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Issue Date:	January 26, 2022
Deadline for Questions:	February 9, 2022
Phase 1 Closing Date:	February 28, 2022
Closing Time:	2:00 PM Juba Time

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity Number 72066822RFA00001

Program Title: **South Sudan Integrated Youth Engagement Activity**

Federal Assistance Listing Number: 98.001 Foreign Assistance for Programs Overseas

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified entities to implement the South Sudan Integrated Youth Engagement Activity (IYEA). Eligibility for this award is not restricted.

USAID intends to make one (1) award to the applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO subject to a risk assessment. Applicants should review Section D.8 regarding Funding Restrictions. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection 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. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the NOFO has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes. 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.

Please be aware that this NOFO utilizes a multi-tiered review process with several selection phases:

Phase 1: Applicants will submit an Initial Application. Based on USAID's evaluation of the Initial Application, up to four (4) Applicants will be selected to proceed to Phase 2.

Phase 2: Selected applicants from Phase 1 will be invited to participate in oral presentations of their proposed technical and management approaches. Oral presentations will be conducted virtually. Based on USAID's evaluation of the Oral Presentation, one applicant will be selected to proceed to Phase 3.

Phase 3: One applicant whose proposal best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the selection criteria contained herein will be selected as the Apparently Successful Applicant and will be requested to submit a full application, including a program description that will be incorporated into the resulting Cooperative Agreement.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.5.B(3). The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

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,

Alexis M McGinness (affiliate)

Digitally signed by Alexis M McGinness (affiliate)
Date: 2022.01.26 08:18:15 +02'00'

Alexis McGinness
Agreement Officer

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID's supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

I. INTRODUCTION

Through the Integrated Youth Engagement Activity (IYEA), USAID/South Sudan seeks to support a program that builds the capacity of vulnerable youth and empowers them to lead healthy, engaged, and productive lives in their communities.

USAID/South Sudan envisions that IYEA will adapt and/or pilot a Youth Corps Service model as a modality to creatively achieve the activity's stated goal and integrated objectives. Unemployed South Sudanese youth who are graduates from high school and universities, and non-graduates of exceptional demonstrated ability, will be mobilized, trained, coached, and mentored to become Youth Corps Service members. They will deliver specific IYEA-prescribed activities to disadvantaged targeted youth beneficiaries and their communities. The activity will help leverage youth for the youth's benefit, build a sense of belonging and solidarity, and help to promote peace.

In line with USAID's Positive Youth Development approach, USAID will support the development of peaceful and protective youth safe spaces and strengthen relationships among youth, their families and communities, and local authorities. These spaces will support work readiness skills including functional literacy, numeracy, soft skills, social emotional skills, and economic opportunities for vulnerable and marginalized youth. The activity will target disadvantaged youth, including, but not limited to, women and girls, out of school youth, internally displaced, returnees, child soldiers, street youth, youth in gangs, disabled, drug addicts, cattle camp youth, youth living with HIV/AIDS. Other vulnerable youth categories will be identified during activity implementation scoping in USAID/South Sudan's strategic 13 focus counties.

Through the activity, USAID/South Sudan will be better positioned to assist in preventing violence and support conflict-affected South Sudanese youth and their communities. USAID envisions that IYEA will partner with communities and the private sector to provide economic opportunities, foster employment, and promote entrepreneurship and other productive activities with market-based approaches. IYEA will leverage young people to go to work, help fellow youth gain skills, while also improving social cohesion, support the prevention of disenfranchisement by idle and disengaged youth, foster greater economic and social stability for youth in their communities, and a sense of belonging and solidarity.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. Development Context

Since gaining independence from Sudan in 2011, South Sudan has been engulfed in civil war for much of its history. About 400,000 South Sudanese died as a result of the conflict that started in December 2013. Atrocities and widespread attacks on civilians, including rampant sexual violence, have defined this conflict. In this context, young people have been forcefully recruited by armed groups, killed extrajudicially, used as informers, forcefully displaced from their homes and schools and denied learning opportunities, forced into prostitution, and trafficked within the armed groups and urban gangs.

Half of South Sudan's population is under the age of eighteen[1] and over 72 percent are under the age of 30. Despite making up such a significant portion of the population, the youth in South Sudan are among the most vulnerable, underserved, and untapped segments of the population. In 2020, South Sudan ranked 185 out of 189 in the Human Development Index (HDI) and was shown to have among the world's lowest human development outcomes.[2]

Youth are plagued by many challenges, which range from limited access to basic social services such as education and health, to widespread unemployment and limited opportunities to engage in productive livelihoods. Studies have shown that youth, with no possibility to attend school or acquire skills to earn a living or lead productive lives, are a latent force for instability. Limited access to educational and other relevant livelihood skills and few employment opportunities mean that out-of-school and idle youth become more vulnerable to negative coping methods such as substance abuse, crime, and mental health challenges. These at-risk youth find themselves unable to positively engage and participate in the development of their communities and country.

The oil sector is the key driver of economic growth, accounting for over 70 percent[3] of Gross Domestic Product in 2017, but it has not resulted in much-needed jobs for South Sudanese. The oil industry is highly controlled and sets stringent international standards. Thus, the oil sector largely imports labor due to lack of a qualified local labor force. The other economic sectors include agriculture (10 percent), manufacturing (7 percent) and services (6.1 percent). The country's rich natural endowment has not translated into improved standards of living for the people of South Sudan, particularly as much of the population is mobile due to insecurity.

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[1] *UNFPA/USAID 2019. ''The Status of Adolescent and Youth Report in South Sudan''; USAID South Sudan 2020-2024 Strategic Framework; South Sudan Development Plan (2011-2013, extended to date).*

[2] *UNDP 2020. 'Human Development Report 2020: Accessible at:* http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/SSD.pdf

[3] African Development Bank (2019): Statistic database-2018.

Furthermore, the recent economic growth momentum, with the real GDP reaching 5.8 percent in 2019 from 0.5 percent in 2018, was not inclusive as it has not created the needed jobs to support the rapidly growing population, especially youth.

Recent consultations with youth identify and affirm some of the issues identified. Additional challenges include:

- Multiple barriers to youth employment, livelihood, and economic opportunities.
- Gaps in availability and use of youth-friendly services, especially for reproductive health.
- Distrust of public authorities; and
- Weak social cohesion among communities.

The poverty rate in South Sudan is estimated at 82 percent of the total population[4]; youth comprise 72 percent of the total population. The demand for skilled labor is growing in South Sudan in sectors such as hospitality and construction. However, the current labor force does not have the required skills and mentality to enable youth to take advantage of the job opportunities. This has resulted in the country importing skilled labor from neighboring countries, contributing to South Sudanese youth unemployment.

Over 2.2 million[5] children and youth were out of school in 2018, representing 47 percent of the 4.7 million population of school-aged children and youth in South Sudan. For those in school, the education system does not meet their needs. Bleak prospects and inadequate education quality and access further increase the risk of youth dropping out of school. Only 47.9% of youth aged 15-24 years are literate[6], and the school dropout rate rapidly increases from ages 14-17.[7] Youth lack knowledge and skills, including work readiness, psychosocial and social emotional skills, and the soft and life skills needed to function effectively. Despite these gaps, youth would like to work and earn a living as well as lead healthy and productive lives. For those youth with some education, paid employment opportunities are rare. When paid jobs arise, there is often a mismatch between the skills youth have and what employers need and expect. Lack of career guidance has been identified as a major setback for most youth - a challenge attributed to the educational system and the youth development structures are in a nascent stage, with most youth policies and legal frameworks yet to be harmonized, disseminated, and operationalized.

[4] *World Bank (2021) Available at https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/southsudan/overview#1*
[5] *UNESCO (2018) Global Initiative for Out of School Children and Youth Report. South Sudan.*
[6] *UNESCO (2020) Available at: http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/ss*
[7] *Ibid*

Notably, the many years of conflict in the country have exacerbated ethnic tensions that weakened the social fabric and have had a negative impact on youth's mental health[8]. The children and youth associated with armed conflict in the country are estimated at 19,000[9]. These youth have few skills, little to do, and minimal opportunities for legitimate employment as compared with civilian youth. With no jobs or skills, youth may choose the only alternative they know, coming together based on shared tribal and/or political interests. This has potentially serious consequences: the rise of youth gangs, violence, and criminal activities, including inter-communal conflicts, cattle rustling, and revenge killings.

In relation to health, although all youth face multiple obstacles in accessing reproductive health support and services, especially during the adolescence stage, the circumstances of adolescent girls and young women are particularly challenging. Child marriage and adolescent pregnancy remain quite high, with 31% of youth ages 15-19 already experiencing childbirth. Overall, about 51% of women ages 20-24 were married before the age of 18[10] despite the association of child marriage with childbirth complications and infant and maternal mortality.[11] Most youth are bound by cultural norms and practices that limit their access to sexual and reproductive health services. 2016 research on social norms and family planning decisions in South Sudan notes that the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) is just 4.7%, with only 1.7% of women reporting using modern methods,[12] a very low uptake which can be associated with the gender and social norms around using contraceptives.

Consultations with youth further affirmed the shrinking civic engagement space in the country and noted that youth see themselves further alienated from the governance system and political engagements. This has led to a level of discontent, with some becoming easy prey to political manipulation, being co-opted into armed conflicts and used to advance political interests and agendas with the promise that they will be rewarded with political posts and other benefits. Without major initiatives to address the relevant socio-economic and civic engagement constraints, youth are likely to put the current Government of the Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) peace, and economic reforms at risk.

B. USAID/South Sudan and USG Priorities

While USAID/South Sudan is strategic in its work with youth, and the majority of Mission

[8] *UNFPA/USAID 2019. '' The Status of Adolescent and Youth Report in South Sudan": UNESCO 2018, The Out of School Youth Report for South Sudan.*

[9] *U.S. States Department Report on Child Soldiers: accessed on Dec 17, 2021, at: https://www.stimson.org/2021/cspa-country-south-sudan/*

[10] *UNFPA/USAID 2019: The Status of Adolescent and Youth Report.*

[11] *Kane et al. 2019. ''You have a child who will call you "mama": Understanding Adolescent Pregnancy in South Sudan'', Global Health Action, Vol.12.*

[12] *Kane et al. 2016. ''Social norms and family planning decisions in South Sudan'', BMC Public Health.*

activities are working with youth, there is no specific activity that is comprehensively working with and for youth. IYEA will fill this crucial gap to respond to the critical needs of South Sudan's youth in key geographic locations.

IYEA is driven by USAID/South Sudan's Youth Engagement Strategy and overall South Sudan Strategic Framework 2020-2024 development goals. The activity stems from Development Objective (DO) 2: Household resilience increased (IR 2.2 'Foundation laid for individuals to expand livelihood options') and DO 3: Improved social cohesion (IR 3.3 'Enhanced civil society capacity for inclusive civic engagement particularly youth and women'). Additionally, the activity is built upon lessons learned from previous and ongoing USAID and other organizations' programs working with youth and marginalized groups focusing on education and life skills, conflict prevention and reconciliation, psychosocial and mental health support, livelihoods, and humanitarian response to conflict-affected populations including IDPs and returnees.

IYEA is also closely aligned with the Agency's Youth in Development Policy (2021) by using its Positive Youth Development approach to proactively develop youth's social, personal, and technical skills to foster healthy relationships, and support youth to become meaningful participants in the development of their communities. This activity also advances the goals of the Global Leadership and Education for Advancing Development (Global LEAD) initiative by increasing education, civic/political engagement, and leadership skills. Additionally, IYEA adheres to the following USG strategies and policies:

- USG Strategy for Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity by incorporating elements to protect youth from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect.
- USG Education Policy 2018-2023 with a focus on Goals 2 and 3: "Children and youth gain literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills that are foundational to future learning and success" and "Youth gain the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to society'' respectively.

III. THEORY OF CHANGE AND ANTICIPATED RESULTS

A. Theory of Change

"IF youth have improved knowledge and skills necessary to earn a livelihood, advocate for their inclusion and participation in decision making; ***AND*** youth have access to reproductive health services and meaningful opportunities for civic and economic empowerment; ***THEN*** South Sudanese youth will be more productive, responsible, and resilient citizens.''

This theory of change is built upon the assumptions that:

1. The security situation in the country remains sufficiently stable and physically accessible to allow for activity presence and implementation.
2. Target institutions, communities, and organizations remain open to receiving USAID assistance and implementing the activity.
3. The Government of Republic of South Sudan (GRSS) is supportive of this activity: The core assumption is that the applicant and USAID have a strong/supportive working relationship with the GRSS and the local authorities to ensure a fully successful youth activity.
4. The activity outputs will result in expected outcomes, and other USAID and donor activities are coordinated to ensure adequate collaboration and optimization of IYEA outcomes.

This activity depends upon a multi-layered theory of change, which states that for its purpose and intended results to be best achieved, it is important that the Recipient:

- Directly engages youth and their communities to plan, implement, and monitor interventions that fit their needs and priorities.
- Works with the private sector to identify market-based solutions, engages with government counterparts, and ensures communities are leading their own development efforts.
- Maintains flexibility to adapt interventions over the course of implementation to respond to emerging and unexpected contextual shifts and environmental dynamics including climate change and prioritizes collaboration to ensure rapid feedback loops and adaptation to achieve both short- and long-term changes.
- Identifies and links IYEA’s components to other existing interventions in the locality to optimize impact.
- Selects a significant amount of youth activities that have the potential for scaling up without additional investment.

USAID/South Sudan recognizes that given the complexity of the current development landscape in South Sudan, the theory of change will need to be periodically revisited, and potentially adjusted, in accordance with an ongoing, iterative analytical approach. It will be essential for monitoring, evaluation, and learning actions, underpinned by staff skills and processes, to periodically examine ongoing progress with respect to the key drivers for transformative and sustainable development.

B. Anticipated Activity Results

Overall, IYEA intends to achieve the following goal:

Goal: Youth gain the knowledge and apply the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to their communities.

The activity seeks to accomplish the following results:

1. **Improved access to functional literacy, numeracy, soft and life skills** (including social emotional skills) and wellbeing programs for vulnerable and marginalized out-of-school youth are increased.
2. **Entrepreneurial, employment, and vocational opportunities** for youth are expanded.
3. **Behavior changes among youth to make positive adolescent reproductive health choices** are supported and cultivate equitable gender norms.
4. **Social cohesion among youth and their communities** by improving civic engagement and supporting youth contributions to address community needs.

IV. GENERAL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

IYEA seeks to address a selected number of youth challenges, recognizing that the problems facing the youth are systemic in nature and scope, and thus require systemic solutions. Thus, to provide more attainable systemic solutions, IYEA will focus on community-based approaches to provide interventions at the community level, adopting a holistic and cross-sectoral methodology.

USAID aims to engage youth, especially females, as a generally underserved and under-utilized population and yet potentially powerful influencers of South Sudan's development trajectory and outcomes. The activity will actively work with local structures and actors to reduce barriers for marginalized and vulnerable populations. In the face of increasing economic concentration and various forms of exclusion and discrimination, IYEA will specifically engage and empower marginalized and vulnerable populations throughout all stages of activity design, implementation, evaluation, and learning.

