



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

RE: “Advancing Partners and Community – based Family Planning Project” Request for Application (RFA) Number – SOL- OAA-12-000091-Questions and Answers

1. Please tell us how to apply this grant - Is submission by email or by what means?

Please follow the instruction at the bottom of page 2 and page 3 of this RFA.

Please provide one (1) original, plus four (4) additional copies of the technical proposal and one (1) original and one (1) copy of the cost proposal. The technical and cost proposals are to be submitted separately. In addition, please submit electronic copies of both the technical and cost proposal on a CD- ROM.

2. If an organization decides to partner on this bid as part of a consortium, is that organization and its in-country affiliates then excluded from applying for any of the small grant awards?

A key responsibility of the Recipient and any implementing Partner(s) of the Advancing Partners and Community-based Family Planning award will be to solicit, execute, and manage sub-grants. This will include reviewing applications for eligibility, reviewing and recommending applications for funding, monitoring program progress, and bringing to the attention of USAID any implementation and financial accountability issues and problems. Because of potential conflicts of interest in carrying out these responsibilities, the Recipient and any implementing partner(s) and their affiliates will NOT be eligible to receive small- or medium-sized sub-grants issued under this project.

3. (Page 12) The RFA states that “a primary focus of the Advancing Communities project is to provide global support and leadership to strengthen USAID’s community-based family planning service delivery efforts.” Does USAID expect that this will only apply to community-based family planning efforts that are implemented by PVOs/NGOs (who are primary focus of Results 2 and 3) or can this include community-based FP approaches that are implemented by the public and for-profit sectors as well?

Absolutely, this project is intended to provide global support and leadership to strengthen USAID’s community-based family planning service delivery efforts broadly. The activities are intended to extend beyond the PVOs/NGOs and encompass the public sector and, where appropriate, the for-profit sector.

The narrative on Result 1 and illustrative outcomes found on pages 12-13 describe global support and leadership activities broadly. The reference to working with sub-grantees to test new strategies and integrate best practices was included here to link the grants program with the global support and leadership effort for CBF.

Missions seeking technical support or assistance to strengthen community-based family planning or introduce new strategies may access those services by obligating field support into this award.

4. (Page 14) The RFA states, “USAID will recommend cost share requirements of each solicitation conducted by the Recipient ... Cost share reported by sub-awardees of the Recipient should not be attributed to the cost share requirements of the Recipient.” If cost share that is assigned to subgrantees is not attributable to the Prime recipient, does USAID plan to directly hold subgrantees legally responsible for their cost share obligations and require reimbursement from the subgrantees if they fail to meet cost-share requirements?

USAID will not have a legal relationship with the sub-grantees under this award and will not be in a position to hold them legally responsible for cost share. A situation where a sub-grantee is unable to document or report cost share will be managed by the Project Director and AOR on a case-by-case basis.

It should be noted that USAID will not hold the Recipient of this award responsible for the cost share of the sub-grantees in the sub-award program.

5. (Page 28) The RFA states that the AOR must approve domestic and international travel for sub-awardees. Would USAID consider changing this requirement to apply only to international travel? Regulating the domestic travel of sub-grantees would greatly increase the oversight necessary by the implementing partner and hinder cost-effectiveness. It will also substantially increase correspondence between the Recipient and the AOR.

As stated in the RFA, the AOR will approve domestic and international travel as part of Section II- Implementation Arrangements. H- Substantial Involvement- Approval of Recipient's annual work/implementation plans. The nature of this international project should not generate domestic travel such that its approval is burdensome or costly.

6. Page 30 – 31) USAID states that an independent evaluation will be conducted in year 3 or 4. Should applicants include costs for mid-term and final evaluation in their budgets or will USAID contract the evaluations separately?

The costs of the independent mid-term evaluation and the final evaluation mentioned in the RFA will be covered outside of this mechanism and should not be included in the Applicant's budget.

7. (Page 34) The RFA states that applicants are expected to contribute (emphasis added) “no less than 10 percent of the amount obligated by USAID for the **implementation** of this program, over the life of the program,” while on page 37 it states that “there is a minimum 10 percent cost share requirement for the cooperative agreement.” The statement on page 34 seems to imply that an organization need only contribute 10% cost share on the funds that are actually used by implementers (i.e. the funds devoted to technical/global leadership as well as overhead necessary to support the grants program). However, the statement on page 37 seems to indicate that the successful bidder must commit to cost share of 10% of the entire program, in other words \$21,000,000. Given the restriction placed on cost share under this RFA, this may discourage many technically capable organizations from bidding on this opportunity. Can USAID clarify whether 10% cost share is required on the full \$210,000,000, or whether it is limited to the funds to implement the program?

USAID expects that the Recipient of this award will report 10% cost share on project activities that contribute to achieving Result 1 and 3. The cost share requirement does not apply to the sub-award program described in Result 2. However, it does apply to any sub-awards issued to partners or others to achieve Results 1 and 3.

8. (Page 36) The RFA states that applicants should provide a draft start up and transition plan as part of the application package. Does this plan have to be in the text or can it be submitted as a separate attachment?

The start-up and transition plan can be included as a separate attachment. For clarity, the Applicant may refer to the start-up plan in the Technical Application.

9. (Page 39) Is the required table of contents excluded from the 35 page limit for the technical application?

Yes

10. (Page 46) The RFA states that “in the application, the Applicant will provide the percentage of funding that will be channeled to the sub-award program for each budget scenario.” Is this to be included in the cost application only or should applicants include a reference to the percentage of funding channeled to sub-awards in the technical application also?

