<u>RFA-623-16-000001 Amendment 1</u>
<u>Questions and Answers</u>
<u>Program Title: Engaging Somalis in Peaceful Political Processes (ES3P)</u>

1. Reference: Page 27: Section D, Subsection 5, of the RFA states:

A Cost Application consists of:
a. The SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance; SF-424A, Budget Information – NonConstruction Program; and SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction
Programs.
b. A summary budget and a detailed/itemized budget (the required budget format is
embedded below);
c. A budget narrative explaining costs estimated and providing the rationale and the basis on which they were derived including sufficient information to determine the reasonableness of proposed salaries, equipment, vehicles, etc.; and
d. Other administrative documentation as required.

Question: Please provide a list of the "other administrative documentation" referred to under Item d.

A clear heading has been added to clarify that "other administrative documentation" includes the applicant's NICRA or financial statements, details of sub-award arrangements, self-certification for compliance with USAID policies, evidence of responsibility, required representations and certifications, and information confirming that any proposed cost share will materialize.

2. Reference: Page 23: Technical Application Format, Item 6 under Section D, Subsection 4, of the RFA lists the required annexes as:

a. Illustrative risk assessment and monitoring methodology
b. Draft monitoring and evaluation plan
c. CVs of key personnel
d. Summary organizational chart
e. Sub-recipient management structure chart (if sub-recipients are proposed)

Question: We respectfully request that USAID consider not requiring the annexes listed as items c, d, and e above to be included in the 45 count page limit of the Technical Application.

USAID has carefully reviewed the requirements for the technical application, including the annexes, and judges the page limit of the full application to be sufficient. Items c, d, and e noted above must be included in the page limit.

3. How much interest is there for the project to work in complementarity with the initiatives of other external actors on programmes agreed upon with the FGS, regional states and interim administrations?

USAID strongly encourages coordination with other external actors on programs supporting elections and political processes at all levels. To reflect this, USAID has added a Coordination section to the Program Description in Amendment 1.

4. Is there a budgetary restriction and/or guidance in terms of the percentage split between programmatic and overhead/operation costs?

All costs must be in line with the proposed technical approach, and applicants must ensure all costs are fair and reasonable. Applicants should ensure that the indirect cost rates applied in the budgets are consistent with their respective Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements (NICRA). If the applicant has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, then they may choose to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR 200.414(f)).

5. With regard to the financial formats that needs to be completed, the SF-424B is not attached with this call and the one posted on the Grants.gov has expired on 06/30/2014, please advise whether we should use the existing form even though it has expired?

The current SF-424B can be downloaded from this website: https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15

6. Can USAID confirm that company registration in Somalia extends to Somaliland and that offerors do not need to have registration in both?

The successful applicant must comply with local laws.

7. Can USAID please clarify the Regional Rest Breaks benefits for expat and TCN staff?

Please refer to your organization's established policies.

8. Please provide the FSN scale and complete Local Compensation Plan applicable to Somalia and Kenya. Please clarify what FSN scale/LCP applies to this project.

Applicants should follow their respective organization's compensation plans.

9. Page 18 of the RFA states that the geographic code for this program is 937. Can USAID please revise the Authorized Geographic Code to 935 per DFA requirements for Somalia as a sub-Saharan African country?

Somalia receives funding that does not fit within this exception; thus, we are required to use geographic code 937. However, please note that this only applies to procurement under assistance.

10. Page 24 of the RFA describes required technical annexes. Under item 1, please confirm that USAID is requesting a risk assessment and risk monitoring methodology, not the project performance monitoring methodology?

This is confirmed and USAID has revised the language for the Technical Approach section of the Technical Application Format to provide clarity in Amendment 1.

11. Page 24 of the RFA mentions a logical framework. Please clarify where and how the logical framework should be presented (and whether there is a template we should use), and confirm that it is different from the diagram on page 11 of the RFA.

Applicants should provide a logical framework as part of the draft M&E plan. This logical framework should build on the beginnings of the logical framework provided in Section A of the RFA and provide the logical connections between the proposed activities, the expected results, and the objectives of the program. The M&E plan should be aligned with this logical *framework. USAID has revised the language for the Technical Approach section of the Technical Application Format to provide clarity in Amendment 1.*

12. Page 25 of the RFA describes required qualifications for key personnel positions. For the COP position, will USAID consider counting additional degrees or experience in non-developing countries towards the 10 years of required experience? If not, will you consider lowering the required number of years of experience?

USAID considers the required qualifications as currently detailed in the RFA appropriate. We have revised the language for the COP requirements to add clarity in Amendment 1.

13. Page 25 of the RFA also describe the qualifications for the Grants Manager position. Will USAID please define what is meant by "large grants facilities"? What qualifies as "large" grants?

USAID has revised the language for the Grants Manager requirement to add clarity in Amendment 1.

14. Page 28 of the RFA indicates that cost sharing is not required, but is encouraged for cost effectiveness. Will USAID consider leveraging in lieu of cost share?

Per Section C, part 2, cost share is not required under this RFA. Leveraging is also not required. The statement noted in Section D, part 5 has been revised to clarify that cost share is not required.

15. On page 35 of the RFA, the second evaluation criteria for the technical approach states, "The technical approach will be evaluated in terms of the extent to which it integrates flexibility and an understanding of the local context into the proposed management approach to allow the program to adjust and respond to unforeseen circumstances or unexpected." Would USAID please clarify whether the evaluation criteria should read "technical approach" rather than "management approach"? Or should applicants include a discussion of relevant management approaches in the Technical Approach, as well as the Management and Staffing Plan sections?