IYEA will focus on youth in accordance with the USAID definition of youth (targeting ages 10-29) with an emphasis on youth between the ages of 15-29 (adolescence and emerging adulthood) to respond to the different challenges and needs of younger and older youth.

The activities of IYEA are envisioned to be youth initiated, designed, implemented, and led. Opportunities for youth to participate throughout the process, during the design, implementation, and monitoring of interventions, are a priority.

A. Objectives

1. **OBJECTIVE 1 - SKILLS:** Access to functional literacy, numeracy, soft and life skills (including social emotional skills and wellbeing) programs for vulnerable and marginalized out-of-school youth increased.

The following provides definitions of the skills described above:

- ***Functional literacy and numeracy skills***: *are special and practical skills that enable a person to engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective function of his or her group and community and for enabling a person to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his or her own and the community's development (UNESCO).*
- ***Soft skills:*** *refers to a broad set of skills, behaviors, and personal qualities that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, relate well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals.*[13]
- ***Social emotional skills****: skills that help an individual manage emotions, problem solve, and create positive relationships with others*[14].
- ***Life skills****: are a set of abilities, attitudes and socio-emotional competencies that enable individuals to learn, make informed decisions and exercise rights to lead a healthy and productive life and subsequently become agents of change.*[15]

USAID will support efforts to partner with local communities, local authorities, civil society, and the private sector to implement innovative approaches to address skill gaps, which is one of the root causes of unemployment and livelihood diversification, and activities that will improve youth's functional literacy and numeracy skills and soft and social emotional skills. The Recipient is expected to provide community and institutional provision of skills empowerment services for youth that is responsive to their specific needs and differences. These include services for vulnerable and marginalized youth both in rural and urban settings, out of school youth with no/limited knowledge and skills, school dropouts, disengaged child soldiers, and unemployed youth graduates with diplomas.

Men and women experience differences in pursuit of their educational and training goals. The IYEA will support approaches that will increase participation of women and girls as much as men and boys, focusing on several key areas in its attempt to reduce gender inequality, ensure equitable access to training and mentoring services and support positive gender norms.

The key beneficiaries will be out of school youth who will benefit from quality skills training. Other beneficiaries will include facilitators, parents, and other community members who will be better able to participate in, and exert influence over, the quality of training.

Objective 1: Expected Outcomes Results

- Enhanced readiness of young people to engage in sustainable livelihood activities.

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[13] *USAIDYouthpower.org:https://www.youthpower.org/soft-skills-positive-youth-development*
[14] *USAID Youthpower.org https://www.youthpower.org/resources/guiding-principles-building-soft-and-life-skills-among-adolescents-and-young-adults ; (CASEL 2015; Ungar et al. 2017; Winthrop and Kirk 2008).*
[15] *https://www.unicef.org/azerbaijan/media/1541/file/basic%20life%20skills.pdf;*

- Youth trained apply literacy and numeracy skills in their daily activities.
- Instructors and facilitators use improved methods/skills to deliver their training.
- Youth suffering from significant adverse experiences or marginalized backgrounds practice socio-emotional, coping, and problem-solving skills.

Illustrative Indicators

- Number of youth trained in soft skills/life skills/socio-emotional skills through USG-assisted programs.
- Percent of individuals with improved soft skills following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs.
- Percent of individuals with improved reading and math skills following participation in USG-assisted youth programs.
- Number of youth who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG assisted training/programming.
- Number of youth who complete USG-assisted leadership programs.
- Number of public or private schools/institutions receiving USG assistance.
- Number of USG engagements jointly undertaken with the private sector to achieve a U.S. foreign assistance objective.

2. **OBJECTIVE 2 - INCOME**: Entrepreneurial, employment and vocational opportunities for youth expanded.

The demand for a skilled labor force is growing in South Sudan in sectors such as hospitality and construction. However, the current labor force does not have the required skills, competencies, and attitude to enable the youth to take advantage of the job opportunities. This has resulted in the country importing skilled labor from neighboring countries. This importation has contributed to unemployment, especially among youth. Youth destitution and lack of empowerment, underpinned by the widespread absence of productive capacities and income generation opportunities, are among the principal factors sustaining the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. Further, young men and women face unequal access to assets, including information, financial services, land, and other productive assets. High unemployment with little formal sector employment results in many youth, particularly women, engaged in the informal sector where wages are not regulated and the earnings are minimal. In addition to informal sector employment, most women are still fulfilling the many reproductive and community-assigned roles in line with cultural norms. While men have more freedom to navigate the private and public spheres, traditional roles often restrict women to the private or informal sphere. This results in women being less active, engaged, and empowered in political, social, and economic decisions. With the return of peace and a growing number of returnees, the GRSS is challenged to ensure that more South Sudanese are absorbed into the labor market. Entrepreneurial and vocational training plays an important role in providing alternative, and often more effective, pathways to acquiring skills, learning and employment, especially in the context of a fragile setting.

USAID/South Sudan seeks to encourage working-age youth participation in economic growth. IYEA will leverage community and private sector resources by engaging in partnerships to increase youth's workforce development skills, support access to gainful employment, and promote entrepreneurship opportunities to sustain peace and development. USAID will support the recipient's efforts to widen the livelihood options for youth and to engage them through skills enhancement, employment, and social inclusion, especially for the most vulnerable (including female youth, ex-combatants, and persons with disabilities).

Objective 2: Expected Outcomes Results

- Improved youth access to market-driven products and services that can enhance their income opportunities or that of their households.
- Trained youth apply their knowledge and skills to create small scale enterprises or cooperatives.
- Private vocational training institutions provide demand-driven, relevant and employable skills to learners.

Illustrative Indicators

- Percent of individuals with new employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs.
- Average percent change in earnings following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs.
- Percent of youth with improved perceived quality of employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs.
- Number of youth-related microenterprises supported by USG enterprise assistance.
- Percentage of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment).
- Number of private sector enterprises that engaged with the USG to support U.S. Foreign Assistance objectives.

3. **OBJECTIVE 3 - HEALTH**: Foster behavior change among youth to make positive adolescent reproductive health choices and cultivate equitable gender norms.

Adolescents experience rapid physical, cognitive, and psychosocial growth and despite being thought of as a healthy stage of life, there is significant death, illness, and injury in the adolescent years. During this phase, adolescents establish patterns of behavior – for instance, related to diet, physical activity, substance use, and sexual activity – that can protect their health and the health of others around them (World Health Organization[16]) and partly determines how productive they are in their communities. Without adequate, quality information and guidance, youth can make ill-informed decisions that have life-long negative consequences such as engaging in transactional sex or abusing drugs. Girls and young women face additional challenges related to familial economic circumstances and cultural traditions. As a result, they are often forced into early marriages, do not have a say as to when to start having children, and suffer from intimate partner violence. In South Sudan, 52% of girls are married before the age of 18 (UNICEF[17]). Complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death for girls aged 15–19 globally and those who survive are most likely to drop out of school.

Additionally, one of the barriers to accessing health services by the adolescents is the provider's bias and negative attitude towards adolescents. Youth-friendly services help youth, especially girls and young women, address a range of sexual and reproductive health needs. These should include non-judgmental counseling and practical services, such as testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), access to contraceptives and HIV/AIDS prevention information.

IYEA will focus on empowerment of girls and young women to enhance their agency that will expand their life choices. The activity will support efforts targeted at strengthening positive parental, family, and community involvement to foster healthy behaviors with and among youth. This may include promotion of sexual and reproductive health education, efforts to delay marriage, pregnancy and prevent sexually transmitted diseases, and more respect between girls and boys, and young men and women. Equitable access to friendly health services and being supported by family and their community is necessary to ensure that youth can more meaningfully participate in productive activities.

Objective 3: Expected Outcomes Results

- Improved parenting and family communication skills for strengthened intra-family support.
- Reduced adolescent pregnancies in targeted communities.
- Increased female participation in household-level decision-making processes.

Illustrative Indicators

- Number of sites providing youth friendly health information and services.

[16] *https://www.who.int/health-topics/adolescent-health#tab=tab_1*
[17]*https://mics.unicef.org/surveys. 2010*

- Percent of audience who recall hearing or seeing specific USG-supported Family Planning/Reproductive Health (FP/RH) and/or gender equity messages.
- Number of people reached by a USG funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g., health, legal, psycho-social counseling, shelters, hotlines, etc.).

4. **OBJECTIVE 4 – YOUTH CONTRIBUTIONS**: Improved social cohesion among youth and their communities by supporting safe spaces for productive and civic engagement activities.

South Sudanese youth are often excluded from public dialogues and decision-making processes impacting them and their community development. Idle youth are denied their ability to build social skills and healthy community values because of limited opportunities for social engagement. This situation often leads to deterioration of social cohesion and development of negative community perceptions of youth.

Youth participation in public spaces is currently hindered by a lack of safe spaces that are key to positive youth engagement. Safe spaces enable youth to engage in activities related to their needs and interests; participate in community and local decision-making processes; and freely express themselves without fear of violence or retribution.

USAID will support efforts to advance youth's safety and respect by fostering the availability and accessibility of safe places where youth can convene and organize, participate in productive community engagement activities including sports, culture, civic, and leisure activities, and feel comfortable and welcome. Youth engagement in safe spaces, along with the communities' and institutions' participation and commitment to developing these spaces, will in turn be key to strengthening social cohesion and trust in target communities.

Objective 4 Expected Outcomes/Results

- Inter- and intra-community social bonding among youth strengthened.
- Increased capacity for youth-responsive services.
- Improved civic participation by young people in community development.
- Increased use of safe spaces by youth to share and promote positive development values.
- Improved safe public spaces for youth.

Illustrative Indicators

- Number/percent of youth participating in civic engagement and peacebuilding activities
- Number/percent of youth participating in community decision-making processes.
- Number of youth who participate in civil society activities following social or leadership skills training or initiatives from USG assisted programs.

- Number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations.

B. Geographic Focus

IYEA will be implemented in the five states and 13 counties of the USAID/South Sudan Strategic Framework in a phased approach, drawing upon continuous learning and ensuring the activity's flexibility to adjust as needed. This may include adjustments in technical and/or geographic approach. Aligning with the Mission's goals and the priorities of the GRSS Ministry of Youth, the Office of Vice President for Youth and the Gender Cluster[18], USAID/South Sudan will support the recipient's efforts in:

- **Eastern Equatoria State:** Kapoeta North and Budi Counties
- **Jonglei:** Akobo, Duk, Pibor, and Uror counties
- **Unity:** Leer, Mayendit, and Panyijar counties
- **Upper Nile:** Baliet and Ulang counties and
- **Western Bahr-el Ghazal:** Jur River and Wau counties

Specific locations within the 13 counties will be determined during the implementation stage especially during the inception phase. USAID and the Recipient will determine the counties designated as high priority, medium priority, and low priority and specific intervention locations will be based on the following considerations:

- Areas with high numbers of out of school children and youth;
- Conflict affected and hard to reach counties;
- Reported utilization and engagement of youth in criminal activities;
- Reported levels of idle and disengaged youth;
- Areas with highest rates of gender-based violence against youth;
- Areas with high rates of adolescent pregnancy; and
- Cattle rustling and revenge killings.

V. EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES

A. Inception Phase to Refine Interventions

As part of the adaptive management, and at the outset of the activity, during the initial approximately six months after the award effective date, the Recipient is envisioned to allow for participatory, informed, and coordinated piloting and planning of interventions to ensure youth,

[18] *The Office of Vice President for Gender and Youth Cluster led by Mama Rebecca Nyandeng is one of the Executives of the GRSS responsible for gender and youth issues in South Sudan.*

community, and government buy-in. This critical phase will enable the Recipient to analyze and understand system dynamics, the nature of the problem to be addressed, and identify where the activity might best intervene to achieve the activity purpose. Further interventions will be informed by the findings from the baseline assessments, studies, and pilots carried out.

The Recipient may consider conducting analyses within the thirteen counties of drivers and threats to youth development, including a robust analysis of economic activities and community conflicts impacting the relevant geographical target areas.

The Recipient is expected to use the Inception Phase to test design assumptions and pilot initial activities, including the Youth Service Corps program.

B. Youth Service Corps

To improve the communities in which they operate, as well as the education and employment outcomes of youth participants, IYEA will include a Youth Service Corps program. Evidence has shown that youth service experiences and programs operated at the local community level by government agencies and/or community-based organizations have improved the ethnic and social tensions in communities. By focusing on youth as leaders, IYEA is expected to create a positive enabling environment for vulnerable youth. Through the Youth Service Corps, youth will be positive change agents ready to contribute to the social and economic development of South Sudan, helping their communities and the country to achieve self-reliance. The approach also improves the education and employment outcomes of participants, who may come from different social and economic backgrounds than the communities where they serve.

The Corps should primarily target economically disadvantaged young adults aged 18 and 29 who are high school and university graduates, or non-graduates of exceptional demonstrated ability. Candidates must also demonstrate healthy behaviors, and would benefit from training, coaching, mentoring and facilitation resources.

C. Coordination and Partnership with Other Actors

IYEA is anticipated to coordinate and partner with USAID and other donor activities and offer support for greater coherence among other Mission activities. IYEA is envisioned to:

- Coordinate and partner with other donors to leverage resources and help establish a shared view of overlapping activities, results, and location.
- Coordinate and build synergies with the current mission flagship initiatives that most related to, dependent upon or contribute to the IYEA.
- Influence decision-making and interventions using evidence and data from the USAID/South Sudan targeted geographic locations.

1. Coordination

Youth issues are effectively cross-cutting and intersect with each of the Mission's technical sectors, including education, health, economic growth, democracy and governance, and humanitarian assistance. IYEA is envisioned to benefit and contribute synergies to the current USAID funded programs such as the peace building activity, the resilience agriculture activity, the water, sanitation, and hygiene activity, the PEPFAR Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS[19]) activity and others, especially those in the geographic focus areas, are encouraged to support a coherent USAID/South Sudan Youth Policy. The Recipient should help establish a shared view of overlapping activities, results, and locations that advance essential outputs and results for youth.

Additionally, it is anticipated that other donors will continue to support the GRSS to develop youth in upcoming years. Current other donor activities include:

- EU: EMPOWER II project supports vocational skills
- UNDP: Youth empowerment project
- JICA: Peace through sports
- UNFPA: Reproductive health, youth policy, and youth Enterprise funds

USAID will continue to coordinate closely with other donors to minimize the duplication of efforts among donors and maximize the degree of coordination and program effectiveness.

2. Partnerships

Collaboration with key stakeholders, such as local youth-serving and youth-led organizations, local communities, local traditional leaders, local government leaders, private sector companies and institutions, civil society organizations, media outlets, and advocacy groups will be critical to achieving results. Support to vulnerable and marginalized youth requires their cooperation, commitments, and resources.

There is no required number of partnerships, but a strong commitment to a partnership-based approach, especially with locally based and non-traditional actors, is necessary for IYEA success. Partnering with private vocational training institutions and youth-led and youth-serving organizations is key.

