

USAID BETTER OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN EASTERN AND NORTHERN UGANDA REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) NO: RFA-617-14-000009

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

1. Are community based organizations also legible for these grants?
USAID Response: Yes, this is a full and open competition, under which any type of organization, large or small, commercial (for-profit) firms, faith-based, and non-profit organizations in partnerships or consortia, are eligible to compete. Please refer to page 1 of the RFA. Please note that the applicant will have to pass a responsibility determination and be able to manage a \$23.5 million program.
2. Is it alright if applicants make slight adjustments to the budget template? We would like to include unit costs and costs per year.
USAID Response: Yes, Applicants can make adjustments to the budget template to incorporate anticipated line item costs and to provide more detail regarding unit costs and costs per year.
3. Where should applicants include the consultant line in the budget?
USAID Response: See response to question 2 above
4. The template does not have a place for subagreements. Should applicants include these under the line for subgrants?
USAID Response: See response to question 2 above
5. *Substantial Involvement (Page 41) - Monitor to authorize specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects. All such activities must be included in the program description, negotiated in the budget, and made part of the award.* Could you please clarify to us what would be the roles and responsibilities of USAID and the Recipient regarding the above substantial involvement?
USAID Response: When the recipient's successful accomplishment of program objectives would benefit from USAID's technical knowledge, the Agreement Officer may authorize the collaboration or joint participation of USAID and the recipient on the program. There should be sufficient reason for Agency involvement and the involvement should be specifically tailored to support identified elements in the program description. Please refer to Elements of Substantial Involvement under ADS 303.
6. On page 38 of the RFA it is stated that "The total value of an individual grant to a US organization must not exceed \$100,000".
On page 40 of the RFA it is stated "The recipient shall plan to engage a wide range of partners, including local, regional and international partners through a consortium or similar arrangement, where these partnerships might contribute to the project's success."
 - a. It is not clear whether the limit of \$100,000 per grant to US organizations also applies to non-Ugandan organizations which are not US based.
USAID Response: The limit of \$100,000 per grant ONLY applies to US organizations.

- b. It is not clear whether this limit applies to members of a consortium proposed in the response to the RFA or only to subgrants made as a part of the sub grant component of the project.

USAID Response: This limit applies ONLY to sub-grants made as a part of the sub-grant component of the project and not to proposed consortium members.

7. Can prospective recipients assume that the restriction to limit sub grants to \$100,000 for US-based partners does not apply to US-based key sub partners or consortium partners included in the bid?

USAID Response: See response to question 6 b. above.

8. In view of the total amount under consideration, which is above the implementation capacities of our local partner organizations, we wanted to find out whether it is possible to also apply only for half of the funding available, i.e. for approximately 11'000'000 USD.

USAID Response: In order to achieve a systematic approach to reaching all targeted OVC in the regions for which the program is designed, USAID has determined that a program in the magnitude of the one described in the RFA is required/desirable.

9. Is USAID planning to release another regional OVC RFA and if so, when?

USAID Response: Yes, USAID is planning to release another regional OVC RFA in the near future. Please continue to monitor www.Grants.gov.

10. On pg 53, the RFA states that criteria by which the application will be assessed are as follows in descending order of importance: Technical Approach, Personnel and Staffing, Management and Institutional Capacity, and Past Performance. Can USAID please place a numerical value for each of the criterion?

USAID Response: Please note revision to RFA, Section V to equally weight the evaluation criteria.

11. Page 38 of the RFA states that “the total value of an individual grant to a U.S. organization must not exceed \$100,000.” Can USAID please confirm that this limit applies only to the grants management mechanism of this project, and that prime applicants are not prohibited from proposing consortia which include U.S. organizations as sub-recipients and/or sub-contracted with budgets exceeding \$100,000?

USAID Response: See response to question 6 b. above.

12. Page 51 of the RFA states that the cost application should include “other administrative documentation as required.” Could USAID please clarify what other administrative documentation may be required, if any?

USAID Response: An organization may need to provide copies of policy manuals to substantiate costs or even audit reports for proposed indirect cost rates. These are illustrative examples.

13. Please confirm that biodata forms 1420 are not required to be submitted with the cost proposal since this is a Cooperative Agreement.

USAID Response: Submission of bio-data forms 1420 is not a mandatory requirement. Please note that AID 1420 form is different from the one page certification.

14. On page 50, the solicitation requests that one page certification for each key personnel be included as part of the cost application. Please confirm that applicants can use the form 1420 to provide this information. Also confirm if the local HR Manager would be an acceptable point of contact to sign these forms.

USAID Response: See response to question 13 above

15. On page 52, the solicitation requires that applicants that do not have a NICRA Letter include:

Copies of the applicant's financial reports for the previous 3-year period, which have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID; Projected budget, cash flow and organizational chart; and a copy of the organization's accounting manual.

