Issuance Date: June 22, 2012

Subject: Amendment #01 to Request for Applications # **RFA-OAA-12-000024**

RFA Title: Development and expansion of economic assistance programs that fully utilize cooperatives and credit unions

The Purpose of Modification #01 to the above referenced RFA is as follows:

1. Make specific changes to the RFA document as per **SECTION A** below.
2. Provide responses to the questions that USAID received against RFA in **SECTION B** below.

SECTION A

1. On page #1, second paragraph **DELETE** "the President's Global Engagement Initiative".

2. On page # 8, under "Program Evaluation" third line of first paragraph **REPLACE** "Annex 'B'" with "Annex 'K'".

3. On page # 16, under SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION, PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND COST SHARE **DELETE** point #1 in its entirety and **REPLACE** with the following:

"Provide either a 20 percent cost share, or a combination of cost share and leveraged funds equal to not less than 40 percent of the project cost of which not less than 5 percent of the total cost must be in the form of a cost share. While the 20 percent cost share would not be changed if that is the choice of the applicant, USAID could consider different percentages for the leverage and cost share combination. The match, also referred to as cost-share, may be in cash, in-kind, or a combination of both. All cash and in-kind contributions committed by partner cooperatives and Cooperative Promotional Organizations (CPOs) must be documented;"

4. On page #20 under "2.2.1" **DELETE** the section in its entirety and **REPLACE** with the following:

"What are the intended results? These should be stated in terms that are observable and measurable. Examples are provided in Annexes F1 and F2."

5. On page # 21 **DELETE** "3.2.8 How will achieving these results contribute to cooperatives and their members?"

6. On page # 23, **DELETE** point #6 in its entirety and **REPLACE** with the following:

   "Your cost share must be either a 20 percent cost share, or a combination of cost share and leveraged funds equal to not less than 40 percent of the project cost of which not less than 5 percent of the total cost must be in the form of a cost share. While the 20 percent cost share would not be changed if that is the choice of the applicant, USAID could consider different percentages for the leverage and cost share combination. The match, also referred to as cost-share, may be in cash, in-kind, or a combination of both. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to provide the proposed match via letters of commitment for all non-USAID or private organizations involved in implementing the award. Such cost shares should be specified in terms of the total dollar amount and the specific amount per participant."

7. On page # 31, the last paragraph just before the table **DELETE** "up to a total of 35 points may be deducted…." And **REPLACE** with "up to a total of 33 points may be deducted…."

8. On page # 32 under "COST-SHARE EVALUATION**"** **DELETE** the entire paragraph and **REPLACE** with the following:

   "Your cost share must be either a 20 percent cost share, or a combination of cost share and leveraged funds equal to not less than 40 percent of the project cost of which not less than 5 percent of the total cost must be in the form of a cost share. While the 20 percent cost share would not be changed if that is the choice of the applicant, USAID could consider different percentages for the leverage and cost share combination. The match, also referred to as cost-share, may be in cash, in-kind, or a combination of both. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to provide the proposed match via letters of commitment for all non-USAID or private organizations involved in implementing the award. Such cost shares should be specified in terms of the total dollar amount and the specific amount per participant."

9. On page # 32 under "Application Elements" **DELETE** block # 10 of sub block **"**Applications should include" in its entirety.

Listing of all externally funded activities undertaken during the previous three years, with references who can provide assessment of performance	-2	*12.9*

10. On page # 32 under "Application Elements**"** **DELETE** sub block "Past Performance" And **REPLACE** with the following:

Past Performance		
Application fails to provide past performance reference and listing of up to three externally funded activities undertaken during the previous three years, with references who can provide assessment of performance	**-2**	

11. On page #32, in the second column "Priority" of the table **DELETE** the total "-35" and **REPLACE** with "-33".

12. On page # 32 under "Application Elements**"** **DELETE** block # 09 of sub block **"**Applications should include:" in its entirety and **REPLACE** with:

A tabulation of current CDP award objectives, their status at the time of preparing the application and anticipated status by completion of the award (August, 2015)	-2	*12.8*

13. On page # 39 under "Technical Application Summary Format" **DELETE** tables under point #10 &11 in their entirety and **REPLACE** with the following tables:

10. Requested First Year vs. Life of Program (LOP) Funding Distribution

	USAID $ Request	**Program Match**			
		Cost Share		Leverage	
		In-Kind	$	In-Kind	$
FY 2012					
Life of Project					

11. Requested Life of Program Funding Distribution by Country:

Location	**USAID $ Request**	**Program Match**				**Total $**
		Cost Share		Leverage		
		In-Kind	$	In-Kind	$	
Country (list)						
Total (Direct Costs)						
Indirect Costs						
Life of Project						

14. **ADD** "Annex K - Cooperative Development Program Evaluation" at the end of "Annex J".

15. **ADD** "Annex L – Guidance on Cost Sharing and Leveraging" at the end of "Annex K".

[END OF SECTION A]

SECTION B

USAID's responses to questions are in **blue color font.**

1. USAID is seeking "Alliances in support of cooperative development objectives" including "pilot project designs that would involve U.S. cooperatives in joint ventures and other alliances that contribute to development outcomes…" (p. 12). Such alliances often involve the sharing of proprietary and confidential information yet on p. 10 the RFA states that applicants are expected to "Provide a clear description of how the implementation results will be…disseminated within the broader cooperative and development communities." Can USAID provide further guidance on how proprietary and confidential information that may be collected and shared between alliance partners (e.g., business plans, market research, product innovations, detailed financial statements, etc.), and which may be critical to achieving meaningful cooperative alliances (including imports, exports, joint ventures), can be safeguarded while still meeting USAID reporting and knowledge management objectives?

   The RFA does not call for the details of any specific alliance. It requests applicants to propose ways in which they will identify the factors that would promote and inhibit US cooperatives from entering into mutually-beneficial business relationships with partner cooperatives in the emerging and developing economies as well as to describe strategies that would successfully promote such relationships and, if feasible, to propose how they would implement a pilot activity. As with other CDP challenges, the applicant is expected to describe their hypothesis and the way in which they will proceed to test that hypothesis. Should implementation lead to an actual activity, the details of that activity would not be the subject of dissemination. Rather, the approach taken to successfully promote cooperative-to-cooperative activity and the lessons learned in implementing that approach would be disseminated.

2. Page 10 of the RFA states that "activities may be carried out in any USAID-eligible country or countries (See Annexes 'H' and 'I')" yet Annex 'G' outlines a list of IDEA/LS priority countries and states that "For purposes of the Cooperative Development Program, the following countries should be considered as priorities". What are the implications on proposal evaluation and the likelihood of award funding for applications that focus on priority countries that are included in Annexes 'H' and 'I' but not in Annex 'G'?

   Please refer to the selection criteria that will be employed to evaluate applications (see RFA pp 27-31). Only these criteria will be used to evaluate applications.

3. Pages 9 and 10 of the RFA reference "USAID's priority strategies". Can USAID provide a reference to key USAID strategies that are considered priorities for the CDP program and RFA?

   Please see: http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/USAID_PolicyFramework.PDF

4. Given the time involved in a) securing a letter from the concerned Mission(s) (p. 16) and, more importantly, b) developing meaningful cooperative-to-cooperative alliances (including letters detailing cost-share contributions), would USAID consider extending the Closing Date for applications beyond July 13, 2012?

No extension of the time period is contemplated at this time.

5. The cover letter states at the top of page 3, “The full applications should be received by the mission (s)/bureau (s) no later than July 13, 2012.” The application timeline directly below this paragraph lists applications received by Missions/Bureaus on July 12, 2012. By which date should the application be submitted to the Mission/Bureau?

   It must be submitted prior to submission of the application as you must provide evidence that it has been sent.