3. Private Sector Engagement

USAID Private Sector Engagement (PSE) policy gives prioritization and direction for the agency staff and partners to further USAID's cooperation with the private sector and to apply market-based approaches for achieving sustainable development. Efforts to engage or partner with the

[19] https://www.state.gov/pepfar-dreams-partnership/

private sector - including as resource partners - should be considered as tools to achieve the IYEA objectives.

4. **Engagement with the Government of Republic of South Sudan**

A key lesson learned from the implementation of USAID activities is the importance of continued dialogue between USAID/South Sudan, implementing partners, and the GRSS in identifying development challenges and building consensus around priorities and policies that should be pursued.

While USAID/South Sudan is focused on a community-based approach to deliver services to the people of South Sudan, institutionalization of successful lessons and best practices is essential for sustainability. IYEA should coordinate with youth related institutions to map priorities and opportunities for youth. These institutions may include, for example, the Gender and Youth Clusters, the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Peacebuilding, the Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Human Resource Development, and training centers at the state and county levels.

D. Adaptive Management

Responsiveness to new information and contextual changes, and regularly conducted appropriate adjustments, is critical to the success of this activity. USAID seeks to support efforts that present a vision and strategy for management that intentionally plans for consideration and adjustment based on program learning, experience, and inputs from both internal and external researchers and evaluators. This includes regular consultations with USAID and relevant stakeholders, as well as the effective use of iterative processes and key data points from monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) and collaboration, learning, and adapting (CLA) efforts as detailed in the activity’s MEL Plan (AMELP). CLA approaches should be leveraged with outreach initiatives to enhance programmatic impact. The activity’s implementation approach to adaptive management should also examine how to best take advantage of the flexibility of this mechanism to respond to targeted technical needs or other unanticipated requests as they may arise.

To foster a culture of knowledge management, knowledge sharing and performance monitoring, MEL will be a key component of IYEA's approach to adaptive management and its CLA agenda. The activity must develop a systematic method for collecting and analyzing performance data and other information to track progress toward planned results, ensure effective management and oversight, and enable evidence-based decision-making. The activity should provide sufficient human and financial resources for MEL and CLA. Relevant stakeholders/partners must be involved in the development of the MEL approach, to not only cultivate ownership over results but to also utilize the process to build their own MEL capacity. This also ensures performance measurement and accountability partners.

Thus, the activity will need to remain flexible as the country context changes, and work along a continuum of relief to development. Furthermore, the appropriate stakeholders should be fully engaged, and investments safeguarded throughout the implementation period and beyond. The flexibility may also need to be in response to emergent learning from implementation. Approaches, models, activities, tasks may need to be adjusted to attain the results. To ensure impact, IYEA encourages new and relatively untested approaches (or untested in South Sudan context or in this sector).

E. Scenario Planning

The Recipient is expected to be cognizant of the South Sudan's operational context and may conduct an analysis of three possible scenarios: status quo (fragile peace); relative stability and return to war (presence of conflict, lack of access to some places). The scenario plan may be integrated in all planning activities with suggested activities for each scenario. All three scenarios may be modified by a pandemic situation (COVID-19 etc.). When drafting the annual work plan, the Recipient should work with the AOR to determine the scenario used to draft that annual work plan. If conditions change, the scenario assumption could be revisited, and the annual work plan modified accordingly.

Furthermore, the Recipient is expected to be agile and take requests from USAID which address changing circumstances and unanticipated events that impact the achievement of the objectives of this activity and could enhance its results. This may include disaster preparedness, response and recovery, assistance to key stakeholders, taking advantage of new or changing market opportunities necessary to achieve the objectives in a changing environment.

VI. OTHER IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

A. Do No Harm

IYEA implementation will incorporate the principles of *Do No Harm*. USAID commits to robust measures to avoid partners, participants, and communities experiencing harm as a consequence of activities. This incorporates potential physical, digital, psychological, and reputational threats and vulnerabilities. Cautious analysis and planning should be conducted to ensure that none of the activities' participants are put at risk of harm due to existing community tensions. Necessary precautions will be followed to ensure no element of the activity itself should cause added harm to violence and trauma survivors and/or lead to potential conflict situations.

B. Gender

The USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2020) requires women, girls, men, and boys enjoy equal economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights and are equally empowered to secure better lives for themselves, their families, their communities, and their countries. This activity will support a program that aspires to be gender responsive and integrates approaches that prevent and respond to GBV; promote inclusive representation and participation of young girls and women as well as boys and men in program activities; addresses gender and social norms that will affect effective and inclusive participation; and advances the voice and agency of young girls and boys. Special emphasis will be placed on targeting female youth trainees and to recruit female youth volunteer facilitators and trainers. The activity encourages equal participation of young women and men, girls and boys as trainees, trainers and facilitators and mentors. It is envisioned that the IYEA Youth Service Corps will consist of a cadre of young male and female volunteers that will be mentored to serve as coaches and trainers of trainers.

C. Sustainability

As a principle of sustainability, youth development programs need to be carried out in a localized atmosphere, respond to needs identified by youth and their communities, and engage youth and their communities in design and implementation. Therefore, youth-serving organizations, civil society engagement, and capacity building are critical to the success of the project.

IYEA envisions that the Recipient will utilize innovative methods of sustainability.

Sustainability in the context of South Sudan is challenging, and self-reliance starts at the community level, boosting community and household-level resilience so youth and their families are better equipped to weather shocks. The USAID/South Sudan Strategic Framework uses a community-focused approach to help targeted households and communities assume greater responsibility in shaping their own futures by more intentionally centering development efforts on individuals and communities, thereby making investments more relevant, sustainable, and effective.

D. Staffing and Management

The Recipient must have the necessary mix of staff and requisite levels of professional expertise to implement the activity and should identify, recruit, hire, and support appropriate personnel. The Recipient must supply Key Personnel - as determined by the Recipient - essential to the work to be performed under the award. Key Personnel are expected to be in-country (if applicable) and fully engaged by no later than 60 days after the award's effective date. When qualified personnel are available, the Recipient should utilize local personnel with appropriate experience and expertise.

The Recipient is expected to commit to gender equality and social inclusion and should consider equitable balance in staffing and staff requirements; personnel systems, hiring, and management; and capacity development principles and approaches.

Professional-level skills and management practices are required in the performance of the activity. Accordingly, the Recipient will be expected to establish an effective quality control program to assure that deliverables and other products meet professional standards and comply with terms and conditions of the Agreement.

The Recipient should have an organizational structure that adequately meets management needs to implement all initiatives and manage needs within each of the geographic areas.

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SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to award one (1) Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide no more than $43,500,000 in total USAID funding over a four (4) year period.

B.2 Expected Performance Indicators, Targets, Baseline Data, and Data Collection

The Recipient must develop qualitative and quantitative indicators, including appropriate Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators (F indicators) as mandated by USAID, to measure the activity achievement at the purpose, IR, sub-IR and output levels, and establish baselines for those indicators. All indicators must be consistent with 1) USAID's Strategic Framework and 2) USAID/South Sudan Performance Management Plan (PMP), which will be shared during the implementation planning phase. Indicators must measure potential achievement of the following non-exhaustive list of activity outcomes:

- Enhanced readiness of young people to engage in sustainable livelihood activities.
- Youth trained to apply literacy and numeracy skills in their daily activities.
- Youth Service Corps members apply the knowledge and skills gained to create a positive enabling environment for vulnerable youth and contribute to the development of communities where they operate.
- Improved youth access to market-driven products and services that can enhance their income opportunities or that of their households.
- Trained youth apply their knowledge and skills to create small scale enterprises or cooperatives.
- Private vocational training institutions provide demand-driven, relevant and employable skills to the learners.
- Improved parenting and family communication skills for strengthened intra-family support.
- Inter- and intra-community social bonding among youth and communities strengthened.
- Increased capacity of youth-led organizations for youth-responsive services.

Relevant mandatory standard indicators will include:

Objective 1

- Number of youth trained in soft skills/life skills/socio-emotional skills through USG-assisted programs.
- Percent of individuals with improved soft skills following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs.
- Number of youth who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG assisted training/programming.

Objective 2

- Percent of individuals with new employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs.
- Number of youth-related microenterprises supported by USG enterprise assistance.

Objective 3

- Percent of audience who recall hearing or seeing specific USG-supported Family Planning/Reproductive Health (FP/RH) and/or gender equity messages.
- Number of sites providing youth friendly health information and services.

Objective 4

- Number of youth who participate in civil society activities following social or leadership skills training or initiatives from USG assisted programs.
- Number/percent of youth participating in civic engagement and peacebuilding activities.
- Number/percent of youth participating in community decision-making processes.

The Recipient is responsible for developing clearly defined and fit-for-purpose data collection methods to inform continuous learning and adaptations for maximum activity impact. The Recipient is also responsible for storage, analysis, reporting as well as ensuring the quality of indicator data, including those provided by any sub-awardees. The Recipient must ensure the validity, integrity, precision, reliability, and timeliness of data used for measuring performance of the Activity and informing decision making. All externally reported indicators must have a data quality assessment (DQA). The Recipient is also encouraged to be creative and innovative about learning and adapting methods that are outside of what has been described herein.

In order to better represent the results of USAID-funded activities, USAID requires geographically disaggregated indicators. Such indicators include information on the location or geographic scale of the Activity's performance, impact, or other information as deemed appropriate by USAID or the Recipient. Geographically disaggregated indicators enable the Activity to investigate the variation in performance to inform USAID decision-making and any adaptation to continually refine the activity over its four-year life.

The time it takes to ascertain potential baselines will depend on the nature of the indicators and their data sources. The target will be determined once the baseline is established. It is generally expected that all such baseline and target information must be included in the AMEL Plan.

B.3 Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The anticipated period of performance is four (4) years. The estimated start date will be September 1, 2022.

B.4 Substantial Involvement

A. Approval of the Recipient's Annual Implementation Plan. The annual implementation plans, and subsequent revisions, are subject to approval by USAID's Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) prior to implementing substantive work for each year of the Agreement.

B. Approval of Specified Key Personnel and Any Changes. The positions indicated below have been designated as key to the successful implementation of the activity objectives of this Agreement. Prior to replacing key personnel, the Recipient shall immediately notify both the Agreement Officer and AOR reasonably in advance and shall submit written justification, including proposed substitutions, in sufficient detail to permit evaluation of the impact on the Activity. No replacement of these specified key personnel shall be made by the Recipient without consent of the Agreement Officer.

1. TBD - Name, Key Personnel Position (equivalent of Financial Director), Roles/Responsibilities, Minimum Qualifications
2. TBD - Name, Key Personnel Position, Roles/Responsibilities, Minimum Qualifications
3. TBD - Name, Key Personnel Position, Roles/Responsibilities, Minimum Qualifications
4. TBD - Name, Key Personnel Position, Roles/Responsibilities, Minimum Qualifications

C. Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation. When the Recipient's successful accomplishment of activity objectives would benefit from USAID's technical knowledge, USAID may specify the collaboration or joint participation of USAID and the Recipient in the program. When these conditions are met, USAID may specify appropriate levels of substantial involvement, which include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Concurrence of Sub-Awards – The sub-award, transfer, or contracting out of any work under an award already requires the Recipient to obtain the AO's prior approval under 2 CFR 200.308. However, the AO has delegated sub-award approvals to the AOR up to $150,000. Any sub-award approval above $150,000 should be provided by the AO, with concurrence from the AOR.
2. Approval of Activity Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (AMEL) Plan – USAID will review and approve the Recipient's AMEL Plan for realistic and appropriate performance indicators and learning and adapting planning, periodic evaluation of activities, and all subsequent changes to the AMEL Plan.
3. Approval of Activity site locations and geographic targeting.
4. Direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other U.S. Government Activities. USAID may provide directions to the Recipient to help achieve results through coordination with other activities sponsored by the U.S. Government or other donors, to avoid duplication of effort, and in adherence to U.S. foreign policy.
5. Participation in Preparation of Technical Publications. USAID may
(i) Participate in technical discussions with the Recipient in the development of content for print and electronic publications and/or
(ii) Review and approve final versions of all print or electronic publications before

publication to ensure compliance with the approved Branding Strategy and Marking Plan.

6. Engagement with the Government of South Sudan. USAID may participate in discussions or meetings with the Recipient and Government of South Sudan officials at the national (Undersecretary level or above) and state (Governor level) levels. The Recipient must notify USAID at least two (2) days prior to any planned engagement with such officials and USAID will inform the Recipient if USAID will participate in any such engagement.

B.5 Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this activity is 935. Code 935 is defined as any area or country including the cooperating country but excluding foreign policy-restricted countries.

B.6 Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Recipient

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject activity is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the IYEA which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the activity objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

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SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted.

Pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 2 CFR 200.400(g), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as cooperative agreements. While for-profit firms may participate, pursuant to 2 CFR 700.13(A)(1) Prohibition against profit, no funds will be paid as profit to any for-profit entity receiving or administering Federal financial assistance as a recipient or subrecipient, and as such, for-profit organizations must waive profits and/or fees to be eligible to submit an application.

USAID welcomes applications from organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID. Faith-based organizations are eligible to apply for federal financial assistance on the same basis as any other organization and are subject to the protections and requirements of Federal law.

Successful applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. Thus, in order for an award to be made, the AO must make a positive "risk assessment," as discussed in ADS 303.3.9. This means that the applicant must possess, or have the ability to obtain, the necessary management and technical competence to conduct the proposed activity. The applicant must agree to practice mutually agreed-upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided or funded by USAID.

In the absence of a positive risk assessment, an award can ordinarily not be made. However, in rare cases, an award can be made with "Specific Conditions" (e.g., additional non-standard award requirements designed to minimize the risk presented to USAID of making an award to an NGO for which a positive risk assessment cannot be made), but only where it appears likely that the applicant can correct the deficiency in a reasonable period.

C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

USAID has established a required recipient cost share of five percent (5%) for this award. Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level. This may include contribution of staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306.

C.3 Exclusive Commitments

USAID/South Sudan discourages any applicant from requiring exclusive commitments by local organizations to participate as part of the consortium or sub-award. Local organizations participating in a consortium may elect to participate in another consortium under a different application.

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SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 Agency Point of Contact

Name:	Ms. Alexis McGinness
Title:	Agreement Officer
Email:	amcginness@usaid.gov
Mailing Address:	4420 Juba Place Washington, D.C. 20521-4420

D.2 Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted to: Arpi Shotigian Moskovitch at ashotigian@usaid.gov with a courtesy copy to Michael Loro at mloro@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

D.3 General Content and Form of Application

Each Applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. Applications must be submitted in the prescribed formats for each phase of review. This subsection addresses general content requirements applying to all applications.

Phase	Format
Phase 1	Two separate parts: Phase 1 Initial Technical Application and Phase 1 Business (Cost) Application (submitted in two separate parts))
Phase 2	Oral Presentation, with Applicant's presentation materials
Phase 3	Apparently Successful Applicant's Phase 3 Full Technical Application and Phase 3 Full Business (Cost) Application (submitted in two separate parts)

Please see subsections D.5 and D.7, below, for information on the content specific to the Technical and Business (Cost) Applications. The Technical Application must address technical aspects only while the Business (Cost) Application must present the costs, and address risk and other related issues.

