



QUESTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS AND ANSWERS

NOFO 72052222RFA00005

IMPROVING PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION (IPE)

SECTION A:

- 1. Question:** A.2 Summary on p. 4 of the RFA states: “The IPE Activity will increase access to safe, quality basic education for children and youth *by improving socio-economic opportunities*, contributing to the multi-sectoral impacts of violence prevention efforts, and decreasing irregular migration.

- Could USAID kindly clarify how ‘increasing access to safe, quality basic education for children and youth *by improving socio-economic opportunities*’ aligns with the Purpose Statement on Page 5 of the RFA, which states that “the purpose of the IPE Activity is to increase access to safe learning environments, and to relevant, and quality basic education for children and youth, particularly the most marginalized in communities with high violence and outmigration targeted by USAID)” and the ToC found on page 15?

USAID Response: *The purpose statement on Page 5 correctly describes the main objective of the activity. Other statements illustrate ways to do it or amplify the expected outcomes of the activity in areas of USAID’s interest such as improving socio economic opportunities, and prevention of violence and irregular migration.*

- 2. Question:** Page 5 of the RFA states, “It will be particularly important, for example, to develop strategic linkages to the Mission’s violence prevention activity, Sembrando Esperanza. This could include exploring ways in which successful violence prevention interventions in schools can be leveraged in support of broader violence prevention efforts in the community. Sembrando’s work towards supporting violence prevention in the community also could be leveraged to help improve children’s safe access to and from schools.”

- Could USAID kindly provide more information on the timing and expected outcomes of the Sembrando Esperanza activity?

USAID Response: *The goal of USAID/Honduras’ Sembrando Esperanza Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) is to achieve a sustainable and measurable impact in the prevention of crime, violence and irregular migration in Honduras. The IDIQ will facilitate partnerships and strengthen local systems with a focus on facilitating the*

achievement of systemic, transformative change in areas where high irregular migration and high crime and violence overlap in Honduras, benefitting at least one million Hondurans.

Objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1: Collective Efficacy in Target Locations Improved

Support integrated community-level efforts and comprehensive services.

OBJECTIVE 2: Comprehensive Family and Youth-centered Services Expanded

Reduce individual violence and migration risk through differentiated risk levels, life stages, and the individual circumstances of affected youth.

OBJECTIVE 3: Evidence-driven advisory capabilities increased

Implement within responsive local and national frameworks that are continually adapted to contexts and emerging needs.

The duration of this IDIQ is planned to be implemented during a five-year ordering period starting in the fourth quarter of FY 2022.

3. **Question:** Page 6 of the RFA states, “Recent data from the National Institute of Statistics indicates that roughly 2 million children and youth are not currently enrolled in the system (almost 50 percent of the school-age population).”

- Can USAID kindly provide a more precise reference to this data?

USAID Response: *The reference is to the household surveys conducted by the National Institute of Statistics (INE) particularly in 2019 and 2020.*

4. **Question:** Page 7 of the RFA states, “Forty-seven percent of Honduran parents surveyed in opinion surveys stated that education would be their main reason for sending their children to another country.”

- Could USAID kindly provide access to this survey data or a reference link to published survey results?

USAID Response: *The reference is to: Department of State. (2018). Central American Child Migration Driven by Violence, Need. Unfortunately, we do not have a reference link to share.*

5. **Question:** An illustrative activity for Result 1 on page 9 of the RFA states, “Strengthen MOE’s internal controls with administrative and clerical support of core operations, technical expertise, and strategic planning.”

- Will USAID please clarify if this refers only to strengthening existing personnel capacity in internal controls or may include directly funding additional or new staff positions within the MOE?

USAID Response: *This refers only to strengthening existing personnel and internal controls.*

6. **Question:** An illustrative activity for Result 1 on page 9 of the RFA states, “Formation of an intergovernmental steering committee to respond to and address violence with representatives from both the security, youth and education sectors.”

- Could USAID kindly indicate whether such a body already exists?

USAID Response: *The Sistema Integral de Garantía de Derechos de la Niñez y la Adolescencia en Honduras (SIGADENAH) could be something to look at. However, the implementor is free to decide to work with or within SIGADENAH or work with a more specific or regional committee.*

7. **Question:** Page 10 of the RFA states, “Through a focus on integrating social and emotional learning into classroom instruction and soft skill development into **non-formal education modalities**, the Activity will aim to build skills, such as affective empathy.”

- Could USAID kindly clarify what is meant by ‘non-formal education modalities’ and how they link to transition and completion rates in Grades 6-9 in the formal system.”?

