



USAID | DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Amendment 1 Issue Date: March 23, 2017

Closing Date: April 17, 2017

Closing Time: 17:00 Kinshasa time

Subject: Amendment 1 to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Number: RFA-605-17-000003

Title: Community Resilience in Central Africa

Potential Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a cooperative agreement from qualified U.S. and Non-U.S. organizations to fund an activity entitled “Counter-Lord’s Resistance Army” (C-LRA). Eligibility for this award is not restricted.

Amendment #1 to this NOFO is hereby issued to notify interested applicants of the responses to the questions received which are attached hereto. The Closing Date for Submission of Applicants has been extended to April 17, 2017. All other provisions and text of the NOFO remain unchanged.

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

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

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

The successful applicant will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the activity’s objectives. Please read each section of the NOFO.



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

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Amy McQuade", is positioned above the printed name.

Amy McQuade
Regional Agreement Officer
USAID/DRC

Questions & Answers

**NOFO Number: RFA-605-17-000003, *Community Resilience in Central Africa*
Amendment 1**

- 1. Could USAID please clarify the number of past performance references required. Five is referenced on page 42. Three is referenced on page 51.**

Answer: Five past performance references are required. The sentence on page 51 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity in Section E. 2. Review and Selection Process a. Merit Review: Past Performance, is hereby deleted and replaced by the following:

“Please provide five references that USAID can use to verify past performance.”

- 2. Could USAID please clarify how many past performance references are required for partners implementing greater than 25% of the program? Are these references considered a part of the five or three referenced in the first question above? Or are they separately counted from the five or three number?**

Answer: Five past performance references are required for partners implementing greater than 25% of the program. This requirement is in addition to the five references required for the prime applicant addressed in Question 1 above.

- 3. With regard to the Key Personnel requirements, will USAID accept an equivalent level of years of experience as a substitute for a Master's Degree or Bachelor's Degree?**

Answer: USAID will accept the substitution of years of experience for academic degrees. The following sentence, “Minimum of a Master’s Degree in a relevant field,” on page 40 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity under Section 4.f. Management Approach and Key Personnel, Chief of Party: bulletpoint 4 is hereby deleted and replaced by:

“Minimum of a Master’s Degree in a relevant field. A Master’s Degree may be substituted by a bachelor’s degree and 15 years of relevant experience as described herein.”

- 4. Could USAID please clarify if there are any Standard Indicators we should be incorporating in to our MEL plan?**

Answer: The MEL plan should include a mix of standard and custom indicators. The MEL plan submitted will not be deemed the final, but will serve as an illustrative draft, to be reviewed and

finalized in coordination with USAID upon award execution. All standard indicators are now required as applicable, meaning that any standard indicator that measures an activity proposed should be included in the MEL plan.

- 5. On page 54 of the NOFO, USAID states that “The Draft Implementation Plan for the initial research phase must be submitted as an annex to the technical application.” Can USAID please clarify if this is to be part of Annex E as part of the Illustrative First Year Implementation Plan?**

Answer: Appendix E - Illustrative First Year Implementation Plan contains both: (1.) “The Draft Implementation Plan for the initial research phase,” as described on page 54 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity in subsection a. Initial Research Phase; and (2.) the Draft Initial Implementation Plan, as described on page 55 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity in subsection b. Annual Implementation Plans and Budgets.

- 6. Could USAID please clarify the number of years of audited financials required to submit?**

Answer: Five years of audited financial reports are required.

- 7. Could USAID please provide a full Local Compensation Plan as well as definitions for the 12 professional levels referenced for local staff?**

Answer: The applicant should tailor their proposed local compensation package around the Basic Salary and Allowances Table, which was provided on page of 44 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity in sub-section d. Local Staffing Costs. USAID does not make publicly available the Local Compensation Plan.

- 8. Are there any existing waivers in effect for this program or in the countries of Democratic Republic of Congo or Central African Republic?**

Answer: The following waivers apply to USAID projects in the DRC:

DRC-Wide Waiver of Source/Nationality and Manufacturing Requirements for Motor Vehicles. This waiver allows the purchase of goods and services from Geographic Code 935 and non-U.S.-manufactured vehicles for partners implementing USAID projects in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

No USAID waivers currently exist for USAID projects in the Central African Republic.