Both the Technical and Business (Cost) Applications must include a cover page containing the following information:

- Name of the organization(s) submitting the application.

- Identification and signature of the primary contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address) and the identification of the alternate contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address)
- Activity Title - The Applicant must propose an activity title. Activity titles must be no more than three words and have such meaning as to be able to explain the purpose of the activity, preferably for a Washington DC and South Sudan audience.
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number
- Name of any proposed sub-recipients or partnerships (identify if any of the organizations are local organizations, per USAID's definition of 'local entity' under ADS 303

Any erasures or other changes to the application must be initiated by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent on behalf of the applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

Applications must comply with the following:

- USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.
- Written in English.
- Use standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant's name.
- 10-point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables, however, must comply with the 12-point Times New Roman requirement.
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats, except budget files which must be submitted in Microsoft Excel.
- The estimated start date identified in Section B of this NOFO must be used in the cost application.
- The technical application must be a searchable and editable Word or PDF format as appropriate.
- The Cost Schedule must include an Excel spreadsheet with all cells unlocked and no hidden formulas or sheets. A PDF version of the Excel spreadsheet may be submitted in addition to the Excel version at the applicant's discretion, however, the official cost application submission is the unlocked Excel version.

Applicants must review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this NOFO, including but not limited to the type of activity sought, application submission requirements and selection process. Applications that fail to comply with this NOFO may not be evaluated further and may be removed from further consideration. Applicants should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for their records.

Applicants must set forth full, accurate and complete information as required by this NOFO. The penalty for making false statements to the U.S. Government is prescribed in 18 U.S.C. 1001.

D.4 Application Submission Procedures

Initial Applications in response to this NOFO must be submitted no later than the closing date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Applications must be submitted by email to Arpi Shotigian Moskovitch at ashotigian@usaid.gov with a courtesy copy to Michael Loro at mloro@usaid.gov and Alexis McGinness at amcginness@usaid.gov. **Applications submitted through www.grants.gov will not be accepted.** Late applications will not be reviewed. Applicants must retain proof of timely delivery in the form of system generated documentation of delivery receipt date.

The following provides the estimated timing for conducting the merit review process. This timeline is subject to change:

Submission/Action	**Estimated Date of Submission and/or Activity***
Phase 1 - Submission of Initial Application	2/28/2022
Notification to Applicants Regarding Phase 1 Selection	4/6/2022
Phase 2 - Oral Presentation Materials Due	Friday Prior to Week of Oral Presentations
Phase 2 – Oral Presentations	Week of 4/25/2022
Notification to Applicants Regarding Phase 2 Selection	5/6/2022
Phase 3 - Submission of Full Application (Technical and Cost Applications)	6/1/2022 (tentative)

* Dates provided are estimates only and subject to change

The actual deadline for the Oral Presentations will be provided following review of Phase 1 Initial Applications. Similarly, the actual deadline for submission of the Full Application will be provided following Phase 2 Oral Presentations.

Application email submissions must include the NOFO number and Applicant's name in the email subject line heading. In addition, for an application sent by multiple emails, the subject line must also indicate whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of the emails and their attachments (e.g., "No. 1 of 4", etc.). For example, if your cost application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line that states: "[NOFO number], [organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".

USAID's preference is that the technical application and the cost application each be submitted as consolidated email attachments, e.g., that you consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending it. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear.

After submitting an application electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name if submitted via grants.gov that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email. Applicants are reminded that email is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this NOFO, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/South Sudan cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server.

D.5 Phase 1 Initial Application Format & Content

A. Initial Technical Application Format

The short initial technical application should be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The application must demonstrate the applicant's technical concept as well as its capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The application should take into account the requirements of the activity and merit review criteria found in this NOFO.

(1) Cover Page (See Section D.3 above for requirements)

(2) Executive Summary (One page)

The Executive Summary must provide a high-level overview of key elements of the Initial Technical Application.

(3) Technical Concept - Not to Exceed Five (5) Pages

In this section, the Applicant must detail its technical concept that demonstrates how the Expected Implementation Approaches and other implementation considerations, as described in Section A, will be integrated into a coherent technical approach that can feasibly accomplish planned outcomes and expected results within the local context. While the Technical Approach need not be the full and detailed Program Description at this phase, there must be sufficient detailed information that describes the Applicant’s notional technical approach.

(4) Institutional Capacity - Not to Exceed Four (4) Pages

In this section, the Applicant must convincingly demonstrate how the Applicant (and its partners), through its past experience in South Sudan or a similar context, possesses the institutional capacity to successfully implement the proposed technical concept to achieve the desired outcomes within the operational context, including with available budget and other resources.

In demonstrating such institutional capacity, the Applicant must describe how it has demonstrated success in implementing similar size and/or complex programs. The Applicant should explain how it possesses: the management capacity to timely, effectively and with high quality complete interventions and reporting requirements; the financial systems and capability to provide financial oversight; and the M&E and CLA systems to measure and adapt from programmatic progress.

B. Initial Business (Cost) Application Format

The Initial Cost Application must contain the following sections:

(1) Cover Page (See Section D.3 above for requirements)

(2) SF-424 Forms

The applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the SF-424 series. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov or using the following links:

Instructions for SF-424	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424A	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html
Budget Information (SF-424A)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424B	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html
Assurances (SF-424B)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html

At this Phase (Phase 1 - Initial Applications), a full detailed budget and budget narrative are not required as part of the Initial Application.

(3) UEI and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (UEI) (formerly the DUNS number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid DUNS and UEI number for the Applicant and all proposed sub-recipients.

2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient.
3. 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 registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Note: The federal government is changing the unique identifier used for entities from the DUNS Number to the UEI generated by SAM.gov. On April 4, 2022, the DUNS Number will be removed from U.S. Government systems and the UEI will be the authoritative identifier. Include your DUNS Number and UEI on application documents until April 4; starting on April 4, 2022, you will use only the UEI.

UEI and SAM registration: http://www.beta.sam.gov

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM on the Federal Service Desk website by clicking on "Help on UEI Transition."

Applicants must confirm whether they have an active SAM registration and UEI as part of the Initial Application.

Prior to award, applicants will be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant's risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.206. Applicants should not submit any additional information with their initial application except to satisfy the requirements specified below.

(4) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term

a. Personal Conflict of Interest

1. An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.

2. The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting

the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

b. Organizational Conflict of Interest

The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.

D.6 Phase 2: Oral Presentation - Logistics, Format and Content

The factors below highlight the requirements of the second phase of selection. The Selection Committee will evaluate each oral presentation, in accordance with the evaluation factors set forth under Section E.3.B.

A. Logistics & Format

1. Based on USAID's merit review of the Initial Applications, only up to four (4) of the best technically acceptable applicants will be invited to present their applications orally (the "Selected Applicants").

2. Selected Applicants will be notified promptly of the date of their scheduled presentation. At this time, USAID anticipates such Oral Presentations to take place the week of April 25, 2022, subject to further change. Presentations will commence between 9:00 - 10:00 am Juba time and end approximately 15:00-16:00 Juba time. Specific logistic information will be provided.

3. Oral presentations will occur via videoconferencing utilizing the Google Meet platform.

4. The Applicant may have up to six (6) participants deliver the presentation. Offerors are encouraged, but not required, to include as presentation participants potential core management personnel, such as those the Applicant may consider to recruit as key personnel if selected for award, as well as include other consortium members as participants, particularly those from local organizations. There is no obligation that such core management personnel or other local organizations be part of the presentation team. Participants from local entities as well as key or core management personnel that are considered for recruitment by multiple Offerors are not precluded from participating in multiple oral presentations.

5. The audience for the Oral Presentations will consist of the Selection Committee (SC), the Agreement Officer, and other Office of Acquisition & Assistance and USAID staff as

observers. The Agreement Officer will chair the Oral Presentations. USAID may, however, use in-house or a contracted moderator to facilitate the presentations. The Selected Applicants may assume that members of the Phase 2 Selection Committee reviewed their Initial Applicants and therefore the presentation should build on the concepts introduced in their Initial Application.

6. The anticipated agenda for oral presentations is as follows:

Session	Time Allocated
Agreement Officer Introduction	
Applicant Presentation	One Hour
Internal Selection Committee (SC) Discussion	One Hour
1st Round - Question and Answers Regarding Presentation	One Hour
Break & SC Deliberation	Two Hours
2nd Round - Questions and Answers/Discussions	One Hour
Adjournment/Next Steps	

7. The time limits for the presentation and Q&A sessions will be carefully followed. However, if an agenda item is completed earlier than scheduled, the group may move on to the next agenda item.

8. The presentation must last no more than one hour, which will be followed by a one-hour question and answer period in which the Selected Applicant will respond to questions related to their presentation as well as any other questions arising from their Initial Application, if any. After the Selection Committee completes its deliberation, there will be a one-hour discussion period where the SC will discuss their initial evaluation issues.

   Note that while the first presentation may be in a PowerPoint (or similar) format, the remaining discussions will be in Question/Answer (Q&A) format with little time for consultation. Each of the Selected Applicants' participants should be an expert in the approach and will be expected to "think on their feet" and expected to participate in the presentation and subsequent Q&A. The questions during the Questions and Answer Session will be different for each Selected Applicant, as they will seek additional information and/or clarification from the Selected Applicant's presentation.

   Please note that at the completion of the 1st round of questions and answers, the competitive process requirements of ADS 303 will be satisfied. Therefore, the 2nd round of questions and answers are not part of the merit review process but provides an opportunity for the Selected Applicant and USAID to conduct discussions.

9. The Selected Applicant is expected to be the "Presenter" of any Powerpoint or similar presentation deck. Should there be any technology failures during videoconferencing, the Agreement Officer, at its sole discretion, will determine if and to what extent reasonable accommodation of additional time may be provided.

B. Oral Presentation Format

1. Selected Applicants may utilize a PowerPoint or similar presentation slide deck as supporting materials to the presentation. The slide deck should include a cover slide that identifies 1) the Applicant and other organizations that will be part of the Applicant's consortium; 2) date of presentation; 3) Activity title; and 4) names, position title and organization of those specifically participating in the presentation.

2. There is no limitation to the number of slides the Applicant may utilize; however, the SC will only review slides that are shown as part of the presentation. The SC will not review these slides prior to the oral presentation. Any slides that were not incorporated into the presentation within the allocated time will be excluded from evaluation consideration.

3. Presentation materials must be submitted by no later than 2:00 pm the Friday prior to the week of presentations, which is anticipated to be April 22, 2022, subject to further change. The final deadline for the presentation materials will be provided when Selected Applicants are notified of the date of their presentation.

C. Oral Presentation Content

Selected Applicants must address the following merit review factors in their one-hour presentation. There is no specified order by which the information must be presented, although Selected Applicants should be cognizant of the weighted importance of each of the merit review criteria set forth in Section E.3.B:

1. Factor 3: Technical Approach

The Selected Applicant should demonstrate how its holistic and cross-sectorial methodology demonstrates an understanding of the local context and proposes ambitious yet realistic interventions that achieve expected outcomes for each of the four activity objectives.

2. Factor 4: Management Approach

The Selected Applicant should demonstrate how, while ensuring meaningful attention to the principles set forth in Section A, its management approach will effectively achieve the activity's objectives, especially how the lead partner will work with specific local partners to ensure well integrated implementation.

3. *Factor 5: Stakeholder Engagement*

The Selected Applicant should demonstrate how, while ensuring meaningful attention to the principles set forth in Section A, its planned community-based implementation approach and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders will effectively achieve the activity's objectives.

Key stakeholders of interest include local and national government actors supporting youth programming and other USAID implementing partners working in the target counties.

4. *Factor 6: Gender and Inclusive Development Integration*

The Selected Applicant should demonstrate how gender and inclusive development will be incorporated into interventions.

D. Notification of Apparently Successful Applicant

Soon after the Oral Presentation, USAID plans to inform the Selected Applicants if its application has been selected to proceed to the next stage of the review process. Unsuccessful Selected Applicants will have the opportunity to request additional information following notification that they were not selected to proceed to the next stage. The Apparent Successful Applicant (ASA) will proceed to submit a Full Application as per the instructions set forth in Section D.7 below.

USAID reserves the right to select another applicant from the pool of Phase 2 participants in case final agreement is not reached with the initially selected ASA.

D.7 Phase 3: Full Application Format and Content

A. Full Technical Application Format

The Full Technical Application should be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The application must demonstrate the Applicant's approach to achieving the goals of this program. The application should take into account the requirements of the program and merit review criteria found in this NOFO.

(1) Cover Page (See Section D.3 above for requirements)

(2) Technical Approach - Not to Exceed Twenty (20) Pages

The Applicant will submit the finalized Program Description that will be inserted into the cooperative agreement. The Program Description must describe the clear and practical programmatic approach for the effective implementation and successful achievement of the activity objectives, including how the activity will integrate gender and inclusive development approaches throughout all aspects of implementation and other considerations described in Section A, such as but not limited to, a brief description of the management and staffing plan, subrecipient management, and other similar relevant information.

(3) Management and Staffing Plan - Not to Exceed Five (5) Pages, Excluding Annexes

In this section, the Applicant must elaborate from what is contained in the Program Description to provide a well-articulated management and staffing plan that will lead to successful implementation of its proposed Program Description, including the proposed Key Personnel positions. The management plan and staffing plan should be appropriate and aligned with the proposed technical approach.

The Applicant's management plan should summarize how the Applicant's proposed organizational structure and management approach will effectively implement its technical approach to achieve the activity objectives. The management plan must include the roles and responsibilities of the prime organization, sub-partners, consortium members and use of local networks (as each is applicable) as well as how the Applicant intends to identify additional potential subrecipients (if applicable) and manage subawards. The Management Plan should describe the roles and responsibilities of the Home Office, Juba presence and field offices and staff, including their assigned management and decision-making authorities, and how this organizational structure will effectively and efficiently achieve the IYEA objectives.

The Applicant must also describe how its staffing plan will efficiently and effectively provide the greatest likelihood of results in the target locations and communities. The staffing plan must adequately describe the proposed overall skills mix, anticipated distribution of these skills and personnel among selected field sites and the main office and use of support staff and/or short-term technical assistance (if applicable), demonstrating how this mixture will collectively possess the required technical and management expertise and skills to achieve the expected results, and how the proposed staffing will meet the Section A considerations. The Applicant must also address its mitigation strategy for retention of qualified staff and how it will promptly and satisfactorily change personnel if and when problems identified arise.

This section must also propose which positions will be Key Personnel (this must include a Senior Financial Manager or equivalent) and how these individuals will contribute to the overall successful implementation of the activity. The staffing plan should describe their roles and responsibilities and proposed minimum qualifications for each position; in a format to be included in Section B.4.B of the Cooperative Agreement. The Applicant must also propose candidates that meet these specific qualifications for these Key Personnel positions.