USAID has revised the language for this criterion to add clarity in Amendment 1.

16. Page 40 of the RFA indicates that the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DfID) is also supporting this project. Please clarify how this will affect proposal preparation and program implementation, i.e., should we include DfID-specific indicators in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan? Will there be additional reporting requirements and separate reports required?

Applicants are not required to include DfID-specific indicators in the draft monitoring and evaluation plan submitted with the application. The potential inclusion of DfID-specific indicators may be discussed when the full monitoring and evaluation plan is developed after award. At this time, no additional reporting requirements are foreseen; however, the AOR or AO may request that additional information be included in the quarterly reports.

17. Does USAID have any preferences for how project resources should be divided among the three objectives, such as XX% for objective 1, XX% for objective 2, etc.? This clarification would be helpful in light of the RFA's reference on page 7 to the United Nations and other donors providing support for various political processes.

Given the volatility of the Somali political context, the uncertainty of events particularly in the later years of the program, and the fact that other donors will also contribute to various aspects of political processes, USAID expects that the division of resources across objectives may need to change year-to-year, and as such will need to be regularly reviewed and addressed during implementation planning.

18. Does USAID have any specific suggestions for the division of the designated $3 million in subgrants between objectives 1 and 2?

There is no requirement at this stage of the process to provide a breakdown for the $3 million in the cost application; however, it is up to the applicant to propose appropriate use of subgrants.

19. For the email submissions of the cost and technical applications, does USAID have any limitations for the size of email attachments the mission can receive?

Each email must not exceed 15mb in size.

20. Could USAID please exclude the cover page, table of contents, and list of acronyms from the technical application's 45-page limit? In addition, given the need to include CV— each of which would be multiple pages—of five key personnel in the required annexes, would USAID consider extending the total number of pages for the technical application to 55?

USAID has carefully reviewed the requirements for the technical application, including the annexes, and judges the page limit of the full application to be sufficient.

21. On page 22 of the RFA, under Section D. Application and Submission Information, USAID states that reimbursement of pre-award costs will not be allowed unless prior written approval is provided by the Agreement Officer. On the top of pages 29 and 34, however, USAID states that it will not reimburse potential applicants or the selected awardee for any pre-award costs. Could USAID please clarify whether the selected recipient would be able to incur pre-award costs provided Agreement Officer approval is provided in advance?

This depends on the pre-award costs. Per 2 CFR 200.458, pre-award costs are those incurred prior to the effective date of the Federal award directly pursuant to the negotiation and in anticipation of the Federal award where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the scope of work. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award and only with the written approval of the Federal awarding agency. This language has been clarified in Amendment 1.

22. On page 40, the RFA states that, under Section F. Federal Award and Administration Information, the recipient will prepare four quarterly reports and that "the October Report shall be a cumulative annual report." Per 2 CFR 200.328, "intervals must be no less frequent than annually nor more frequent than quarterly except in unusual circumstances." Therefore, could USAID clarify that an annual report, separate from the fourth quarter narrative report, is not required and that annual results and indicator data can be included as part of the October quarterly report to accommodate USAID's internal annual reporting requirements?

Yes, the October progress report, instead of reflecting only quarterly information, will also be an annual report and reflect annual information. As such, the recipient will need to include annual results and indicator data in the October progress report in additonal to the quarterly information.

23. On page 41 of the RFA, under Section F. Federal Award and Administration Information, USAID states that the final performance report would be due 60 calendar days after the expiration of the award. However, per 2 CFR 200.328, final performance reports are due 90 days following the end of the period of performance. Given this, could USAID confirm that the selected awardee would have until 90 days after the end of the award to submit the final performance report?

Yes, the awardee will have 90 days. Amendment 1 has clarified this.

24. In the cost application, what level of detail does USAID require for the $3 million in subgrants to be provided over the life of the program? Given that specific subgrantees may not yet be identified for election related activities in the later years of the program, would USAID allow applicants to show some of the subgrant funds as a pool of funds whose specific use and assignment would be determined during project implementation?

There is no requirement at this stage of the process to provide a breakdown for the $3 million in the cost application. It is up to the applicant to propose appropriate use of subgrants based on their technical approach.

25. Can USAID please confirm that the bulk of support under this program is expected to be targeted toward political processes on the federal level and that minimal additional support is expected toward regional political processes in Somaliland and/or the federal member states?

Per Section A, part 2 "Purpose and Geographic Scope," USAID intends to support political processes on the federal level as well as in Somaliland, Puntland, and potentially emerging federal member states. Given the uncertainty of events over the next five years, USAID is not in a position to state what percentage of resources should go to specific political processes, particularly those that are yet to be planned. However, as one example, USAID anticipates supporting Somaliland's 2017 parliamentary and presidential election through ES3P.

26. As an individual offeror, I have a proposal for setting-up a counter radicalization center (CRC) for providing unique education for local communities against radicalization and extremism and in support of peace and reconciliation, good governance and development in Somalia. However, my drafted CRC proposal is a smaller undertaking with an estimated annual budget of over $2.7 million only, compared to the announced ES3P award of over $23 million for community development.

Given the relevance of my proposed endeavor to the announced Category of Funding Activity of community development, I wonder if there is a way that I could submit my proposed CRC project with the smaller budget for consideration as a segment of the ES3P Award.

Thank you for sharing your idea for a new initiative. Individuals or organizations with ideas for programming that may further ES3P objectives may partner with organizations submitting full applications as proposed sub-recipients at the application stage. Alternatively, local organizations in particular may be able to apply for funding under the small grants portfolio of this program after it has begun.