsibilities as set forth in the written law of West Africa to complement what is already being done in-country by the GOCI, USG, other implementing partners, and other donors. This section must include benchmarks to track the progress of the interventions throughout the life of the activity.

Because of the changing and challenging country context the recipient should be able to respond proactively to changes in the existing platform during the project period.

The implementation plan should include a description of all planned activities with sufficient detail including:

- Sequence of activities;
- Timeframes for implementing each activity;
- Outcome of each activity;
- Impact on gender equality;
- Sustainability plan

Using a tabular format, summarize main activities, objectives, indicators, and measurement methods. Succinctly explain how a particular set of activities will achieve a specific objective and how these results will be measured. Each table should contain the following:

a. Main results-oriented objectives that the program will accomplish;
b. Primary activities intended to achieve results for each stated objective;
c. Examples of key indicators that will measure the results of each objective; and
d. Methods that will be used to measure key indicators.

If the Applicant determines that a lengthy chart or other supporting documentation is helpful, this supporting documentation may be included in the Attachment/Annex if authorized.

c. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

This section should include information sufficient to properly evaluate the application under the monitoring and evaluation plan criterion set forth in below and in the request for full application. The applicants must describe how they will develop a robust and cost-effective, M&E system that will deliver a reliable evidence base. A detailed strategic framework for evaluating performance toward achieving each of the technical objectives shall be provided, including expected quantifiable program results, benchmarks and indicators to monitor progress and impact over the life of the project. The system should link the project interventions with national and project area impact. The applicant must be prepared to monitor and report results at the sub-national level; e.g. either by specific geographic locations or (if that unavailable) by district and/or sector where the applicant and its partners are operating.

The applicant is encouraged to propose a number of higher level, outcome focused indicators over the life of the program to measure higher-level results of the program.

The M&E system must be supported by an effective data quality assurance strategy. The applicant should therefore identify how it would develop a system with the government and other partners to ensure the quality of the data used for the project in the most efficient and effective manner. The applicant should include a preliminary monitoring and evaluation plan as an annex that describes the overall anticipated life of the activity outcomes, including a preliminary list of indicators, benchmarks, targets, and the potential sources of information that the applicant considers appropriate, reliable, and available to monitor the activity. This Section should also address how this data will be collected and monitored over time.

d. Personnel and Management Approach

Applicants should demonstrate capacity in management, planning, and implementation of proposed activities and provide a clear description of how the grant or cooperative agreement will be managed, including the approach to addressing potential problems. The management plan must:

- Specify the composition and organizational structure of the entire project team (including sub-partners, if any) and describe the role of each staff member named under key personnel, his or her technical expertise, and estimated amount of time he or she will devote to the program;
- If there are partners or sub-grantees in the proposal, describe how the activity would be organized to use the complementary capabilities of all sub-recipients and/or partners most effectively and efficiently;
- If there are partners or sub-grantees, Include the roles and responsibilities of each sub-grantee and/or partner; and
- If there are partners or sub-grantees, include lines of authority and communication among the prime and all proposed sub-recipients and/or partners in order to maximize efficiency and best utilize technical expertise/strengths of each partner.

Applicants are requested to develop a comprehensive staffing plan to accomplish the objectives and expected results and outcomes of the Program Description. The plan should also demonstrate an appropriate balance of skills, expertise, and efficiency. Resumes for all key personnel and any additional information for all other proposed personnel should be included in an annex. In addition, applicants should specify the qualifications and abilities of proposed personnel relevant to successful implementation of the proposed technical approach. Applicants shall choose a staffing structure and determine the additional qualifications of key staff based on their proposed technical and management approach.

Annexes: The Merit Review Application should contain annexes. The following annexes are authorized.

1. Draft Workplan
2. Draft M&E Plan
3. Letters of Support from all sub-partners
4. Resumes and Letters of Commitment for All Proposed Key Personnel
5. Relevant Past Experience for the Past Three Years

B.2.b. Cost and Other Relevant Information Application Format

The Cost and Other Relevant Information Application is to be submitted separately from the technical 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. The application must include completed SF-424 forms which can be downloaded from the web site listed above under section IV.B.