In support of the above narrative, the Applicant must include the following as Annexes (which do not count toward the page limit):

- **Annex A - Organizational Structure Diagram:** A diagram that illustrates the proposed organizational structure. There is no set form for this Annex. It may not exceed two pages.
- **Annex B - Staffing Plan:** A diagram/matrix that provides proposed staffing and roles and responsibilities. There is no set form for this Annex. There is no page limit, but a

summary of each position should be succinct to be able to understand the staffing pattern and plan. For the Key Personnel positions, the matrix should describe the position, roles and responsibilities and proposed minimum qualifications that align with the expertise and experience needed to undertake the roles and responsibilities.

- **Annex C - Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) for Key Personnel:** Do not include CVs or resumes for each of the Key Personnel. Rather, the Applicant should submit for each Key Personnel a SOQ that clearly explains why the individual is suited for the proposed position and possesses the skills, knowledge and thus meets the proposed minimum qualifications, and contributes to the collective knowledge and experience requirements for the Key Personnel Team. The SOQ narrative may not exceed two pages for each of Key Personnel. A third page to each SOQ must identify a minimum of three (3) references of professional contacts, with contact information, preferably including email addresses. Note that it is in the interest of the Applicant to inform these contacts that USAID/South Sudan will be contacting them in order to obtain information to verify qualifications.

(4) Adaptive Management: Draft Activity M&E Plan - No Page Limit

The Applicant must submit an initial outline and/or draft of its AMEL Plan to demonstrate how it will have a monitoring, evaluation and learning plan that describes how its MEL system will effectively and thoroughly collect relevant data, convincingly measure programmatic progress, and facilitate adaptive learning and management.

While the AMEL Plan is not expected to be in a final form, the outline and/or draft of the AMEL should follow the format and align with the requirements for an AMEL Plan described in Section F.3.B (Reporting Requirements), excluding in particular PIRS.

B. Final Business (Cost) Application

The Business (Cost) Application must be submitted separately from the Technical Application. While no page limit exists for the full cost application, the Applicant is encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.

The Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):

(ii) **Cover Page** (See Section D.4 above for requirements)

(iii) **Final SF 424 Form(s)**

The applicant must sign and submit the final cost application using the SF-424 series. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at www.grants.gov or using the following links:

Instructions for SF-424	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424A	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html
Budget Information (SF-424A)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
Instructions for SF-424B	http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html
Assurances (SF-424B)	https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html

(iv) **Budget and Budget Narrative**

The Budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and must be broken out by activity year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. <u>Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time required to make an award and may result in a rejection of the cost application.</u>

The Budget Narrative must contain sufficient detail to allow USAID to understand the proposed costs. The applicant must ensure the budgeted costs address any additional requirements identified in Section F, such as Branding and Marking. The Budget Narrative must be thorough, including sources for costs to support USAID's determination that the proposed costs are fair and reasonable.

The Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:

1) Summary Budget, inclusive of all activity costs (federal and non-federal), broken out by major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the Applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the entire period of the program. See Annex 1 for the Summary Budget Template.

2) Detailed Budget, including a breakdown by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's activity and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. The Detailed Budget Template is also included in Annex 1.

3) Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the activity, similar to the template in Annex 1.

4) The Detailed Budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

1) Salaries and Allowances – Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. The Applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and support market research.

2) Fringe Benefits – (if applicable) If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the Budget Narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries. The application must also include, either as a fringe benefit or other direct cost, all social contributions and employment benefits required by law for South Sudanese direct labor.

3) Travel and Transportation – Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant's normal travel policies. When appropriate please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative.

4) Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment & Supplies), Services, and Real Property – Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The Budget Narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.

5) Subawards – Specify the budget for the portion of the activity to be passed through to any subrecipients. See 2 CFR 200 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. The subrecipient budgets must align with the same requirements as the applicant's budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.

6) Other Direct Costs – This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the activity proposed by the applicant. The

applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.

7) Security Costs - Applicants must present security costs broken down by cost element according to the "Security Costs" tab of the Budget Template provided in Annex 1. **Security costs proposed by the Apparently Successful Applicant will be evaluated for realism to operate in the South Sudan environment.**

8) Indirect Costs – Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200. The application must identify which approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate methods:

   Method 1 - Direct Charge Only
   Eligibility: Any applicant
   Initial Application Requirements: See above on direct costs

   Method 2 - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)
   Eligibility: Any applicant with a NICRA issued by a USG Agency must use that NICRA
   Initial Application Requirements: If the applicant has a current NICRA, submit your approved NICRA and the associated disclosed practices. If your NICRA was issued by an Agency other than USAID, provide the contact information for the approving Agency. Additionally, at the Agency's discretion, a provisional rate may be set forth in the award subject to audit and finalization. See USAID's Indirect Cost Rate Guide for Non Profit Organizations for further guidance.

   Method 3 - De minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)
   Eligibility: Any applicant that does not have a current NICRA
   Initial Application Requirements: Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate an indirect rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The applicant must describe which cost elements it charges indirectly vs. directly. See 2 CFR 200 for further information.

If the applicant does not have an approved NICRA and does not elect to utilize the 10% de minimis rate, the Agreement Officer will provide further instructions and may request additional supporting information, including financial statements and audits, should the application still be under consideration after the merit review. USAID is under no obligation to approve the applicant's requested method.

9) Cost Sharing – The applicant should estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources to be provided over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the

basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting award.

For the purpose of this RFA, the Applicant must apply a uniform currency exchange rate of SSP 420 to US $1.

(v) **Required Certifications and Assurances**

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with their application:

(1) "Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient" ADS 303mav document found at https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mav
(2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
(3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

(vi) **Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407**

Inclusion of an item of cost in the detailed application budget does not satisfy any requirements for prior approval by the Agency. If the applicant would like the award to reflect approval of any cost elements for which prior written approval is specifically required for allowability, the applicant must specify and justify that cost. See 2 CFR 200.407 for information regarding which cost elements require prior written approval.

(vii) **Approval of Subawards**

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.332(b)

- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation.

(viii) **History of Performance**

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 3 awards, as follows:

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;
- A brief description of the activity;
- Period of Performance;
- Award Amount;
- Reports and findings from any audits performed in the last three (3) years; and
- Name of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information including telephone number, and e-mail address for each proposed individual.

If the applicant encountered problems on any of the referenced Awards, it may provide a short explanation and the corrective action taken. The applicant should not provide general information on its performance. USAID reserves the right to obtain relevant information concerning an applicant's history of performance from any sources and may consider such information in its review of the applicant's risk. The Agency may request additional information and conduct a pre-award survey if it determines that it is necessary to inform the risk assessment.

(ix) **Responsibility Determination**

To assist the Agreement Officer to make a determination of the Applicant's risk, the Applicant is requested to demonstrate:

1) Applicant has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources, as required during the performance of the award;
2) Applicant has the ability to meet the award terms and conditions, considering all existing prospective recipient commitments, both non-governmental and governmental;
3) Applicant has a satisfactory record of business integrity;
4) Applicant is otherwise qualified to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.

(x) **Branding Strategy & Marketing Plan**

USAID seeks to achieve a high level of public visibility through an array of communication activities, including media coverage, social media engagement, and events. USAID policy on the branding and marking of the work products of this agreement is contained in 2 CFR 700.16;

USAID ADS Chapters 320, 557, and 558; and the USAID Graphic Standard Manual and Partner Co-Branding Guide.

The Applicant must submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan as part of the Full Application. The Agreement Officer will review it for adequacy and compliance with USAID/South Sudan's Branding Strategy and Marking Plan Guidance and Agency policies. The negotiated and approved Branding Strategy and Marking Plan will be incorporated into the Cooperative Agreement at time of award.

USAID requires the use of social media and online platforms to publicize work, and to engage with development partners and learn from stakeholder communities in coordination with the existing media outreach and efforts of the USAID/South Sudan mission. The Applicant must prepare a complementary social media strategy that is incorporated in the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan.

For more information on Branding Strategy and Marking Plan guidance, please see Annex 3 and visit: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/320.pdf.

The following provides additional minimum requirements for the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan:

1. 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 brand mark, with the tagline “from the American people” as found on the USAID Web site at http://www.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 activity 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 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 activity materials used to explain or market the activity to beneficiaries.

(i) Describe the main program message.

(ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcements, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.

(iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this activity 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 the 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.

2. MARKING PLAN - ASSISTANCE (June 2012)

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and 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, audiovisual 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 (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.

(iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity. Other stakeholders may also be co-branded, such as the Government of South Sudan, but is contingent upon agency authorization. Given sanctions on the Government of South Sudan, any co-branding with the national government is subject to approval by the AO.

(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 activity deliverables with the following details:

(i) The activity 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 activity deliverables;

(iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the activity deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;

(iv) What activity deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity, and

(v) The rationale for not marking activity 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 activity or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the activity and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or activity 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 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.

D.8 Funding Restrictions

Activities to be undertaken should fall within the Foreign Assistance Standardized Program Structure and Definitions within the domains of ***Basic Education*** (Program Element ES.1.4: Learning for Out-of-School Youth; Program Element ES.1.5: Literacy and Numeracy for Youth and Adults); ***Workforce Development*** (Program Element EG.6.3: Workforce Readiness and Program Element EG.6.4: Technical/Vocational Training for Employment); ***Family Planning and Reproductive Health*** (Program Element HL.7.1: Service Delivery and Program Element HL.7.2: Communication and Knowledge Management (FP/RH) and***; Democracy, Human Rights and Governance*** (Program Element DR.4.4: Civic Education and Democratic Culture).

The level of effort for each objective should align with the following, which is based on funding streams:

- Objective 1: approximately 45% of total level of effort
- Objective 2: approximately 40% total level of effort
- Objective 3: less than 5% of total level of effort
- Objective 4: approximately 10-15% of total level of effort

It should be noted that education-related activities focusing on youth need to be in line with the USG Basic Education Earmark, which has the following restrictions:

- Basic life skills components of workforce development programs, sometimes called workforce readiness skills (e.g. literacy, numeracy and other basic skills like problem solving, critical thinking, communication skills).
- Basic Education (BE) funds cannot be used to fund hard skills in vocational education (e.g. automotive repair). However, BE funds may be used for workforce development activities where the focus is on the development of basic life skills or workforce readiness skills. They include the development of cognitive and social skills that employers globally value in their workforces at all levels: problem solving, critical thinking, communication skills, etc. Thus, BE funds may be used for WFD as long as the primary use of basic education funds is for improving students' literacy, numeracy, or other basic life skills. An example would be a BE-funded activity for vulnerable populations (such as at-risk youth in a post-conflict environment) that includes some technical training considered important for improving livelihood opportunity or employability, provided that the training is integrated with literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills development. The overall focus should be on preparing vulnerable populations to be better prepared to engage in lifelong learning, contribute to their communities, and become better equipped to engage in livelihoods or employment.

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.331 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not be authorized under this award.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer.

Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.4 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

D.9 Apparently Successful Applicant Selection

USAID reserves the right to select another applicant from the pool of Phase 2 Applicants in the event that final agreement and award is not reached with the initially selected Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA).

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SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 General Information

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

There are three distinct merit review phases. The criteria listed below are presented so that Applicants will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of their applications during the appropriate phase.

E.2 Review and Selection Process

USAID/South Sudan will follow a multi-tiered merit review process. The purpose of this process is to identify an Applicant that will have the greatest chance of success to achieve the activity objectives. Phase 1 is the submission and review of the Initial Application. Phase 2 will consist of oral presentations, from which one (1) Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA) will be selected to proceed to Phase 3. Phase 3 is the submission and review of the Full Application, including USAID's full review of the cost proposal.

All phases will be evaluated by a Selection Committee (SC) using the criteria described in this section. Applicants not selected for the consecutive phase will be notified at the end of each phase. Unsuccessful applicants may request additional information following such notification.

<u>Merit Review of Phase 1 (Initial Application):</u> Once the Initial Application has been submitted in response to this NOFO, USAID will conduct a merit review of the Initial Application using the criteria outlined in the Initial Merit Review section below. The purpose of the merit review is to identify the Applicants that present the best approach to achieve the IYEA objectives, as described in Section A: Program Description.

Based on the review of the Initial Application in accordance with the merit review criteria, up to four (4) Applicants will be selected to proceed to Phase 2 Oral Presentations.

<u>Merit Review of Phase 2 (Oral Presentation):</u>
The Oral Presentation and first round of follow up question responses will be reviewed based on the factors identified herein below.

Based on the review of Phase 2 in accordance with the merit review criteria, one (1) applicant will be selected as the Apparent Successful Applicant (ASA)[20]. Following this review, Applicants

[20] Apparently Successful Applicant(s): The applicant for USAID funding recommended for an award after the merit review, but who has not yet been awarded cooperative agreement award by the Agreement Officer. Apparently

will be informed if they have been selected as the ASA or if they have not been selected for an award.

Merit Review of Phase 3 (Full Application): USAID will request the ASA to submit its Full Application, which will include both technical and cost applications. USAID will review these documents and may request additional clarification questions. Per USAID's requirements, the final technical and cost/business application will be reviewed and at this stage, USAID/South Sudan will evaluate them as "Acceptable" or "Unacceptable." If the application is deemed "acceptable," an award will be drafted and submitted to the ASA for review.

The Selection Committee will consist of USAID personnel. Note that the Agreement Officer makes all final decisions regarding awardee selection.

E.3 Merit Review Technical Evaluation Criteria

USAID will conduct a merit review during each of the three phases of the merit review process. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria in the order of importance specified. Only those applications that comply with the instructions of this NOFO will be evaluated.

A. Phase 1 Evaluation Criteria

USAID will conduct a merit review of the Initial Application based on the following evaluation factors, which are of equal importance:

Factor 1 - Technical Concept

The extent to which the Applicant's technical concept demonstrates how the Expected Implementation Approaches and other implementation considerations, as described in Section A, will be integrated into a coherent technical approach that can feasibly accomplish planned outcomes and expected results within the local context.

Factor 2 - Institutional Capacity

The extent to which the Applicant (and its partners) convincingly demonstrate through its past experience in South Sudan or a similar context that it possesses the institutional capacity to successfully implement the proposed technical concept to achieve the desired outcomes within the operational context, including with available budget and other resources.

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successful applicant status confers no right and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award, which still must be obligated by the Agreement Officer.

B. Phase 2 (Oral Presentations) Evaluation Criteria

USAID will conduct a merit review of the Selection Applicants' oral presentations based on the following evaluation factors. Factor 3 is more important than the other factors, which are of equal importance.

Factor 3 - Technical Approach

The extent to which the Applicant adopts a holistic and cross-sectorial methodology that demonstrates an understanding of the local context and proposes ambitious yet realistic interventions that achieve expected outcomes for each of the four activity objectives.

Factor 4 - Management Approach

The extent to which the Applicant demonstrates how, while ensuring meaningful attention to the principles set forth in Section A, its management approach will effectively achieve the activity's objectives, especially how the lead partner will work with specific local partners to ensure well integrated implementation.

Factor 5 - Stakeholder Engagement

The extent to which the Applicant demonstrates how, while ensuring meaningful attention to the principles set forth in Section A, its planned community-based implementation approach and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders will effectively achieve the activity's objectives. Key stakeholders of interest include local and national government actors supporting youth programming and other USAID implementing partners working in the target counties.

Factor 6 - Gender and Inclusive Development Integration
The extent to which the Applicant demonstrates how gender and inclusive development will be incorporated into interventions.