USAID Response: *There are several non-formal education modalities working in Honduras such as: The Instituto Hondureño de Educacion por Radio (IHER), EDUCATODOS, the Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial (SAT), etc. These modalities are more important to increase enrollment and to offer opportunities to out of school’s children and youth. The problem of transition and completion rates in the referred grades is both a problem for the formal system and for these non-formal modalities.*

8. **Question:** On page 10 the RFA states: “Existing alternative education modalities may need to be modified, expanded or strengthened, or new alternative modalities created, to meet the needs of learners, particularly those outside of the education system. Special attention will be given to targeting youth at risk of violence and youth in conflict with the law, identifying appropriate alternative education approaches for these groups and strategically aligning SEL skills and training to target these often-marginalized populations.”

- Should the Activity be targeting youth in conflict with the law that are currently being held at detention centers? Or only with those who are in conflict with the law but not inside detention centers?

USAID Response: *The activity will target youth at risk of violence and youth in conflict with the law but only those that are not inside detention centers.*

9. **Question:** Page 16 of the RFA states, “The awardee must be able to present new areas of assistance programming related to the following program modifier categories.”

- Should applicants present these new areas of assistance programming during the proposal stage?

USAID Response: *Subject to the availability of additional funding, USAID/Honduras may choose to invoke any of the program modifiers to implement additional interventions at any point in the life of the Activity. The concepts for these program modifiers will be developed prior to the modification of the anticipated award. Therefore, **applicants should not present** these new areas of assistance programming during the proposal stage.*

10. Question: The description of the mathematics under the Operating Parameters section on page 18 of the RFA states: “The Activity should focus on developing, piloting and implementing teacher guides and student workbooks, as well as incorporating problem solving and critical thinking into classroom mathematics instruction.”

- Should applicants’ budget for procurement, including printing and distribution, of these materials?
- Printing and distribution of math materials is listed in Section A.9 Operating Parameters, but not under the illustrative activities of the IRs. Does USAID anticipate that the cost of printing and distribution of mathematics teacher guides and student workbooks would be covered by the activity budget (or program modifier) or the government of Honduras?

USAID Response: *The improving of math is an essential part of Result 2 of the activity, particularly under IR 2.4. Given the number of IRs under this Result, not all the key expected activities are illustrated here. The purpose of parameter (e) is to call to the attention of the applicant as to what the focus of the mathematics programming should be. The applicant should budget for the procurement of some of these materials but also should leverage funds from the private sector for this purpose. In terms of distribution, the applicant should work closely with the Ministry of Education.*

11. Question: On page 16, the RFA states: “USAID may employ program modifiers to respond to evolving programmatic opportunities that require a high degree of flexibility... The “program modifier” cost line item will allow the release of separate, rapid response funds to the recipient and its partners for immediate activities to address emergencies or seize opportunities.”

Can USAID please confirm that the applicant shall only include a placeholder line item named “Program Modifiers” totaling \$20 million over the life of the project.

- a. Should these costs start in Year 2?
- b. Should they be distributed equally across years 2-5?

USAID Response: *Yes, the applicant shall include a placeholder line item named “Program modifiers” for that total over the life of the project. These costs should start in Year 2 and it should be distributed equally across years 2-5*

12. Question: The Theory of Change on p. 15 has 11 Results, yet the narrative description has 12 IRs. The IR on *Increased protective factors among students and families* appears to be missing from the Theory of Change graphic on p. 15. Should the applicant still consider this as part of this NOFO?

- a) IR 2.6 *Families and caregivers value education and have the resources and knowledge needed to ensure their children stay in school* seems to be connected to Result 3 based in the colors in the Theory of Change and the Outcome. Can you clarify if we should consider this IR under Result 2 or Result 3?
- b) Is the applicant expected to follow the Theory of Change as reflected on p. 15 or can the Results be slightly adapted based on the following statements in the NOFO that appear on pages 9, 12 and 14 in relation to each Result?
- c) Does Figure 1. IPE Activity – Theory of Change, reflect the most up-to-date version of USAID’s expected Results?

USAID Response: *Thank you for noticing. In the latest changes in the design there were some modifications made to narratives for Results 3 and 2 that are not reflected in the theory of change. Applicants are encouraged to propose their own theory of change considering the narrative descriptions. Please notice that result 3 is more related to safety issues and that is why IR 2.6 should be considered under Result 2 as it is in the narrative. The theory of Change on Page 15 should be adapted based on the narratives. Any modification to the theory of change must be reflected in figure 1 with a clear link to the outcomes and desired impact.*

13. Question: Page 16 states that: “The program modifiers have an additional total estimated budget of \$20 million. **The concepts for the program modifiers will be developed prior to the modification of the anticipated award.**”

- Can you please confirm if the proposal we are submitting should program for a total of 60 million dollars or if it should also include the 20 million of program modifiers?