Please confirm that this information is only required for organizations that do not have a NICRA Letter and are including an indirect cost rate in their budget.

USAID Response: Yes, this information is **ONLY** required for organization that do not have a NICRA.

16. Please confirm that applicants are not expected to sign and include the special provisions that are included in the solicitation on page 55. Point 4.

USAID Response: Applicants are not expected to sign and include special provisions. However, the successful applicant will be expected to sign an agreement in which these special provisions will be included.

17. Page 50 of the RFA requests that Annex IV. Representations and Certifications be included as an annex to the technical proposal. As there is procurement information (costs) included in these certifications, please confirm that they are to be included as part of the cost proposal.

USAID Response: Representations and Certifications should be included in the technical proposal under **Annex IV**

18. On pages 50-52, the RFA requests several cost documents from the applicant (i.e. SF 424/A/B, Certifications, NICRA, Evidence of Responsibility, etc.). Are these items required from each member of the consortium group, or only from the prime?

USAID Response: Any proposed partner or member of a consortium group that is including a NICRA in its cost proposal must provide documentation to substantiate the rate. The SF424/A/B, Certifications, Evidence of Responsibility is required from the Prime.

19. What is the expected start date for this project?

USAID Response: USAID Response: 2nd quarter FY2015. Final date will be set upon award.

20. Please confirm that documents in Microsoft version 2010 are acceptable.

USAID Response: Yes

21. Regarding the electronic submission, please advise if there is a MB limit per email or a limit on the number of attachments per email.

USAID Response: 5 MB limit per e-mail

22. Regarding the Budget template (Attachment D):

- a) Please confirm that posting costs (travel to post and shipment of expats' personal effects) can be included in the Allowance section.

USAID Response: YES

- b) Please confirm that the offeror can add "Consultants" as a separate category (currently consultants seem to be included in the Labor category).

USAID Response: See response to question 2 above

- c) Please clarify what supplies would be included under "Supplies" and which would be included under "Equipment – Expendable Equipment and Supplies"?

USAID Response: Supplies – An explanation is necessary for supplies costing more than \$5,000 or 5 percent of the award – whichever is greater. The requirements for supplies that exceed the threshold include the following: explain the type of supplies to be purchased or the nature of the expense in the budget narrative; provide a breakdown of supplies by quantity and cost per unit if known; and indicate basis for estimate of supplies, for example, historical use on similar projects.

Equipment is nonexpendable, tangible personal property with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more and has a useful life of more than one year. Items that do not meet the equipment definition can be included under supplies. List each piece of equipment to be purchased, and provide a description of how it will be used in the project. Lease versus purchase analysis should be completed as appropriate. A budget narrative should explain why the equipment is necessary for successful completion of the project. General use equipment (e.g., computer, faxes, etc.) must be used 100 percent for the proposed project if charged directly to the grant.

23. The RFA provides a \$100,000 grant ceiling per sub-grantee. Is this \$100,000 ceiling over life of grants or for each year? What are the other requirements for these grants

USAID Response: \$100,000 grant ceiling is per year. The other requirements is responsibility determination and environmental compliance/ environmental review

24. Page 52 - are financial requirements for partners not having a NICRA only for major implementing partners? Does this apply to local partners?

USAID Response: This requirement applies to all Applicants

25. Page 3 of the RFA notes that the U.S. government conducted an in-depth policy review of its assistance program in Uganda. Is this review publically available?

USAID Response: No

26. Page 11 of the RFA states that applicants are required to conduct a risk assessment to inform their Risk Mitigation and Contingency Plans. Could USAID please confirm that Risk Mitigation and Contingency Plans should not appear in the technical proposal?

USAID Response: Risk Mitigation and Contingency Plans should be included in the work plan

27. Page 50 - could USAID please confirm that PPRs are requested only for those similar projects implemented by the offeror in the past 3 years, and not all projects implemented in the past 3 years?

USAID Response: Provide a list of current US Government and/or privately funded contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, etc., **for similar size, scope and complexity or related programs during the past three years.**

28. Page 50 - are PPRs required from major implementing partners?

USAID Response: PPRs are required from ALL Applicants

29. Page 44 - Is the 35 page proposal to be single or double space?

USAID Response: Single space

30. Could USAID please share the District Operational Plans (mentioned on page 31) for the districts in which this project will work?

USAID Response: District Operational Plans (DOPs) are essentially, memoranda of understanding) with the District Government leadership and the Chiefs of Party of each USAID implementing partner operating in "Focus Districts". This is specific to existing programs, not public documents.

31. Is the three page limit stated on page 49 for just the resume or the resume plus the letter of commitment?

USAID Response: Resume

32. Are there any other Mission-specific blanket waivers in effect which will apply to an award resulting from this solicitation?