In addition, the following information should be provided in the cost application.

a. Guidelines:
- The cost application should be for the entire project period (i.e., 12 to 36 months).
- Budget should be stated in US Dollars.
- All requests for cost summaries and breakdowns should include the required cost share information in addition to the amounts anticipated to be funded by USAID/West Africa.

b. An overall budget should be included in the Cost/Business Application that provides, in detail to the individual line item, a breakdown of the costs anticipated. The types of costs should be organized based on the cost categories in the SF-424 budgets. All budgets shall include a sheet relating to the entire project period and separate sheets for each 12 month program year [applicants can alternatively include one worksheet that includes the detailed cost breakdown per year AND a project summary]. The spread sheet should indicate whether the included cost is considered programmatic or administrative as defined in Section V. The electronic version of the budgets should be provided in the unprotected Microsoft Excel format.

c. A spreadsheet should be provided that segregates the overall three-year proposed cost into program implementation costs and administrative costs.

d. The budget shall include a summary and breakdown of the costs allocated to any sub-recipient or sub-contractor involved in the activity (unless the agreement or contract is on a fixed-amount basis). The applicant has the option of including separate sub- agreement or subcontract budgets for the sake of clarity, again as an unprotected Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

e. Budget notes are required. These budget notes must provide an accompanying narrative by line item which explains in detail the basis for how the individual line item costs were derived. The budget notes must be sufficient to ensure that USAID/West Africa can determine the purpose of every cost item proposed, as well as understanding the basis for the cost estimate (units and unit cost).

f. The following information provides guidance on line item costs.

Salary and Wages - Direct salaries and wages should be proposed in accordance with the organization's personnel policies.

Fringe Benefits - If the organization has a fringe benefit rate that has been approved by an agency of the Government, such rate should be used and evidence of its approval should be provided. If a fringe benefit rate has not been so approved, the application should propose a rate and explain how the rate was determined. If the latter is used, the narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement) and the costs of each, expressed in dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

Travel and Transportation - the application should indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, and the estimated costs. Specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, duration of travel, and number of individuals traveling. Per Diem should be based on the applicant's normal travel policies.

Other Direct Costs - This includes communications, report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than insurance included in the applicant's fringe benefits), equipment (procurement plan for commodities), office rent abroad, branding/marking supplies, etc. The narrative should provide a breakdown and support for all and each other direct costs.

Indirect Costs - Local/ regional or other organizations that do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter with the US Government, these organizations should treat all indirect costs as direct costs and provide a fully- developed and supported rational for allocating or estimating how much of the indirect costs should be allocated to the program.

Seminars and Conferences – The application should indicate the subject, venue, and duration of proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs.

Foreign Government Delegations to International Conferences - Funds in this agreement may not be used to finance the travel, per diem, hotel expenses, meals, conference fees, or other conference costs for any member of a foreign government’s delegation to an international conference sponsored by a public international organization, except as provided in ADS Mandatory Reference “Guidance on Funding Foreign Government Delegations to International Conferences or as approved by the AOR [http://www.info.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/refindx3.htm].

Source and Nationality Requirements - The authorized Geographic Code for this Agreement will be 935.

Training Costs - If there are any training costs to be charged to this Agreement, they must be clearly identified.

Audit Fees - If the applicant proposes expending more than $300,000 of USAID funding during a single fiscal year of the applicant, the applicant must include funds within the budget to contract an audit, with the Statement of Work approved by USAID. Any sub awards for more than $300,000 per year or $500,000 in total are required to be audited.

g. In the case of an application where the entity receiving the award is a joint venture, partnership or some other type of group where the proposed applicant is not a legal entity, the Cost Application must include a copy of the legal relationship between the prime applicant and its partners. The application document should include a full discussion of the relationship between the applicant and its partners, including identification of the applicant with which USAID will directly engage for purposes of Agreement administration, the 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.

h. The required Certifications, including the SF 424s, should be included with the Cost Application.