USAID Response: *The proposal should be submitted for a total of \$80 million. Please see responses to questions 9 and 11 above.*

14. Question: Can you clarify if the applicant is encouraged to slightly adapt the Results (if necessary) to address system-level changes that we would propose to achieve the Outcomes and Desired Impact in the Theory of Change?

- Page 9 Result 1: Applicants are encouraged to identify the specific systems-level changes they will address along with potential interventions to support those changes and indicators to better measure impact.
- Page 12 Result 2: Applicants are encouraged to identify the specific systems-level changes related to Result 2 that they hope to address along with potential interventions to support those changes.

- Page 14 Result 3: Applicants are encouraged to identify the specific systems-level changes related to Result 3 that they will address along with potential interventions to support those changes.

USAID Response: *Yes, the applicant is encouraged to slightly adapt the results keeping always in mind the achievement of the outcomes of the activity. The identification of system-level changes for all results is key to achieve these outcomes. Please also see the response to question 12.*

15. Question: Is the applicant expected to propose interventions that can be directly implemented with this USAID Activity funding or can the applicant leverage resources from other initiatives and projects to directly achieve the project's Results?

USAID Response: *The applicant is expected to propose interventions that can be directly implemented in coordination with other initiatives and projects. The leverage of resources is expected to be done with the private sector and the government.*

16. Question: Upon review of the Results Framework, we are under the impression that IR 2.3 and 2.4 are at a higher level if compared with the remaining IRs for result 2.

- a) Are we allowed to reorganize and maybe summarize/rewrite some of the IRs to achieve Result 2?

USAID Response: *Result 2 is complex and includes a different array of intermediate results. You can reorganize and modify the IRs as needed as long as you are able to achieve Result 2.*

- b) Are we allowed to reduce the number of IRs under result 2?

USAID Response: *This can include the reduction of IRs but making sure that you address the different issues the current ones have. See also answers to questions 12 and 14.*

17. Question: On page 18 - Geographic: is USAID expecting that this Activity necessarily reaches all 40 Municipalities? When will be the time to negotiate with USAID the geographic area?

USAID Response: *The ideal geographic targets are all 40 municipalities. However, the reaching of less than 40 or the extension to all municipalities will depend on the right justification in terms of security or mainly in terms of achieving the results of the activity and the overall objective of USAID programming. The time to negotiate will be immediately upon award.*

18. Question: Page 19 states: "Engaging Local Organizations: USAID is looking for substantial local buy-in and engagement in this award. ... The Activity includes a sizable sub-grants mechanism that will be used to engage local partners as well as an

intermediary result focused specifically on strengthening the capacity of local CSOs and actors engaged in the education space.”

- Can USAID please clarify what is the total maximum amount for the sub-grants mechanisms?
- Also, can USAID please clarify what is the intermediary result focused specifically on strengthening the capacity of local CSOs?
- Intermediate result 1.3 focuses on strengthening the capacity of the education system to respond to and recover from shocks and stressors. Should the capacity building be focused only on response and recovery from shocks and stressors?
- Can USAID clarify what is meant by the following text on page 19, Section A.5, “The Activity includes a sizable sub-grants mechanism that will be used to engage local partners as well as an intermediary result focused specifically on strengthening the capacity of local CSOs and actors engaged in the education space” as there is no reference to a sub-grants mechanism in either the program description or intermediate results?

USAID Response:

- a) The total amount for sub-grants is \$10,000,000.*
- b) The intermediary result focused on strengthening the capacity of local organizations and CSOs is IR 1.2. But please also see IR 3.3 in relation to improved safety in and around schools.*
- c) Regarding IR 1.3, the idea is to build resilience of the education sector to respond to and to recover from shocks and stressors.*
- d) Finally, the activity does include a sizable sub-grant mechanism in the amount mentioned above.*

19. Question: On page 19, the NOFO references a sizable sub- grants mechanism to engage local partners and strengthen the capacity of local CSOs and actors engaged in the education space.

- Would USAID consider providing a plug figure, or percentage amount to be allocated to sub-grants?

USAID Response: *Yes, the activity will allocate \$10,000,000 for subgrants. See answer to question 18.*

20. Question: On page 18, the NOFO says “classrooms are equipped with grade-level appropriate materials to support mathematics instruction.”