9. Are there any mission orders in effect at this time in the countries of Democratic Republic of Congo or Central African Republic?

Answer: Mission Orders are internal documents and are not made publicly available.

10. Coordination with military actors

We applaud USAID's emphasis in the NOFO regarding "Do No Harm" principles. In Section 5.3 *Conflict Sensitivity* the NOFO states that:

'All elements of the activity must demonstrate conflict sensitivity. Conflict sensitivity will be essential for ensuring that programming in LRA-affected areas achieves its intended outcomes. Recognizing that programming can have both positive and negative impacts, this activity will abide in all cases by the "do no harm" principle.'

Nonetheless, we are concerned about references in the NOFO to potential collaboration with military actors, which if realized, could potentially put communities in harm's way. For example, In Section 5.4 "Coordination and Collaboration" the NOFO states:

'As discussed above, coordination with other USAID implementers, USG agencies, host nation governments, international organizations, multiple donors, NGOs, and other stakeholders will be crucial for the success of this activity.'

Under IR 6: *Implementation of IR 1 to IR 5 informed by ongoing research, analysis, and coordination*, the NOFO suggests the illustrative intervention:

'Conduct joint planning with the international community for any multi-actor interventions into local conflicts and humanitarian crises.'

a.) Could USAID clarify which organizations are included in the terms "stakeholders" and "the international community" implicated in cooperation and coordination?

Answer: The terms "stakeholders" and "the international community" are used to encapsulate the multitude of actors providing or facilitating community protection and recovery support in LRA-affected areas. As noted on page 24 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity, relevant actors in recent years have included the United Nations, the African Union, donor governments, military forces, and NGOs.

b.) Could USAID clarify its expectations regarding coordination and cooperation while respecting conflict sensitivity and “do no harm” principles?

Answer: USAID strongly encourages applicants to elaborate a plan for cooperation and coordination. This includes, but is not limited to, sharing information with other actors, on the basis that this will further collective efforts towards community protection and recovery support in LRA-affected areas. Do no harm principles dictate that care should be taken not to share information in a manner likely to be harmful to beneficiary communities’ security. In such cases, implementers may consider sharing information on a “need to know” basis or at a general level to demonstrate key trends and events, thus enabling coordination without jeopardizing community security.

c.) Could USAID confirm that cooperation and coordination do not include direct engagement with military actors, and that USAID will not require humanitarian organizations that subscribe to the NGO Code of Conduct and humanitarian principles to cooperate and collaborate directly with military actors?

Answer: As noted on pages 24-25 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity, USAID believes that a coordinated approach is critical such a complex, rapidly changing, and remote environment, where no single actor has perfect access to information about local conditions. Accordingly, USAID has emphasized its strong preference that the implementer of the Community Resilience in Central Africa activity coordinate closely and proactively with other stakeholders in LRA-affected areas. As noted in the NOFO, relevant actors have in recent years included the United Nations, the African Union, donor governments, military forces, and NGOs.

11. Sharing of information

Under Sub-IR 2.3: *Security and conservation trends analysis shared among stakeholders involved in community and wildlife protection*, the NOFO suggests illustrative interventions such as:

‘Exchange of real-time information among stakeholders in a way that contributes to effective responses to security threats’

Under IR 6: *Implementation of IR 1 to IR 5 informed by ongoing research, analysis, and coordination*, the NOFO suggests illustrative interventions including:

‘Facilitate the efficient and timely flow of information between international, national, and local stakeholders on security threats, avoiding duplication with other C-LRA stakeholders’

Because sustainability of community-operated information collection systems depends on these platforms being owned by the communities, any information collected through these platforms becomes the property of the communities themselves. Sharing of this information should therefore be left to the discretion of these communities.

a.) Could USAID clarify which organizations are included in the terms “stakeholders” and “the international community” implicated in the sharing of real-time information?