i. The cost/business portion of the application should describe headquarters and field procedures for financial reporting. Discuss the management information procedure you will employ to ensure accountability for the use of U.S. Government funds. Describe program budgeting, financial, and related program reporting procedures.

j. Indicate if financial commitments were made among partners during the preparation of the application. Budgets shall indicate the amounts committed to each member of the team. Letters of commitments from partners should be included.

k. If requested by USAID/West Africa after submission of applications, please provide information on the Applicant’s financial and management status, or that of major sub- grantees and sub-recipients, including:

1. Audited financial statements for the past three years;
2. Organization chart, by-laws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable; and
3. If the applicant has made a certification to USAID that its personnel, procurement and travel policies are compliant with applicable OMB circular and other applicable USAID and Federal regulations, a copy of the certification should be included with the application. If the certification has not been made to USAID/Washington, the applicant should submit a copy of its personnel (especially regarding salary and wage scales, merit increases, promotions, leave, differentials, etc.), travel and procurement policies, and indicate whether personnel and travel 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.

l. If applicable, approval of the organization's accounting system by a U. S. Government agency including the name, addresses, and telephone number of the cognizant auditor.

m. The Cost/Business Application should also address the applicant's resources and capacity in the following areas in narrative form:

1. Have adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the Agreement;
2. Has the ability to comply with the agreement conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, non- governmental and governmental;
3. Has a satisfactory record of performance (only a brief discussion of this issue is required in the cost/business application since past performance is an evaluation factor – the applicant may wish to discuss any notable issues re its record of performance that were not discussed in the technical application);
4. Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics; and
5. Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a cooperative agreement under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO).

n. If requested by USAID after submission of applications, please provide any additional evidence of responsibility considered necessary in order for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. Please note that a positive responsibility determination is a requirement for award, and all organizations shall be subject to a pre-award survey to verify the information provided and substantiate the determination.

o. Unnecessarily elaborate applications: Unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective application in response to this APS are not desired and may be construed as an indication of the applicant's lack of cost consciousness. Elaborate artwork, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

Note: Applicants who include data in their Concept Paper or Full Application that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for merit review purposes, should:

(a) 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; and

(b) Mark each sheet of data it wishes 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."

B3. Pre-Award Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements of the Recipient (full application stage)

In addition to the certifications included in the Standard Form 424, the AO must obtain the following certifications, assurances, and other statements from both U.S. and non-U.S. organizations (except as specified below) before making an award and as otherwise required by the regulations listed in this section. The AO must also incorporate the solicitation standard provisions and provide links to the applicable award standard provisions in all solicitations.

The AO may choose to ask that the applicant submit the certifications either as part of the application or during negotiations. The AO should consider the administrative burden of requiring certifications as part of the application in light of potential delays in making the award while waiting for the certifications. The required certifications, assurances, and other statements are:

a. A signed copy of ADS 303mav, Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions, 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. Certification on Lobbying (22 CFR 227);
3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206, Prohibition of Assistance to Drug Traffickers);
4. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224; and
5. Certification of Recipient.

b. Other certifications and statements found in ADS 303mav, Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions:

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 signed copy of the Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants;

4. Representation by Organization regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or Felony Criminal Conviction (August 2014)
5. Other Statements of Recipients.

B4. DUN and Bradstreet Universal Numbering (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM) (full application stage)

Each applicant is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid DUNS number in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The Federal awarding agency will not make a Federal award to the winning applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

B5. Submission Dates and Times

All applications in response to this APS shall be due at not later than 4:00 p.m. Kigali Time on the date indicated on the cover page to this APS. Consistent with ADS 303.3.6.7, applications that are submitted late may be eliminated from the competition. If a late application is evaluated and considered for award, all similarly-situated late applications (in terms of time of receipt) will also be evaluated and considered for award.

B6. Funding Restrictions

There are no funding restrictions applicable to this APS at this time. Applicants will be reimbursed only for costs that benefit the program description and are allocable, allowable and reasonable.