USAID Response: Blanket waiver for procurement of certain right-hand drive (RHD) motor-vehicles not manufactured in the United States. Please refer to ADS 312.3.3.2b

33. Will local hires be scored higher than TCN's or expats?

USAID Response: Please refer to the Section V – Application Review Information, Technical Criteria B. Personnel and staffing

34. The RFA has a strong focus on building clinical linkages. So would it be an allowable expense if we include in our budget a district health worker who facilitates service delivery or a welfare officer?

USAID Response: If the district health worker or welfare officer is a government employee at the time of engagement, this will be treated as a Salary supplement. Please review Special Provision (d) and (e), page 57 of the RFA.

35. Annex III – Past Performance References and Information. Please clarify if this annex should include past performance references for major sub-grantees as well or only the prime applicant.

USAID Response: Annex III should include Past Performance Reference for the prime Applicant.

36. On pg 14, the RFA refers to household 'graduation' from economic strengthening activities. Can USAID give any guidance on what constitutes criteria for graduation or shall that be defined by the Recipient?

USAID Response: The applicant should take into account graduation criteria used by current programs such as Score. The applicant should also review literature on graduation models of economic strengthening such as Hashemi & de Montesquiou, 2011- graduation model developed by Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee. Also review the Guidance for OVC programming July 2012 - Focus is on achieving household economic strengthening so that parents and caregivers can provide for children's basic needs, rather than rely on external assistance. Success is measured by a family's ability to invest in education, nutrition and health of the children they care for.

37. Can USAID please confirm that the Recipient is not required to cover costs for performance evaluations, impact evaluations, operational research, or special, rapid studies (pg 29)?

USAID Response: The applicant is not expected to cover full costs of performance or impact evaluations of the program. However, the recipient is expected to collaborate, cooperate and make relevant program data available to the external evaluator. Recipient is responsible for baseline data collection and analysis as well as robust monitoring of all activities to ensure that the evidence base continues to grow and to inform better practice. With justification, the Recipient may design and directly manage innovative operational research and special, rapid studies to inform programming. However, these studies must be undertaken by qualified researchers and in coordination with the OVC Evaluation Partner. The mission may also support the OVC Evaluation partner to carry out operational research and special studies in cooperation with the Recipient.

38. The RFA gives a minimum goal of reaching 367,000 OVC and 59,802 households with core services. Is USAID suggesting that 100% of OVC and households must meet the 'active beneficiary' criteria (new MER indicators) to be counted?

USAID Response: Yes. OVC and households may be reached through either Direct Service Delivery (DSD) or Technical Assistance (TA). However, in order to be counted towards DSD and TA targets, OVCs and their caregivers must meet the criteria for "active beneficiaries" established by PEPFAR for each of these categories. A requirement for counting an individual as receiving direct service delivery (DSD) support from PEPFAR is that there needs to be quarterly contact with the point of service delivery.

What constitutes a quarterly contact for DSD for OVC_SERV?

Quality programming would indicate the need to have at least quarterly in-person contact with an individual who is actively part of an OVC program or actively receiving OVC services. Examples of qualifying DSD quarterly contact may include a home visit, a visit to a school to verify a child's attendance and progress in school, observation of a child's participation in kids clubs, peer support groups, referral to and possible accompaniment to a health and child protection services. (Note that phone call and texts only do not count as direct service delivery).

39. The RFA clearly states that the primary target group is OVC aged 10-18. The RFA also focuses on under 5s. Can USAID provide guidance on the percentage of the overall OVC target that should be made up of under 5s?

USAID Response: The recipient will plan interventions for OVC from birth to 18 years of age as well as children under 5. Furthermore, a young person who turns 18 while receiving OVC services should not automatically be terminated from receiving assistance. Appropriate transition strategies should be applied. The baseline study

should help to determine the percentage of children in these age groups that should be targeted under this project

40. The PEPFAR OVC Guidance recommends that 10% of funding be allocated to M&E. Given the anticipated USAID investment in M&E through the collaboration of the OVC evaluation partner under a separate funding mechanism, does USAID/PEPFAR recommend maintaining the 10% earmark for M&E in this activity budget?

USAID Response: YES, Recipient is responsible for baseline data collection and for establishing a robust monitoring of all activities to ensure that the evidence base continues to grow and to inform better practice. The program will carry out CLA as presented in the RFA. As part of CLA the program will assess the effectiveness of high impact and innovative interventions being implemented and under certain circumstances, operational research and special, rapid studies. Furthermore, the recipient is responsible for developing an environmental mitigation and monitoring plan for all IEE conditions pertaining to activities funded under this solicitation.

41. Can USAID please give guidance about what the proposed recipient should include as part of the documented plan in the technical approach for adapting and modifying engagement with GOU and non-governmental , including private sector, actors in order to achieve expected results?

Assuming they are referring to Page 44 -The applicant must describe steps that will be taken, if necessary, to limit engagement with government authorities and foster non-governmental, including private sector relationships.