C. Phase 3 Evaluation Criteria

The Apparent Successful Applicant's full technical application will be evaluated on an "acceptable" or "not acceptable" basis and will be evaluated based on the following factors:

Factor 7 - Technical Approach
The Applicant's Program Description describes the clear and practical programmatic approach for the effective implementation and successful achievement of the activity objectives, including how the activity will integrate gender and inclusive development approaches throughout all aspects of implementation and other considerations described in Section A.

Factor 8 - Management and Staffing Plan
The Applicant demonstrates a well-articulated management and staffing plan that will lead to successful implementation of its proposed Program Description, including the proposed Key Personnel positions.

Factor 9 - Adaptive Management
The Applicant clearly describes its MEL and CLA methodologies and how the structure of the proposed system will apply adaptive management techniques to inform activity management and key decisions.

E.4 Initial Business/Cost Application Review

The Agency will evaluate the cost application at this phase based on whether the requirements of Cost/Business Application submission have been satisfied. The Agency will also consider the applicant's proposed cost share meets or exceeds the minimum requirements. An Applicant that does not submit the required Initial Business/Cost Application requirements may be excluded from further evaluation.

E.5 Full Application Business/Cost Review

The Agency will evaluate the cost application of only the ASA. The Agency will evaluate whether the Applicant's cost application is complete, and costs are allowable, allocable, reasonable and realistic in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

Proposed cost share will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

The AO will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.206). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the activity and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with "specific conditions" (2 CFR 200.208).

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SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

A notice of award signed by the AO is the authorizing document. USAID will provide it to the selected Recipient electronically. Unsuccessful Applicants will be notified.

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

F.2 Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations.

For US organizations: ADS 303, 2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, and Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental organizations.

For Non-US organizations: Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations.

This NOFO only contains provisions that are required at this stage. Final provisions will be incorporated in the final award as applicable to the selected Recipient.

USAID/South Sudan's OAA will administer this award. The AO will designate an AOR to review, concur and/or approve on the items outlined in Substantial Involvement (Section B of this NOFO).

See Annex 2, for a list of the Standard Provisions that will be applicable to any awards resulting from this NOFO.

USAID Education Policy: The USAID Education Policy 2019-2023 guides Agency-wide education investment and is the primary source of direction in all education programming. The policy requires Missions to focus on one or more of the following key goals:

1. Children, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable, have increased access to quality education that is safe, relevant, and promotes social well-being.

2. Children and youth gain literacy, numeracy and socio-emotional skills that are foundational to future learning and success.

3. Youth gain the skills they need to lead productive lives, gain employment, and positively contribute to society.

4. Higher education institutions have the capacity to be central actors in development by conducting and applying research, developing quality education, and engaging communities.

USAID Youth in Development Policy: The USAID Youth Policy 2012-2021 (currently under revision) guides agency-wide investment and is the primary source of direction in all youth programming. The policy recommends missions to focus on the following objectives:

1. **ACCESS**: Youth, especially those with marginalized intersecting identities, are better able to access quality youth-responsive information, safe services, and quality opportunities, and to build the skills they need to lead healthy, productive, and engaged lives.
2. **PARTICIPATION**: Youth, especially those with intersecting marginalized identities, fully participate in decision-making and resource allocation as key partners to contribute to household, community, and national well-being.
3. **SYSTEMS**: Youth have a stronger collective voice in, and are better served by, local and national systems through more coordinated and effective services, practices, and policies that embody the principles of positive youth development.

The IYEA goal is directly linked to Objectives One, Two, and Three.

GRSS' South Sudan's GENERAL EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN, 2017-2022 is currently under revision by GRSS and will provide considerations for IYEA interventions when complete in late 2022, particularly related to vocational and technical education.

The **South Sudan National Family Planning Policy 2013 and Reproductive Health Strategic Framework 2018-2022** address youth and adolescence reproductive health needs, including family planning. These documents are currently under revision by GRSS and will provide considerations for IYEA interventions when complete in late 2022.

F.3 Reporting Requirements

A. Annual Implementation Plans

The Recipient must work with USAID to develop and submit an annual implementation work plan within 45 calendar days of the effective date of the award. The Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will review and approve the plan within 15 calendar days after receipt of the draft implementation plan. Sixty (60) calendar days before the end of each USAID fiscal year, the Recipient must submit to the AOR an annual implementation work plan for the following fiscal year.

The implementation plans will include activities for the given year, time frame for implementation of annual activities, detailed budget by state and counties covered, and proposed outreach and communication deliverables including strategic communication activities. The plan will review the previous year's accomplishments (if applicable), problems, and progress towards achieving award results and annual accomplishments and progress towards achieving results.

The annual implementation plan will describe activities to be conducted at a greater level of detail than the Program Description of the award but should be cross-referenced with the applicable sections in the Program Description. All activities must be within the scope and objectives of the award. Annual implementation plans must not change such scope and objectives or any other terms and conditions of the award in any way; such changes may only be approved by the Agreement Officer, in advance and in writing. Thereafter, if there are inconsistencies between the work plan and Program Description or other terms and conditions of the award, the latter will take precedence over the workplan.

Therefore, the implementation plans must include, at a minimum:

- A strategic statement, articulating major program impacts over the life of the program, including information on how proposed interventions will be implemented
- A strategic statement of challenges to be addressed in particular years and opportunities.
- All proposed interventions, including expected accomplishments and progress towards achieving results and performance measures tied to the indicators agreed upon within the MEL Plan
- A gender section that highlights strategic gender equitable goals, related activities, and indicators. This includes, but not limited to, equitable gender representation of stakeholders representation of women's groups, and incorporation of violence-free as a component of sustainable district planning
- Personnel requirements and consultancy needs during program implementation, including draft position descriptions to achieve expected outcomes
- Details of collaboration with other major partners
- The initial annual implementation plan must also include the Recipient's Strategic Communications Plan as a separate annexed plan with proposed outreach and communication deliverables including strategic communication activities
- Major commodities to be procured (as applicable)

As part of the CLA process, the Recipient must review the Year One Implementation Plan six months after the award date. The Recipient must inform the AOR if any revisions are required or appropriate to achieve the work plan by the end of Year One. If the Recipient does not anticipate completing its anticipated activities, the Recipient must submit a revised Implementation Plan to the AOR for consideration by no later than the first day of the Seventh Month after award. The revised Implementation Plan must explain the reasons why the Recipient does not anticipate completing its implementation strategy and its mitigation strategy.

All implementation plans, including significant revisions thereto, must be approved by the AOR. If at any time, it becomes necessary to revise the approved work plan, the Recipient must submit proposed changes to the AOR for approval.

B. Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (AMEL) Plan & DIS Reporting

The Recipient must develop and implement an Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (AMEL) Plan in accordance with ADS 201.3.4.10. that measures and tracks progress toward the immediate results and expected outcomes. The Recipient must submit the AMEL Plan within 90 days after the effective date of award. The Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will review and approve the plan within 20 calendar days after receipt of the draft implementation plan. If revisions are required, the Recipient must resubmit a further revised plan within 15 calendar days after receipt of comments provided by the AOR.

The AMEL Plan should include:

1. Overall description of the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) approach, including proposed indicators, methodologies for collection and verification, data sources, and responsible parties.
2. Collaboration with any external evaluations, including Data Quality Assessments (DQA) conducted by USAID.
3. Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS) for each mandatory and custom indicator, including the rationale for selected custom indicators at the outcome level.
4. A Logical Framework Matrix that includes all indicators and their baselines, annual target values, life of Activity target values, and disaggregate levels, including disaggregation by sex.
5. Outline the management of data at all stages, including data collection, storage, analysis, quality and reporting.

In the AMEL plan, the Recipient must identify which indicators lend themselves to geographic representation and report accordingly. The AMEL plan must demonstrate how such geographically disaggregated indicators will be used to analyze Activity performance and inform management decisions.

The AMEL plan must include indicators that USAID uses in its own standardized reporting as well as indicators that the Recipient believes to be necessary in order to adequately measure, track progress and impact, and adapt the activity for maximum impact. The Recipient must describe the rationale behind the indicators selected (relevance of the indicator, data quality, availability, cost-effectiveness of collection, etc.). The Recipient is encouraged to keep these to the minimum number necessary for monitoring needs and to propose innovative approaches and creative technologies for data collection. Outcome indicators, as opposed to output indicators, should be used whenever possible. Any modification to an indicator and its PIRS must be validated and approved by the COR.

As part of the AMEL Plan, the Recipient must submit a CLA Plan supplement. The CLA Plan must describe how the Recipient will:

- Collaborate with USAID; government counterparts; and other stakeholders. Establish a fit-for-purpose learning agenda, including opportunities to reflect on progress, review challenges and successes, and learn from failure.

- USAID asks the Recipient to develop learning and adaptation approaches that are focused on supporting effective decision-making and proper refinements to the activity. While there are compliance requirements, the Recipient will be most successful if it can also employ a substantive, genuine, and open approach to learning beyond what is minimally required. Specifically, the Recipient investigates what has worked and what has failed. The Recipient then incorporates this learning in a practical fashion into the implementation of the activity. This would be indicative of a truly learning and adapting organization.

The plan must also include an analysis of the role of gender equality and social inclusion to avoid an imbalance in the kind of Youth Services Corps volunteers that this activity attracts. Moreover, the Recipient should plan ahead for the ways in which the private sector may be engaged to propel and sustain the activity's objectives and promote local ownership.

As part of CLA, the AMEL plan should be revised as needed in response to changes in the Activity or context that occur during the life of the Activity, including changes to USAID mandatory standard indicators and indicator disaggregate categories. All changes must be approved in writing by the AOR.

In developing the AMEL plan, the Recipient should follow the guidance outlined in USAID's How-To Note: Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning (AMEL) Plan document: https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/cleared_-_how-to_note_-_activity_mel_plan_sep2017.pdf. The Recipient is highly encouraged to utilize the AMEL Plan template that will be provided by the SOR.

The Recipient must submit AMEL data in quarterly and annual reports.

In compliance with ADS 201 and ADS 579 regarding data reporting, once the AMEL Plan is approved by the AOR, the Recipient must register in USAID/South Sudan's DIS System and provide the required information.

AMELP indicators (PIRS Information). The indicator results will be uploaded on a quarterly basis.

C. Performance Reports

1. Quarterly Performance Reports

The Recipient will submit quarterly reports that give insight into the progress of planned activities. The narrative report will include qualitative and quantitative information describing activities carried out and specific results achieved during the quarter. In addition, the narrative report will indicate key implementation challenges encountered and how they were, or are planned to be, resolved. To the extent that the AMEL Plan includes quarterly targets, this should be reflected in the narrative report. The report will also contain the status and outcome of outreach and communication activities described in the annual implementation plan, and as appropriate, lessons learned and recommendations for future communications.

Each report must include the following:

- Name of the Activity and Implementer; award number; and period of performance;
- Brief outline of Activity purpose and Activity approach;
- Overall status of Activity progress towards programmatic and financial objectives (narrative);
- Identify and relate the benchmarks and achievements towards planned targets, as identified in the Recipient's AMELP;
- Provide status of overall Activity progress per the approved performance and context indicators defined in the AMELP, clearly distinguishing between relevant components of the results framework;
- Succinct success stories and lessons learned for possible public dissemination;
- Status of progress in implementation of the Gender Strategy and the Communications and Outreach Plan;
- Verification of compliance with cost share broken down by financial and/or in-kind contributions;
- Programmatic coordination and collaboration with other USAID Activities, if applicable;
- Monitor indicator report and screenshots of documents uploaded to the DEC during the quarter; and
- If any key problems or issues were encountered, how they were or will be resolved, and, if there are recommended Mission-level interventions, to facilitate their timely resolution.

Reporting periods will coincide with USAID fiscal year quarters, with reports due no later than thirty (30) days after the end of each quarter, or by any other schedule agreed upon with the USAID AOR. Note that a fourth quarterly report is not required separate from the Annual Progress Report.

2. Annual Progress Reports

The Annual Progress Report is due 45 calendar days after the end of the reporting period covering activities of the previous USG fiscal year. A Fourth Quarter Performance Report is not required; the Recipient may include results from the fourth quarter within the Annual Progress Report.

The report will provide a succinct presentation of achievements of activity objectives and targets during the year with supporting discussion to explain any shortfalls. The report will summarize program progress, provide an analysis of program impact based on activities completed or in-progress, identify success stories, and suggest resolution of any outstanding issues. The Annual Progress Report will provide a summary of activities, accomplishments and lessons learned regarding gender equality and social inclusion efforts and efforts to coordinate with other USAID activities and collaborate with private sector stakeholders. The Annual Progress Reports will include a performance-indicator data table presenting the baseline, targets established for each fiscal year, and the actual annual performance data using indicators from the AMEL Plan.

D. Financial Reporting

1. **Quarterly Accrual and Estimated Expenditures Report** – The Recipient must submit the Report no later than the 10th of March, June, September and December. The Report must include columns for: current budget, cumulative actual expenditures through the end of the previous quarter, accrued expenditures through the end of current quarter, and estimated expenditures for remaining quarters and for the next fiscal year. The AOR will inform the Recipient if obligated funds are "earmarked." If funding is earmarked, this quarterly accrual report will include the above information as to each earmark funding item.

2. **Quarterly Financial Reporting** – Within 30 calendar days following the end of each USAID fiscal year quarter, the Recipient will submit electronic copies of Financial Reports (quarterly SF 425 and final SF 425), with a copy of the report to the AOR.

3. **Final Financial Report** – In accordance with 2 CFR 200.343-344, no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the agreement, the Recipient must submit all final financial reports to the Agreement Officer and AOR.

E. Activity Location, Geographic and Location Data Collection and Reporting Requirements (January 2022)

In accordance with ADS 579, USAID has established its requirements governing development data collection and management.

The following provides requirements for reporting:

1. Activity Location Data Collection and Submission Standards

a. Activity Location Data is the geographic location or locations where an activity is implemented. The geographic detail at which USAID/South Sudan Activity Location Data must be collected is the State, County, Payam and Boma levels.
b. Activity Location Data must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Excel format using the USAID/ South Sudan Activity Mapping Implementation Template. This template describes the level of geographic detail that is required and will be provided by the AOR.
c. Activity Location Data must be submitted as part of the second quarterly and annual progress report.

2. Geographic Data Collection and Asset Submission Standards

a. In consultation with the AOR, USAID will inform the Contractor of the level of geographic detail at which Geographic Data must be collected and reported.

b. In determining the appropriate geographic data collection method, the Contractor must comply with ADS chapters 579 and 201 and Geographic Data Collection and Submission Standards.
c. Geographic Data must be submitted as part of the annual progress report.

3. All Activity Location Data and Geographic Data collection and submissions must comply with the standards set forth in ADS 579, Geographic Data Collection and Submission Standards.

Recipients are highly encouraged to review ADS 579saam, Geographic Data Collection and Submission Standards – An Additional Help For ADS 579 for supplemental guidance when preparing their data collection and reports.

F. Special Reporting

1. Depending on the final scope of activities and results indicators agreed by USAID and the Recipient, USAID may require additional annual reporting to fulfill Agency, congressional, or presidential requirements. The Recipient will be notified of these requirements in advance and expected to incorporate them into the AMEL Plan.

