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**Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity: 72069621RFA00002
Inclusive Nutrition and Early Childhood Development (INECD) Activity**

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development (“USAID” or the “Agency”) seeks concept papers from qualified entities for Inclusive Nutrition and Early Childhood Development (“INECD”) Activity in Rwanda, as further described in Section A of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”). Eligibility for this award is not restricted.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in Section E of this NOFO subject to a risk assessment in accordance with ADS 303.3.9. Eligible parties interested in submitting a concept paper are encouraged to thoroughly read this NOFO to understand the type of program sought, concept paper 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 NOFO 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 process. 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.

USAID will 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.8.g. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Issuance of this NOFO neither constitutes an award commitment on the part of USAID nor does it commit USAID to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of any comments/suggestions or a concept paper. Applicants submit concept papers at their own risk. All preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant’s expense.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D by the above deadline. 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.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Simone Cho
Agreement Officer

Table of Contents

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	3
SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION	16
SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	18
SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	19
SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION	38
SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION	41
SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACT(S)	50
SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION	51
ANNEX 1 - SUMMARY BUDGET TEMPLATE	52
ANNEX 2 - STANDARD PROVISIONS	53
ANNEX 3 - ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	56
ANNEX 4 - INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION (IEE)	57

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.

A.1 Introduction

Early childhood is a critical stage of human development, the time when nurturing care by families lays the foundation for life-long well-being. Good nutrition and health during pregnancy, lactation, and early childhood is essential to ensuring that children have the opportunity to grow and develop fully, including for preventing poor birth outcomes and life-long developmental delays or disabilities.¹ To enable children to have the strongest foundation to reach their full potential in life and improve health and nutritional outcomes for women and children in the first 1,000 days requires a multi-pronged and multi-sectoral approach.

The INECD activity will promote nurturing and responsive care practices, especially in the areas of health, functioning, nutrition, and early childhood development (ECD) for caregivers and children. Specifically, the activity aims to improve health and nutrition outcomes among women of reproductive age and adolescents and improve infant and young child feeding practices. It also aims to address child development gaps and significant unmet physical rehabilitation and assistive technology (rehab/AT) and social inclusion needs for infants and children. The activity will focus on community-level service delivery, community-health facility linkages and district level capacity development, as well as address issues of inclusion and participation, including access to programs and services for children and adults with disabilities, in line with Government of Rwanda priorities. This Program Description articulates a set of desired outcomes that build upon USAID/Rwanda’s history of implementing strong health and rehab/AT, nutrition, parenting and ECD, economic growth programming and its unique comparative advantages as a donor and a key partner.

A.2 Background

The INECD Activity is authorized under USAID/Rwanda’s THRIVE Project (2020-2025) Project Appraisal Document (THRIVE PAD) and contributes to USAID/Rwanda’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) for 2020-2025. The four Development Objectives (DO) of the strategy aim to improve health outcomes, improve learning outcomes, increase inclusive and sustainable private sector driven growth, and increase government responsiveness to citizen priorities. The CDCS is available at:

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/CDCS_Rwanda_February_2025_2.pdf

The INECD Activity contributes to DO1, Health outcomes improved, which addresses service utilization gaps by improving the quality of services delivered through both community and facility platforms and by encouraging the adoption of healthy behaviors through innovative social and

¹ [NECDP National Strategic Plan 2018-2024](#), page 4

behavioral change strategies. DO1 also seeks to address the needs of the most at-risk populations in Rwandan society: very young children, persons with disabilities, male and female victims of gender-based violence, and adolescent girls and young women, especially those who have already become mothers.

There are three intermediate results (IRs) that contribute to THRIVE DO1: 1) Health system strengthened for increased sustainability; 2) Improved utilization of health and nutrition services and adoption of key health behaviors including improved sanitation and hygiene practices; and 3) Strengthened capacity to address the health needs of high-risk individuals. The INECD activity will contribute to all three IRs and the following sub-intermediate results of the THRIVE PAD, while also emphasizing inclusion and ensuring the availability of services for all:

- 1.1 Strengthened financing and governance of the health system
- 1.2 Improved use of data for evidence-based decision-making
- 2.1 Improved quality of community-based services
- 2.2 Improved quality of facility-based services
- 2.3 Increased demand for services
- 2.4 Increased adoption of healthy behaviors
- 3.1 Increased effectiveness of ECD programs
- 3.3 Increased access to quality, sustainable rehabilitation and assistive technology services

A.2.1 Country and Sector Context

INECD will directly support and contribute to the Government of Rwanda (GOR) led efforts to combat malnutrition, stunting, and improve early childhood development. The INECD activity is in line with the following national policies and guidelines: 1) the National Child Development Agency (NCDA) Strategic Plan 2018 – 2024, which advocates for coordinated delivery of inclusive nutrition and ECD services, and adoption of health behaviors; 2) the National Nutrition Policy, a comprehensive framework for effective implementation and promotion of nutrition strategies and interventions for the entire population of Rwanda especially women and children; and 3) the National Community Based Rehabilitation Guidelines which advocates for the inclusion of persons with disabilities across all interventions and promotes the availability of and access to rehab/AT services. The NCDA Strategic plan defines integrated ECD services as services related to health, nutrition, education, sanitation, child protection, parenting, and disability services.

Globally, 250 million children under five years of age living in low- and middle-income countries are at risk of not achieving their development potential, with nearly one-third of all children around the world entering primary school without essential cognitive, social, functional, and emotional skills. Despite gains in reducing maternal and child health mortality in Rwanda, about 38% of children under five in rural areas are stunted, indicating that comprehensive approaches to ensure all children grow and thrive in inclusive nurturing environments have not been realized. Furthermore, infants and young children with congenital conditions, impairments and/or disabilities are at high risk of not meeting their optimal nutritional status or their developmental potential and, consequently, are in risk of being excluded from educational and social opportunities. It is estimated that 15% of the world's population has a disability, however, data are often not valid and/or disability is not disaggregated. A clear understanding of the extent that disability impacts families, especially as the result of poor nutrition, is unknown. Globally it is estimated that more than 50% of people requiring rehab/AT services do not have access; in low- and middle-income countries that

number increases to 80%. Lack of access to and availability of rehab/AT services can significantly negatively impact an individual's functioning, quality of life and well-being. Poor functioning is associated with a decreased capacity to work, lower income levels, poor educational outcomes, stigma and discrimination, and decreased inclusion in communities and society. A 2016 UNICEF study² on children with disabilities and their right to education found that there was no formal system for identifying children with disabilities, and sources of data on disability vary greatly and have validity issues.

Maternal nutritional status during pregnancy and lactation and the quality and frequency of interactions between young children and their parents and caregivers are crucial for a child's healthy growth and development. This includes access to quality counseling and support for safe, adequate, and diverse diets during antenatal and postnatal care, opportunities for stimulation, responsive parent-child interactions, child-directed/focused enrichment, early learning, and positive parenting. Overall, maternal health during pregnancy in Rwanda needs improvement. According to the 2015 Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey (RDHS), only 3% of women took the recommended 90+ days of iron supplements during their last pregnancy, and 20% reported taking none. Furthermore, the 2018 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA 2018) found that only 28% of Rwandan women between 15-49 years of age met the minimum dietary diversity for women (MDD-W), which corresponds to the consumption of five out of ten food groups; only 8% and 12% of women in the poorest and poor categories, respectively, meet the MDD-W. Parents and/or caretakers with disabilities may have less access to information on good parenting skills and/or accurate and appropriate health, rehab/AT, nutrition, ECD and/or WASH information and services.

Evidence shows that early childhood interventions that promote developmental stimulation in conjunction with nutrition and health services result in better outcomes for children than either alone. According to the 2015 RDHS, only 18% of children 6-23 months received a minimum acceptable diet (fed in accordance with all three recommended Infant and Young Children Feeding (IYCF) practices for breastfeeding, dietary diversity, and meal frequency); and over one-third of children 6-59 months were classified with any anemia. Increasing a child's liquid and food intake during illness are important for preventing dehydration, but in Rwanda, this practice is particularly poor. According to the 2015 RDHS among children with diarrhea, over 50% are offered less liquids and over 60% are offered less food. The 2015 RDHS also estimated that less than two-thirds of children 36-59 months were developmentally on track in the domains of literacy-numeracy, socio-emotional, functional and learning. According to the 2016 UNICEF study, the 2014 school census showed a total of 24,862 children with disabilities in preschool, primary and lower secondary schools across all categories specified (UNICEF, 2016). Also, in 2016, the National Council of Persons with Disabilities and National Commission for Children conducted a National Assessment of Centres caring for Children with Disabilities in Rwanda, which found that enrollment in centers caring for children with disabilities has been increasing since 2013, yet records and monitoring are incomplete.³

Improved hygiene and sanitation behaviors, such as safe disposal of child's feces, handwashing with

² <https://www.unicef.org/esaro/Rwanda-children-with-disabilities-UNICEF-EDT-2016.pdf>

³ https://www.ncc.gov.rw/fileadmin/templates/document/National_Assessment_of_Centres_Caring_for_CWDs.pdf

soap or safe food practices, also impact the cleanliness and health of families. Despite moderate levels of access to water and very high coverage of latrines in Rwanda, sanitation and hygiene practices are still poor. The 2017 Joint Monitoring Program estimates that only 5% of households have a handwashing facility with soap and water on the premises and 86% have no handwashing facility at all. In the 2014 Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey⁴, of the children who were observed defecating, only 8% defecated in the toilet or potty, only 28% of caretakers cleaned the child's bottom and only 3% of caretakers washed their hands immediately after cleaning the child. In the same survey, while 100% of respondents knew that washing hands with soap before preparing food for children was important, only 28% felt it was commonly practiced by people in their community.

Household food security status plays a significant role in the nutrition outcomes of the household members in Rwanda. The 2018 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA 2018) report in Rwanda highlights that 19% of Rwandan households are food insecure, of which 60% come from *Ubudehe* 1 and 2 (the poorest socio-economic categories in Rwanda), 65% of the households purchase their food from the markets and 40% have faced shocks and applied different ways to cope.

In Rwanda, linkages and referral systems between inclusive community-based nutrition, health, rehab/AT services and health facilities are weak and need improvement. Based on figures in quarterly and annual reports from USAID funded nutrition projects in Rwanda, around 1.5% of children in growth monitoring and promotion sites at village level are consistently identified with severe acute malnutrition every month and are referred to hospitals for rehabilitation and nutrition care. However, little is known about the counter referral and follow up back to the community level of these cases.

Recognizing the behavior change to achieve health, functional, nutrition, and ECD goals, USAID and the GOR have supported the development of many strategies, including the National Social Behavior Change Communication Strategy for Integrated ECD, Nutrition and WASH 2018-2024. Insufficient family resources, skills, and capacity contribute to suboptimal health, nutrition, and development outcomes. Men are particularly disengaged with early learning and nurturing activities at home which is affecting early child stimulation. The role of harmful social norms and gender dynamics are essential to understand and address given the critical role a child's environment and their relationship with their parents/caregivers play in their development and protection from adverse experiences.

In addition to the National Social Behavior Change Communication Strategy mentioned above, the GOR also developed the National Early Childhood Development Strategic Plan (2018-2024) to address these multi-sectoral challenges. This recently established government coordination body (NCDA) brings together key sectors and ministries (Prime Minister's Office, MIGEPROF, MINAGRI, MINALOC, MINISANTE, MINEDUC, MINEMA, MININFRA) and across national and local government levels (Districts, Sectors, Cells, and Villages). Decentralized coordination structures for inclusive multi-sectoral nutrition activities were established as part of the district plans to eliminate malnutrition (DPEMs) in 2010, however, a 2019 joint assessment funded by USAID

⁴ Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Assessment on Early Nurturing of Children Report. Ministry of Health, Rwanda and UNICEF Rwanda, 2014.

Gikuriro (CRS) and Hinga Weze (CNFA) showed that the establishment of the DPEM coordination committees in the districts did not happen immediately and did not expand to the sectors, cells, and villages as planned. Other findings from this assessment indicated that there are not enough human resources in the districts with adequate capacity and appropriate skills and knowledge to implement, coordinate, and supervise the DPEM activities, among other challenges.

The NCDA now brings another layer of complexity to the capacity, coordination, and management necessary for inclusive and comprehensive service delivery at the decentralized levels. The DPEM structures will need to integrate ECD and inclusion to reflect the NCDA's new national strategic plan. Furthermore, stakeholder meetings and site visits conducted in 2019 in Rwanda demonstrated that many of the community based and home based ECD centers did not have enough space for child play and interaction, lacked or had polluted kitchens with soot and smoke in cooking spaces that affects child breathing, and lack of accessible water and clean latrines for children and their parents. In addition, the need for rehab/AT is largely unmet due to a number of factors such as: lack of prioritization, funding, or strategic planning at a national level; misconceptions that physical rehabilitation is a highly specialized service only for persons with disabilities, or that it is a "luxury" service that can be ignored in face of competing demands; lack of services and trained personnel; lack of financing models and/or high out-of-pocket expenses; poor availability of appropriate and affordable assistive products; ineffective or under-utilized referral pathways; limited availability of data to drive evidenced based decisions; and limited leadership and governance capacity of national entities.

Lastly, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a global health crisis resulting in significant health and economic impacts on communities, families, and individuals. When countries around the world, including Rwanda, introduced lock down measures to control the spread of the virus, the first people to feel the consequences were pregnant and lactating women, children under five years of age and persons with disabilities. The immediate impact was on household income, limiting access to nutritious food and needed services. In Rwanda, this was mainly caused by an increase in food prices and loss of small businesses. It is projected that underweight and acute malnutrition for children under five in Rwanda will increase, leading to the loss of the gains the country had achieved in the last decade in childhood wasting and underweight as a result of the pandemic. Additionally, children and adults with disabilities are at greater risk for poorer health outcomes. The pandemic has shed light on the extreme stigma and discrimination that persons with disabilities face and, in some cases, led to denial of services. The long-term rehab/AT needs of persons recovering from COVID-19 are not fully understood yet, however, access to these services are key to optimizing function and increasing participation in community and family life and thus must also be included in the continuum of health care.

A.2.2 Relationship to USAID Strategies

This activity aligns with several global initiatives that shape USAID priorities and investments in Rwanda, including:

- USAID's Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy (2014-2025) which provides a framework for reducing chronic and acute malnutrition, especially during the critical 1,000-day window from pregnancy to a child's second birthday across sectors, including health, nutrition, agriculture, and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

- The U.S. Government Strategy for International Assistance for Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity (2019-2023) which reaffirms commitment to three evidence-based objectives to benefit the world's most vulnerable children: 1) Build Strong Beginnings, 2) Put Family First, and 3) Protect Children from Violence, while also providing five guiding principles to inform programming.
- The U.S. Government Global Water Strategy and the USAID Water Development Implementation Plan envisions a water secure world, where people have sustainable supplies of water of sufficient quantity and quality to meet human needs and increased uptake of key hygiene behaviors. This activity will support increasing sustainable access and use of sanitation and the practice of key hygiene behaviors.

A.2.3 Geographical Focus

Geographic targeting will be refined during mission consultations with successful applicant(s) and stakeholders. However, the following criteria have been developed to identify up to ten districts that maximize programmatic impact of USAID investments, accelerate sustainable and inclusive programming and build on existing relationships.

- Current eight (8) districts under USAID nutrition, ECD and WASH activities that will end in 2020 and early 2021
 - Kayonza, Ngoma, Nyabihu, Ruhango, Nyanza, Kicukiro, Nyarugenge, and Rwamagana.
- Ten (10) Districts considered for the INECD activity and will contribute to USAID Rwanda's Hub approach (aiming to geographically concentrate activities to create synergies, better reach beneficiaries and build a closer relationship with stakeholders).
 - Kayonza, Ngoma, Nyabihu, Ruhango, Nyanza, Kicukiro, Nyarugenge, Rwamagana, and two additional districts, Rutsiro and Rubavu, that have high stunting rates.
- The above listed districts are not supported by other donor partners which is appealing to USAID to avoid duplication of activities.
- High levels of child stunting, food insecurity, developmental delay or disability, and poverty.

A.3 Purpose and Theory of Change

Through this Activity, USAID/Rwanda aims to improve the health, functioning, nutritional status, and wellbeing of women of reproductive age and children under five years of age, with an emphasis on the 1,000-day window, strengthen inclusion of children and adults with disabilities, and improve positive parenting and child development. This requires a systems approach to increase the technical capacity and coordination of the national and sub-national authorities, health workers and other service providers, and improve the support families receive and provide.

As such, the Theory of Change states that:

IF national and sub-national capacity for coordination and implementation of the NCDA Strategic Plan 2018 – 2024, National Nutrition Policy, and National Community Based Rehabilitation Guidelines are strengthened, and

IF improved inclusive quality social, nutrition, health, ECD, and rehab/AT services are available, accessed and delivered, and

IF community and household members have the ability and resources to adopt healthy behaviors, **THEN**, the health and nutritional status of women of reproductive age, especially pregnant and lactating women, will improve and children under five will meet their growth and developmental potential.

To achieve this theory of change, efforts will be needed to support both supply- and demand-side efforts including service delivery to children and home and family support.

A.4 Proposed Outcomes and Results

The overall goal is to improve maternal, infant, child and adolescent nutrition, development, functional and health outcomes. Progress on this has been hampered by sub-optimal technical management and coordination capacity, especially at sub-national level; low quality and poor access to integrated community-based services (inclusive nutrition, health, ECD, rehab/AT, sanitation, protection, parenting); and sub-optimal household resources and skills to provide optimal nurturing care (health, nutrition, hygiene, and responsive care). To achieve this the activity has three overall objectives and associated intermediate results it expects to achieve.

Objective 1: Strengthened governance, coordination, and implementation of the National Strategic Plan for NCDA at the national, district, sector, cell and village level

While the GOR is committed to a comprehensive and integrated approach towards early childhood development, as laid out in the National Integrated ECD Strategic Plan 2018-2024, there are challenges to implementation especially at district, sector, and cell levels. These include unclear roles and responsibilities, shortages of human resources, inadequate funding, and low technical capacity for planning, budgeting, resource mobilization, and stakeholder coordination. In order to be fully functional, the existing DPEM committee structures need to be strengthened and expanded to enable them to carry out their duties as stipulated in the district plans. While action plans including Single Action Plan, DPEM, and performance contracts/imihigo at village level have been developed, tracked and reported at the national level, they still lack comprehensive and inclusive approaches for integrated health, nutrition, ECD, rehab/AT services.

The challenges of implementation at the district level are further complicated by multiple policies, strategies, and agendas of the different national social cluster ministries, especially for health, nutrition, ECD and rehab/AT. Coordination among these social clusters and the NCDA requires further strengthening to build synergies and ensure sufficient resources are available to the district, sector, and cell levels for delivering inclusive, multisectoral services.

Expected Results:

Intermediate Result 1.1: Increased capacities for planning, budgeting, and supervision of inclusive multi-sectoral services

Intermediate Result 1.2: Improved coordination, monitoring and use of data for evidence-based decision-making

Intermediate Result 1.3: Improved national level coordination between social cluster ministries responsible for promoting inclusive health, rehab/AT, nutrition, and ECD

Intermediate Result 1.4 Increased capacity of local civil society to advocate and

provide technical support to decentralized government institutions for inclusive integrated services

Intermediate Result 1.5 Improved ownership of integrated ECD services in INECD supported Districts by GOR line institutions

Objective 2: Improved access to and availability of quality services that promote inclusive nurturing care

The NCDA promotes integrated services for families, women and children across many levels, including the community and facility level of the health system, at community and home-based ECD centers, and other community-based platforms. These services promote nurturing care. Nurturing care by parents and other caregivers ensures children's good health and nutrition, protects them from threats, and gives young children opportunities for early learning through interactions that are emotionally supportive, stimulating and responsive. There are challenges with implementing the NCDA's strategy because not all services are available or delivered with high quality in all districts, and many vulnerable individuals and households lack access to services. Facility-based providers and other frontline workers (community health workers (CHW)), friends of family, hygiene clubs, ECD caregivers, community-based rehab/AT workers) need stronger skills and supervision to deliver inclusive health, nutrition, rehab/AT and ECD services, identify developmental delays, and model responsive care. Furthermore, a strong referral and follow up mechanism between community-based platforms and other services is lacking. Coordination and collaboration with other USAID/Rwanda investments, like Ingobyi, which are working with the GOR to improve the country's referral systems, will be crucial in complementing these efforts by strengthening the process for referrals originating and requiring follow up in the community.

Expected Results:

Intermediate Result 2.1: Strengthened quality of inclusive health, nutrition, rehab/AT and ECD services provided through community-based platforms

Intermediate Result 2.2: Improved capacity and supervision of facility and frontline workers for early identification, referral, and follow-up of child developmental delays, impairment, disability, malnutrition, and other signs of illness

Intermediate Result 2.3: Increased capacity and improved attitudes and practices of service providers to effectively counsel and support families with young children about providing nurturing care

Intermediate Result 2.4: Strengthened sustainable quality community and facility based rehab/AT services, within the health system

Intermediate Result 2.5: Strengthened community referral systems, linkages and follow up mechanisms between community and health facilities

Objective 3: Increased household resources and skills to provide optimal nurturing care and promote healthy growth and development

While improving access to and quality of health care services is critical, given that most of the care-taking of children under two in Rwanda takes place within the home, increased demand for services, adoption of optimal child rearing practices, and positive community norms to support those behaviors are needed. The INECD will engage men as active and equal participants in providing

nurturing care for their children through positive parenting. Data from the 2015 RDHS and the KAP Survey Assessment of Early Nurturing of Children Report, 2014 illustrate the need to focus on improving behaviors related to integrated ECD.

Only 40% of pregnant women attended all four recommended ANC visits despite 91% of births occurring at health facilities. For mothers caring for a child with difficulty breathing, only 11% would seek care from a healthcare facility while 44% would take the child to an herbalist first. For young children, only 12% engaged in four or more learning activities with their mothers and only 3% engaged in learning activities with their biological fathers. In the 2014 KAP survey⁵, of the children who were observed defecating, only 8% defecated in the toilet or potty, only 28% of caretakers cleaned the child's bottom and only 3% of caretakers washed their hands immediately after cleaning the child. Finally, while 100% of respondents knew that washing hands with soap before preparing food for children was important, only 28% felt it was commonly practiced by people in their community.

Although a variety of factors affect each of the above behaviors, they can be summarized by the following barriers: insufficient knowledge and skills among caretakers, inadequate informational, financial, and physical resources within the family, and community norms that negatively affect nurturing care behaviors. An effective social and behavior change (SBC) program should clearly identify the behaviors that would contribute to improved INECD with the rural Rwandan context, analyze the barriers and facilitators for each behavior and develop interventions that address those factors in a holistic manner.

And while SBC activities can improve knowledge and skills, address harmful norms, increase access to information and guide families to prioritize existing resources towards positive nurture and care, it must be coupled with interventions that address the physical and structural barriers (access to food, water, financing, etc.) that are critical for sustained behavior change. While the INECD activity will not directly address these challenges, it will collaborate with and connect participants to markets and other resources through USAID/Rwanda investments in water, sanitation and hygiene, food security and agriculture to complement the INECD SBC efforts.

Expected results:

Intermediate Result 3.1: Increased capacity, including greater knowledge, skills and problem-solving ability, of individuals and families to support healthy behaviors that contribute to nurturing care

Intermediate Result 3.2: Improved community norms that support healthy behaviors, including male involvement in childcare practices and inclusive health and development

Intermediate Result 3.3: Increased family resources to support healthy behaviors and provide nurturing care

Intermediate Result 3.4: Increased demand for social services and adoption of improved behaviors including those within health and nutrition, sanitation, and hygiene, ECD, rehab/AT, child protection and social protection by families with young children

⁵ Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Assessment on Early Nurturing of Children Report. Ministry of Health, Rwanda and UNICEF Rwanda, 2014.

A.5 Activity Parameters & Cross-cutting Principles

A.5.1 Activity Parameters

- Target Beneficiaries
 - Women of reproductive age, children under 5, with a focus on the first 1,000 days, families, adults and children with disabilities, adolescents and caregivers
- Partnership with the GOR
 - The activity will support the implementation of country-led policies, strategies and processes, and build on and strengthen GOR structures, institutions, and program ownership.
- Relationship with other USAID-funded Activities
 - As part of the THRIVE project, the Activity will be expected to coordinate and collaborate with other THRIVE health activities, as well as other USAID-funded economic growth, agriculture, and education activities. The activity under the THRIVE Project will also contribute to the new Mission “hubs” approach in selected districts to improve coordination, complementarity and impact maximization.
- Coordination and Collaboration with other Development Partners and Stakeholders
 - Coordination with the Rwanda Scaling Up Nutrition Multi-Stakeholder Platform, World Bank, UNICEF, Rehabilitation Technical Working Group, and other key stakeholders of the NCDA will be essential. Participation in GOR led coordination efforts at District level, including JADF and DPEM activities will be required.
- Local Partner Institution Engagement and Capacity Building
 - This Activity is grounded in the reality that achieving and sustaining any long-term development outcome depends on the contributions of multiple and interconnected actors, which includes the use of local systems. As such, the Recipient should identify opportunities for local ownership and strengthening GOR local government institutions and systems, and build local civil society capacity.
- Management/Implementation Approach

As guided by the THRIVE PAD, most of the new USAID activities under design and other USAID IPs will be expected to:

 - Co-locate in districts to support hubs approach and maximize programmatic impact
 - Provide coordinated capacity development at decentralized level
 - Conduct joint work planning in partnership with each other, various District coordination teams, and other sectoral counterparts as appropriate.
 - Conduct joint work planning and coordinated policy engagement
 - Conduct mapping of district-level activities
 - Provide evaluation and learning opportunities around programmatic performance and impact of USAID investments

At the central level, INECD will be expected to conduct joint work planning, prepare joint presentations on implementation progress to GOR multiple times per year, and collaborate in the implementation of activities. This also includes collaborative joint monitoring of activities with

GOR and other stakeholders at both central and district level through USAID's co-located investments in the regional district hubs. In addition, certain nutrition-sensitive economic growth (EG) activities will also participate in coordination and collaboration with INECD Activity as these activities support the larger enabling environment for the mission's desired nutrition outcomes.

Involving implementing partners in the USAID learning activities, such as portfolio reviews or stocktaking efforts, as appropriate; and using the knowledge and learning gained from implementation, opportunities to reflect on performance, monitoring data, evaluations, knowledge about the context, and other sources to adjust interventions and approaches as needed.

A.5.2 Cross-cutting principles

- A. Evidence-based:** All interventions should make use of nationally recognized and recommended, evidence-based curricula, materials and approaches. The implementing partner will learn from and improve programmatic approaches based on rigorous research and field application; strengthen evaluation and learning; increase the documentation of implementation successes and failures; and disseminate promising practices and apply lessons learned.
- B. Youth:** While the emphasis on the INECD program will be on the first 1,000 days, adolescents will also be considered in a comprehensive programming approach.
- C. Private Sector Engagement:** Promote the substantial engagement of the private sector and increased coordination between the public and private sectors to improve the quality of complementary feeding for women and children, for example through national food fortification.
- D. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion:** In alignment with USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, USAID Rwanda seeks to promote gender equality through its activities. The activities undertaken by the INECD activity must incorporate results of relevant data analyses and address gender-specific gaps and constraints and implement gender-sensitive and gender transformative programming. Mitigating actions should be taken to ensure that all children and members of households can benefit from the program, that activities do not exacerbate gender inequalities, and that interventions aim to reduce gender-based violence, and promote positive parenting. The activity will contribute to these crosscutting gender priorities by helping to strengthen an enabling environment in which women and men and boys and girls can equally access, contribute, and benefit from the services.
- E. Conflict Sensitivity and Do No Harm:** A conflict sensitive approach takes into account and adjusts interventions according to the context, employing innovative approaches to avoid negative impacts and maximize positive ones. The INECD design must maximize positive and constructive dynamics in the context and communities in which proposed activities will be carried out. The project should ensure an adaptive management approach that is responsive to events on the ground and assures that INECD interventions do not exacerbate negative or destructive dynamics.

- F. Sustainability:** Where feasible, the Recipient should increase GOR capacity, CSOs to sustainably plan, coordinate, and finance multi-sectoral, integrated early childhood development interventions and access to rehab/AT services. The Recipient may need to review and strengthen public policies, programs, and services creating the conditions for the provision of nurturing care, particularly for children aged 0-3 years. Districts, Sectors, Cells and Villages create strong entry points for sustainability.
- G. COVID19 Adaptations:** Programming in the context of COVID-19 should prioritize the following: Protect the health workforce and the community; Sustain prevention and timely care-seeking; Deliver high-quality care effectively; Buffer disruptions to service delivery; boost economic strengthening activities to cope; Promote a total market approach; Maximize and utilize the best data / evidence.

A.6 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

Few USAID priority countries are delivering an integrated package of nurturing care services. The INECD Activity represents a singular opportunity to evaluate, document, and disseminate lessons for the growing national, regional and global audience seeking to expand the Nurturing Care Framework and document results on the implementation of the NCDA Strategic Plan.

A.6.1 Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA)

USAID's Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) methodology is central to the overall project strategy and the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) approach. CLA allows a project to maintain a culture of learning that guides adaptation and improves the quality of project design and interventions. The Recipient will promote a strong ethos of generating and disseminating evidence and learnings that the Recipient expects will lead to improved and inclusive nutrition, ECD and health services.

Collaboration enables cross-sector integration, convergence, and effective interventions to maximize development resources and enhance development results. It is a key feature of the INECD activity, as described in the sections on strategic collaboration & coordination and layering. The recipient will collaborate with USAID-supported activities in common areas of operation and engage with stakeholders to deliver integrated services to targeted populations.

Sources for learning include data from monitoring, portfolio reviews, findings of research, evaluations, analyses conducted by USAID or third parties, knowledge gained from experience, stocktaking exercises, and other sources. Knowledge generated by learning will be applied throughout programming to implementation approaches, processes, and stakeholder engagement. Knowledge generated by learning should also be disseminated to activity stakeholders, partners, and collaborators in an appropriate forum and format so that it may be translated into decisions and actions that enhance the success of approaches and interventions designed to achieve common intermediate results.

These sources will be used to develop and implement plans, manage adaptively, and contribute to the USAID/Rwanda knowledge base in order to improve development outcomes. A

collaborating, learning, and adapting focus helps to ensure that programming is coordinated, grounded in evidence, and adjusted as necessary to remain relevant and effective throughout implementation. The Recipient will demonstrate adaptability that is informed by knowledge gained through learning, and recognize behaviors and incentives necessary to create change. Knowledge gained through learning will influence decision making, resource allocation, and adaptation to contextual shifts.

A.6.2 Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan

The MEL Plan is a management tool that includes a Monitoring, an Evaluation and a Learning section. The Monitoring section specifies indicators and the necessary methodologies to enable the Recipient and USAID/Rwanda to monitor the progress of activities towards achieving the stated objectives. The Monitoring section must include applicable Health HL.6, HL.8 and HL.9 nutrition indicators (<https://2009-2017.state.gov/f/indicators/>) and Social Service indicators ES.4-1 (Number of vulnerable persons benefiting from USG-supported social services), ES.4-2 (Number of service providers trained who serve vulnerable persons), and ES.4-3 (Number of USG-assisted organizations and/or service delivery systems that serve vulnerable persons strengthened). The Applicant should recommend custom indicators to monitor activity performance. Baseline values, as well as targets for each Fiscal Year and for the Life of the Activity should be included in the final MEL Plan.

The Evaluation section includes a brief description of any systematic collection and analysis of information as a basis for judgements to improve and inform decisions about programming. USAID may procure an independent impact evaluation of this award. While research questions may be submitted for consideration as part of the concept paper submission, Applicants should focus on formative and process evaluation questions and situational or needs assessments. Such internal evaluations (conducted by the Recipient) are subject to review and approval by USAID.

Finally, the Learning section indicates how the activity will address learning questions or knowledge gaps and identify ways to allow for adjustments as circumstances change or learning evolves. The Applicant should be clear on plans to utilize minimal but sufficient data to adaptively manage interventions.

Impact Evaluation: USAID may procure an external Impact Evaluation (IE) to test the theory of change embedded in this activity. While the external IE would be managed under a separate mechanism, the Recipient would be expected to work closely with the IE team to ensure that the final evaluation design is closely aligned with the proposed INECD activity. This relates in particular to the isolation of activity inputs for the outcomes being measured and the ability to establish control groups. In short, the Recipient must be flexible, open-minded, and committed to cooperating on the implementation of the IE that would inform key components of this activity. If an IE is commissioned, the co-creation workshop will include collaborative design together with evaluation experts to inform the theory of change. Additionally, the evaluation experts and Recipient would identify hypotheses to test with rigorous research and agree on the methods.

[End of Section A]

SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

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

USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this NOFO. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide \$38,000,000 in total USAID funding over a five-year period.

USAID reserves the right to fund activities incrementally over the duration of the award, if necessary, depending on the availability of funds, the level of performance against approved indicators, and their continued relevance to USAID programs.

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

Performance indicators for this activity will be developed jointly by USAID/Rwanda and the Recipient and will be incorporated into the Cooperative Agreement.

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

The anticipated period of performance is five years. The estimated start date will be May 15, 2021.

B.4 Substantial Involvement

USAID/Rwanda anticipates a close working partnership with the Recipient for this award. USAID will exercise substantial involvement under this Cooperative Agreement in the following ways:

1. Approval of the Recipient's Implementation Plans by the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR). The Agreement Officer (AO) delegates authority to the AOR to approve implementation plans.
2. Approval of the Recipient's MEL Plan by the AOR.
3. The AO may immediately halt the activity if the Recipient does not meet identified performance targets (This includes authority to halt construction activities if construction specifications are not met).
4. USAID's review and approval of the Recipient's achievement after one year of implementation, before implementation can begin in subsequent year(s) during the period covered by the cooperative agreement.
5. USAID's review and approval of substantive provisions of proposed subawards or contracts.
6. Approval of Specified Key Personnel as concurred on by the AOR and approved by the AO. The positions include:
 - a. Chief of Party
 - b. Deputy Chief of Party
 - c. Physical Rehabilitation Technical Advisor
 - d. Nutrition Technical Advisor
 - e. Early Childhood Development Technical Advisor

7. The Agency and Recipient collaboration and joint participation including USAID involvement as a member of advisory committee.
8. Agency monitoring to permit specific kinds of direction or redirection of the work because of the interrelationships with other projects or activities. All such direction or redirection must be within the program description budget, and other terms and conditions of the award.

B.5 Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this award is 937, defined as the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source. The list of countries designated as prohibited sources is found at <http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/310mac>.

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

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the INECD activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program 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.

[End of Section B]

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted. USAID welcomes concept papers from organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

The successful Applicant will be subject to a risk assessment (possibly including a pre-award survey) by the AO. A positive risk assessment means that the applicant possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management competence to plan and carry out the assistance program to be funded, and that the applicant will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID.

C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

USAID has established a mandatory minimum recipient cost share of 15% of projected award amount for the 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 Other

Each legal entity is limited to one concept paper submission under this NOFO as the prime Applicant. There is no limitation on being included as a potential sub-awardee across multiple concept papers. The use of exclusive teaming arrangements is discouraged.

Risk Assessment: In accordance with 2 CFR 200.206 USAID is required to evaluate risk posed by the Applicant prior to awarding a federal grant. Risk assessment will be conducted in accordance with ADS 303.3.9. The Apparently Successful Applicant will be requested to submit additional evidence they deem necessary for the AO to make a positive risk assessment determination. The information submitted should substantiate that the applicant:

- i. Has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources, as required during the performance of the award.
- ii. Has the ability to meet the award terms and conditions, considering all existing prospective recipient commitments, both non governmental and governmental.
- iii. Has a satisfactory record of performance. Generally, relevant unsatisfactory performance in the past is enough to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance or the applicant has taken adequate corrective measures to assure that it will be able to perform its functions satisfactorily.
- iv. Has a satisfactory record of business integrity.
- v. Is otherwise qualified to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.

[End of Section C]

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 Agency Point of Contact

Name: Justin Troy DiVenzano
Title: Supervisory Contracting and Agreement Officer
Email: jdivenanzo@usaid.gov
Mail Address: 2657 Avenue de la Gendarmerie, P.O. Box 2848 Kigali, Rwanda

The above contact information is for informational purposes only. This NOFO itself and any subsequent amendments can be found at www.grants.gov. All concept papers must be submitted according to the instructions contained in this NOFO.

In order to maintain a fair and transparent funding opportunity USAID maintains strict guidelines on who within USAID may be contacted regarding concept papers or questions about the opportunity. Applicants may only contact USAID via the email address provided in this NOFO.

D.2 Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted via email to Elvira Kassimova, Assistance Specialist at ekassimova@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. All questions submitted by email must have the NOFO number included in the email subject line. 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 concept papers or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

D.3 Overall Selection Process

This section describes a multi-tiered review and co-creation selection process. Employing this approach provides USAID the ability to retain oversight and influence, provides government partners and stakeholders constructive space to provide inputs, and provides the Apparently Successful Applicant with the ability to transparently develop a robust final Program Description. The selection process for the INECD Activity will happen in three phases.

Phase 1: Written Concept Paper. Applicants are invited to submit a Concept Paper not to exceed the page limit and submission instructions set forth in Section D.5. Concept Papers will be evaluated in accordance with the merit review criteria set forth in Section E.2. A limited number of Applicants will be invited for Phase 2. Virtual Oral Presentation. Applicants with concept papers not advancing to Phase 2 will be notified.

Phase 2: Virtual Oral Presentation. Applicants with the highest evaluated concept papers will be invited to orally present the technical application in accordance with the detailed instructions provided below in Section D.6. One Applicant will be selected from Phase 2 as the Apparently Successful Applicant.

Phase 3: Virtual Joint Application Development Workshop. Following the oral presentation phase, the Apparently Successful Applicant will lead a process to collaborate with USAID/Rwanda, NCDA, the Ministry of Health (Rwanda Biomedical Center), the National Council for Persons with Disabilities and other major stakeholders, which will result in the submission of Full Technical and Cost Application for final review. During the Joint Application Development phase the Apparently Successful Applicant must resolve the identified weaknesses and address any questions or requests for clarifications. USAID reserves the right to select another Applicant from the oral presentation phase in case a final agreement is not reached with the initially selected Applicant.

D.4 General Content and Form of Concept Paper

Each Applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. This subsection addresses general content requirements applying to the concept paper. Please see subsections D.5 below, for information on the content specific to the concept paper.

Any erasures or other changes to the concept paper must be initialed by the person signing the concept paper. Concept Papers 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.

Concept papers 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 concept papers 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 text boxes, graphs and charts. Tables however, must comply with the 12 point Times New Roman requirement.
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats.
- The concept paper must be a searchable and editable Word or PDF format as appropriate.

Applicants must review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Failure to do so may be considered as being non-responsive and may be evaluated accordingly. Applicants should retain a copy of the concept paper for their records.

D.5 Phase 1: Concept Paper

D.5.1 Concept Paper Submission Procedures

Concept papers in response to this NOFO must be submitted no later than the closing date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Late concept papers may be considered at the discretion of the AO. Applicants must retain proof of timely delivery in the form of system generated documentation of delivery receipt date and time/confirmation from the receiving office.

Concept papers must be submitted by email to ekassimova@usaid.gov. Email submissions must include the NOFO number and applicant's name in the subject line heading.

After submitting a concept paper 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 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 concept paper 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/Rwanda cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server. File size must not exceed 25 MB.

D.5.2 Concept Paper Format

Concept papers can not exceed ten (10) pages (cover page and an acronym list are-is excluded from the page limit). Content above ten pages will not be reviewed. Concept papers are due on the date and time indicated on the cover page of this NOFO. Concept papers submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed.

Applicants must submit concept papers that respond to the three objectives outlined in Section A. Program Description and address merit review criteria listed in Section E.2 of the NOFO. Concept Papers must follow the outlined Sections below:

1. Cover Page (excluded from the page limit) should include the following:

- Activity Title
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number
- Name and address of the Applicant Organization
- Type of organization (e.g., for-profit, non-profit, university, network, etc.) and DUNS Number
- Name(s) and Title(s) of Authorized Representative(s) with their phone numbers and e-mail addresses
- Amount of Funding Requested from USAID and Cost Share Amount
- Date of Submission
- Names of major subrecipients or partnerships (identify if local organization, per USAID's definition of 'local entity' under ADS 303). For the purposes of this NOFO "major subrecipient" is defined as an organization with a budget of 20% or more of total proposed USAID contribution for this activity.

2.Acronym list (excluded from the page limit)

2.3.Technical Approach, to include:

- Theory of Change/Conceptual Framework
- Goal/Objective
- Description of interventions (including the inclusive, integrated development approach)
- Sustainability
- Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Approach

In the Concept Paper, the Applicant must describe in sufficient detail its conceptual approach, methodology, and techniques for the accomplishment of INECD objectives. The technical approach must demonstrate potential to achieve appropriate and relevant system-level change and respond to the Rwandan context. The Applicant's technical approach must also consider the Agency's priorities and guiding principles described in the Program Description.

3.4.Organizational Experience and Capability

The Applicant must demonstrate recent (within the past five years) and relevant experience and capability, including that of its proposed partners, in implementing integrated programming related to the goal and objectives in the program description. The experience must be similar in scope and complexity to the proposed INECD activity. The Applicant must also demonstrate experience and capability in the facilitation of partnerships across organizations, with emphasis on leveraging local partnerships, and with host-government counterparts. The Applicant must articulate how the described institutional experience and capability will enhance the likelihood of successful implementation of INECD objectives.

The Applicants should not request exclusivity from local partners as this may harm their prospects for growth and sustainability.

The applicant should not adjust its proposed consortium partners after submitting the concept paper and prior to the oral presentation.

D.6 Phase 2: Oral Presentation

PLEASE NOTE

ALL PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS MAY SUBMIT A CONCEPT NOTE;
HOWEVER, DO NOT SUBMIT AN ORAL PRESENTATION UNTIL
REQUESTED TO DO SO.

D.6.1 Oral Presentation Process

USAID/Rwanda will notify the selected Applicant(s) at least two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled oral presentation date. At the time of the notification, USAID/Rwanda will provide the Applicants with the identified strengths and weaknesses, questions and requests for clarifications resulting from the concept paper review, and additional guidance for the oral presentation, if necessary. Responses to USAID/Rwanda feedback given during Phase I should be incorporated in the oral presentation. The Applicant must submit a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation and 3 references for each proposed Key Personnel including contact name, professional relationship, e-mail, and phone number at least 48 hours prior to the individually scheduled presentation.

1) Time Limit: The Applicant's oral presentation must not exceed forty (40) minutes. The AO reserves the right to terminate the presentation if it exceeds the prescribed time limit. The Applicant should be prepared for a question and answer period after the presentation where USAID will ask clarifying questions on any part of the presentation.

2) Recording the Presentation: The Oral Presentation will be recorded by USAID/Rwanda, be available to the Selection Committee for their review during the merit review process, and be maintained as part of the assistance selection record and award file.

3) Applicant Attendees: A maximum of five (5) presenters will be allowed into the (virtual) presentation room. The presentation must be led/delivered by at least two of the proposed Key Personnel.

4) Presentation Media: PowerPoint slides will be presented through the virtual platform. The Applicant will have fifteen (15) minutes prior to the presentation to view and check all equipment and connection.

5) Location: The Oral Presentation will occur virtually. USAID/Rwanda will make arrangements for video teleconference.

D.6.2 Oral Presentation Format

Applicants selected for Phase 2 will have the opportunity to elaborate on their technical approach and organizational experience and capability, and present their Management Approach and Key Personnel during the oral presentation. The presentation must describe the following:

1. Technical Approach

- Key strategies, planned activities, and approaches, and the rationale for selecting these strategies and activities to accomplish and sustain the objectives and results identified in the program description
- A synopsis of first year implementation activities and proposed targets
- MEL Approach

2. Organizational Experience and Capability

- Articulates the institutional experience and capability that will enhance the likelihood of successful implementation of INECD objectives
- Describe approach for facilitating partnerships, including leveraging local partnerships, and coordinating and collaborating with GOR ministries and programs, and other USAID and other donor-funded activities

3. Key Personnel and Management Approach

Applicants must present a Key Personnel and management and staffing approach that describes the method for carrying out the proposed technical components of the activity and internal and external communication flows to meet expected results. Applicant must:

- Clearly describe the overall management plan for managerial, technical, and administrative functions;
- Include a description of staffing roles and responsibilities (in Rwanda, and if applicable, with Home Office support);
- Describe the quality and experience of the proposed key personnel that meet the minimum knowledge, skills, and experience outlined below.

i. Chief of Party (100% LOE)

The COP is intended to be a seasoned multi-sectoral programming professional with experience in the area of nutrition, early childhood development and disability inclusion. He/she will serve as the institutional liaison and will be responsible for strategic oversight of the project. The Chief of Party (COP) will lead efforts to collaborate and coordinate with other USAID/Rwanda projects, other donor and non governmental organization (NGO)-sponsored activities, and the GoR. The following qualifications apply to this key personnel position:

- Ten years professional experience, with progressively increasing responsibilities and duties in fields related to the successful implementation of multi-sectoral projects, including nutrition, early childhood development, maternal and child health, and disability inclusion; technical assistance, local governance, capacity building for improvement of health and social services, and/or social and behavior change is required;
- An advanced graduate degree in a related field of study (e.g. public health, nutrition, early childhood development, business administration, governance, etc.) is required;
- Proven experience as a past COP or in a leadership position involving the administration of similarly sized, international donor supported programs with skills in strategic planning, management, supervision, and budgeting is required;
- Experience with organizational capacity development, strengthening systems, management and leadership skills, and good governance of the public sector, civil society organizations, NGOs, or multi-sector bodies to achieve sustainable outcomes, especially in developing countries;
- Proven ability to communicate a common vision among diverse partners and the ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams is desired;

- Demonstrated problem solving skills, collaboration experience, creativity and willingness to innovate; and
- Evidence of strong communication skills, both oral and written in English, to fulfill the diverse technical and managerial requirements of the agreement is desired.

ii. Deputy Chief of Party (100% LOE)

The proposed Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) will be responsible for technical leadership of the program and manage a team of senior staff and sub-partners and ensure quality, timeliness, and efficiency of all products and activities generated under the project.

- A Master's degree or experience equivalent to a Master's degree higher in management, public health, development studies, social/behavioral sciences, or in a closely related field is required;
- At least eight years of progressively increasing technical leadership/management responsibility, including experience with direct supervision of professional staff, preferably with a program of an equivalent size and scope is highly desired;
- Experience interacting with developing country governments, international organizations, other bilateral donor and civil society representatives, and senior level government officials is desired;
- Experience managing and coordinating complex multi-sectoral development programs, preferably in Rwanda is desired;
- At least eight years of experience working with USG cooperative agreements or contracts in senior program management capacity is desired;
- Demonstrated ability to establish and sustain professional relationships with civil society organizations and host country government counterparts is desired;
- Excellent communicator with demonstrated experience in communicating complex processes to diverse stakeholders, including government officials at the national, provincial and district levels, service-orientated NGOs, civil society organizations, donors, etc. is desired; and
- Excellent ability to communicate effectively in English, both verbally and in writing is highly desirable.

iii. Physical Rehabilitation Technical Advisor

The Physical Rehabilitation Technical Advisor must be a subject matter expert in the development of physical rehabilitation, including assistive technology, services and be knowledgeable about health system approaches with a minimum of seven years of relevant experience in low- and middle-income settings.

- A Master's degree or experience equivalent to a Master's degree higher in a physical rehabilitation and/or associated field is required
- At least seven years of experience designing, implementing, or supporting physical rehabilitation programming, is highly desired;
- Technical capacity, experience, and skills to develop quality sustainable physical rehabilitation services is highly desired;

- Strong technical skills around policy development and quality control for training curricula/tool development/revision and support for the physical rehabilitation national platform is required; and
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English are highly desirable.

iv. Nutrition Technical Advisor

The proposed Nutrition Technical Advisor will provide technical leadership and have responsibility for all activities associated with improving the nutritional status of the beneficiaries:.

- A Master's degree or experience equivalent to a Master's degree~~higher~~ in nutrition, public health, or in a closely related field is required.;
- At least seven years of experience designing, implementing, or supporting nutrition programming, preferably in Rwanda is highly desired;
- Strong technical skills in essential nutrition actions, growth monitoring and promotion, and social and behavior change is desirable;
- Strong technical skills in multi-sectoral nutrition programming, including health, WASH and food security are preferred;
- Demonstrated ability to address SBC issues in improving nutritional status, especially for women and children in the first 1,000 days.
- Experience in nutrition research, monitoring and evaluation is highly desirable
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English are highly desirable.

v. Early Childhood Development Technical Advisor

The proposed ECD Technical Advisor will provide technical leadership and have responsibility for all activities associated with improving early childhood development, positive parenting and social inclusion.

- A Master's degree or experience equivalent to a Master's degree~~higher~~ in early childhood development, Social Sciences, Education or in a closely related field is required;
- At least seven years of experience designing, implementing, or supporting ECD and positive parenting programming, preferably in Rwanda is highly desired;
- Excellent knowledge of holistic child development and understanding of global evidence, best practices, and gaps around early childhood development interventions. ;
- Experience integrating ECD interventions into nutrition, health and other service delivery platforms is preferred;
- Demonstrated experience working with children experiencing deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability and their families, and
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English are highly desirable.

D.7 Phase 3: Joint Application Development Workshop

Only one Apparently Successful Applicant, determined after the Phase 2 merit review will be invited to Phase 3. The competitive portion of the process is concluded, and USAID and the Apparently Successful Applicant may freely exchange information and collaborate to finalize the program description and award documentation.

The Apparently Successful Applicant will be responsible for hosting the Joint Application Development Workshop and working with USAID on the agenda for the workshop. During the workshop, the Apparently Successful Applicant will share its program approach with GOR officials, key stakeholders, and USAID to co-create the final Program Description and assure that the selected Applicant's program approach is well grounded in government-endorsed strategies, is responsive to all INECD components, and aligned to existing programs.

Thereafter, the Applicant will prepare a full application, including a final Program Description; MEL Plan; Sustainability Plan; Management and Staffing Plan; Implementation Plan; Past Performance Information and a Cost Application with detailed budget and budget narrative. More information on developing the full application will be provided to the Apparently Successful Applicant. USAID will evaluate this final application as Pass/Fail.

Note: If during the course of Phase 3, the AO determines that the Apparently Successful Applicant is unable to provide satisfactory Technical and Cost Applications, or did not meet deadlines for submissions, or the Applicant and USAID cannot come to agreement on the terms and conditions of the final award, then the AO may designate the next highest-evaluated Applicant from Phase 2 as the Apparently Successful Applicant.

D.8 Business (Cost) Application Format

NOTE: Only the Apparently Successful Applicant will be requested to submit a Cost Application after the Joint Program Description Development workshop.

While no page limit exists for the full cost application, the Apparently Successful 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.

Prior to award, the Apparently Successful Applicant may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the AO to assess the Apparently Successful Applicant's risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.206.

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

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

b) SF 424 Form(s)

The Apparently Successful 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 link: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>

Instructions for SF-424
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
Instructions for SF-424A
Budget Information (SF-424A)
Instructions for SF-424B
Assurances (SF-424B)

Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application.

c) Required Certifications and Assurances

The Apparently Successful 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 <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>
- (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).

d) 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 project year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time required to make an award, and may result in a rejection of the cost application. 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:

- Summary Budget, inclusive of all program 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 Section H, Annex 1 for Summary Budget Template
- 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 program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
- 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 project.

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 supporting 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 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.
- 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 program 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) Construction – If applicable. For purposes of this NOFO "Construction" means construction, alteration, or repair (including dredging and excavation) of buildings, structures, or other real property and includes, without limitation, improvements, renovation, alteration and refurbishment. The term includes, without limitation, roads,

power plants, buildings, bridges, water treatment facilities, and vertical structures. “Improvements, renovation, alteration and refurbishment” includes any betterment or change to an existing property to allow its continued or more efficient use within its designed purpose (renovation), or for the use of a different purpose or function (alteration). Improvements also include improvements to or upgrading of primary mechanical, electrical, or other building systems. “Improvements, renovation, alteration and refurbishment” does NOT include non-structural, cosmetic work, including painting, floor covering, wall coverings, window replacement that does not include changing the size of the window opening, replacement of plumbing or conduits that does not affect structural elements, and non-load bearing walls or fixtures (e.g., shelves, signs, lighting, etc.).

- 7) 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 program 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. Under Other Direct Costs the applicant should also include illustrative costs for environmental compliance implementation and monitoring as stated in Section F.5 subsection 8 of the NOFO.
- 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.

Method 4 - Indirect Costs Charged As A Fixed Amount

Eligibility: Non U.S. non-profit organizations without a NICRA may request, but approval is at the discretion of the AO. Initial Application Requirements: Provide the proposed fixed amount and a worksheet that includes the following:

- Total costs incurred by the organization for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year.
- Indirect costs (common costs that benefit the day-to-day operations of the organization, including categories such as salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting, or that benefit and are identifiable to more than one program or activity, such as depreciation, rental costs, operations and maintenance of facilities, and telephone expenses) for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year
- Proposed method for prorating the indirect costs equitably and consistently across all programs and activities of using a base that measures the benefits of that particular cost to each program or activity to which the cost applies.

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. The Applicant should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting award.

e) 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.

f) 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
- DUNS Number
- 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.

g) Dun and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (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 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 (www.beta.sam.gov).
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.

DUNS number: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM registration: <http://www.beta.sam.gov>

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on www.beta.sam.gov, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

h) History of Performance

The Apparently Successful Applicant will be requested to 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 three 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 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.

i) Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

The Apparently Successful Applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the AO and incorporated into any resulting award.

Pre-Award Terms

1. Branding Strategy – Assistance (June 2012)

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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.
- d. 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 brandmark, 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 program 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 program materials used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries.
- (i) Describe the main program message.
 - (ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcement, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.
 - (iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this program 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 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.
- e. 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.
- f. 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
 - (iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.
 - (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 program deliverables with the following details:
 - (i) The program 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 program deliverables;

- (iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;
 - (iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity, and
 - (v) The rationale for not marking program 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 program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or program 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.

j) Funding Restrictions

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 – no large-scale construction is authorized under this award. Construction will be limited to necessary renovations that directly support activity objectives.

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.5 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

k) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term (August 2018)

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.

(End of Section D)

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 Criteria

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 concept papers, and (b) set the standard against which all concept papers will be evaluated.

Technical and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Concept Paper and Oral Presentation Format. The Selection Committee (SC) will review concept papers and oral presentations based upon the merit review criteria set forth below.

E.2 Review and Selection Process

a) Merit Review

Phase 1 Concept Paper Review

USAID will conduct a merit review of all concept papers received that comply with the instructions in this NOFO. Concept Papers will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria shown in descending order of importance.

Criterion 1: Technical Approach (these considerations are not sub-criteria with specific weight assigned but aspects of the technical approach that will be considered in the review of this criterion)

- The extent to which the proposed technical approach is clear, feasible, and logical, and leads to the achievement of all three Objectives and corresponding Intermediate Results (IRs), as outlined in the Program Description.
- The extent to which the proposed multi-sectoral approaches support the activity's purpose and theory of change, and are representative of and appropriate to the targeted geographic regional and local contexts.
- Clear description and rationale for how the Applicant will leverage local government staffing and coordination structures to implement proposed multisectoral, inclusive nutrition, health, ECD and physical rehabilitation activities across the Objectives.
- The extent to which the applicant articulates its MEL approach, including its ability to manage adaptively and contribute to the knowledge base.

Criterion 2: Organizational Experience and Capability (these considerations are not sub-criteria with specific weight assigned but aspects of the organizational experience and capacity that will be considered in the review of this criterion):

- The extent to which the proposed members of the organization/consortium have skills and capacities that complement one another, including that of its proposed partners, in implementing integrated programming, and will contribute to the achievement of the Objectives and IRs.
- The extent to which the organization/consortium includes local entities that are appropriate to the technical approach and objectives and IRs; including plans for capacity building efforts to be conducted in concert with local government, civil society, and community level actors within the activity's geographical districts.

Phase 2 Oral Presentation

Oral presentations for the INECD activity will be assessed using the following merit review criteria. Criteria 1 is the most important. Criteria 2 is less important than Criteria 1. Criteria 2 and 3 are of equal importance.

Criterion 1: Technical Approach (these considerations are not sub-criteria with specific weight assigned but aspects of the technical approach that will be considered in the review of this criterion)

- The extent to which the proposed technical approach is clear, feasible, and logical, and leads to the achievement of all three Objectives and corresponding IRs, as outlined in the Program Description.
- The extent to which the proposed multi-sectoral approaches support the activity's purpose and theory of change, and are representative of and appropriate to the targeted geographic districts and local contexts.
- Clear description and rationale for how the applicant will leverage local government staffing and coordination structures to implement proposed multisectoral, inclusive nutrition, health, ECD and physical rehabilitation activities across the Objectives.
- The extent to which the applicant articulates its Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) approach, including its ability to manage adaptively and contribute to the knowledge base.

Criterion 2: Organizational Experience and Capability (these considerations are not sub-criteria with specific weight assigned but merely aspects of the review of the organizational experience and capacity that may be considered in the review of this criterion):

- The extent to which the organization and/or the proposed members of the consortium have skills and capacities that complement one another, including that of its proposed partners, in implementing integrated programming, and will contribute to the achievement of expected results.
- The extent to which the organization/consortium includes local entities that are appropriate to the technical approach and expected results and demonstrates its ability to provide organizational and technical capacity development.

Criterion 3: Key Personnel and Management Approach (these considerations are not sub-criteria with specific weight assigned but aspects of the Key Personnel and Management Approach that will be considered in the review of this criterion):

- Extent to which the overall management plan for the activity provides for appropriate resources and expertise to realistically and efficiently meet the Activity's technical, coordination, and communications needs.
- Extent to which the overall management and staffing plan is appropriate to carry out a program that supports multi-sectoral, inclusive nutrition, health, ECD and physical rehabilitation activities
- The quality and experience of the proposed key personnel and the extent the proposed candidates (1) possess the minimum knowledge, skills, and experience outlined below, and (2) the past performance references collected by USAID strongly support the candidates' ability to successfully accomplish the requirements of the position.

Phase 3: Joint Application Development Merit Review Criterion

There are no technical evaluation criteria for Phase 3. Only the Apparently Successful Applicant will be invited to this phase. USAID will evaluate this final application as Pass/Fail.

b) Business Review

The Agency will evaluate the cost application of the Apparently Successful Applicant under consideration for an award as a result of the merit criteria review to determine whether the costs are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

The Agency will also consider (1) the extent of the Applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested; (2) whether the Applicant's plans will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency; and (3) whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

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 program 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).

(End of Section E)

SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

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.

The AO is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. 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.

Following selection of an awardee USAID will inform the successful Applicant concerning the award. A notice of award signed by the AO is the official authorizing document, which USAID will provide electronically to the successful Applicant's main point of contact. USAID also will notify unsuccessful Applicants concerning their status after selection has been made. USAID also will notify unsuccessful Applicants concerning their status after selection has been made.

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](#).

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

F.3 Reporting Requirements

The Recipient shall be subject to the following reporting requirements covering financial reporting, program planning and performance monitoring reporting in accordance with 2 CFR 200.328 and 2 CFR 200.329:

All written documentation (correspondence, reports, information sheets, etc.) for submission to USAID/Rwanda AOR shall be in English language, unless otherwise specified by the AOR.

a. Financial Reporting

1. **Quarterly Financial Reports.** The Recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) (available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html>) on a quarterly basis not later than thirty days after the end of each reporting period. The following reporting period end dates shall be used for quarterly reports: 3/31, 6/30, 9/30, or 12/31. The Recipient must submit SF-425 via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The Recipient must submit an electronic copy of the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) at the same time to the AO and the AOR.
2. **Final Financial Report.** The final financial report is due later than 90 days after the estimated completion date of this Agreement. The Recipient must submit an electronic version of the final Federal Financial Form (SF-425) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with paragraph (1) above, USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMP-LOC Unit at loc@usaid.gov, the Agreement Officer, and the AOR.
3. **Accruals Reports.** The Recipient is also requested to provide quarterly financial expenditure reports highlighting accrual estimates to the AOR not later than three weeks before the end of each quarter. A template will be provided by the AOR.

b. Performance Reporting

i. Program Planning

Program planning reports are critical to USAID/Rwanda's ability to be substantially involved in this program. These include the Annual Implementation Plan and the MEL Plan.

1. MEL Plan

The MEL Plan will establish how the Recipient and USAID will monitor progress, evaluate performance and impact, and how the activity intends to learn from the implementation and use the lessons learned to adapt its programming. It will include the goal, objectives and expected results of the Activity. The MEL Plan must cover the full period of this Award and will contain a section on "Monitoring," a section on "Evaluation" and a section on "Learning."

The *Monitoring section* will specify indicators, targets, and monitoring methodologies that allow the Recipient and USAID/Rwanda to track the progress of activity interventions towards achieving the expected results and targets related to activity objectives.

The *Evaluation section* will describe how activities will be assessed at the performance and/or impact level, and include a schedule and tools for periodic evaluation/re-evaluation and revision of the approach if and as necessary.

The *Learning section* will describe how knowledge and learning will be gained from implementation, evaluation findings, and monitoring data, to adjust interventions and approaches, as needed.

The MEL plan must cover the full period of this Cooperative Agreement. The AOR will have authority to determine the appropriate format of the MEL Plan.

The MEL Plan will be completed on the following schedule:

- The Recipient must submit the initial draft of the MEL Plan to the AOR no later than 60 days after the effective date of the Award;
- USAID will provide comments on the MEL Plan no later than 75 days after the effective date of the Award; and
- The Recipient must submit the final MEL Plan to the AOR for USAID approval by no later than 90 days after the effective date of the Award.

For subsequent years, the annual updates to the MEL Plan will be completed on the following schedule:

- The Recipient shall submit the updated MEL Plan to the AOR no later than August 16 of the corresponding year;
- USAID will provide comments on the updated MEL Plan no later than September 1 of the corresponding year; and
- The Recipient shall submit the final updated MEL Plan to the AOR for USAID approval by no later than September 15 of the corresponding year.

If revisions to the MEL plan are necessary or desirable, the Recipient shall report any significant MEL plan changes or revisions to the USAID AOR, and shall obtain the USAID AOR's approval prior to implementing or undertaking such changes or revisions. MEL plans should not be submitted to USAID's DEC.

2. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Data Collection and Reporting

The Recipient should apply geospatial methods using GIS technology to support USAID's effort to incorporate geographic data and analysis into USAID's overall development planning, design, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning. The Recipient should include geographic data collection, analysis, and submission methods in the MEL plan and Work Plans as a separate section. The USAID/Rwanda Mission collects three types of GIS data:

- A. Activity and Intervention Location Data: Activity and Intervention Location Data will be submitted according to the Mission's data requirements. Activity and Intervention Location Data refers to data that records a discrete point location for activity and intervention sites. Activity and Intervention Location Data is essential in establishing an effective method for managing, analyzing, and communicating Activity and Intervention information.
- B. Thematic Data: This refers to data such as demographic and health indicators, land use land cover, hydrology, and transportation infrastructure. Thematic Data is

essential for USAID’s development planning and project design purposes. When the Recipient creates or acquires using USAID funds, these datasets, it will submit them to the AOR.

- C. Activity Specific Geographic Data: This refers to data such as the analytical output of a geographic analysis that is conducted while implementing an Activity and is useful to USAID’s development planning and project design purposes. When the Recipient creates or acquires using USAID funds, these datasets, it will submit them to the AOR.

To the extent possible, Activity and Intervention Location Data should be collected under this activity. The Recipient shall submit all geographic data collected to the AOR.

3. Annual Implementation Plan

The Recipient will be required to submit an electronic copy of the annual implementation plan to the AOR for approval. The annual implementation plan is intended to express the recipient and USAID’s plan to implement the program. The annual implementation plan authorizes specific activities to implement the Program Description. The implementation plan shall include:

- the interventions planned to be conducted;
- the site (s), target areas and provinces where they will be conducted;
- benchmarks/milestones/baselines and annual performance targets;
- the outputs/outcomes which the Recipient expects to achieve; and
- the inputs planned to be provided by the Recipient, during the implementation plan period.

The implementation plans shall be completed based on the following schedule. For the first year, the Recipient will begin working on the first annual implementation plan within 30 days of award. This plan shall be completed on the following schedule:

- The Recipient will submit the draft implementation plan to the AOR by no later than 60 days after the effective date of the Award;
- USAID will provide comments on the draft implementation plan no later than 75 days after the effective date of the Award; and
- The Recipient will submit the final implementation plan to the AOR for USAID approval by no later than 90 days after the effective date of the Award.

For the subsequent years, the implementation plans will be completed on the following schedule:

- The Recipient will submit the draft implementation plan to the AOR no later than August 16 of the corresponding year;
- USAID will provide comments on the draft implementation plan no later than September 1 of the corresponding year; and
- The Recipient will submit the final implementation plan to the AOR for USAID approval no later than September 15 of the corresponding year.

In accordance with CLA principles, the AOR and Recipient should plan for a period of “pause and reflect” around the annual implementation planning process. The AOR and Recipient should

consider learning from the previous year of implementation and opportunities for improvement in the coming year. Additionally, the Recipient must consider opportunities to co-create the implementation plan with stakeholders, including Government of Rwanda, private sector representatives, etc.

If revisions to the annual implementation plan are necessary or desirable, the Recipient must report any significant implementation plan changes or revisions to the USAID AOR, and must obtain the USAID AOR's approval prior to implementing or undertaking such changes or revisions.

Implementation plans and changes/revisions thereto must be within the scope of the Program Description (Attachment B) of this Cooperative Agreement. Implementation plans and changes/revisions thereto shall describe activities to be conducted during the period at a greater level of detail than the Program Description, but shall not serve to change the Program Description in any way. Therefore, all implementation plans and changes/revisions thereto shall cross-reference the applicable section(s) in the Program Description. The Program Description shall take precedence over the implementation plans and any changes/revisions thereto. Any changes to the Program Description must be approved by the AO by means of a modification to this Cooperative Agreement. Implementation plans should not be submitted to USAID's DEC.

b. Performance Monitoring Reporting

Performance Monitoring Reporting is intended to ensure that USAID has sufficient information to effectively monitor the Recipient's performance under this program. This includes any information regarding any development that may have a significant impact on performance, including, but not limited to, obstacles faced, relevant contextual changes, or assumptions violated.

1. Notification

As specified in 2 CFR 200.328(d), the Recipient shall promptly notify the AOR and AO in the case of: (1) developments which have a significant impact on the activities supported by this Award; or (2) problems, delays, or adverse conditions which materially impair the ability to meet the objectives of this Cooperative Agreement. This notification shall include a statement of the action taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the problem.

2. Quarterly Activity Performance Reports

The Recipient will submit a Quarterly Activity Performance Report on progress towards agreed performance targets every quarter. Each report will be submitted 30 calendar days after the end of each quarter, except for the fourth quarter of activity performance (this will be included in the Annual Activity Performance Report). The quarterly reporting cycle will align with USAID's fiscal year as follows:

Quarter 1: October-December,
Quarter 2: January-March,
Quarter 3: April-June,
Quarter 4: July- September.

The Quarterly Activity Performance Report should provide a brief and precise description of the intervention, progress on activity implementation during the reporting period, constraints encountered and suggestions for additional actions to be taken. The expected scope and format of the quarterly report will be established by the AOR in consultation with the Recipient. The Quarterly Activity Performance Report will be submitted electronically to the AOR. Upon AOR approval, the Recipient will upload the report to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).

3. Annual Activity Performance Reports

The Recipient will submit an Annual Activity Performance Report, describing cumulatively the performance of the activity in the reporting fiscal year, by October 30th of each year. The expected scope and format shall be established by the AOR in consultation with the Recipient. At a minimum, the report will address:

- Progress on activity implementation during that reporting period, outlining achievements for each result area presented in the approved annual work plan;
- Progress made in the areas of monitoring, evaluation, and cross-cutting themes, such as gender integration, sustainability and local capacity building, and partnership engagement;
- An overview of major challenges and lessons learned during the reporting period;
- An overview of the collaborating, learning, and adapting strategy with an overview of information sharing with other partners during the reporting period and any problems encountered, agreements reached and/or actions taken to ensure effective coordination between partners;
- Other pertinent information as specified by the AOR in writing. The AOR will communicate any other pertinent information required in the report in writing to the Chief of Party no later than 15 days prior to the end of the reporting period. Any request for other pertinent information specified by the AOR for a specific annual report automatically are required for all subsequent reports unless specifically indicated in writing by the AOR that the pertinent information is no longer required in the annual reports.
- Annexes to include the following:
 - Indicator results metrics for all indicators included in the MEL Plan
 - Success stories during the reporting period (if any)
 - Environmental compliance reporting monitoring (if applicable)
 - List of reports/studies/documents to be submitted to the DEC
 - GIS data (if appropriate)

Upon AOR approval, the Recipient will upload the report to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).

4. Indicator Results Data Reporting

In addition to the Quarterly and Annual performance reports, the Recipient shall report indicator results data to USAID in accordance with the assigned indicators' reporting frequencies (quarterly, semi-annual, and annual) as established in the MEL Plan.

The reporting of indicator results data allows USAID to aggregate data, assess the overall performance of activities, and generate reports for its internal and external stakeholders, including but not limited to USAID Washington, Congress, and the Government of Rwanda.

USAID is currently using a new online performance management and reporting system called Development Information Solution (DIS). The Recipient will be expected to report indicator results data and other data (ex: GIS information, etc.) and upload documents (e.g, success stories, pictures etc), via this system. USAID will provide training and access to DIS to enable the Recipient to report through this system.

The indicator results data must be reported in accordance with the following schedule.

Quarterly reported indicators:

1. Quarter 1, Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 - 30 calendar days after the end of the quarter
2. Quarter 4, 30 days after the end of the quarter (October 30)

Semi - Annually reported Indicators:

1. Semi-Annual 1 (Oct - Mar): 30 calendar days after the end of the Semi-Annual 1
2. Semi-Annual 2 (Apr - Sep): 30 calendar days after the end of the Semi-Annual 2

Annually reported Indicators: 30 calendar days after the end of the fiscal year.

5. Demobilization Plan

90 days prior to the completion date of this agreement, the Recipient shall submit a demobilization plan for AOR approval. The demobilization plan shall include a) draft property disposition plan, b) plan for the phase-out of 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.

6. Final Performance Report

The Recipient must submit a draft of the Final Performance Report to the AOR 90 days following the estimated completion date of the cooperative agreement. This Final Performance Report will include the following information:

- i) overall activity accomplishments, presented in quantitative terms and described in a narrative that relates interventions, products, and results to the MEL Plan;
- ii) discussion of why unexpected progress, positive or negative, was made toward the planned results. If the performance monitoring system (indicators) indicates that expected results were not achieved, the partner shall seek to determine and explain the reason;
- iii) analysis of lessons learned, summary of responses to problems encountered during project implementation;
- iv) a bibliography of all products, tools, reports, and studies produced through the project; and

- v) other pertinent information communicated by the AOR in writing within 15 days of the end of the agreement.

In accordance with the Standard Provision set forth in Attachment C of this agreement entitled “Submissions to the Development Experience Clearinghouse and Publications (June 2012)”, upon receiving AOR approval, the Recipient must submit one electronic (preferred) copy of the Final Performance Report to the following: <http://dec.usaid.gov>.

F.4 Program Income

If it is expected that program income might be generated under this program, then program income earned under the resulting award shall be added to the program and used to further eligible program objectives as agreed upon by USAID. Applicants should describe how program income might be generated under the proposed activities and how it envisions program income being utilized to successfully accomplish program objectives. Program Income, if any, will be accounted for in accordance with 2 CFR 200.307 for U.S. organizations or the Standard Provision entitled Program Income for non-U.S. organizations.

F.5 Environmental Compliance

1a) The FAA 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. Applicant environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this NOFO.

1b) 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.

1c) No activity funded under this cooperative agreement (CA) 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) (Annex 4 of the NOFO). Hereinafter, such documents are described as “approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.”

2) n/a

3) n/a

4a) As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the Recipient, in collaboration with the USAID Agreement Officer Representative and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned

activities under this CA to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

4b) If the Recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

4c) Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

5) n/a

6) n/a

7a) A provision for sub-grants is included under this award; therefore, the Recipient will be required to use an Environmental Review Form (ERF) or Environmental Review (ER) checklist using impact assessment tools to screen grant proposals to ensure the funded proposals will result in no adverse environmental impact, to develop mitigation measures, as necessary, and to specify monitoring and reporting. Use of the ERF or ER checklist is called for when the nature of the grant proposals to be funded is not well enough known to make an informed decision about their potential environmental impacts, yet due to the type and extent of activities to be funded, any adverse impacts are expected to be easily mitigated. Implementation of sub-grant activities cannot go forward until the ERF or ER checklist is completed and approved by USAID. Recipient is responsible for ensuring that mitigation measures specified by the ERF or ER checklist process are implemented.

7b) The Recipient will be responsible for periodic reporting to the USAID Agreement Officer Representative, as specified in the Cooperative Agreement.

8a) USAID anticipates that environmental compliance and achieving optimal development outcomes for the proposed activities will require environmental management expertise. Applicants to the NOFO should therefore include as part of their application their approach to achieving environmental compliance and management, to include:

8b) The applicant's approach to developing and implementing an IEE or EA or environmental review process for a grant fund and/or an EMMP or M&M Plan.

8c) The applicant's approach to providing necessary environmental management expertise, including examples of past experience of environmental management of similar activities.

8d) The respondent's illustrative budget for implementing the environmental compliance activities. For the purposes of this solicitation, Applicants should reflect illustrative costs for environmental compliance implementation and monitoring in their cost application.

(End of Section F)

SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

See Section D.2 for Points of Contact (POC) for questions while this NOFO is open.

For technical assistance related to Grants.gov, applicants may contact Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov

(End of Section G)

SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the concept papers 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.

Concept Papers 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 concept paper includes data that must not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this concept paper. 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 concept paper.”

(End of Section H)

ANNEX 1 - SUMMARY BUDGET TEMPLATE

Attached as a separate document to the grants.gov posting.

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 (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA2. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PROVISIONAL (Nonprofit) (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA3. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE - PROVISIONAL (Profit) (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA5. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
		RAA6. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
		RAA7. PROTECTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT (APRIL 1998)
		RAA8. CARE OF LABORATORY ANIMALS (MARCH 2004)
		RAA9. TITLE TO AND CARE OF PROPERTY (COOPERATING COUNTRY TITLE) (NOVEMBER 1985)
		RAA10. COST SHARING (MATCHING) (FEBRUARY 2012)
		RAA11. PROHIBITION OF ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS (JUNE 1999)
		RAA12. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
		RAA13. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA14. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA15. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
		RAA16. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA17. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA18. USAID DISABILITY POLICY - ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2004)

		RAA19. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
		RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA23. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA24. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA25. PATENT REPORTING PROCEDURES (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA26. ACCESS TO USAID FACILITIES AND USAID'S INFORMATION SYSTEMS (AUGUST 2013)
		RAA27. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA28. AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA29. PROTECTING LIFE IN GLOBAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA30. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

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)
		RAA6. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA7. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA8. SUBAWARDS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA9. TRAVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA10. OCEAN SHIPMENT OF GOODS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA11. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA12. PATENT RIGHTS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA13. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
		RAA14. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
		RAA 15. COST SHARE (JUNE 2012)

		RAA16. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
		RAA17. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA18. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
		RAA19. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA23. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
		RAA24. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
		RAA25. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA26. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING(ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA27. LIMITATION ON SUBAWARDS TO NON-LOCAL ENTITIES (JULY 2014)
		RAA28. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA29. CONTRACT AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA30. PROTECTING LIFE IN GLOBAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

ANNEX 3 - ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
AO	Agreement Officer
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
COP	Chief of Party
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DIS	Development Information Solution
DO	Development objective
DPEM	District plans to eliminate malnutrition
DUNS	Data universal numbering system
EA	Environmental Assessment
ECD	Early childhood development
FAA	Foreign Assistance Act
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GOR	Government of Rwanda
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
INECD	Inclusive Nutrition and Early Childhood Development
IR	Intermediate results
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice
MDD-W	Minimum dietary diversity for women
NCDA	National Child Development Agency
NECDP	National Early Childhood Development Program
NICRA	Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity
OFAC	Office of Foreign Assets Control
Rehab/AT	Physical rehabilitation and assistive technology
RCE	Request for Categorical Exclusion
RDHS	Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey
SAM	System for Award Management
SBC	Social and behavior change
THRIVE PAD	THRIVE Health Project (2020-2025) Project Appraisal Document
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, sanitation, and hygiene

ANNEX 4 - INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION (IEE)

Attached as a separate document to the grants.gov posting.

(End of the NOFO)