B7. Other Submission Requirements

USAID will accept concept papers and applications from the qualified entities as defined in Section III of this APS. The Applicant should follow the instructions set forth herein. If an applicant does not follow the instructions, the Applicant’s Application may be down-graded and may not receive full credit under the applicable evaluation factors, or, at the discretion of the Agreement Officer, be eliminated from the competition. All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed against the evaluation factors in Section V.

B7.a. Submission, Marking and Copies

The Applicant must submit the application electronically, via email.

B7.b. Addresses

Applications shall be delivered to the following email addresses: spervaiz@usaid.gov

Telegraphic or faxed applications are not authorized for this APS and will not be accepted.

B7.c. Pre-Award Costs

Pre-award costs may be reimbursed under the resulting award, but only with the prior written approval of the Agreement Officer.

B7.d. Branding Strategy and Marking Plan

Pursuant to ADS 303.3.6.3.f and ADS 320.3.1.2, the apparently successful applicant will be requested to submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan that will have to be successfully negotiated before a cooperative agreement will be awarded. These plans shall be prepared in accordance with the guidance in ADS 320.3.1.2, 22 CFR 226.91 and the references therein. Please note that the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan shall not be included with the original application but shall be provided only after a written request of the Agreement Officer. Cost of Branding and Marking should be included in cost application.

No award will be made without USAID approved Branding Strategy and Marking Plan.

ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "assistance" apply to this APS. ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "acquisition" do not apply to this APS. ADS Chapter 320 can be found on the USAID website: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320

B7.e. Cost Sharing

Please see Section III B “Cost Sharing and Matching”.

[END OF SECTION IV]

SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

This Section includes information regarding: A. the merit review criteria that will be used; and B. a discussion of the merit review and selection process.

A. MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this particular APS. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which applicants should address in their applications and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated. The following selection criteria will be used to make an award decision. The criteria for the concept stage and full application stage are discussed below.

1. Concept Paper Merit Review Criteria

A Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) will review concept papers. The successful applicants will be invited to submit a full application.

USAID will review concept papers based on:

1. Whether the proposed activity fits within the stated themes;
2. Feasibility of the proposal;
3. Likelihood that the proposal will accomplish its goals; and
4. Whether the proposed summary budget is realistic and reasonable.

After a careful and thorough review of Concept Papers based upon the criteria above, USAID/West Africa will determine whether (a) a full application should be requested, (b) the concept paper should be rejected or (c) to hold the concept paper for further consideration.

2. Full Application Merit Review Criteria

The Selection Committee (SC) will evaluate the applications under the four criteria set forth below. These criteria are listed in descending order of importance.

1. Technical Approach;
2. Implementation Plan;
3. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan; and
4. Management Plan and Key Personnel.

a. Technical Approach: The extent to which the applicant provides a clear explanation of the problem it seeks to address, the methodology it will use to achieve its goals, the results it expects to achieve, and why that particular methodology should achieve the desired result.

b. Implementation Plan: The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a clear and realistic implementation approach with logically sequenced activities which build upon each other, with indicators that are clearly articulated, measurable, realistic, and tied to program objectives.

c. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan: Evaluation of the monitoring and evaluation plan will be focused on the extent to which it is technically sound and presents an effective plan that effectively measures and reports on meaningful indicators. The extent to which the applicant's M&E strategic framework provides a complete and feasible plan for monitoring progress, collecting data, and disseminating lessons learned and best practices will be evaluated. The Monitoring and Evaluation plan will also be evaluated with respect to whether it provides a robust data quality assurance plan and offers the type and level of proposed results, indicators, and targets that are challenging and appropriate. The realism of the expected program results, illustrative indicators, mid-term milestones/benchmarks, and end- of-project results and whether the results, indicators, etc. will lead to achievement of program goals will also be evaluated.

d. Management Plan and Key Personnel: The extent to which the proposed structure and staffing, including roles and responsibilities of any sub-grantees, demonstrates the organizational capacity to manage and implement the activity. The extent to which key personnel possess relevant and demonstrated qualifications, experience, performance and skills applicable to the key personnel positions.

II. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

As discussed above, the review and selection process utilizes a two-stage review process. The best-reviewed and most relevant concept papers will be required to provide a full application during the second phase selection process. The required format and content for the concept paper and full application are described in Section IV.

After the full application review, the selection criteria will be evaluated by a Selection Committee (SC) comprised of USAID employees, other U.S. Government representatives, and/or host country experts. The SC will make a recommendation regarding which applicant should receive the award. The final award decision is made, while considering the recommendations of the SC, by the Agreement Officer.

Prior to negotiating an actual award, the Agreement Officer will review the apparently successful applicant's budget to ensure that costs, including cost sharing, are in compliance with 2 CFR 200 and USAID's policies. The costs proposed must be determined to be reasonable, based on the Cost Application and other information, before award can be made.

The Agreement Officer must also evaluate risk of the apparently successful applicant and is charged with the final determination of whether to make an award to the apparently successful applicant. Among other issues, the apparently successful applicant's history of performance will be reviewed using the reference information contained in the Merit Review Application, along with any other information deemed relevant by the Agreement Officer or Selection Committee.

Authority to obligate the Government: the Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either an Agreement signed by the Agreement Officer or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

[END OF SECTION V]

SECTION VI – FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. FEDERAL AWARD NOTICES

The Cooperative Agreement signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorizing document, which shall be transmitted to the Recipient for countersignature to the authorized agent of the successful organization electronically, to be followed by original copies for execution.

An award will be made only by the USAID/West Africa Agreement Officer upon his/her signature to incur costs. He/she will only do so after making a positive responsibility determination that the applicant possesses, or has the ability to obtain, the necessary management competence in planning and carrying out assistance programs and that it will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID.

Notification will also be made electronically to unsuccessful applicants pursuant to ADS 303.3.7.1.b.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

No deviations are currently contemplated to the standard provisions for the cooperative agreement contemplated by this APS. The standard provisions to be used will be the Mandatory Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients or the Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients (other types of provisions may be used if other types of eligible organizations, e.g. Public International Organizations, are selected for award).

The following regulations and policies are expected to govern award administration.

- For U.S. organizations, 2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, OMB Circulars, and the Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients will be applicable.
- For non-U.S. organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients will apply. While 2CFR 200 does not directly apply to non-U.S. applicants, the Agreement Officer will use the standards of 2CFR 200 in the administration of the award.
- For Public International Organizations (PIOs), the Standard Provisions for Grants to Public International Organizations, along with selected provisions from the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients and other negotiated provisions, will be used.

These documents may be accessed through the internet as follows:

- 2 CFR 200: http://www.ecfr.gov/
- 2 CFR 700: http://www.ecfr.gov/
- OMB Circulars: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html
- Standard Provisions for U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303maa.pdf
- Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf

- Standard Provisions Public International Organizations: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/308mab.pdf
- FAR Part 31: https://www.acquisition.gov/far/html/FARTOCP31.html

You may contact Shahid Pervaiz via email at spervaiz@usaid.gov for copies of these regulations.

C. REPORTING

The recipient shall be responsible to USAID/West Africa for all matters related to the execution of the agreement. Specifically, the recipient shall report to the Agreement Officer (AO) and to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR), who will be designated by the AO prior to award.

1) Work Plan

The Recipient will submit its detailed Monitoring and Evaluation plan for the life of the program within 90 days of the award. For projects of over one year, this plan should be updated annually and submitted to USAID for approval 30 days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. This plan will include a robust set of indicators and targets to measure both short- and medium-term outcomes and long-term impacts. It will also describe relevant data collection and assessment procedures and quality control mechanisms. The plan will describe how relevant data and analysis will inform adaptive management of the program.

2) Monitoring and Evaluation plan

The Recipient will submit its detailed Monitoring and Evaluation plan for the life of the program within 90 days of the award. For projects of over one year, this plan should be updated annually and submitted to USAID for approval 30 days prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. This plan will include a robust set of indicators and targets to measure both short- and medium-term outcomes and long-term impacts. It will also describe relevant data collection and assessment procedures and quality control mechanisms. The plan will describe how relevant data and analysis will inform adaptive management of the program.