The Applicant responses to the budget scenarios, inclusive of narratives and budgets, will be included in the Cost Application. The final percentage for each budget scenario, using the formula provided, will be included in the Technical Application as requested. The Applicant may choose to report these percentages using the matrix provided as well as any cost savings strategies they will employ.

11. (Page 47) The RFA states that applicants should describe how they will develop a branding and marking plan and an environmental monitoring and management plan in the text of the proposal. Is the applicant also required to include fully realized plans as attachments for the July 12 submission, or can these be developed at a later stage?

It is recommended that applicants submit these documents with their proposal as an appendix. This will help applicants ensure that the cost associated with implementing their plans are incorporated in the budget.

12. (Page 48) The RFA states that applicants should follow the USAID Budget format found in Annex E. However, the list of budget categories on page 50 of the RFA does not correspond with the USAID Budget Format provided in Annex E. Can USAID clarify which template should be used for the main budget, and separately for the budget scenarios?

Applicants should follow the Budget Format on Annex E.

13. (Page 48) The RFA states that the applicants must, “provide the names of the key individuals responsible for preparing the technical application” ... and “identify the specific sections of the proposal and the approximate percentage of the final document to which each individual contributed.” Should this be included in the proposal body or as an attachment? Can USAID provide some indication of why this information is requested?

The applicant is not required to submit this information.

14. (Page 49) The RFA states, “cost share reported by sub-awardees of the Recipient should not be attributed to the cost share requirements of the Recipient.” Can USAID clarify whether this refers to all subawardees, or just those who are targeted for subgrant funding by USAID? Can sub-recipients under the main award contribute to cost share?

Sub-awardees referred to in the reference above are those sub-awardees funded under the grants program in Result 2. Sub-awardees in this instance are NOT referring to sub-awardees that are part of the coalition or consortium responding collectively to this RFA. They should be encouraged to contribute to the overall cost share requirement.

15. (Page 51) For the purpose of preparing the budget scenarios, should the applicant assume that costs included in the main budget cannot be drawn upon?

Yes, as per Section A. Budget Scenarios, the budget scenarios are not to be included as part of the budgets prepared for the overall program.

16. Once the grant will be awarded to an organization, how can we be informed about the launch of the sub-award process in order to submit a “sub-proposal”?

The Recipient of this award will be responsible for conducting solicitations for the grant programs. USAID is unable to provide this information in advance of the award as each applicant may have a different process for advertising and informing the public of their solicitations.

17. The RFA states on page 34 that applicants are expected to contribute (emphasis added) “no less than 10 percent of the amount obligated by USAID for the **implementation** of this program, over the life of the program,” while on page 37 it states that “there is a minimum 10 percent cost share requirement for the cooperative agreement.” The statement on page 34 seems to imply that an organization need only contribute 10% cost share on the funds that are actually used by implementers (i.e. the funds devoted to technical/global leadership as well as overhead necessary to support the grants program). However, the statement on page 37 seems to indicate that the successful bidder must commit to cost share of 10% of the entire program, in other words \$21,000,000. Given the restriction placed on cost share under this RFA, this could prove extremely difficult for many organizations to meet. Can USAID clarify whether 10% cost share is required on the full \$210,000,000, or whether it is limited to the funds to implement the program?

USAID expects that the Recipient of this award will report 10% cost share on project activities that contribute to achieving Result 1 and 3. The cost share requirement does not apply to the sub-award program described in Result 2. However, it does apply to any sub-awards issued to partners or others to achieve Results 1 and 3. If a consortium is proposed, all members of the consortium are eligible to contribute to the cost share requirement.

18. In the instructions for preparation of the proposal, under the staffing section, we are not clear about what is to be included for key personnel. It says that summary biographical statements should be included for staff that is not key, and it specifies what should be in the annex for key personnel, but there is no indication of what information about key personnel should be included in the technical proposal. Could this be clarified?

This RFA intentionally allows flexibility of Applicants to propose a staffing plan that will facilitate reaching project results in a creative and cost effective manner.

The Staffing section found on page 20 of this RFA- the Program Description includes the titles of those to be considered as Key Personnel. When preparing the staffing section for the Technical Application, please consider the instruction found in the third bullet on page 44 of this RFA as the needed information on key personnel. It is in the

best interest of the Applicant to present reviewers with a full understanding of key personnel and complimentary support staff in the Technical Application and how the collective team will be positioned to achieve project results.

19. We would like clarification on the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation section. The instructions say this section is not included in the technical application, but should be included in an annex. However, it also states that a half page summary of the PMP should be included in the technical application. Does this mean there should be a separate section in the technical application that is part of the 35 pages? Will this be scored, or will the scoring only be applied to the PMP in the annex?

As clarification, there are no page requirements for any section of the 35-page Technical Application. The half-page reference on the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) section indicated on page 45 should be ignored.

An Applicant may choose to include a descriptive narrative as part of the Technical Approach but this is not required. For clarity, Applicants may reference the attachment in the Technical Approach but it is not required. The PMP will be reviewed and scored if it is included in the appendix and not referenced in the Technical Application.

20. Considering that the answers to questions have not yet been released, and the current deadline for applications is set for July 12, 2012, requests this extension to ensure sufficient time to prepare a high-quality application for USAID's consideration.

USAID is extending the closing date of this RFA to July 20th, 2012 11:00 a.m. EST. See Amendment 01.