



Acquisition and Assistance Office

Amendment Issuance Date: May 27, 2021

Activity Title: Strengthening Civil Society System (Sawt) Activity

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity Number 72027821RFA00005,
Amendment 01

The purpose of Amendment No. 01 to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) No. 72027821RFA00005 is to provide responses to questions received by the deadline for questions in accordance with the NOFO. The questions and answers are included in Attachment 1 to this Amendment.

Except as specifically indicated on the pages that follow, all terms and conditions of the NOFO 72027821RFA00005 remain unchanged. Issuance of this amendment to the 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. Concept papers and Full Applications are submitted at the risk and expense of the submitting organization.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Camille Garcia
Agreement Officer

Attachment 1: Q&A for the Strengthening Civil Society System (Sawt) Activity

**Questions and Answers for the
Strengthening Civil Society System (Sawt) Activity
Notice of Funding Opportunity No. 72027821RFA00005**

1. *For the concept note submission, is any budget information required?*

USAID Response: Budget information is not required with the Phase 1 - Concept Paper Submission.

2. *Are there a minimum number of program references USAID wants included for both the Prime offeror, as well as any sub-partners? (Pages 26-27, Institutional Capacity)*

USAID Response: There is no minimum number required.

Additionally, can these references be included on a separate page that does not count towards the 3-page Organizational Capacity and 10-page overall concept note page limits?

USAID Response: For Phase 1 - Concept Paper Submissions, for the Institutional Capacity section, the reference information described on page 27 of the RFA may be included as an Annex to the Concept Paper. This annex must not exceed two pages and it will not count against the 10 page limit.

Further, can USAID confirm that offerors do not need to include program reference information for every single program that may be mentioned in the narrative?

USAID Response: As stated in the RFA: “Organizations are required to supply the names of the entities (i.e., donors) from which they have received assistance awards or contracts for similar activities over the past three years.”

3. *Will USAID allow professional reference information for candidates to be included on a separate page that does not count towards the total page limit for the full application? (Page 30, Annex A – Key Personnel Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) and References)*

USAID Response: Key personnel references are not required for Phase 1 - Concept Paper submissions. If an organization is selected to proceed to Phase 2 and a full application is requested, reference information must be included as part of Annex A in the corresponding SOQ, which is not to exceed one page per position.

4. *Institutional Capacity (page 27) – The solicitation states organizations “should provide a concise summary of the organization's qualifications.” Can USAID please confirm whether in the initial one page, only prime organizations must discuss their own organization's qualification? Or should the prime applicant also include information about partners in that one page?*

USAID Response: The RFA states (pg. 27) that the Institutional Capacity section of the Phase 1 - Concept Paper submission “will summarize how the organization (and its sub-partners and/or

consortium members, as applicable) possesses the experience and institutional capacity to achieve the activity objectives.” Therefore the prime organization should include information on any proposed sub-partners and/or consortium members if it is applicable.

5. *Institutional Capacity (page 27) – The solicitation states “Organizations are required to supply the names of the entities (i.e., donors) from which they have received assistance awards or contracts for similar activities over the past three years. Reference information should include the name of the awarding organization, addresses, current telephone numbers, current points of contact, funding amounts, and award numbers if available, and brief descriptions of the work performed”.*

Is this information needed for the prime organization or also for partner organizations?

USAID Response: See response to Question 4 above.

If the donor is USAID or Department of State, is an address and telephone number required? Is an e-mail address sufficient?

USAID Response: As stated in the RFA (pg. 27) for Concept Paper Institutional Capacity, “Reference information should include the name of the awarding organization, addresses, current telephone numbers, current points of contact, funding amounts, and award numbers if available, and brief descriptions of the work performed.”

6. *A budget template was attached but not referenced. Can USAID confirm no budget is to be submitted as part of the Concept Paper?*

USAID Response: Please see the response to Question 1. If/When USAID requests a cost application from an organization, the organization will be expected to utilize the budget template in the preparation of its cost application.

7. *On Page 25, it says tables and graphs may use TNR 10 point. May we use other 10-point fonts for tables and graphs?*

USAID Response: No, Times New Roman font is required.

8. *For Institutional Capacity, the instructions for the “additional two pages” say: “a description of present and ongoing donor-funded programs” but in the next paragraph refers to “past experience”. Can applicants use both present and past projects (those closed within the past 3 years) in both Page 1 (summary) and Page 2-3 (details) of the institutional capacity section?*

USAID Response: Yes, organizations can list both present and past projects as part of its past experience.

9. *For Institutional Capacity, would USAID permit inclusion of partner organizations’ qualifications and donor-funded programs? If so, would USAID be amenable to an additional page to summarize partner capabilities?*

USAID Response: See responses to Questions 2 and 4. Organizations must comply with the stated page limitations.