USAID Response: The recipient needs to demonstrate creativity, innovation and EFFICIENCY when describing the need for GOU, NGO and private sector engagement for sustainability. The approach should demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in relation to GOU engagement without sacrificing outcomes.

42. a)Is USAID expecting that a certain number (how many) of local partners will meet the criteria necessary to receive USG funds directly as part of USAID FORWARD? b)Can we assume that this would be by the end of the project?

USAID Response: Page 32 – a) recipient will propose number of local partners based on assessment of local partner capacity to receive and manage USG funds and their ability to implement project activities. Recipient should also take into account its own ability to provide and monitor capacity development improvements. b) local partners should demonstrate continuous and progressive capacity improvements over the life of the program.

43. Does USAID expect the proposed recipient to conduct the gender and youth analyses referred to on page 34 and 35 prior to the award or post award, as part of start up and implementation of the program?

USAID Response: Gender and youth analysis will be carried out as part of baseline data collection and start up. HOWEVER, the application must demonstrate that the recipient has experience and capacity to implement interventions that can measurably address gender inequalities (page 34) and youth appropriate services.

44. Please confirm that the Draft Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Annex II is not to exceed five pages (pg 49)

USAID Response: Confirmed - The draft M&E plan should not exceed five pages

45. Can USAID give guidance on the parameters of the baseline study expected as part of start-up activities as this needs to be included in the prospective recipient's budget?

USAID Response: USAID will not prescribe parameters for the baseline study. Recipient should determine baseline study based on indicators needed to measure progress under planned activities and intended results.

46. The call acknowledges that a significant proportion of OVC and youths live with older caregivers- typically impoverished elderly grandparents. The call also appreciates the importance of building positive relationship between OVC and youths with their caregivers. From that perspective, to what extent does this RFA anticipate specific interventions targeting older caregivers of OVC/ youth as a way of promoting supportive and complementary intergenerational relationships?

USAID Response: The primary strategy to achieve improved child outcomes is to strengthen parents and caregivers so they can provide for their children's basic needs. This is inclusive of older caregivers although no specific targets are set for reaching older caregivers. Baselines should help to determine the proportion of older caregivers in these geographic regions and whether or not interventions should target them to achieve greatest impact on child outcomes. More important- recipient is expected to use a household level approach to developing service packages that meet the needs of each household.

47. How much weight should the recipient give to advocacy and national policy influencing on issues of OVC and youths?

USAID Response: Recipient is expected to determine specific advocacy and policy issues to address. Support for national counterparts, including advocacy with national counterparts, may be provided on a limited basis, where implementation of activities at the local government level requires building the capacity from national level, national coordination, technical support supervision and policy dissemination among others. Recipient will also leverage and coordinate with the Health Advocacy program.

48. On Page 32 under Local Capacity Development (LCD) section. It statement that Activity management shall be structured to promote activities to enhance partners' technical and operational capabilities.....> Local partners shall include both government and non-governmental partners at the national and local government levels. Yet on Page 2, second paragraph say "This may result in sharply limiting USAID implementing partners' engagements with governmental authorities" Can please clarify the activity will work or not with government at the national level?

USAID Response: This should read as follows: Local partners shall include both government and non-governmental partners at the national and local levels. The recipient should consider working with both government and non-government local partners with the understanding that no funds can be transferred directly to GOU and that the activities must be flexible and responsive to changing political climate. Furthermore, work with government is acceptable, and partnerships at the local government level are recommended.

49. Page 4 of the RFA says, "In the North...approximately 8 percent of children attend secondary school. Enrollment in secondary school education is also alarmingly low – approximately 17%. Can USAID please clarify which figure is correct, 8% or 17%?

USAID Response: this should read: "In the North...approximately 8 percent of children attend secondary school, while the national enrollment in secondary school education is also alarmingly low – approximately 17%.

50. Page 14 - Is the remark regarding the delayed formation of savings groups under IR1.2 apply only destitute families? Or also to "struggling to make ends meet" under IR1.3 as well?

USAID Response: Delayed formation of savings groups refers to the need to have a critical mass of beneficiaries to start a new cohort. Savings groups, farmer field schools, and other group-based income generation activities, etc. shall only be initiated when the activity identifies a critical mass of beneficiaries, or can otherwise justify working with a new cohort. This approach is good practice should be applied as appropriate.

51. Page 31 - at what level should the activities currently being implemented under SUNRISE, PIN, and SCORE be budgeted at when they are assumed by this project?

USAID Response: The recipient will budget for implementing interventions for OVC in all 13 focus districts selected. In focus districts where SUNRISE, SCORE or PIN are currently serving OVC, the recipient will coordinate implementation in sub counties not served by current programs. As current programs end, recipient will provide services to those OVC that have not reached graduation, based on the nationally accepted Vulnerability Index. Strategies for coordinating with current program will be further developed during this activity's early inception and start-up phase as it conducts and reviews findings from needs assessments for OVC and vulnerable youth. The baseline study, needs assessments, and project evaluations from SUNRISE, PIN and SCORE will determine which activities should be assumed by the project, when and at what cost.

