

Empowering Women for Economic Progress (SCAKAB-23-GR-006-SCA-05032023)

Questions and Answer

1. **Question:** The NOFO states that projects must include both urban and rural women. We plan on submitting two separate proposals - one project targeting urban women and the other project targeting rural women. However, if a single project must include both categories, what is the minimum percentage of the secondary category? For example, could a project include 90% urban women and only 10% rural women and still qualify?

Answer: To ensure the project supports diverse groups of beneficiaries, we encourage the applicants to consider including women both from rural and urban areas. However, this is not a requirement. The Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) is open to review project ideas that are innovative, inclusive, and support best the overall project objectives.

2. **Question:** Can the projects take place in any province? The NOFO does not mention any location restrictions or preferences, but we want to confirm this.

Answer: There are no restrictions on any specific geographic location within Afghanistan for this project. Our preference is for a project with provincial and/or regional and/or national scope that promote women's entrepreneurship, increase women's access to economic opportunities, and build their capacity.

3. **Question:** Page 5 states that the length of the performance period is at least 18 months. However, Page 6 states the program should be completed in 18 months or less. Please clarify.

Answer: PDS anticipate supporting projects with a period of performance of up to 18 months and the activities should be completed within the award period of performance.

4. **Question:** There are two statements on eligibility, one that would include U.S. small businesses or at least does not exclude them. The other requires proof of non-for-profit status. Could you please clarify and let us know if a U.S. small business is eligible to submit a proposal?

Answer: This opportunity is open to all types of applicants except for individuals. U.S. small businesses and not-for-profit organizations are eligible to apply for this opportunity.

5. **Question:** Could you tell us if it is possible for a U.S. small business to sub to a U.S. - registered international NGO that is registered and working in Afghanistan?

Answer: Yes, an eligible U.S. small business can partner with other national and or international organizations to work in Afghanistan under this funding opportunity.

6. Question: We wanted to learn if it was possible to confirm whether there are any exemptions available to the vetting requirements of participants noted on page 7 and copied below: *“Applicants are advised that individuals proposed to participate in an award resulting from this NOFO (recipient employees, contractors, beneficiaries, etc.) are subject to vetting for involvement in corrupt practices, illicit narcotics production or trafficking, and violation of human rights. Successful vetting is a precondition to any award under this NOFO.”*

Answer: Employees, sub-recipient personnel and contract personal are required to be vetted by the U.S. Mission to Afghanistan and there are no exceptions. However, the Embassy reserves the right to vet others, including beneficiaries of the award.

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