



USAID

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

August 11, 2008

To All Prospective Applicants

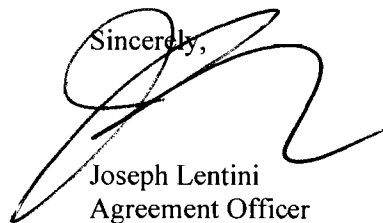
Subject: Amendment No. 2
RFA No.: USAID-Washington M-OAA-DCHA-DOFDA-08-977
Title: **Global Civil Society Strengthening**

This Amendment No. 2 to the subject RFA is issued to:

1. Extend the deadline for submission of applications from August 22 to September 2nd, 2008
2. Make changes in Sections I, II and IV of the RFA, and
3. Disseminate questions and answers received concerning the subject RFA.

If you have questions or require additional information, please contact Claudia M. Enríquez at cenriquez@usaid.gov or (202) 712-5355

Sincerely,



Joseph Lentini
Agreement Officer

- 1) Section I, add the following language at the end of page 9:

“Sub-Element 2.4.2.6: Government Communications

Definition: Assist with government public information campaigns and other related activities. Also, in the context of sensitizing government officials to the role of independent media, assist governments in improving their press and public relations capacities, including training of press officers on free media systems and interaction with the media, promotion of e-government capacities, restoration/recovery/cataloguing of archival media materials, and building other communications capacities.

Examples of anticipated results:

- Created government support and the necessary operational environment to support independent media
 - Improved government capacities to communicate effectively to the media and the public
 - Trained government public relations liaisons, offices, and press officers
 - Strengthened government information sharing through media systems and campaigns
 - Created regular and open venues for the government to engage with free media systems
 - Advanced government's information sharing ability through online resources
 - Strengthened government capacity for beginning and sustaining e-government solutions
 - Improved government processes for restoration, recovery and cataloguing of archival media materials and other public information
 - Developed government ability to respond to freedom of information requests
 - Strengthen government capacity to be more transparent through public information sharing and public information access.”
- 2) Section II, page 26 is amended to remove language regarding subawards from the substantial involvement section. Therefore, Substantial Involvement is amended as follows:

“D. SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

A Cooperative Agreement implies a level of “substantial involvement” by USAID through the Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO). The intended purpose of the CTO’s involvement during the award is to assist the Recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the agreement. The substantial involvement elements for this award are listed below:

- 1) Approval of Recipient’s annual work plans, including work plans for research and evaluation.
- 2) Approval of monitoring and evaluation plans.

- 3) Approval of key personnel and any changes; including any and all key personnel associated with programs carried out in specific countries under the Leader Agreement.”

- 3) Section IV.B., page 32, delete sixth bullet and replace with the following language:

- “Sample Monitoring and Evaluation Plan [and Sustainability plan](#)”

- 4) Section IV, page 33, paragraph 4 delete the note in brackets under section (a) and substitute with the following:

“[Note: If the applicant is applying as a consortium or partnership, please incorporate within your 10 page management plan the role of each organization, the governance structure, between the Leader and Consortium member (including lines of authority and decision-making with regard to how each partner will be utilized in implementing the overall strategy. Applicants should prepare a draft management plan that addresses key management strategies, and financial management reporting.]”

- 5) Section IV, page 34, add the following language:

“The sample Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Sustainability plan shall be presented [for the five years](#) of the leader award.”

- 6) Section IV, page 38, the following note included in the budget section 2 is deleted and replaced with the following language:

[Per the Note above, the Technical Director and Project Administrator positions must be budgeted at approximately 25% of a full-time equivalent [per each position](#) (i.e., 60-70 workdays per year). The budget must provide a separate line item for each position listing the proposed salary and number of days of effort per year.]

- 7) Section IV, paragraph C.5., page 39, delete the first sentence and replace with the following:

“Additionally, the Applicant must submit the following required certifications and representations [for the prime and proposed subrecipients](#).”

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

- 1) Of the six Civil Society Specialists required, should a specific allocation for media specialists be reserved?

Staffing should be determined in accordance with the Applicant's program proposal and the personnel needs to implement the illustrative activities.