52. Page 31 - are the quarterly reports to be submitted to the districts (p31) the same as those to be submitted to USAID (p59)? Or is the implementer expected to produce two sets of quarterly reports?

USAID Response: The recipient is expected to develop a complete quarterly report for USAID and then determine what parts of that report are suitable for the districts.

53. The RFA defines the target population of children as 10-18 years old (versus the Ugandan definition of 12-30 years). Besides making coordination of data difficult (2 definitions in use), in IR 3.3 there is mention of "adolescents" as the target population. Can USAID please define adolescents for the purposes of this RFA as well as provide some clarity as to how program data (which is incomplete as per GOU standards and therefore is the basis for resource allocations for OVCs and services) can be reconciled?

USAID Response: For the purpose of this RFA children are persons 0-18 years old as defined by the international community. This is the age range to be used when planning child-specific interventions. Youth are defined as members of an OVC household between the ages of 10-29 years. As defined in the USAID Youth in Development Policy, adolescents are defined as 10-19 year olds (10-14 early adolescence and 15-19 adolescence). Data on project beneficiaries reported to PEPFAR must be disaggregated by Sex & Age: Male <1, Male 1-4, Male 5-9, Male 10-14, Male 15-17, Male 18+; Female <1, Female 1-4, Female 5-9, Female 10-14, Female 15-17, Female 18+. Youth data collection should include age brackets 18-24 and 25-29

If the Recipient wishes to collect additional data on other age categories or disaggregate data further, this is permissible. However, this additional data is not required by PEPFAR. Furthermore, the recipient will carry out activities to strengthen OVC MIS which is under review to include age cohorts and HIV indicators.

54. The goal statement of the program is: “to improve well-being of children and youth orphaned and made vulnerable (*italics added*) by HIV and other adversities...”. The structure of the statement would indicate that the target population is limited to orphans, which is but a sub-set of the entire OVC population. Please affirm that this program is directed at all OVCs, not just orphans.

USAID Response: Based on PEPFAR guidance for OVC Programming 2012 – This should read: The intended beneficiaries of PEPFAR programs as defined in the Hyde-Lantos Act include “Children who have lost The legislation further states that PEPFAR strategies should be guided by an analysis of...(I) factors contributing to children’s vulnerability to HIV/AIDS; and (II) vulnerabilities caused by the impact of HIV/AIDS on children and their families.” In addition the Hyde-Lantos Act stipulates the need in “areas of higher HIV/AIDS prevalence, to promote a community-based approach to vulnerability, maximizing community input into determining which children participate.” a parent to HIV/AIDS, who are otherwise directly affected by the disease, or who live in areas of high HIV prevalence and may be vulnerable to the disease or its socioeconomic effects.”

55. Further, the RFA asks that we “identify... indicators to demonstrate a positive shift for OVC programs focusing on more meaningful desirable human as well as institutionally-oriented outcome and system development conditions (rather than simply outputs...”. While we understand that this program will take more of a sustainable systems approach to OVC programming and services, this statement seems to indicate that the recipient will be responsible for re-steering other programs (from other donors), and that the result of our program will be better implemented programs by others. Can USAID please comment on what level of effect on the operating environment occupied by others is expected?

USAID Response: This statement simply refers to the requirement for the recipient to identify age disaggregated outcome indicators that reflect the holistic nature of the OVC program rather than simple output and count indicators. If and where necessary to meet project goals, the recipient will be expected to advocate for and support others to focus on more meaningful desirable human as well as institutionally-oriented outcome and system development conditions

The statement could be modified to the following: The recipient will identify age disaggregated outcome indicators to demonstrate a positive shift for OVC from vulnerabilities. Outcome indicators should measure meaningful change at the human, institutional and system levels

56. Under Child Safeguarding USAID has wisely stipulated that we have in place Risk Mitigation and Contingency Plans to monitor and prevent child abuse by “activity personnel”. Please clarify whether this surveillance extends down to grantees or just to Award personnel.

USAID Response: Child safeguarding policies should extend to grantees

57. USAID suggests that the Recipient utilize SAVIX as the database system for tracking savings and loan operations. Since SAVIX can handle more than one project now (that it is web-based), does USAID envisage a separate SAVIX MIS for the program or can the Recipient utilize existing SAVIX platforms in place?

USAID Response: The Recipient is expected to use the platform/system most appropriate for programming and provide justification to support the selection of the appropriate platform/system.

58. Under IR 1.1 the RFA stipulates that cash transfers be geared towards monitoring conditions so that graduation can occur (cash transfers no longer “needed” and will be monitored by the illustrative indicator “value of consumption”). Does USAID have pre-determined standards based on income levels? Should we use the SAGE decile consumption matrix? And which condition shall hold precedent – a measure of need or the one-year limitation on support?