2. **Notifications -** Notifications should be sent to the AO and the AOR as follows:
   - Developments which may have a significant impact on the activities supported by this Award; and
   - Problems, delays, or adverse conditions which materially impact the recipient's ability to timely meet the objectives of this Agreement. This notification shall include a statement of the action taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the implementation challenge.

3. **Security Plan and Reports**

a. As set forth in Section F.11 below, as part of the overall security requirements, the Recipient must report any security threats and/or incidents impacting the implementation of the award, verbally or by telephone, immediately to the AOR or Alternate AOR in the AOR's absence and PLSO, as described below. At the minimum, a security incident report must contain the name of the Organization, name of the individual(s), date, time, a description of what happened, where the incident occurred, and any other relevant details surrounding the incident. The type and frequency of these reports may vary. If there is an ongoing incident, progress reports must be submitted to keep the AOR apprised of the situation.

G. Demobilization Plan

Six months prior to the completion date of the agreement, the Recipient will submit a demobilization plan for Agreement Officer approval. The demobilization plan must include a) draft property disposition plan, b) plan for the phase-out of in-country operations, c) delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the agreement, and d) timetable for completing all required actions in the demobilization plan, including the submission date of the final property disposition plan to the Agreement Officer.

H. Final Report

The final performance report is a detailed report, which summarizes the accomplishments and impact in relation to the expected results, in accordance with the approved AMEL Plan. It should contain a three-page executive summary, an index of all reports and information products produced under the agreement and should discuss the elements listed in 2 CFR 200.328(b).

The report must be submitted no later than 90 days after the end-date of the agreement to the Agreement Officer, and the AOR. In addition, an electronic copy must be submitted either:

1) Online to the Development Experience Clearinghouse at: https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/submit.aspx .

2) By mail (for pouch delivery):
USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse
M/CIO/ITSD/KM/DEC
RRB m.01-010
Washington, DC 20523-6100

** Note: Mail sent to USAID via the US Postal Service undergoes security and irradiation processing. To send sensitive items, like CDs or DVDs, please contact the Dec team at **ksc@usaid.gov** to arrange delivery.*

For questions on DEC submissions, contact
M/CIO/ITSD/KM/DEC
Telephone: +1 202-712-0579
E-mail: **ksc@usaid.gov**

F.4 Program Income

Program income is not expected to be created under this award.

F.5 Environmental Compliance

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 (22 CFR 216) 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. Offeror/respondent's environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs.

In addition, the 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.

No activity funded under this Cooperative Agreement will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, 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.")

An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) is being prepared and once approved, will be incorporated at time of award. The recipient is responsible for implementing all IEE conditions pertaining to activities to be funded under this award.

As part of its initial Implementation Plan, and all Implementation Plans thereafter, the Recipient, in collaboration with the AOR and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, must review all ongoing and planned activities under this Cooperative Agreement to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

If the recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it must prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities may be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation must be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

When the approved Regulation 216 documentation is (1) an IEE that contains one or more Negative Determinations with conditions and/or (2) an EA, the recipient must:

- Unless the approved Regulation 216 documentation contains a complete environmental mitigation and monitoring plan (EMMP) or a project mitigation and monitoring (M&M) plan, the recipient must prepare an EMMP or M&M Plan describing how the recipient will, in specific terms, implement all IEE and/or EA conditions that apply to proposed project activities within the scope of the award. The EMMP or M&M Plan must include monitoring the implementation of the conditions and their effectiveness.
- Integrate a completed EMMP or M&M Plan into the initial work plan.
- Integrate an EMMP or M&M Plan into subsequent Annual Work Plans, making any necessary adjustments to activity implementation to minimize adverse impacts to the environment.

F.6 Climate Risk

All USAID projects and activities approved after October 1, 2016 are required to be assessed for climate risks. The process of assessing, addressing, and adaptively managing climate risks is known as climate risk management (see Climate Risk Management for USAID Projects and Activities, a Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 201 https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/201mal_042817.pdf).

The goal of climate risk management is to make USAID's development work more resilient to potential changes in climate or weather conditions -- such as increasing temperatures, more frequent droughts or floods, or large storms. These events can have potential negative consequences on projects or activities, making it more difficult to achieve results. With better analysis and planning, USAID can anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to these changing conditions and avoid inadvertently increasing our exposure to risk.

Climate risk is the potential for negative consequences due to changing climatic conditions where the outcome is uncertain. The focus of climate risk management at USAID is on the risk to USAID development programs. This risk consists of individual climate risks—potentially severe adverse consequences for development programs resulting from the interaction of climate-related hazards with the vulnerability of societies and systems exposed to climate change. A climate risk may arise when something is exposed to a climate stressor such as higher temperatures, flooding or drought. The level of risk increases as the magnitude of the negative consequence from the exposure increases and it also increases as the likelihood of the negative consequence increases.

For IYEA, USAID/South Sudan conducted the climate risk assessment and will present results to the Recipient during the Post Award Orientation Meeting. If the assessment indicates moderate or high climate risks, each risk must be addressed by integrating risk management measures into activity implementation. This will be done through an Environmental Management Approach (EMA) in the Monitor system, where the Recipient will describe specifically how it will implement all Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) conditions and mitigation measures that result from the climate risk screening that apply to proposed activities within the scope of the award, including identified climate risks.

F.7 Limiting Plastic Pollution and Mismanaged Waste (March 2020)

Environmental stewardship is a USAID priority, including preventing ocean pollution from mismanaged plastic waste. USAID seeks to model environmentally aware practices. As such, the recipient is encouraged to use alternatives to disposable products to reduce environmental impacts. Further, the implementing partner should identify opportunities to support and highlight environmentally friendly, sustainable solutions during the course of implementation.

F.8 Branding and Marking Requirements

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub-award, must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID Identity. See Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended; 2 CFR 700.16.

The Recipient will follow the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan as approved by the Agreement Officer and as incorporated into this Cooperative Agreement. See Attachment _ [*to be completed at time of award*]. The Branding Strategy and Marking Plan will be implemented in accordance with standard provision M.13 Marking and Public Communications Under USAID-Funded Assistance.

All final communication assets (e.g., public and media documents, marketing materials, speeches, and event preparation forms, press coverages) will be provided to the Mission's Development Outreach and Communications (DOC) team. This is to ensure that USAID is aware of all public communication about the agency in South Sudan and that USAID is aware of how to promote the activity's assets and impact on the USAID social media pages, press when appropriate, and to USAID/Washington.

F.9 Management and Operational Considerations

The activity's main offices must be in Juba, South Sudan. The Recipient must ensure proper oversight and management. Where possible, the Recipient is encouraged to minimize the use of expatriate staff.

When providing subawards, the Recipient must comply with USAID's policy regarding subawards as described in ADS 303.3.21. The Recipient is required to submit a subawards manual at the startup of the activity.

F.10 Special Award Requirement Relating to the Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (November 2020)

Note: An updated version of this provision is expected soon.

FOR U.S. ORGANIZATIONS

USAID has been granted a temporary waiver under Section 889(d)(2) that will allow the recipient to use award funds through September 30, 2022, to procure certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment as specified in 2 CFR 200.216. Based on this waiver, all costs incurred for covered telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment will be allowable through September 30, 2022, without regard to the cost principle at 2 CFR 200.471. Procurements made on or after October 1, 2022, will be unallowable in accordance with 2 CFR 200.471.

FOR NON-U.S. ORGANIZATIONS

USAID has been granted a temporary waiver under Section 889(d)(2) that will allow the recipient to use award funds through September 30, 2022, to procure certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment as specified in the standard provision "Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (AUGUST 2020)." Based on this waiver, all costs incurred for covered telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment will be allowable through September 30, 2022, without regard to the standard provision "Allowable Costs" and the cost principle at 2 CFR 200.471. Procurements made on or after October 1, 2022, will be unallowable in accordance with the standard provision "Allowable Costs" and 2 CFR 200.471.

F.11 Security Requirements

One of USAID/South Sudan's primary programming concerns is that its implementing partners take all reasonable precautions to minimize risks to all staff and operations funded by the Agency. While risk can never be fully eliminated, USAID/South Sudan expects its partners to be adequately prepared to work in the prioritized cities and regions specified in the USAID/South Sudan Strategic Framework. The Recipient must be aware of security conditions in South Sudan, and by entering into this Agreement, assumes full responsibility for the safety of its employees.

Prior to commencing work, the Recipient must ensure that it has adequate procedures in place to advise its employees of situations or changed conditions that could adversely affect their security. In order to keep abreast of security conditions in South Sudan, the Recipient must seek information from all available sources, including USAID/South Sudan's Partner Liaison Security Office Contractor (PLSO) and other sources as directed by the Agreement Officer, for all areas in which its employees work or travel.

The Recipient acknowledges that security conditions are subject to change at any moment, that USAID cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information that it may provide to the Recipient, and that USAID assumes no responsibility for the reliability of such information.

The Recipient has sole responsibility for approving all travel plans for its employees and/or his dependents traveling to South Sudan if allowed by the Recipient's personnel internal policies. The Recipient is also responsible for immediately notifying USAID/South Sudan and the U.S. Embassy American Citizen Services section in the event a U.S. citizen employee does not return from travel as expected or does not report to work. American citizen personnel are encouraged to register in the State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

In the event that USAID requests the Recipient to do so, the Chief of Party (COP) [or alternative staff member with a similar activity leadership function] must assume responsibility for contacting all of its employees.

The Recipient must provide to the PLSO, or others as directed by the Agreement Officer, the name, current address, and current home and/or cellular telephone number of the COP and of an alternate designated employee. The Recipient is responsible for ensuring that the information on file with the PLSO is up to date so that in an emergency, the COP or alternate representative can be reached immediately and he/she can rapidly contact all other affected employees. The Recipient is requested to notify the PLSO, copying the Agreement Officer, about any changes of the individual listed in the security plan who are considered in-charge of security.

SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN

The Recipient must submit a location-specific Safety and Security Plan (SSP) for proposed operational areas, which may be as specific as by state, county, and place, where activities will occur. The Recipient will use discretion in providing a level of detail appropriate to the operating context and variance in conditions across the targeted areas. The SSP is to be implemented and maintained also by all sub-awardees. The SSP will be reviewed by the Agreement Officer in consultation with the PLSO.

The plan should include commentary on all aspects listed below:

1. Security risk management approach that ties into this threat and vulnerability analysis to mitigate risks.
2. A description of the organizational structure and associated roles and responsibilities of those responsible for security risk and emergency management and including how these integrate with headquarters / regional teams as relevant.
3. A description of the overarching security incident response and management process (from initial notification through to the implementation of a planned course of response action).
4. A description of the emergency communications approach to be used to enable the project to communicate quickly to staff in the event of an emergent threat and that allows staff to communicate in the event of a security incident affecting them or their locality.
5. A description of the approach taken to training and exercising all staff in support of secure project operations.
6. A description of the approach to travel risk management – including journey management.
7. A description of the approach to physical security of premises (offices, compounds, warehouses, residences, etc.), including the nature of contracted guard force and other security services, approach to access control and visitor management.
8. Contingency planning for relevant emergency situations such as -
    - Abductions or illegal detention,
    - Evacuation,
    - Emergency medical care,
    - Psycho-social support for staff impacted by serious crimes or personal violence,
    - Sexual assault,
    - Armed attack,
    - Reporting and prosecution options, etc., and
    - Risk mitigation measures, which address specific needs based on analysis of proposed program areas.

Submission of global security handbooks and/or policy documents does not qualify as a Safety and Security Plan. The Safety and Security Plan must be demonstrably written for and apply directly to the areas where activities will be implemented. All personnel and operations funded under this award, including sub-awardees or other partners with substantive programmatic contributions, must be covered by a safety and security plan. The Recipient must pay attention to the unique threats and vulnerabilities faced by their staff, beneficiaries, sub- awardees, etc., and directly address these threats and vulnerabilities in safety and security plans.

In terms of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) for activity staff, beneficiaries, sub-awardees, etc., the Recipient must describe how the activity will monitor this, as well as manage potential cases internally and externally according to relevant local South Sudanese laws.

SECURITY REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The Recipient must submit the below reports to the PLSO and other personnel as directed by the Agreement Officer. The type and frequency of these reports may vary with the project scope, location, and criticality. The Recipient must submit an Initial Incident Report (SIR, IR SITREP or other – see below for definitions) within the timescales described below, and, thereafter, subsequent further reporting as often as the situation requires (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly etc.).

1. Incident Reporting

There are various types of Incident Reporting: Serious Incident Report (SIR); Incident Report (IR); Situation Report (SITREP); and any other security related report that may be required by USAID.

a. Serious Incident Report (SIR)

- An incident that involves the death, injury, kidnapping of Contractor personnel and/or damage to Contractor property.
- An incident that has critically damaged the funded program, such as fire, catastrophic flood, etc.
- Initial SIR must be reported verbally immediately, and no later than 4 hours of the incident occurrence/discovered.
- A Complete SIR must be filed in writing by e-mail within 24 hours of the incident.
- Updated written SIR must continue to be filed in a timely basis (daily, weekly) as long as the situation exists. The timeline will be adjusted as required by the Contracting Officer
- Final Report SIR will summarize the incident, the subsequent happenings and the final resolution.

b. Incident Report (IR)

- An incident involving accidents, potential harm, suspicious persons or acts, threats or harassing actions against personnel or the program.
- IR should be initially reported by phone immediately, followed up with a written report filed as soon as possible (within 24 hours). After the incident is evaluated, a complete detailed written report must be submitted no later than 72 hours after the incident.

c. Situation Report (SITREP)

- A report that a significant, but not critical action or activity, has taken place that has impacted, or may impact, on the well-being of the personnel or the success of the program.

- This report may describe trends, secondhand information that may have bearing on the project, or impact on future operations.
- There is no pre-determined reporting timeline. The report will be submitted by the Contractor as needed and required by PLSO, in consultation with the cognizant CO/AO.

Telephonic communication is the preferred method to provide the initial information of an incident. A written report by e-mail must follow as soon as possible within the above-described guidelines and it must be as detailed as possible. The report must follow the format approved in the original Security Plan but at a minimum it must contain:

- What: What happened – provide the specific details of the event.
- Where: Where exactly did the event happen – provide the specific location or area.
- When: What was the specific date and time of the event.
- Why: Why did the event happen; is there a background or context to the situation.
- Who: Who is involved, especially as it relates to injuries, deaths, arrests, or kidnappings.[21]
- Who: Who is managing the situation – provide their names, contact details and appointments?
- Risks: What are the risks now, do they present a continued direct or indirect threat, and how likely are they to occur.

If this is an ongoing incident, progress reports must be submitted in accordance with the timelines provided via the SITREP in order to keep USAID/South Sudan personnel apprised of the situation.