10. *On p. 25, the solicitation states: “At the end of the co-design phase, the apparently successful applicant will submit its finalized application, including its cost application. “Does that mean that USAID is not wanting to see any cost application during the concept paper or full application phase?”*

USAID Response: No budget information is required at Phase 1 - Concept Paper Submission. The RFA states (pg 28) that organizations must not submit the technical portion of the Full Application unless/until explicitly requested to do so by USAID. The RFA also states (pg 31) that applicant(s) must not submit cost application(s) unless/until explicitly requested to do so by USAID. USAID anticipates that the cost application will be requested at the same time that it requests the technical portion of the Full Application.

11. *Can USAID indicate an anticipated turnaround time between concept note submission and invitation to full proposal?*

USAID Response: USAID anticipates that it will request Full Applications from organizations that proceed to Phase 2 around the middle of July.

12. *Can USAID please confirm that the implementer should not budget for mid-term and final evaluation as these activities will be conducted through an external contract that will be managed by USAID (page 19 and 55)? If, instead, the implementer’s budget should include these expenses, please provide a plug figure for the estimate.*

USAID Response: Confirmed.

13. *Could USAID please clarify if the Mission has a plug figure in mind for a grant pool of funds to be dedicated for local organizations, which the implementer might use for estimating purposes?*

USAID Response: Organizations may propose what they believe to be needed in accordance with the proposed approach to achieving the activity’s objectives.

14. *As part of Phase 2 (full application) submissions, may applicants include a list of abbreviations and acronyms that does not count toward the page limit?*

USAID Response: Yes, if needed, but the acronym list must not exceed 2 pages and it will not count against the 10 page limit.

15. *USAID states that “Interested organizations will submit concept papers by the specified due date utilizing the prescribed format.” – Can USAID confirm that the specified due date for concept papers at Phase I is June 21, 2021 at 08:00 am Jordan local time as listed on the cover page of the RFA?*

USAID Response: Confirmed. Concept papers are due by the date and time stated on the cover letter of the RFA. The RFA states (pg 28) that organizations must not submit the technical portion of the

Full Application unless/until explicitly requested to do so by USAID. The RFA also states (pg 31) that applicant(s) must not submit cost application(s) unless/until explicitly requested to do so by USAID.

16. *USAID states that - “Organizations are required to supply the names of the entities (i.e., donors) from which they have received assistance awards or contracts for similar activities over the past three years. Reference information should include the name of the awarding organization, addresses, current telephone numbers, current points of contact, funding amounts, and award numbers if available, and brief descriptions of the work performed.” May this information be included as an annex, or should it be included as part of the 3-page Institutional Capacity section of the Concept Paper submission? If it is to be included in the 3 pages, can applicants include it as part of a table in font size 10?*

USAID Response: For Phase 1 - Concept Paper Submissions, for the Institutional Capacity section, the reference information described on page 27 of the RFA may be included as an Annex to the Concept Paper. This annex must not exceed two pages and it will not count against the 10 page limit.

17. *USAID states that: “In this section the organization must propose its candidates for the Key Personnel positions of Chief of Party, Media Team Leader and Civil Society Team Leader in accordance with the roles and qualifications outlined in Section B.4 of this NOFO. In its Concept Paper, the organization must demonstrate how their qualifications meet the requirements, and how each is expected to contribute to achieving the activity’s objectives.” May applicants also submit full CVs for these candidates as an annex? If so, how many pages are allowed for these CVs?*

USAID Response: CVs/Resumes are not required with the Phase 1 - Concept Paper Submissions. USAID may elect to request CV's at a later date if that information is deemed necessary.

18. *Can USAID please confirm our understanding that applicants are not required to submit a budget or cost application at the Concept Paper phase?*

USAID Response: Please see response to Questions 1, 6, 10 and 15.

19. *May applicants provide a one page Table of Contents outside of the 10 page requirement at the Concept Phase?*

USAID Response: Yes, if needed, but the Table of Contents must not exceed one page and it will not count against the 10 page limit.

20. *May applicants provide an acronym list outside of the 10 page limitation at the Concept Phase?*

USAID Response: Yes, if needed, but the acronym list must not exceed 2 pages and it will not count against the 10 page limit. See also response to Question 14.

21. *Can USAID please confirm our understanding that applicants are not required to provide the DUNS number for the proposed sub-awardees and partners at the Concept Paper stage?*

USAID Response: Refer to the RFA Section D.5 (pg. 26, 28 and 35) and D.6.g. (pgs 35-36) for information.

22. *Does USAID have any geographic priorities that we should consider in the implementation of SAWT?*

USAID Response: USAID has not determined specific geographic priorities for this activity; however, applicants are encouraged to include civil society organizations outside of Amman.

23. *Can USAID kindly provide an estimate of how many organizations will be invited for Phase 2?*

USAID Response: USAID does not have an estimated number of Applicants for Phase 2.

24. *Can USAID kindly provide further details on the timing of Phases 1 and 2? How long after submission of the Phase I concept paper will organizations learn if they will advance to Phase 2? If invited to Phase 2, how long will applicants have to develop a full application?*

USAID Response: Please see response to question number 11. Also, USAID estimates that Applicant(s) will be provided approximately 15-30 days to submit a Full Application.

25. *Can USAID provide any additional details (e.g., required presenters, length, and format of presentation, etc.) on the oral presentation envisioned during Phase 2?*

USAID Response: The RFA states (pg. 24): "Engagement will likely include communications via email, phone or through virtual meetings, or a virtual oral presentation by an applicant(s)." USAID has not determined whether Phase 2 will include oral presentations. If USAID decides to require oral presentations, the presentations will be conducted through a virtual/online meeting. USAID will provide additional information and instructions in advance of the presentation.

26. *How much notice will USAID provide to applicants ahead of any engagement during Phase 2?*

USAID Response: Also, USAID will provide reasonable advance notice prior to any meetings that would occur during Phase 2.

27. *Can USAID kindly confirm that we do not need to submit the cost application (or any information on cost) in Phase 1 or Phase 2?*

USAID Response: Please see response to Question numbers 1, 6 and 10.

28. *On page 27, USAID requests "Organizations are required to supply the names of the entities (i.e., donors) from which they have received assistance awards or contracts for similar activities over the past three years. Reference information should include the name of the awarding organization,*

addresses, current telephone numbers, current points of contact, funding amounts, and award numbers if available, and brief descriptions of the work performed.” Can USAID kindly confirm that this donor and reference information can be included as an attachment, not counted towards the concept paper page limit?

USAID Response: For Phase 1 - For Phase 1 - Concept Paper Submissions, for the Institutional Capacity section, the reference information described on page 27 of the RFA may be included as an Annex to the Concept Paper. This annex must not exceed two pages and it will not count against the 10 page limit. See also response to Question number 16.

29. *Can USAID kindly confirm that completed programs can be referenced in the Institutional Capacity section of the concept paper? If so, are there any limits as to how far back these programs could have been completed?*

USAID Response: In the Institutional Capacity section of the Phase 1 - Concept Paper Submission, the organization is expected to demonstrate its qualifications and relevant experience in accordance with the instructions outlined in the RFA (26-27). It must summarize how the organization (and its sub-partners and/or consortium members, as applicable) possesses the experience and institutional capacity to achieve the activity objectives. It must provide references for present and past programs that are similar in scope. It must include references for similar activities over the past three years. It is up to the applicant to decide which of its projects to describe in this section of its submission. See also the response to Question 8.

30. *Can USAID kindly confirm that the entire Institutional Capacity section of the concept paper can include a description of past, present, and ongoing donor-funded programs from all consortium members?*

USAID Response: Please see the response to question number 8.

31. *Can USAID kindly confirm that footnotes can be Times New Roman 8 point?*

USAID Response: Yes, confirmed. However, footnotes should only be used for references.

32. *Will USAID provide a template for Annex A. Key Personnel Statement of Qualifications (SOQ)?*

USAID Response: There is no specific template for Annex A. Kindly note that Annex A - Key Personnel Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) and References is not required at the Phase 1 - Concept Paper submission.

33. *Could USAID kindly confirm that they would like to receive budgets from all sub-recipients irrespective of the size of the budget?*

USAID Response: Please see the response to Question numbers 1, 6 and 10. If an organization is requested to submit a cost application, the Applicant will be expected to submit detailed Budgets for each identified sub-recipient, regardless of the estimated value of the subaward.

34. *Does USAID have a preferred allocation of resources per objective (i.e. 35% for objective 1, etc.)?*

USAID Response: No.

35. *Can USAID please request that applicants make their partnerships with local and regional organizations be non-exclusive for this opportunity?*

USAID Response: The second paragraph of page 18 of the RFA (under “Strengthening local systems”) states: “Exclusive teaming agreements that limit the ability of local CSOs’ to engage with multiple stakeholders may be counter-productive.” For the purposes of this RFA, exclusive teaming agreements are discouraged.

36. *While the project will obviously provide a significant level of support to Jordanian organizations, does USAID have a preferred or estimated level of the total amount of the funding to be distributed, such as rough percentage?*

USAID Response: USAID estimates that up to \$35 Million could be provided to achieve the objectives described in the Program Description under section A, page 1 through 18 of the RFA.

37. *Is the budget allocated for each Project \$35 Million?*

USAID Response: Please see SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION, page 19 of the RFA.

38. *What is the minimum and the maximum amount for each project? Is there a floor and ceiling?*

USAID Response: Please see SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION, page 19 of the RFA.

39. *Are local NGOs eligible to apply?*

USAID Response: Please see SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION, page 23 of the RFA.