USAID Response: Language under 1.1 has been modified.

The recipient will not provide direct cash transfers but will ensure linkages with established social assistance or cash transfer programs for ‘destitute’ families of OVC. Direct assistance should be provided only as one part of a comprehensive social protection system. Any direct assistance must be time-limited and beneficiaries should be transitioned to other economic strengthening activities as soon as possible but no later than a period of one year. Recipient can use SAGE decile consumption matrix to measure progress to graduation.

USAID does not have pre-determined standards based on income levels. The applicant should take into account graduation criteria used by current programs such as Score. The applicant should also review literature on graduation models of economic strengthening such as Hashemi & de Montesquiou, 2011- graduation model developed by Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee. Also review the Guidance for OVC programming July 2012 - Focus is on achieving household economic strengthening so that parents and caregivers can provide for children’s basic needs, rather than rely on external assistance. Success is measured by a family’s ability to invest in education, nutrition and health of the children they care for. Applicants should justify standards selected to determine when cash transfers are no longer needed

59. IR 1.1 seems to indicate that cash transfer will not be direct but through the Savings and Loan Associations (and we assume that where these do not exist an equivalent type of association, formal or not, can be used). The use of S&L for injections will distort their books, since they live on the margin between interest given for savings and the interest collected from loans. This may distort SAVIX data. We would request that cash injections not be included in SAVIX since this is a temporary distortion and is an externality to their operations.

USAID Response: The recipient will not provide direct cash transfers but will ensure linkages with established social assistance or cash transfer programs for ‘destitute’ families of OVC. Linkages to Direct assistance should be one part of a comprehensive social protection system. Cash transfers should not be channeled through or injected into Savings and Loan Associations. However, if Savings and Loan Associations wish to generate funds to support cash transfers for families living in destitution through social funds, this is permissible.

60. We note that the target districts for this program are the same as many of the target districts for Feed the Future (including Community Connector and Nutrition programs, though not as much for Value Chains, which would be a source of livelihood for many). To what extent does USAID envisage collaboration with Feed the Future (especially in light of the different funding sources in play), which would be a natural synergy with IR 1.3?

USAID Response: Funding source for this program is PEPFAR OVC earmarked funds. The recipient must seek out opportunities for integration with other health/HIV/AIDs treatment and care services as well as linkages with other programs and sectors as appropriate.

61. Under IR 1.3 there is an illustrative indicator of value of... income, especially during the lean season". While the hungry season as traditionally been defined as April through June, recent data seems to indicator that changes in water fall and temperature may be extending that period back towards February and March. Please provide guidance on the definition of "lean season" we should use, since some livelihood programming timing may be influenced by a changing agricultural cycle.

USAID Response: Applicants should define "lean season" according to criteria they consider most appropriate. Applicants should provide justification for criteria.

62. Throughout the RFA mention is made of the district (L5 and its ministry embeds) as the primary local government partner. Since some OVC programming naturally comes to this level, there are niches that can be played at lower levels, even down to L1 and 2, such as where savings and loan associations exist. May we assume that the program can build capacity at lower governmental levels as needed in furtherance of program objectives?

USAID Response: yes the recipient can plan capacity building activities at lower governmental levels as needed to achieve objectives.

63. Under IR3.2 (Early Childhood Development) we must recognize that the presence of Nodding Syndrome produces permanent stunting and other disorders. The cause and cure are unknown but its victims are within the target population. Should we disaggregate EDC data for Nodding so as not to distort the data for factors at somewhat under program control?

USAID Response: Recipient must determine the most robust way of collecting and analyzing data as well as monitoring activities.

64. Please provide a breakdown of the different funding sources for this program so that we can balance our proposed indicators among the illustrative indicators of the RFA, the CDCS, PEPFAR and the Children in Adversity indicators.

USAID Response: Sole funding source is PEPFAR OVC earmark funds

65. If there are different funding sources, what will be the monitoring/ evaluation and reporting requirements for each?

USAID Response: the recipient will follow USAID and PEPFAR monitoring, evaluation and reporting policies and guidelines.

66. Under 4 Activity Monitoring and Evaluation the solicitation says that much of the key baseline data may be collected from current efforts (we assume this refers to all of the other organizations doing OVC work in N/E Uganda). While this can provide some information on OVCs, the systemic change nature of this program requires some in-depth analysis of capabilities and competencies, and levels of coordination in order to develop new models for service delivery coordination. Does USAID have a specific amount (or percentage) as a ceiling that we may allocate to an initial and rolling baseline?

USAID Response: The program should set aside a minimum of 10% of funding for M&E inclusive of the baseline data collection and analysis.

67. Can USAID project when the OVC Research and Evaluation partner will be selected and started, since their role will be tied to the evaluation questions that are needed to inform our baseline and M&E system to complement the evaluation and operational research process?