Answer: The terms “stakeholders” and “the international community” are used to encapsulate the multitude of actors providing or facilitating community protection and recovery support in LRA-affected areas. As noted on page 24 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity, relevant actors in recent years have included the United Nations, the African Union, donor governments, military forces, and NGOs. Applicants are strongly encouraged to elaborate a plan for the sharing of information “in a timely fashion” (as opposed to “in real time,” which is not a term used in this Notice of Funding Opportunity) in accordance with “do no harm” principles.

12. Past performance references

On page 42 of the NOFO, it is noted that

‘Applicants must submit a list of the five most recent U.S. Government or other donor funded contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, etc.’

However, on page 51 (related to evaluation criteria), the NOFO states,

‘Please provide three references that USAID can use to verify past performance.’

a.) Is the list of the 5 most recent awards the same as the past performance references submitted in Appendix A, or are these different/additional?

Answer: Yes. USAID confirms that the list of the 5 most recent awards are the same as the past performance references submitted in Appendix A.

b.) How many past performance references must an applicant submit – 5 or 3?

Answer: Please see answer to Question 1 above.

c.) Are proposed sub-recipients’ (exceeding 25% of the total cost of the activity) past performance references included in the total number of PPRs submitted by the

applicant, or are they additional/separate? If additional/separate, how many PPRs may be provided for each sub-recipient?

Answer: Please see answer to Question 2 above.

d.) Could USAID provide a template for the Past Performance Information Appendix?

Answer: No. Please see page 42 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity for information to be included in the Annex A: Relevant Past Performance Information.

13. Sub-recipient budgets

On page 45, it's noted that the

‘Applicant should provide a breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization, contract or sub-awardee.’

However, on page 47, it is noted that

‘Applicants who intend to utilize subawardees who will be substantially involved in implementation (i.e. receiving 25% or more of the total proposed project cost), should indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown, as well as all the information required herein for the Applicant.’

a.) Can USAID clarify whether separate detailed budgets for *all* proposed sub-awardees need to be provided, or only for those receiving 25% or more of the total proposed project cost?

Answer: Separate detailed budgets for all major sub-awardees must be included. Major subawardees are defined as those receiving more than 25% or more of the total proposed project cost.

b.) Does the applicant need to submit NICRA letters (or reviewed and audited financial statements, if applicable) for each of the proposed sub-recipients?

Answer: Applicants must submit either their latest approved NICRA letters, or audited financial statements for each of the proposed major sub-recipients.

14. MEL Plan

On page 56, it is noted that the MEL plan must include

‘a Results Framework (RF) and simplified Foreign Assistance Framework that reflect the objectives described in the award.’

a.) Can USAID clarify what is meant by a ‘simplified Foreign Assistance Framework’?

Answer: The reference to the “simplified Foreign Assistance Framework” in the Notice of Funding Opportunity page 56 in Section F.3.c. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning MEL Plan bulletpoint 3, is hereby deleted and replaced by the following:

“o The MEL Plan must be based on the illustrative plan submitted with the Applicant’s proposal, but include edits to coordinate with counter-wildlife trafficking programming, and as directed by USAID. The MEL Plan will include:

1. Program Briefer: and introduction about the program deliverables/results and explanation of various MEL parts of the document.
2. Deleted.
3. A list of the indicators proposed to assess progress towards the Program goals and intermediate results, including a diagram depicting how these link to the Results Framework (RF). Indicators should include a mix of custom and standard (Foreign Assistance Framework) indicators;”

All other sub-points remain unchanged.

15. Cost share

a.) If including cost share, how should this be represented in the budget? Should applicants include an additional budget sheet, or add a column within the detailed budget (Column Z) for non-USAID resources?

Answer: Applicants should add a column for cost share, if any, to the budget template. Also the budget narrative must clearly explain the basis for the cost share.