6. On pg. 12, the RFA states that applicants are requested to “describe their approach to developing, documenting, employing and disseminating a cooperative development program design.” On page 16, the RFA says that applicants must “commit to develop, test and implement an approach.” Given the limited amount of funding available, what are USAID’s expectations about what it means to employ or implement a design or approach? At what scale?

   The premise of the Cooperative Development Program is that eligible applicants are cooperative development organizations whose major work involves the design, management and evaluation of projects and programs that focus on work with cooperatives. All of the issues addressed by the Cooperative Development Program are specifically designed to build the intellectual capital of our partners so that their work with cooperative development is more successful. Therefore the expectation is that you will develop an approach to the design of cooperative development activities, projects and programs not simply as a desk exercise, but as something that will become integral to your work as an organization.

7. Payment based on milestones is associated with Fixed Obligation Grants while advance payments are associated with cooperative agreements. Section 2.2.1 on page 20 of the RFA suggests payment based on milestones will be used with the CDP cooperative agreement. Please clarify if this is the case.

   Please see specific changes # 4 in <u>SECTION A</u> above.

8. The selection criteria on page 29 award points if: “Baseline data is provided for all key qualitative and quantitative results.” Does USAID expect applicants to conduct a baseline as part of developing their application?

   The baseline for the design challenge would be the approach to design presently employed. The baseline for cooperative-to-cooperative alliances would be critical performance results from any existing alliances that will be part of the proposed activity under the award. Neither should pose a problem to complete as part of the application process. More generally, it may be noted that the absence of baseline data is one of the flaws apparent in the current approach to design employed by some CDP participants.

9. Page 27 of the RFA says that for Past Performance purposes, applicants should “list up to three awards involving similar or related programs during the past three years with a brief statement.” The evaluation criteria on page 32 ask for a “listing of all externally funded activities undertaking during the previous three years, with references.” All externally funded activities for the past three years would be a very large number. Would USAID clarify how many past performance references it requires?

Please see specific changes # 9&10 in SECTION A above.

10. On page 32 of the RFA, it states that points will be deducted if a "listing of all externally funded activities undertaking during the previous three years, with references" is not included. Seven rows below, it states that points will be deducted if "past performance references are not provided." Could USAID explain the difference between these two evaluation criteria?

    Please see specific changes # 9&10 in SECTION A above.

11. In the event that a CDO offers an application of its own sponsorship and will also be participating in a collaborative application with other CDOs, does USAID contemplate that these applications will be submitted separately by that CDO, and that requirements such as the counterpart contribution and the standard certifications and forms are provided in each application? Or does each CDO submit a maximum of one application regardless of the number of (separate, unrelated) activities proposed?

    Please submit one application. If there are two components, clearly distinguish between the two. The counterpart contribution should represent 20 percent of the total funding requested. A single set of certifications may be provided.

12. For a collaborative application sponsored by OCDC's member CDOs that is not region or country-specific –

    a. Can funds that were allocated for previously-funded collaborative activities in the current 5-year CDP (e.g., IMPACT) which have not been utilized be applied to cover part of the cost of the newly proposed collaborative activity?

    This is not a question that can be answered hypothetically. Should the need arise, any approval would be based on consideration of the specifics involved within the context of regulations governing the reallocation of funds.

    b. Is there any requirement for USAID office concurrence? (this I don't think was the case for any of the prior collaborative activities)

    If the question relates to concurrence on the movement of funds between line items for a particular award, the standard regulations apply.

    c. Does the counterpart cost contribution apply? (considering that counterpart was not Included in previous collaborative activities- please correct me if I'm wrong about that)

    Earlier collaborative activities were part of the total application and were treated as part of the total budget of the applicant as negotiated and incorporated in their cooperative agreement. Therefore they were part of the cost sharing. The same will apply to a new award.