USAID Response: Working on concurrent awards, but expected no later than second quarter of FY15

68. Can USAID explain why the program's initial mobilization plan is to be included as part of the M&E Annex (limited to 5 pages)? Can this be done as a separate annex?

USAID Response: RFA has been amended. Yes, the Mobilization Plan can be included as Annex VII.

69. While we understand the need for the MEL Director to have skills in MS Office (including Excel and Access), can USAID please explain why the use of SAS or SPSS is a requirement for the position? There are other data management programs besides SAS or SPSS and some may be more appropriate for monitoring as well as increasing capacity of local partners. The use of these particular statistical programs would seem to fall to the OVC Evaluation partner.

USAID Response: The MEL Director will be required to work closely with the OVC Evaluation Partner to support project evaluation and research and is responsible for robust monitoring of all activities to ensure that the evidence base continues to grow and to inform better practice. With justification, the Recipient may design and directly manage innovative operational research and special, rapid studies to inform programming. However, these studies must be undertaken by qualified researchers, under the supervision of the MEL Director, and in coordination with the OVC Evaluation Partner. Candidates for this position must be experienced using statistical software. If proposing alternative software or a candidate familiar with alternative software, please provide justification.

70. In the Application Instructions, sections for description of M&E appear in both the Management section (f)(iii) that is limited to a total of 9 pages, and as a separate appendix (Annex 2) that shall not exceed 5 pages. The information requested in the former is very specific. Will USAID grant some flexibility in how we describe M&E in these two sections in order to make a logical presentation?

USAID Response: F(iii) will focus on the management structure to carry out M&E, while Annex 2 will focus specifically on a draft activity M&E plan

71. On page 20, IR 2.2, illustrative indicator 4 reads “Number of sectors leveraging resources for OVC households through public poverty eradication programs such as the National Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF) and Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization (SACCOs).” Could USAID define “sectors” in relation to the IR 2.2?

USAID Response: The sectors referenced in this illustrative indicator can include any sectors responsible for programming to support OVC and their households. Recipient should also look at district level departments such as education, health, production, community based services to leverage resources.

72. Page 5 mentions that the SUNRISE project conducted a mapping activity in 2011. Could USAID please share the results of this and other similar mapping exercises or compilations of potential CSO partners?

USAID Response: link to SUNRISE community mapping: <http://www.mglsd.go.ug/ovcmis/home.php?linkvar=Mapping%20Categories&&action=National%20Reports>

73. Please confirm that the assessment of child abuse risks, the gender analysis, and the risk assessment mentioned on pages 10-11 are not required as part of the initial proposal submission.

USAID Response: Correct assessment is not required for initial proposal submission.

74. Page 20 notes that “the SUNRISE project identified promising strategies for increasing funding for child and youth programming at the local government level and coordinated with other partners to develop and Issues Paper to advocate for increased funding and an expanded workforce nationwide.” Could USAID please share this paper?

USAID Response: This Issues Paper is available online at <http://www.socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/strengthening-human-resources-and-financing-child-care-and-protection-services>

75. Page 21 mentions a curriculum to train CDOs that was developed under SUNRISE. Could USAID please share this curriculum?

USAID Response: Curriculum sample listed under Section IX as Attachment M. I

76. The RFA has a strong focus on building clinical linkages. So would it be an allowable expense if we include in our budget a district health worker who facilitates service delivery or a welfare officer?

USAID Response: Recipient is not providing services at facility level, therefore hiring of district health worker is not needed. Recipient must develop processes for referrals and linkages to programs providing services. This process could be more efficient if a focal person was identified at the service point – without having to hire a district health worker.

77. What is the source document for footnote 4 (Page 7)?

USAID Response: OVC burden was calculated by district using 2011 mid-year population estimates and OVC prevalence from 2009/2010 Uganda National Household Survey. The fertility rate is a 2012 estimate based on 2009/2010 Uganda National Household Survey.

78. On page 7 (footnote 4) the solicitation states that USAID intends to reach 367,187 OVC and youth. Please clarify if applicants are expected to follow PEPFAR/OVC indicator guidance to count “active” beneficiaries. Active beneficiary is defined as an individual

who has received program services in the last three months and who is scheduled to receive program services at least once every three months, as outlined in program guidelines or standards of practice. New beneficiaries who only registered in the last quarter will be counted as active, even if they have not yet received services. Partners will report on the number of beneficiaries on their “active” registries.

USAID Response: See response to question 38 above

79. On page 13 – under Result 1, the solicitation states “Other education and support initiatives shall ensure that families and caregivers have access to basic support and are able to access resources to meet important family needs.” Please confirm that this means that USAID does not expect applicants to include strategies to ensure that families and caregivers have access to basic support and are able to access resources to meet important family needs because this is already covered by other initiatives. We appreciate clarification on this point.

USAID Response: Recipient will include strategies to ensure that families and caregivers have access to basic support and are able to access resources to meet important family needs unless these needs are already covered by other initiatives.