- Is the applicant expected to print and distribute math teacher guides and student workbooks for all students in targeted municipalities?

USAID Response: *Please see answer to question 10 above.*

21. Question: Would small-scale infrastructure improvements to schools that reduce school-violence be allowable under this award?

USAID Response: *This activity does not require or allow any infrastructure improvements. The activity should coordinate with other activities in the USAID/Honduras mission that are focused on infrastructure.*

SECTION C:

22. Questions: Section C.3a) Limitations on Submissions states in page 25 that “There is no limitation on being included as a potential sub-awardee across multiple applications. The use of exclusive teaming arrangements is discouraged.”

- Could USAID kindly clarify if the primary intention of the discouragement of exclusive agreements is intended for agreements with local organizations?

USAID Response: *Exclusive agreements are discouraged with both local and international organizations.*

23. Question: Cost Share:

- a) Is the requirement for cost share \$8 million as a fixed amount or is it 10% of the total ceiling value?
- b) Should applicants develop a Cost Share of 10% of the base award of \$60m, or of the base award plus the three program modifiers at \$80m?
- c) If an applicant presents Cost Share of 10% based on the total \$80m award, but USAID chooses not to exercise one or more of the program modifiers during implementation, will applicants still be obligated to provide the \$80m in Cost Share?
- d) For the purposes of providing in-kind cost share, are there any specific limitations to including the time committed by teachers in project activities that are outside of their normal working hours and assigned duties?

USAID Response: *The cost share has a fixed amount of 10% of the total ceiling value. This value will be adjusted if the program modifiers are not exercised.*

Answering the specific questions:

- a) *the requirement is a cost share of 10% of the total ceiling value,*
- b) *the applicant should develop a cost share of 10% of \$80 million,*
- c) *if the program modifiers are not exercised, then the cost share will be adjusted to the new ceiling value. In terms of in-kind cost share,*
- d) *time committed by teachers in project activities that are outside their normal hours can be counted depending on the need. However, we discourage working with teachers outside their normal hours.*

SECTION D:

24. Question: Section D.4 on Page 28 appears to provide two conflicting templates for the subject line for emails.

- Can USAID kindly clarify whether the title of the program should be included in the subject line and whether the subject line should indicate whether an email is in regards to the cost application or the technical application?

USAID Response: *Yes, the title of the program should be included in the subject line of the email and should indicate that the email is in regards to “the cost application” or “the technical application”.*

25. Question: Page 30, Section D.5 on the Technical Application Format states, “The page length for the application shall not exceed fifteen (25) pages.”

- Kindly confirm if the page limit is fifteen (15) or twenty-five (25) pages and consider excluding the Executive Summary from the 25 pages, confirm Annexes C-G do not count against the 25-page limit and confirm that the applicants’ may include an Acronym Table in the technical application which will not count against the page limit.

USAID Response: *The page limit is twenty-five (25) pages. Within these pages, the Executive Summary shall not exceed three (3) pages. Annexes C-G do not count against the 25 page limit. The Acronym Table in the Technical Application will not count against the page limit.*

26. Question: Page 33 states: “(iii) A Table of Management Positions with Qualifications displaying minimum (required) and preferred qualifications/attributes to determine qualified candidates for the core management positions proposed in the Management and Staffing Plan. This table may include strategic and technical positions that are critical to implementing the proposed Technical Approach. **It will be an Annex to the Technical Application** and is not included in the page limitation.”

However, the list of annexes on page 30 does not include Table of Management Positions as one of the annexes:

iv) Annexes: (see below)

Annex C – Activity Monitoring and Learning Plan (not to exceed 3 pages)

Annex D - Activity Work Plan (not to exceed 3 pages)

Annex E - Rapid Start-Up Plan (not to exceed 3 pages)

Annex F - Sustainability and Local Engagement Plan (not to exceed 2 pages)

Annex G - Past Performance Narrative (not to exceed 3 pages)

USAID Response: *Only the annexes listed (i.e. C, D, E, F and G) will be evaluated. The Table of Management Position will be an annex to support the proposed Technical Approach.*

- a) Can USAID confirm if the Table of Management positions goes as an annex or not, and also if there are Annexes A and B.?

USAID Response: *Applicants should provide Annexes A and B as Organizational Chart and the Table of Management Positions.*

- b) Can USAID please confirm that the Organizational Chart and the Table of Management Positions listed on page 33 will be Annexes A and B, respectively, and that neither Annex has a page limit?

USAID Response: *Yes, that is correct.*

- c) Would USAID increase the page limitation for Annex C from 3 to 6 pages, allowing additional space for the indicator table?