3) Quarterly Progress and Financial Reports

The Recipient will submit separate Quarterly Progress and Financial reports to USAID/West Africa within 30 days after the end of each quarter of the fiscal year during the performance period. The Quarterly Progress Reports shall include the following information:

- A summary of key achievements;

- Actual achievements of the quarter that should be presented in quantitative terms whenever possible and described in a narrative that relates activities, products, and results established in the work plan. Progress on performance data should be presented for the quarter and also cumulatively; and

- Information on management issues, including administrative or coordination problems.

Each Quarterly Progress Report shall include a cumulative list of report/studies/documents sent to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC). Upon receiving AOR approval, the approved Quarterly Progress Report shall be submitted to the USAID's DEC.

4) Annual Report

If the project is for longer than one year, the Recipient will submit an Annual Report to USAID/West Africa each year within 30 days after the end of the fiscal year. The Annual Report shall contain the following information: i) a summary of key achievements; ii) a comparison of actual accomplishments against goals established for the period in the annual work-plan; iii) cumulative quantitative Monitoring and Evaluation data, including information on progress towards targets, and explanations of any issues related to data quality; iv) a summary of funds expended during the fiscal year by funding source; v) a cumulative list of report/studies/documents sent to USAID's DEC; vi) lessons learned and success stories, vii) information on major challenges and constraints faced during the performance period being reported; and viii) prospects for the next year's performance. Upon receiving AOR approval, the approved Annual Report shall be submitted to the USAID's DEC.

5) Final Report

The Recipient shall submit a draft of the final report to the AOR within 90 days following the estimated completion date of the cooperative agreement. This Final Report will include the following information: i) overall program accomplishments, presented in quantitative terms and described in a narrative that relates activities, products, and results to the Performance, Monitoring, and Evaluation Plan; ii) discussion of why unexpected progress, positive or negative, was made toward the planned results; if the performance monitoring system (indicators) indicates that expected results were not achieved, the partner shall seek to determine and explain the reason; and iii) analysis of lessons learned, summary of responses to problems encountered during project implementation, and a bibliography of all products, tools, reports, and studies produced through the project. Upon receiving AOR approval, the approved Final Report shall be submitted to the USAID's DEC.

The reports described above are in addition to any financial or performance reporting otherwise required under the standard provisions of the Agreement. Copies of all required financial reports will be submitted to the Agreement Officer's Representative at USAID/West Africa.

DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE CLEARINGHOUSE REQUIREMENTS

Consistent with ADS 540 Development experience documentation may be submitted

- Online: http://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/information-resources/development-experience-clearinghouse-dec

- By mail (for pouch delivery):

USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse
M/CIO/ITSD/KM/DEC
RRB M.01-010
Washington, DC 20523-6100

For questions on DEC submissions, contact
M/CIO/ITSD/KM/DEC

Telephone: +1 202-712-0579
E-mail: DocSubmit@usaid.gov

D. ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

1. General

A. 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 (2 CFR 200.322) 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 of this Request for Applications.

B. In addition, the contractor/recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

C. No activity funded under this Grant will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 2CFR 200.322 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.")

2. Implementation Plans

A. As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the recipient, in collaboration with the USAID AOR and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this grant to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

B. If the Recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall 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.