F.12 Human Rights Violations and Sanctions Program in South Sudan

a. WORKING IN SOUTH SUDAN - U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY

Work under this Agreement must be consistent with U.S. Government's (USG) policy toward South Sudan in effect and as notified by the Agreement Officer (AO) or the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) throughout the life of the award.

b. U.S. GOVERNMENT SANCTIONS

The Recipient must comply with all applicable U.S. Government sanctions, including those administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)

[21] Incident reporters must clearly state whether the identities of those who have died, been seriously injured, are seriously ill, or have been kidnapped or are associated with a serious act of ethical misconduct / inappropriate behavior are CONFIRMED or UNCONFIRMED. Where an incident relates to allegations of / suspected or established serious acts of ethical misconduct / inappropriate behavior, incident reporters must clearly state the status of the case against an identified individual: whether it is alleged, suspected or established. Where reporting a kidnapping, incident reporters should report only the nationality of the kidnapped individual during the initial report, and must seek explicit advice from their Headquarters security team as to the established organizational protocol for release of personally identifiable information relating to a kidnap victim.

under Executive Order 13664, dated April 3, 2014 (South Sudan sanctions) and Executive Order 13818 dated December 20, 2017 (Global Magnitsky sanctions).

c. PRIOR APPROVAL FOR FUNDING OR SUPPORT TO ANY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT

The Recipient must not provide funding or support under this Agreement to any level of government in the Republic of South Sudan, including the central government or state or local governments, without the prior written approval of the Agreement Officer.

d. This special award requirement must be included in all subawards and contracts.

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SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

G.1 NOFO Points of Contact

The Agreement Officer for this Award is:

Alexis McGinness
amcginness@usaid.gov

The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist for this Award is:

Arpi Shotigian Moskovitch
ashotigian@usaid.gov

G.2 Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID's acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information: https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistance-ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov

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SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

H.1 Applications with Proprietary Data

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

> "This application includes data that must not be disclosed, duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. 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 {insert sheet numbers}."

Additionally, the applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

> "Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application."

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ANNEX 1 - SUMMARY BUDGET TEMPLATE

See attached Budget Template

ANNEX 2 - STANDARD PROVISIONS

(Note: the full text of these provisions may be found at: https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa and https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab). The actual Standard Provisions included in the award will be dependent on the organization that is selected. The award will include the latest Mandatory Provisions for either U.S. or non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations**.** The award will also contain the following "required as applicable" Standard Provisions:

Please note that the resulting award will include all standard provisions (both mandatory and required as applicable) in full text.

REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PREDETERMINED (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA2. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PROVISIONAL (Nonprofit) (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA3. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE - PROVISIONAL (Profit) (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (MAY 2020)
X		RAA5. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA6. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
	X	RAA7. PROTECTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT (APRIL 1998)
	X	RAA8. CARE OF LABORATORY ANIMALS (MARCH 2004)
	X	RAA9. TITLE TO AND CARE OF PROPERTY (COOPERATING COUNTRY TITLE) (NOVEMBER 1985)
X		RAA10. COST SHARING (MATCHING) (FEBRUARY 2012)
X		RAA11. PROHIBITION OF ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS (JUNE 1999)
X		RAA12. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
X		RAA13. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES

		(DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA14. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA15. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
X		RAA16. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
X		RAA17. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
X		RAA18. USAID DISABILITY POLICY - ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2004)
	X	RAA19. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
X		RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA23. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (JULY 2015)
X		RAA24. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (DECEMBER 2014 2020)
	X	RAA25. PATENT REPORTING PROCEDURES (DECEMBER 2014)
	X	RAA26. ACCESS TO USAID FACILITIES AND USAID’S INFORMATION SYSTEMS (AUGUST 2013)
X		RAA27. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA28. AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (APRIL 2016)
	X	RAA29. PROTECTING LIFE IN GLOBAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE (MAY 2019)

REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR NON-U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. ADVANCE PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA2. REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (DECEMBER 2014)
TBD		RAA3. INDIRECT COSTS – NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (NICRA) (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – CHARGED AS A FIXED AMOUNT (NONPROFIT) (JUNE 2012)
		RAA5. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA6. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA7. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
X		RAA8. SUBAWARDS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA9. TRAVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA10. OCEAN SHIPMENT OF GOODS (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA11. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA12. PATENT RIGHTS (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA13. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA14. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
X		RAA 15. COST SHARE (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA16. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
X		RAA17. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA18. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
	X	RAA19. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT

		FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
	X	RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
X		RAA23. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
X		RAA24. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
X		RAA25. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
X		RAA26. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING(ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
X		RAA27. LIMITATION ON SUBAWARDS TO NON-LOCAL ENTITIES (JULY 2014)
X		RAA28. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
X		RAA29. CONTRACT AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (APRIL 2016)
		RAA30. RESERVED
X		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

ANNEX 3: ASSISTANCE BRANDING STRATEGY, MARKING PLAN and STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PLAN GUIDANCE

USAID's policy is that programs, projects, activities, public communications, or commodities implemented or delivered under co-funded instruments – such as grants, cooperative agreements, or other assistance awards that usually require a cost share – generally are "co-branded and co-marked." In accordance with 2 CFR 700.16, this policy applies to these assistance awards even when the award does not require any cost sharing. (see ADS 303.3.10). Please note that while USAID promotes a consistent approach to branding and marking across all the Agency's programs and maintains a brand identity that they are "from the American People."

"Co-branding" and "co-marking" means that the program, project, or activity marking represents both USAID and the implementing partner.

Every Apparent Successful Applicant must submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. The following provides guidance in developing such Branding Strategy and Marking Plan.

<u>Branding Strategy</u>

USAID seeks a very high level of public visibility for this activity through co-branding. Co-branding helps show unification between USAID and partners.

The Applicant must develop its **Branding Strategy**. In order to expedite the review and approval of the proposed Branding Strategy, the Apparent Successful Applicant should include:

- **Activity Name**: The name of the activity is XXXXXX. In every public event or document and in discussions with the Government of South Sudan and other counterparts, the Recipient will identify the activity as "XXXXX" on each reference.

- **Communicate Sponsorship:** USAID is mandated to mark its foreign assistance with the USAID identity (logo) and tagline, "From the American People." Therefore, in all USAID-funded and related activities, the activity will consistently highlight USAID through co-branding. The following provides details regarding where and how such USAID Identity will be used:

    a. TEXTUALLY:

    [Example: Recipient will include references to USAID in all printed outreach and communications materials, including but not limited to, reports, press releases, website content, social media postings, invitations, publications, fact sheets, presentations, and promotional materials relating to the activity.]

    b. VERBALLY:

    [Example: Recipient will ensure that USAID is publicly credited in all verbal outreach and communications activities, including but not limited to, speeches, press conferences, media interviews, presentations, training workshops, videos, films, public service announcements, and community meetings when referencing the activity.]

c. VISUALLY:

[Example: USAID's identities will be co-branded on all outreach and communications materials, including but not limited to, reports, press releases, website content, invitations, publications, fact sheets, presentations, videos, films, public service announcements, banners, and other promotional materials.]

d. WHEN ENGAGING WITH THE MEDIA:

[Example: USAID will be acknowledged at all media events and in reporting on the activity. Successes and achievements of the development objectives should be credited to USAID's assistance as appropriate through dissemination of press materials, including but not limited to, press releases, media interviews, op-eds, etc. Media coverage of the work may include. but not be limited to, radio, local TV, videos, films, webcasts, and print (magazines, newspapers, etc.).]

e. THROUGH DIGITAL CONTENT (Websites, Social Media, Blogs, etc.):

[Example: USAID will be acknowledged appropriately through all Recipient's social media channels and content about the activity. All visual content about the activity published through the Activity's digital channels will be co-branded with the USAID logo, although the logo will not be used as the profile picture. Efforts will be made to communicate USAID's sponsorship to the activities on these digital products when appropriate.]

In addition, the Branding Strategy should describe:

Activity Description
Provide a basic description of the activity in simple language. Avoid jargon, abbreviations, and explain what the activity is doing, how it's accomplishing its objectives, and why the work is important.

Branding and Marking Objectives
List the branding and marking objectives that complement the activity's programmatic objectives and communicate USAID's support to the activity. The objectives should directly support the activity's development objectives. The objectives can range from an increase of awareness, encourage behavior change, increase support, encourage adoption of best practices, etc.

Audiences
List the activity's external audiences. The audiences are those who are the decision makers that

are critical to achieving the activity's development objectives. In addition, people who influence those decision makers are also part of the key audiences.

Be specific and clear about your target audiences and user groups and prioritize them according to importance and influence relative to your objectives. Don't just think about the 'usual suspects' and think beyond just the actual "recipients" of the assistance.

Key Messages

The awardee needs to develop key messages to explain the "what," "how" and "why" aspects of the activity to explain the important work of the activity to its key audiences. The message triangle must include a WHAT, HOW, and WHY statement as described below.

a) WHAT: This is the problem we are working to solve and provides the reason why our goals are within reach. A successful "what" statement provides our audience with a reason to believe.

b) HOW: Here we explain the method we will use to achieve our goals through our unique position.

c) WHY: The "why" message appeals to the common interest and values of our audiences. It connects to their sense of reason and emotion, and it tells them why they should care.

Communications Activities

The apparently successful applicant will outline communication activities that are designed to achieve the communications objectives. The activities should be in line to achieve a very high-level of public visibility through an array of communications activities, media coverage, and social media engagement.

We recommend that the apparently successful applicant conduct research on what existing publications, online platforms, events, conferences, and information sources the apparently successful applicant can tap into in order to reach the activity's key audiences.

Communications activities can include but are not limited to: launching the program; online campaigns; community events; announcing research, reports or publications; email marketing; spotlighting trends in the sector; highlighting activity impact or beneficiaries stories; media briefings, contests; community awareness activities; and media visits to the activity sites.

This section should also outline the types of communications products that will be developed through this activity and how these tools will be used to publicize the activity in the host country. Such products can include but not limited to the following:

- High quality, action-oriented photos of the activity's interventions
- Press releases;
- Press conferences;
- Media interviews;
- Site visits;
- Success stories;

- Testimonials from beneficiaries;
- Professional photography;
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs);
- Videos;
- Webcasts;
- E-invitations or group emails;
- Social media; and
- Other Internet activities, etc.

The communications activities and products should be part of the activity's Strategic Communications Plan and will be incorporated into the Activity's Implementation Plan.

Success Criteria
The apparently successful applicant will need to develop measurement tools to determine whether the strategy has successfully achieved the communications objectives of the activity. These metrics will be incorporated into the monitoring and evaluation plan of the award.

Marking Plan

In accordance with 2 CFR 700.16, a Marking Plan means a plan that details the public communications, commodities, and program materials and other items that will visibly bear the USAID Identity.

USAID policy is that all programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID Identity, of a size and prominence equivalent to or greater than the recipient's, other donor's or any other third party's identity or logo. Program materials include the examples set forth in 2 CFR 700.16.

USAID reserves the right to determine that a program's goals require that the USAID Identity be larger and more prominent, if USAID is a majority donor and the USAID-funded program, project or activity is especially important to USAID; any such requirement will be on a case-by-case basis depending on the audience, activity goals and materials produced.

To the extent possible, the apparently successful applicant will provide the text that will be used to acknowledge USAID support on printed communication materials and products as well as for the verbal acknowledgement of USAID at events.

We recommend that the apparently successful applicant create a table and list the public communications materials and products that will be co-marked. Deliverables to be co-marked include but are not limited to the following:

- Products, equipment and inputs delivered;
- Plaques, signs or banners for places where activities or technical assistance are carried out;
- External public communications such as media invitations, press releases, online success stories, beneficiary testimonials, professional photography, brochures, leaflets, and fact sheets;

- Public services announcements, videos, DVDs, CDs, posters, newsletters, publications, and mass distribution of electronic mail sent for program purposes;
- Studies, reports, research results, training manuals, workbooks, guides, and evaluations;
- Letterhead used for program-related purposes (Invitations to workshops, trainings, seminars, public events, etc.), as opposed to apparently successful applicant administrative purposes;
- PowerPoint or program related presentations;
- Newspaper supplements, advertisements, and other paid placements; and
- Signs and banners at public events such as press conferences, briefings, seminars, exhibitions, workshops, conferences, fairs, and trainings.
- Website pages and other online external pages.

Studies, reports, publications, Web sites, and all informational and promotional products not authored, reviewed, or edited by USAID must contain a provision substantially as follows:

This study/report/Website (specify) is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this (specify) are the sole responsibility of (name of organization) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

If an implementing partner intends to mark with its own logo, the strong presumption is that marking with the USAID Identity is also required. The apparently successful applicant may request approval of presumptive exceptions in their submitted Marking Plans. Exceptions are programmatic in nature and reflect the categories of foreign assistance that USAID generally does not want marked. See 2 CFR 700.16 [g-h] and M.13 Marking and Public Communications Under USAID-Funded Assistance (December 2014) for additional guidance. Waivers to the market requirements are discussed in ADS 320.3.2.6 and 320.3.3.3.

Further, to ensure that the marking requirements “flow down” to subrecipients of subawards, recipients of USAID funded grants and cooperative agreements or other assistance awards are required to include a USAID-approved marking provision in any USAID funded subaward, to read as outlined in CFR §700.16.

Strategic Communications Plan

The Recipient will develop a Strategic Communications Plan as part of their Initial Implementation Plan detailing the overarching communications efforts and tools it will use to achieve widespread awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the Activity’s objectives and results among key stakeholders and the South Sudanese public. The plan must state the Activity’s strategic communications objectives and detail how the Recipient will achieve these objectives when creating deliverables and conducting other communications activities (e.g., media engagement, community mobilization, and use of social media). In formulating this plan, the Recipient must ensure that USAID’s contribution to the achievement of communication and programmatic objectives are significantly recognized by the Activity’s potential audience, as appropriate. Based on this Strategic Communications Plan, the annual implementation plan will identify specific outreach and communication deliverables and strategic communication activities for the upcoming year; the annual progress report will report on such deliverables and activities.

Social Media

In accordance with ADS 558, under cooperative agreements and grants, sites will reflect USAID co-branding policies and regulations as stated in ADS 320 and 2 CFR §700.16. Sites funded by multiple partners will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by USAID and other partners.

The apparently successful applicant must prepare a complementary social media strategy that is incorporated in the Branding Strategy. Social media must only be used for the project's development objectives and no other purpose.

All digital content to promote the project including but not limited to, digital success stories, promotional videos, infographics, must be provided to the AOR and the DOC team and distributed via the official USAID/South Sudan social media platforms. The apparently successful applicant must determine the appropriate clearance process for posting content to the project's official social media account.

USAID reserves the right to have social media accounts closed if the AO, in consultation with the AOR and DOC, determines that the applicant is not using these platforms appropriately (see 558.3.1.5 for appropriate activity usage).

Websites

Websites that are produced under USAID-financed assistance instruments and fall outside the scope of ADS 557.3.4 must comply only with USAID branding guidelines. The apparently successful applicant must notify of the URL as far in advance of the site's launch as possible. The web sites must not reside on a .gov domain.

The site must be marked appropriately on the index page of the site and every major entry point to the Website with a disclaimer that states:

"The information provided on this Website is not official U.S. Government information and does not represent the views or positions of the U.S. Agency for International Development or the U.S. Government."

[END OF NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY]