



USAID | RWANDA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Reference: Notice of Funding Opportunity 720-696-21-RFA-00002

Inclusive Nutrition and Early Childhood Development (INECD) Activity

Subject: Amendment 01

Date: January 22, 2021

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The U.S. Agency for International Development (“USAID”) amends the above-referenced Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”), originally issued December 30, 2020.

Amendment 01 revises the NOFO in response to questions from prospective applicants as detailed in the attachment.

Sincerely,

//s//

Justin Troy DiVenzano
Supervisory Contracting and Agreement Officer
Director, Office of Acquisition and Assistance
USAID/Rwanda and USAID/Burundi

Enclosures

Attachment 1 _Amendment 01 to NOFO 720-696-21-RFA-00002

Attachment 2 _USAID Answers to Prospective Applicant Questions

Attachment 1: Amendment 01 to NOFO

The NOFO is hereby amended as set forth below:

1. Amendment 01 revises Section D.5.2 Concept Paper Format as follows:

“Concept papers can not exceed ten (10) pages (cover page and an acronym list are 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)
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.

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.

2. Amendment 01 revises the fourth bullet point under Section D.4 General Content and Form of Concept Paper as follows:

- 10 point font can be used for text boxes, graphs and charts. Tables however, must comply with the 12 point Times New Roman requirement.

3. Amendment 01 revises first bullet points under Key Personnel Requirements in Section D.6.2.3, items ii through iv as follows:

ii. Deputy Chief of Party

- A Master's degree or experience equivalent to a Master's degree in management, public health, development studies, social/behavioral sciences, or in a closely related field is required;

iii. Physical Rehabilitation Technical Advisor:

- A Master's degree or experience equivalent to a Master's degree in a physical rehabilitation and/or associated field is required.

iv. Nutrition Technical Advisor:

- A Master's degree or experience equivalent to a Master's degree in nutrition, public health, or in a closely related field is required.

v. Early Childhood Development Technical Advisor:

- A Master's degree or experience equivalent to a Master's degree in early childhood development, Social Sciences, Education or in a closely related field is required.

Attachment 2: USAID Answers to Prospective Applicant Questions

Question 1

Considering that the eligibility of this NOFO is not restricted and that the geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this award is 937, we would like to understand whether our Rwanda based office - legally registered and operating in Rwanda as branch office (head office based in UK) could be considered eligible to apply either as lead applicant or at least be part of a wider consortium as sub-grantee/partner.

Answer 1

As stated in ADS 310.3.1: “Grants/cooperative agreements using program funds may be made/entered into without regard to the nationality of the prime recipient as long as that organization is not otherwise restricted by statute, regulation, Agency policy, or administrative determination (i.e., suspension and debarment) from receiving assistance.” Authorized Geographic code 937 applies only to procurement of commodities and services under USAID finance contracts and grants/cooperative agreements. Thus, the geographic code does not apply to a lead applicant, but it will apply to a sub-recipient. According to 2 CFR § 228.12 “The suppliers of all commodities and services financed with federal program funds appropriated under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, shall:[...]

(b) If an organization,

- (1) Be incorporated or legally organized under the laws of a country in Code 937
- (2) Must be operating as a going concern in a country in Code 937 , and either
- (3) Be managed by a governing body, the majority of whom are citizens or lawful permanent residents (or equivalent immigration status to live and work on a continuing basis) of countries in Code 937 (or other principal geographic procurement code designated in an implementing instrument), or
- (4) Employ citizens or lawful permanent residents (or equivalent immigration status to live and work on a continuing basis) of a country in Code 937 (or other principal geographic procurement code designated in an implementing instrument), in more than half its permanent full-time positions and more than half of its principal management positions.”

Question 2

Can USAID please confirm that text boxes follow the same criteria as graphs and charts per Section D.4 page 20 of the NOFO?

Answer 2

USAID confirms that text boxes must follow the same criteria as graphs and charts per Section D.4 page 20 of the revised NOFO.

Question 3

Section D.5.2, page 22 of the NOFO requests “Amount of Funding Requested from USAID and Cost Share Amount” be included on the Cover Page. Can USAID please confirm there is no other cost or budget requirements during Phase 1-Concept Note Submission?

Answer 3

USAID confirms that there is no other cost or budget requirement during Phase 1. Only the apparently successful applicant will be required to submit a cost application as stated in Section D.8 of the NOFO.

Question 4

Can USAID please clarify what is meant by “major subrecipients or partnerships” in Section D.5.2, page 22? Are these partners who have a certain percentage of the budget?

Answer 4

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.

Question 5

Can USAID please confirm if offerors are permitted to use their own summary budget templates provided that they include all the same information as the template provided in Annex 1?

Answer 5

USAID confirms that applicants are permitted to use their own budget templates, as long as they include all the same information as the template provided in Annex 1.

Question 6

Would USAID please consider including an acronym list that will not be counted towards the page limit as part of the concept note submission?

Answer 6

USAID will allow an acronym list that will not count towards ten (10) page limitation.

Question 7

Question Partners – Phase 1 of the process outline includes specification of sub-awardees. Can USAID confirm whether all partners must be confirmed at the Phase 1, Concept Note submission, or may additional partners be added during Phase 2, Oral Presentations?

Answer 7

The applicant cannot add partners during Phase 2, Oral Presentations.

Question 8

Key Personnel – The described process appears to request Key Personnel to be named and presented in Phase 2, Oral Presentations and does not include this as a requirement at Phase 1, Concept Note Submission. Can USAID please confirm that key personnel do not need to be named in Phase 1 and that CVs for Key personnel are not required for Phase 1 submission?

Answer 8

USAID confirms that Key personnel do not need to be named in Phase 1 and CVs for Key personnel are not required for Phase 1 submission.

Question 9

On page 10, USAID identifies Objective 3 as “Increased household resources and skills to provide optimal nurturing care and promote healthy growth and development” and goes on to echo global evidence about the importance of coupling knowledge with “interventions that address the physical and structural barriers (access to food, water, financing, etc.) that are critical for sustained behavior change” (pg 11) in nutrition and ECD. However, USAID says that 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.”

Please confirm that the project can, as part of a comprehensive SBC strategy, propose certain focused activities that address barriers to priority behaviors (e.g. gardens to increase uptake of nutrient rich foods). If not, please consider rewording the objective as “increased household skills to provide optimal nurturing care and promote healthy growth and development” as the project will not have a direct role to “increase resources.”

Answer 9

The INECD will not be directly implementing full scale food security activities, nor be responsible for addressing food security through the food system, as these types of activities are supported by other USAID programs. However, the promotion of kitchen gardens to increase dietary diversity is a national priority by the government of Rwanda where all Rwandans should own one. Therefore, INECD may promote home kitchen gardens at household level in the districts it covers. For complementarity purposes, INECD will link its nutrition and ECD beneficiaries to other USAID programs that promote food security in the districts the two programs will overlap.

Question 10

Will USAID allow for endnotes in an annex?

Answer 10

USAID neither requires annexes to the Concept Papers nor should applicants submit them.

Question 11

Would USAID please confirm that applicants may use 10 pt. Times New Roman font for text boxes?

Answer 11

USAID confirms that applicants may use 10 pt. Times New Roman for text boxes.

Question 12

How long after submission does USAID expect to announce phase two?

Answer 12

USAID expects to conduct oral presentations four to six weeks after applicants submit concept papers. USAID will notify the selected Applicant(s) at least two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled oral presentation date.

Question 13

In the interest of recruiting a strong local staff, and in keeping with a bidder's internal HR rules, would USAID consider Rwandan candidates for the technical advisor positions who have experience equivalent to a Master's degree?

Answer 13

Absolutely. USAID considers qualified Rwandan candidates for the technical advisor positions, provided they have prior experience working with USAID funded related programs and their qualifications meet the USAID set criteria about the key positions in the NOFO.

Question 14

Please confirm applicants are not to submit a summary budget at the concept note phase.

Answer 14

USAID confirms that applicants are not to submit a summary budget at the concept note phase.

Question 15

May applicants include a table of contents and acronym list that will not count as part of the overall 10-page limit?

Answer 15

Table of contents is not required. Applicants may include an acronym list that will not count towards the overall 10-page limit.

Question 16

According to the NOFO, target beneficiaries include adults and children with disabilities (pages 3 and 12). The NOFO also “aims to strengthen inclusion of children and adults with disabilities.” Could USAID please clarify expectations with respect to the provision of services and assistive technologies for adults with disabilities?

Answer 16

The INECD activity will target both children and adults with disabilities as the NOFO clearly states. It aims to address child development gaps and significant unmet physical rehabilitation and assistive technology (rehab/AT) and social inclusion needs for infants and children. It will also target the adults with disabilities that require rehab/Assistive technology support.

Question 17

Does USAID allow an organisation to apply on more than one consortium at the same time for the same Call?

Answer 17

As stated in Section C.3 on page 18 of the NOFO “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.”