- 2) Page 53, "b. management" section of the RFA mentions a Consortium Point of Contact. Is this an additional position that should be named, or will the Technical Director or Project Administrator act as the point of contact?

No, we are not requiring an additional position to be the POC. It will be up to the Applicant to determine whether the Technical Director or Project Administrator should act as the Point of Contact

- 3) To what extent will the Core program activities and the potential Core DOS and non-presence country activities be inclusive of media related or media specific activities?

Program content, including media activities, will be determined on a country specific basis.

- 4) Would USAID please direct us to a current listing of the Foreign Assistance Framework Country Categories?

Please go to <http://www.state.gov/f/c23053.htm>

- 5) Page 9 seems to omit a description of the sub-element 2.4.2.6 *Government Communications* that is included in the summary listing on page 3. Will USAID please provide a description?

The RFA is amended to include this description.

- 6) "Is the Core funding amount to be strictly dedicated to DCHA/DG Core Program Activities, or may a portion of the funding be used for additional costs associated with managing the LWA such as supporting outreach?"

The core funding will only support core program activities.

- 7) Does USAID require submission of cost information for all Consortium Partners (i.e. NICRA, Required Certifications and Representations and Evidence of Responsibility)?

Yes, the application shall include cost documentation for all consortium partners.

- 8) Does USAID wish to receive certifications, representations, and other backing documents from proposed subrecipients at this time?

Yes, Applications shall include certifications, representations, and other backing documents from proposed subrecipients. The RFA is being amended accordingly.

- 9) Please advise if a CFDA number has been assigned to this solicitation under the guidance published in the USAID Policy Notice of 5/2/03 and General Notice of 4/1/04 (see attached).

As indicated in the posting in Grants.gov, the CFDA number assigned to this solicitation is 98.001 – USAID Foreign Assistance for Programs Overseas.

- 10) Would USAID provide potential applicants with an updated and comprehensive list of countries that make up the five country categories (Rebuilding, Developing, Transforming, Sustaining Partnership, and Restrictive)?

An illustrative country list is not available.

- 11) Are Associate Awards, under Program Element 2.4.3 *Program Design and Learning*, subject to the conflict of interest statement governing the leader awards on page 18?

All activities under the leader award will be subject to the conflict of interest policies. The Recipient will be required to immediately notify the AO of potential OCIs that may arise under the performance of the resulting award.

- 12) The RFA states on page 32 that the technical application is limited to 30 pages excluding prescribed documents and attachments (Cover Page, Executive Summary, Table of Contents, Dividers, etc.). May the applicant include additional attachments not specified in the RFA in their proposal?

Applicants may include any information they believe necessary to address their capacity to perform. However, per the RFA, any information submitted over 30 pages that is not explicitly excluded from the page limitation will not be evaluated.

- 13) In Section IV.B.7 Institutional Capacity (page 35) there is a reference in sub-point (j) to "technical leadership activities specified in Section II". Is that intended to refer to the Leader Awards description in *Section I.C.2 Leader Awards* or RFA Section II (which doesn't have technical activities)?

It refers to section 1.C.2

- 14) On Page 36 the RFA requests a staffing plan (including support staff) and a matrix of all personnel and relevant skills they bring to the performance of this program. Can USAID please confirm that this can be a larger representation of all potential consultants/staff rather than being confined to the 2 key personnel and 6 Civil Society Specialists?

Potential consultants are not required in either document. Applications must include

- “a staffing plan (including support staff) that highlights the role of each staff member, an estimated percentage of time of each staff to be devoted to this program...” and
- A matrix of all personnel and relevant skills they bring to the performance of this program.

- 15) Should the Applicant include a Budget Narrative or any other documentation in the Business Application to justify its costs?

The evaluation of the cost/business application will focus on a cost realism analysis. A budget narrative will help us verify the Applicant's understanding of the requirement, and assess the degree to which the costs included in the cost/business application accurately reflect the work effort included in the technical application.

21. Is it correct to assume there is only one sub-element under 2.4.3, "Program Design and Learning"? Section I, Part A-1 list 2.4.3.1, but Part B-1 lists 2.4.3.2.

Please go to <http://www.state.gov/f/c24132.htm>

22. DHCA/DG estimates the effort required by the Technical Director and Project Administrator to perform these duties and responsibilities for the Leader Award at 25% of a full-time equivalent (page 37 of RFA). Please clarify whether this means that the total level of effort budgeted for both key personnel should total 25% or whether each of the two key personnel should be budgeted at 25% (for a total of 50% of a full-time equivalent)?

Each of the two key positions should be budgeted at 25% of a full-time equivalent.

23. The RFA indicates that the applicant must provide past performance references for itself and any team member(s) or partner(s) anticipated to perform at least 20% of program activities. The instructions further indicate that applicants are required to list up to five past or current awards for efforts similar to this requirement. Given the nature of the LWA mechanism it is difficult to predict which partners will receive more than 20 percent of the program activities. In this case should applicants provide past performance references for all partners?

Applicants must estimate which team members or partners may provide at least 20% of program activities.

24. The instructions for the management section contain a reference (in the bracketed section under point "a") to the preparation of a draft management plan that addresses key management strategies such as internal and external coordination of partners and staff, establishing lines of authority, financial management, reporting and decision making, and management skills to ensure success in achieving results. The elements requested in this "draft management plan" have significant overlap with what has been requested for the 10 page management section. Are applicants expected to submit a draft management plan in addition to the management narrative, and if so should this plan be submitted as an annex?

No, applicants shall submit only a management narrative, within the 10-page limitation. The RFA has been amended to reflect changes in this section.

25. In the instructions for preparation of the Monitoring and Evaluation portion of the proposal the applicant is asked to develop a cost-effective, results-oriented monitoring and evaluation system that will provide USAID/W, Missions, Regional Bureaus, and the program itself with information to track progress, highlight achievement of results, improve performance and effectiveness, as well as to inform planning and management decisions. The instructions later state: "Applications should also include a sample monitoring and evaluation plan with potential methodologies for setting baselines. The plan should clearly describe data collection methods, the frequency of data collection..." The instructions also state that this sample plan must be submitted as an appendix and will not count towards the page limit. We have interpreted these instructions to indicate that within the body of the proposal we should provide up to 10 pages of text about our monitoring and evaluation methodology for this

program and **in addition** provide a sample monitoring and evaluation plan as an appendix with no page limit. Is this correct?

It is correct.

26. In the instructions for the sustainability plan portion of the proposal the instructions request that the applicant provide a description of how it will incorporate sustainability efforts from start to finish through a sustainability plan tailored to activities. The RFA goes on to state that applications should include a sample sustainability plan demonstrating a sound methodology for illustrative activities that might be funded through the LWA. We have interpreted these instructions to indicate that within the body of the proposal we should provide up to 5 pages of text about our assumption and methodology for ensuring sustainability **and in addition** provide a sample sustainability plan as an appendix with no page limit. Is this correct?

It is correct.

27. With regards to the sample sustainability plan and the sample monitoring and evaluation plan are we correct in assuming that USAID is looking for sample plans for the entire 5-year program and not for an illustrative buy-in or associate award activity?

The sustainability plan shall be presented for the 5-year leader award. The sample M&E plan shall be presented for the 5-year leader award as well. The RFA has been amended to reflect changes in this section.

28. On page 21, the RFA suggests that quarterly reports for the leader award will include information and data on Associate Award activities, when, as separate assistance agreements, the Associate Awards will have their own reporting requirements. Please clarify that double reporting is not required. To ensure the Leader CTO is apprised of Associate Award activities, LWAs often require the submission of Associate Award reports to the Leader CTO in addition to the local CTO for that program; please confirm that this is USAID's intention.

It is USAID/W's intention to receive copies of quarterly information on associate award activities.

29. On page 26 of the RFA, the level of substantial involvement listed with respect to subawards includes USAID's involvement in the preparation of solicitation materials and participation on review panels. We question the need for this provision in the leader award, as the RFA does not include a specific subgrant component in the leader award and individual associate awards will have their own substantial involvement provisions.

The substantial involvement language in the RFA has been amended to remove this requirement.

-- END OF AMENDMENT --