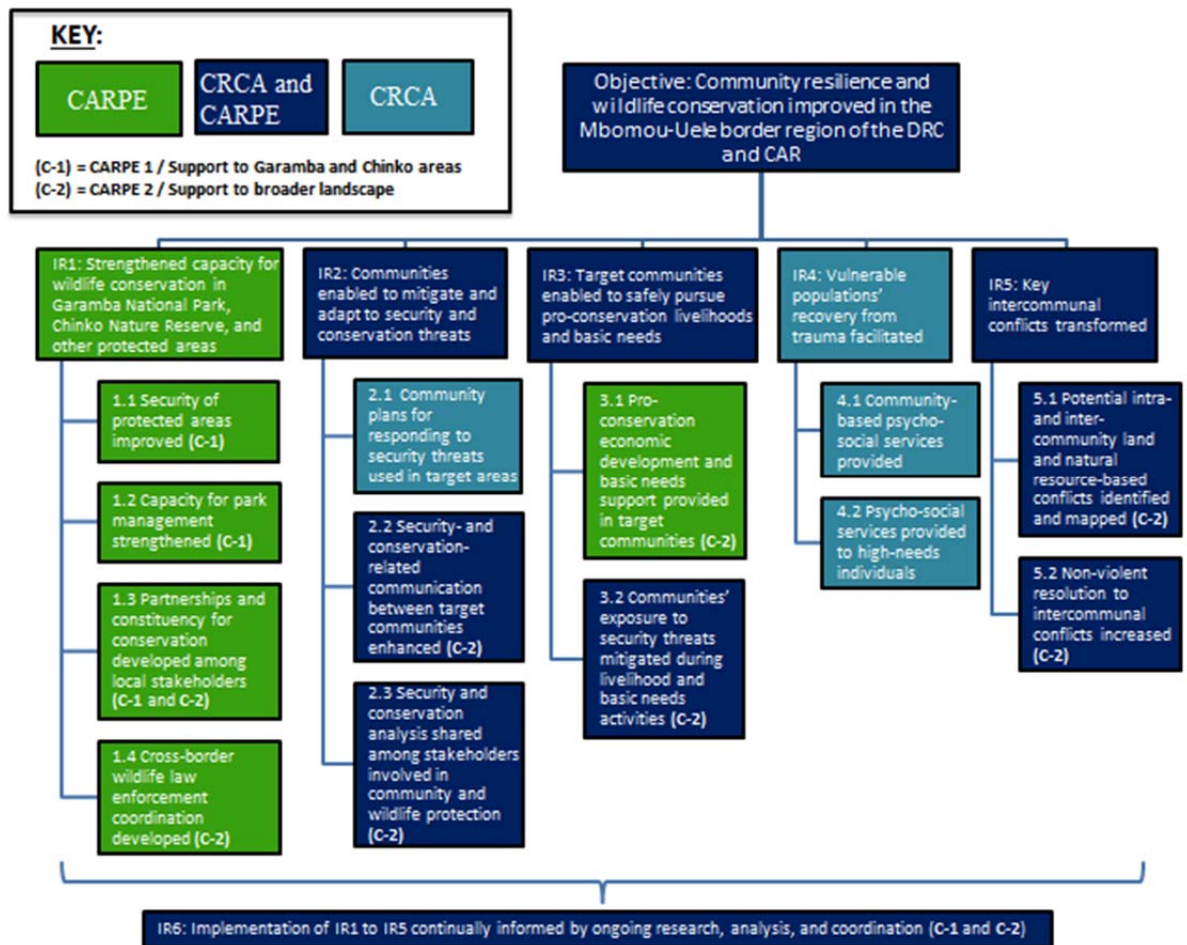
16. Results Framework

The NOFO states Intermediate Result (IR) 5 as:

‘Key intercommunal conflicts resolved.’

a.) Given the “governance and security vacuum” observed in the Mbomou-Uele region, would USAID consider rephrasing this IR to ‘Key intercommunal conflicts *transformed*,’ where “transformed” implies the putting in place of conditions that effectively prevent conflicts and enhance non-violent conflict resolution?

Answer: Yes. Table 1 Joint Results Framework on page 16 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity is hereby deleted and replaced by the following:



17. Budget Summary

a.) In the Budget Summary Tab, it appears as though formulas in the ‘Budget Summary – Award’ table are not correct. Please confirm that this table should match the totals in the ‘Budget Summary – Application’ table, and link to the Budget Detail sheet, showing amounts for Direct, Indirect and Total Costs per year and life of award.

Answer: USAID confirms that the “Budget Summary – Award” table must match the totals in the “Budget Summary – Application” table.

[END OF AMENDMENT 1]