USAID Response: *Yes, the page limitation for Annex C is increased to 6 pages.*

- 27. Question:** Page 40 of the RFA states, “The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed three (3) years as follows....”

- a) Could USAID kindly provide guidance on criteria for determining ‘similar or related’ programs?

USAID Response: *“similar or related programs” refers to programs in basic education addressing similar issues as well as programs with a similar total TEC.*

- b) Also, can USAID kindly clarify whether the standard USAID short form for PPRs would be acceptable?

USAID Response: *Annex See Attachment 5 - Past Performance Information Template (Optional).*

- 28. Question:** On page 34, the RFA states: “The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.”

- The summary budget format provided does not match the SF-424A. Please confirm that the Applicant can revise the summary budget format to match the SF-424A format/categories.

USAID Response: *Yes, the applicant can revise the summary budget format to match the SF-424A. What is provided in the NOFO is what must be contained in the budget categories “at minimum” (see page 36).*

29. Question: Budget Summary Format provided in Annex 1 -

- a. Salaries and Allowances: Allowances are included with Salaries. Would USAID find it acceptable for the Applicant to include Allowances as its own category in the budget detail tab? Typically, our Allowances get rolled into “Other” in the SF 424 categories and Salaries go to Personnel.

USAID Response: *Yes, applicants can include Allowances as its own category in the budget detail tab.*

- b. Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment and Supplies): Would USAID find it acceptable for the Applicant to break-out into two categories as per the SF 424A and label one “Equipment” and the other “Supplies”?

USAID Response: *Yes, that would be acceptable.*

- c. Subawards: Would USAID find it acceptable for the Applicant to rename “contractual” and include both subaward and consultant costs, like the SF 424A?

USAID Response: *Yes, that is acceptable.*

30. Question: D.6.e) Approval of Subawards and f) Dun and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements (pp 38-39): As of April 4, 2022, DUNS numbers are no longer being used as a unique identifier for organizations working with the federal government.

- Can USAID please confirm that applicants should submit UEIs for themselves and their partners in place of DUNS numbers?

USAID Response: *Yes, applicants should submit UEIs for themselves and their partners. April 04, 2022 the Unique Entity ID replaced the DUNs number. See link provided to help new and potential IPs through the transition from DUNS Number to Unique Entity ID at <https://sam.gov/content/duns-uei>*

- Given the current delays in the SAM registration system, can USAID confirm that all proposed subrecipients must be registered in SAM at time of award and not before submitting its application per Section D.6?

USAID Response: *Due to the recent change, and in addition to the normal delays that can be encountered, applicants who are unable to get registration by the submission date, will be allowed additional time, without penalty, to get it done before award.*

SECTION F:

31. Question: Reports:

- Could USAID ensure that reports, assessments, and other relevant documents from current and past USAID Honduras education programming are made available on the DEC?

USAID Response: *The DEC contains all USAID-funded documentation created by the Agency and its contractors and grantees, including that created in Honduras. However, we cannot guarantee that that is the case, particularly in relation to the most recent projects.*

- Would USAID allow the activities of the July–Sept quarter each year to be subsumed into the relevant annual report to avoid duplicative reporting?

USAID Response: *This is a common practice but it is part of the approval of the year plans once the project has been awarded.*

CLARIFICATIONS:

1. **Clarification:** Kindly confirm that the due date for applications is Saturday, July 23rd 2022 at 17:00 Hours Honduras Time.

USAID Response: *Submission for this NOFO is Monday July 25, 2022.*

2. **Clarification:** Please note there are 2 D.6.e) clauses on page 38 of the NOFO.

USAID Response: *Rename to read:*

e) (i) Prior Approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407

e) (ii) Approval of Subawards

3. **Clarification:** Section D.5d)2) on page 33 indicates that the applicant should “Refer to Instructions under Criterion 2.” Section E.2.3 on page 50 similarly indicates the applicant should “Refer to the Instructions under Criterion 3.”

- Could USAID kindly clarify what section of the RFA these are in reference to?

USAID Response: *The wording “Refer to Instructions under Criterion 2” on page 33 and Section E.2.3 on page 50 “Refer to the Instructions under Criterion 3”. are removed. The rest of the section remains unchanged.*

4. **Clarification:** Could USAID kindly clarify what the envisioned start date is for this project?

USAID Response: *The envisioned start date for this project is October 06, 2022.*

5. **Clarification:** Are the Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient required only from the prime or also from sub awardees for submission?

USAID Response: *They are required from both the prime and sub-awardees.*

[END OF QUESTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS AND ANSWERS]