C. 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.

[END OF SECTION VI]

SECTION VII– FEDERAL AWARD AGENCY CONTACT(S)

Points of Contacts:

1. **Agreement Officer for the Award(s) resulting from this APS:**
   Leslie-Ann NWokora or his successor
   Regional Acquisitions and Assistance Office (RAAO)
   USAID West Africa, Accra Ghana
   E-mail Address: lnwokora@usaid.gov

2. **Point of Contact for Questions regarding this APS:**
   Shahid Pervaiz, Senior Acquisition and Assistance Specialist USAID/West Africa
   Accra, Ghana
   Email: spervaiz@usaid.gov

[END OF SECTION VII]

SECTION VIII – OTHER INFORMATION

The following additional information is provided in this Section: Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-Governmental
Recipients: http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/3 03maa.pdf

Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Recipients:
http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf
The mandatory and other applicable standard provisions for all organization types are available on the USAID internet
site http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf

USAID Rights and Funding: Issuing this APS does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the US Government, nor does it commit the US Government to pay for the costs incurred in the submission of an application. Further, the US Government reserves the right to reject any or all applications received, or to negotiate separately with an applicant, if such an action is considered to be in the US Government interest.

Small Business: Applicants are encouraged to use small business concerns on sub-awards as appropriate.

BRANDING STRATEGY (ASSISTANCE) (JUNE 2012)

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Branding Strategy," describing how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens.

b. The request for a Branding Strategy, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application.

These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

e. The Branding Strategy must include, at a minimum, all of the following:

(1) All estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth.

(2) The intended name of the program, project, or activity.

(i) USAID requires the applicant to use the "USAID Identity," comprised of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "from the American people" as found on the USAID Web site at transition.usaid.gov/branding, unless Section VI of the RFA or APS states that the USAID Administrator has approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.
(ii) USAID prefers local language translations of the phrase "made possible by (or with) the generous support of the American People" next to the USAID Identity when acknowledging contributions.
(iii) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.
(iv) If branding in the above manner is inappropriate or not possible, the applicant must explain how USAID's involvement will be showcased during publicity for the program or project.
(v) USAID prefers to fund projects that do not have a separate logo or identity that competes with the USAID Identity. If there is a plan to develop a separate logo to consistently identify this program, the applicant must attach a copy of the proposed logos. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute 16 logo, seal, or tagline.

(3) The intended primary and secondary audiences for this project or program, including direct beneficiaries and any special target segments.
(4) Planned communication or program materials used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries.
(i) Describe the main program message.
(ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcement, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.
(iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this program or project to host country citizens, such as media releases, press conferences, public events, and so forth. Applicant must incorporate the USAID Identity and the message, "USAID is from the American People."
(iv) Provide any additional ideas to increase awareness that the American people support this project or program.

(5) Information on any direct involvement from host-country government or ministry, including any planned acknowledgement of the host-country government.
(6) Any other groups whose logo or identity the applicant will use on program materials and related materials. Indicate if they are a donor or why they will be visibly acknowledged, and if they will receive the same prominence as USAID.

f. The Agreement Officer will review the Branding Strategy to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Branding Strategy will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement

[END OF PROVISION]

USAID DISABILITY POLICY - ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2004)

a. The objectives of the USAID Disability Policy are (1) to enhance the attainment of United States foreign assistance program goals by promoting the participation and equalization of opportunities of individuals with disabilities in USAID policy, country and sector strategies, activity designs and implementation; (2) to increase awareness of issues of people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries; (3) to engage other U.S. government agencies, host country counterparts, governments, implementing organizations and other donors in fostering a climate of nondiscrimination against people with disabilities; and (4) to support international advocacy for people with disabilities. The full text of the policy paper can be found at the following website:
pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDABQ631.pdf

b. USAID therefore requires that the recipient not discriminate against people with disabilities in the implementation of USAID funded programs and that it make every effort to comply with the objectives of the USAID Disability Policy in performing the program under this grant or cooperative agreement. To that end and to the extent it can accomplish this goal within the scope of the program objectives, the recipient should demonstrate a comprehensive and consistent approach for including men, women and children with disabilities.

[END OF PROVISION]

MARKING PLAN – ASSISTANCE (JUNE 2012)

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and 18 negotiate a "Marking Plan," detailing the public communications, commodities, and program materials, and other items that will visibly bear the "USAID Identity," which comprises of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "from the American people." The USAID Identity is the official marking for the Agency, and is found on the USAID Web site at http://www.usaid.gov/branding. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

b. The request for a Marking Plan, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

e. The Marking Plan must include all of the following:

(1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the applicant plans to produce and which will bear the USAID Identity as part of the award, including:
(i) Program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other sites physical in nature;
(ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audio-visual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;
(iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs; and
(iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity 19 and the applicant's identity.
(v) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.