13. In the case that the application is for a design activity that is to result in the formation of some type of alliance, how are the issues discussed on pp. 11-13 to be treated?

If the question is “if the applicants merge the two issues, how are the individual issues to be treated”, the answer is that such an approach would miss the intention of the design issue by limited design to one element in a total project. Alliances may be treated as an element in a project design approach, but an approach to project design would extend well beyond that element. Therefore, the issues should be addressed individually.

14. I also wonder if there is any particular aspect of the gender implications element of the RFA that must be addressed in this application. I also presume that the security risk plan requirement is waived.

    Please refer to USAID standard regulations governing gender. It may be presumed that if developing an approach to cooperative development project design, these considerations would be incorporated – not because they are required, but because they would be important to a sound cooperative project. Similarly prudence on part of the applicants requires that they document plans to ensure the security of physical assets and personnel under the award.

15. The RFA on page 16 requires that applicants “Provide a letter from the concerned Mission/s approving the proposed field activities”. The RFA on page 3 sets out a schedule in which applications are to be received by Missions/Bureaus on July 12th or July 13th, while applications are due to the USAID/IDEA/LS on July 13th. RFA Annex I includes a “Cover Sheet for Submitting Application to Mission”, which envisions submitting a full application to the relevant USAID mission. It is therefore not clear whether or not a full application would include a letter from the concerned USAID Mission. Please clarify the USAID requirement for USAID Mission approval, including the timing for meeting such a requirement prior to, concurrent with, or after submission of the application to the USAID/IDEA/LS.

    First in accordance with page # 3 of RFA applicants must submit the application to any mission/s where the applicant proposes to undertake activities under a future award. In accordance with evaluation criteria evidence of submission should be included with the application and therefore must be submitted prior to submitting the application. Second, prior to final negotiation of an award, Mission approval must be received for any CDP-funded activity in that country. From the standpoint of ensuring Mission interest and support, applicants are urged to carry out discussions with any concerned missions well in advance of the deadlines.

16. The RFA on page 10 requires that applicants “propose an activity or activities that: (1) address a USAID priority as reflected in Bureau/Mission Operational Plans; (2) specify how the activity/ies will contribute to the Agency priority/Bureau or Mission Operational Plan; and (3) address one or both of the cooperative development challenges presented in this RFA”. Similarly, evaluation criterion 1.1 on RFA page 28 and evaluation criterion 6.1 on RFA page 29 require consistency with “Mission Operational Plan”. Please describe how applicants can access current USAID Mission Operational Plans.

    Using your search engine of choice, enter the following URL: Country Name.usaid.gov. If you cannot produce a result with this, try www.usaid.gov, click on “Where we Work” and then go to the country of interest. If you cannot find the information you need there, refer to the RFA Annex H which has contact information for the Missions and Desk Officers.

17. The RFA on page 14 states that "this award will be a cooperative agreement". The RFA on page 20 states that "funds will be released contingent on completion of milestones". Does USAID envision awarding a cooperative agreement or a fixed obligation grant?

    Please see specific changes # 4 in <u>SECTION A</u> above.

18. Please clarify the requirement on RFA page 22 for "letters of commitment". For a program that will establish an alliance, a joint memorandum of understanding (MOU) would be provided with the application. Please confirm that this would meet the requirement for letters of commitment.

    A joint memorandum of agreement is acceptable.

19. Please clarify evaluation criterion 12.8, which is dated May 2010.

    Please see specific changes # 12 in <u>SECTION A</u> above.

20. Please clarify how evaluation criteria category 9.0, "Alliances", would apply to applications made only towards the "design" key issue, and also if the 60 point threshold would apply to applications made only under the "design" key issue, given that evaluation criteria category 9.0, "Alliances", accounts for up to 15 evaluation points.

    Please note that alliances are not limited to those with cooperatives or businesses. They include alliances with other cooperatives and cooperative development organizations. Note the language on page # 30 under second block of "Alliances": *Proposal includes a significant activity with one or more other CDOs to address one or more of the key issues undertaken.*

21. Are we required to include a draft work plan in our application? Annex F (pg 57)

    No, only successful applicants who receive awards are required to prepare work plans.