80. On page 14, the solicitation states that “any direct assistance shall be small and infrequent to reduce fostering unnecessary dependency and distortion of productive incentives or behaviors.” Please confirm that an appropriate portion of project funds can be used to provide this type of support to beneficiaries.

USAID Response: USAID and PEPFAR guidance states that programs should focus on promotion of strengths and resources of family and community through household economic strengthening activities rather than focus on needs and deficits which lead to direct support activities. The Recipient is expected to facilitate beneficiaries that require direct assistance to access cash transfers/asset transfers through Social Funds; SAGE cash transfer program or other social protection schemes. Direct assistance should be the exception and not the norm. Decisions regarding direct assistance, how much to provide, how it will be provided, and who will receive direct assistance should be justified with data.

81. On page 14, the solicitation states that “any direct assistance shall be small and infrequent to reduce fostering unnecessary dependency and distortion of productive incentives or behaviors.” Please confirm if USAID expects these cash transfers/ assets transfers to be covered exclusively by Social Funds and SAGE cash transfer program or other social protection schemes.

USAID Response: See response to question 80 above.

82. On page 17, USAID requests that applicants incorporate lessons from “Better Fathers” project implemented in the North as part of the GREAT (Gender Roles Equality and Transformation) project. Can USAID share project reports or learning documents that could be used as reference?

USAID Response: The name of the Program is The Responsible Engaged and Loving (REAL) Fathers Initiative. Link - <http://irh.org/projects/real-fathers-initiative/>

83. On page 17, USAID requests that applicants incorporate lessons from projects implemented by BRAC Uganda aiming to empower vulnerable adolescent girls. Can USAID share project reports or learning documents that could be used as reference?

USAID Response: As appropriate, the Recipient should draw lessons and adapt tools and resources from similar activities in Uganda and other relevant contexts to identify best practices. BRAC was simply one example there may be others that the recipient can explore. Link to BRAC website <http://uganda.brac.net/>

84. On page 20, USAID mentions the Issues Paper that was produced by SUNRISE. Can USAID share a copy of this Issues Paper?

USAID Response: See response to question 74 above

85. On page 20, the solicitation states that “the recipient shall support financing for OVC, youth and their caregivers in all districts targeted by this activity. Can you please confirm that recipients are not expected to offer direct financing but rather help appropriate actors to advocate or build the evidence base for increased financing?

USAID Response: Correct – the recipient will help appropriate actors to advocate or build evidence base for increased financing.

86. On page 5 of the RFA, SUNRISE's 2011 mapping exercise of 2,000 civil society organizations offering services to OVC is mentioned. Can USAID make that document available? We have not been able to find it on the web.

USAID Response: See response to question 72 above

87. Footnote 6 on page 7 mentions certain age disaggregation groups which are slightly different than the groups mentioned at the bottom of page 45. Can USAID clarify?

USAID Response: The applicant will propose age appropriate interventions for the following age brackets for OVC children: <1, 1-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-17, 18+. For youth age brackets are 18-24, 25-29

Is the Recipient expected to work in all of the targeted districts on page 30? Does USAID expect that the 367,187 beneficiaries will be (roughly) equally divided between the Northern and Eastern regions?

USAID Response: The recipient is expected to work in all 13 districts listed for the northern and Eastern regions. The number of beneficiaries to be served by the project in each district should be determined once the baseline survey is complete. Estimates of OVC burden in each of the targeted districts are provided in Attachment J: Uganda Demographics for Target Districts - Eastern and Northern Uganda.

88. Food supplements are mentioned under IR 1.1 on page 14. Does USAID expect US commodities to be used, or is local and regional procurement allowed?

USAID Response: Consumption support interventions are direct transfers of resources, usually in the form of cash or food supplements, to families to support basic needs of household members, particularly children. USAID does not expect consumption to be used as the norm. Rather USAID and PEPFAR guidance states that programs should focus on promotion of strengths and resources of family and community through household economic strengthening activities rather than focus on needs and deficits which lead to direct support activities. The Recipient will not provide direct cash transfers to destitute families but is expected to facilitate beneficiaries that require direct assistance to access cash transfers/asset transfers through Social Funds, SAGE cash transfer program or other social protection schemes,

Direct assistance should be provided only as one part of a comprehensive social protection system. Any direct assistance must be time-limited and beneficiaries should be transitioned to other economic strengthening activities as soon as possible but no later than a period of one year.

89. Is the prime expected to provide sub-grants to CSOs as a part of project implementation?

USAID Response: YES

90. The RFA lists illustrative targets such as the number of children reached with various OVC services and suggests that the implementer will be held accountable for service delivery. Are we expected to deliver specific services that are typically outside of OVC programming (e.g. reproductive health services)? Or is the expectation to facilitate coordination and referral to services only?

USAID Response: Recipient should maximize opportunities through integration across the continuum of response through coordination, referral and follow up services.