(2) A table on the program deliverables with the following details:
(i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the USAID Identity;
(ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;
(iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;
(iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity, and
(v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.

(3) Any requests for an exemption from USAID marking requirements, and an explanation of why the exemption would apply. The applicant may request an exemption if USAID marking requirements would:
(i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for which an exemption is sought.
(ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent. The applicant must explain why each particular deliverable must be seen as credible.
(iii) Undercut host-country government “ownership” of 20 constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each particular item or product is better positioned as host-country government item or product.
(iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or commodity would impair its functionality.
(v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost beneficial or practical.

(vi) Offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate. The applicant must identify the relevant norm, and explain why marking would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.
(vii) Conflict with international law. The applicant must identify the applicable international law violated by the marking.

f. The Agreement Officer will consider the Marking Plan's adequacy and reasonableness and will approve or disapprove any exemption requests. The Marking Plan will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Marking Plan, including any approved exemptions, will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement, and will apply for the term of the award unless provided otherwise.

[END OF PROVISION]

CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (February 2012)

(a) An organization, including a faith-based organization, that is otherwise eligible to receive funds under this agreement for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, or care—

1) Shall not be required, as a condition of receiving such assistance—
(i) to endorse or utilize a multisectoral or comprehensive approach to combating HIV/AIDS; or
(ii) to endorse, utilize, make a referral to, become integrated with, or otherwise participate in any program or activity to which the organization has a religious or moral objection; and

2) Shall not be discriminated against in the solicitation or issuance of grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements for refusing to meet any requirement described in paragraph (a)(1) above.

(b) An applicant who believes that this solicitation contains provisions or requirements that would require it to endorse or use an approach or participate in an activity to which it has a religious or moral objection must so notify the cognizant Agreement Officer in accordance with the Mandatory Standard Provision titled “Notices” as soon as possible, and in any event not later than 15 calendar days before the deadline for submission of applications under this solicitation. The applicant must advise which activity(ies) it could not implement and the nature of the religious or moral objection.

(c) In responding to the solicitation, an applicant with a religious or moral objection may compete for any funding opportunity as a prime partner, or as a leader or member of a consortium that comes together to compete for an award. Alternatively, such applicant may limit its application to those activities it can undertake and must indicate in its submission the activity(ies) it has excluded based on religious or moral objection. The offeror’s proposal will be evaluated based on the activities for which a proposal is submitted, and will not be evaluated

favorably or unfavorably due to the absence of a proposal addressing the activity(ies) to which it objected and which it thus omitted. In addition to the notification in paragraph (b) above, the applicant must meet the submission date provided for in the solicitation.
[END OF PROVISION]

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.

[END OF PROVISION]

[END OF SECTION VIII]

ANNEXES

The following annexes are provided:

Annex 1 – Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements Annex 2 – Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)

Documents can be accessed at the following:

SF-424 Forms - http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp

Annex 1

CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES, AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF THE RECIPIENT (DECEMBER 2014)

Upon request for full applications the Agreement Officer will request the applicant to submit the required certifications, assurances and other statements of the recipient in line with ADS 303.3.8.

The required certifications, assurances, and other statements are:

A) A signed copy of ADS 303mav, Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions (http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf), 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) Certification Regarding Lobbying (22 CFR 227);
3) Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206, Prohibition of Assistance to Drug Traffickers);
4) Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing; and
5) Certification of Recipient

B) Other certifications and statements found in ADS 303mav, Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions (http://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) Other Statements of Recipients

These certifications, assurances and other statements are required from both U.S. and non-U.S. organizations (except as specified therein).

[END OF ANNEX 1]

Annex 2

Draft Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)

Please Locate the Document at:

http://gemini.info.usaid.gov/egat/envcomp/repository/doc/39306.docx.

[END OF ANNEX 2]