22. Page 32 requires the following: "A tabulation of CDP extension objectives, status at the time of preparing the application and anticipated status by completion of the extension period (May, 2010)." Can you please confirm that this is not applicable?

    Please see specific changes # 12 in <u>SECTION A</u> above.

23. Page 32 requires "Listing of all externally funded activities undertaken during the previous three years, with references who can provide assessment of performance." Can you please confirm the scope of this, e.g. whether this is related to cooperative development programs or across the applicant organization?

    Please provide a list of up to three awards involving similar or related programs. Similar or related should be taken to mean cooperatives where working with cooperatives or similar types of collective enterprise are central to the activity. In the event no such awards have been undertaken, please provide contact information for up to three most similar awards that an applicant can identify.

24. Page 27 under Paste Performance indicates "listing up to three awards involving similar or related programs", while page 32 in the evaluation table indicates "listing all

externally funded activities" for the last 3 years. Could you clarify what the past performance requirements are for applicants.

Please see specific changes # 9&10 in SECTION A above.

25. How does the section on Impact (4.0) in the evaluation table on pg. 29 relate to applications responding to design challenges, as the language is very strong towards implementation?

Please indicate what you believe will be the positive, measurable impact/s of employing the design approach recommended.

26. Page 9, part 2c indicates applicants are required to include "strategies including objectives and implementation activities," also points 3 and 4 on p. 10, and the second point on page 16, indicates applicants must "commit to develop, test and implement an approach." To what degree are implementation activities anticipated from the Design component of the RFA.

The premise of the Cooperative Development Program is that eligible applicants are cooperative development organizations whose major work involves the design, management and evaluation of projects and programs that focus on work with cooperatives. All of the issues addressed by the Cooperative Development Program are specifically designed to build the intellectual capital of our partners so that their work with cooperative development is more successful. Therefore the expectation is that you will develop an approach to the design of cooperative development activities, projects and programs not simply as a desk exercise, but as something that will become integral to your work as an organization.

27. What is the anticipated time frame for applicants responding to the Design component of the RFA? Could design activities last for the full three year RFA period?

The time period available is three years. With appropriate justification, applicants could request a longer period or indicate their intention to complete the activity in a shorter period.

28. Page 16 says that applicants are required to submit a letter from missions "approving" proposed field activities, however the language on page 30 suggests that this is not necessary, and only requires that: "Evidence of transmittal to relevant USAID Missions is included. Mission concurrence, if available, should be provided with application or when received." Can you please clarify what is required?

Evidence of transmittal that should be provided with the application. Please do note that if the applicants proposes activities in one or more countries, it is strongly urged that they initiate discussions with the Mission/s concerned well in advance of submitting an application. Please also see the response to question # 15 above.

29. Page 16, Section III – Eligibility Information, Program Requirements and Cost share, 1.: (we) would welcome the opportunity to further expand other contributions for this program should USAID change the requirement from Cost Share to Leveraging. The intended purpose of the promotion of other resources and post-award sustainability for this specific program suggests that Leveraging would be much more appropriate for this

program. Furthermore, in accordance with ADS 303.3.10.2, Leveraging is preferred when USAID is looking to include resources that third-parties bring to the program without necessarily providing them to the recipient. These parties may include the host government, private foundations, businesses or individuals.

RFA has been amended to include both cost share and leverage, please see specific changes # 3, 6, 8&15 in SECTION A above.

30. The RFA states on page 2 that "the applicant must send a copy of its application to the respective USAID country mission" and on page 3 "the full applications should be received by the missions/bureau no later than July 13, 2012." Please clarify if it is sufficient to send an electronic copy to the missions by July 13 and show proof of courier transmission sent by July 13.

    While this would suffice for the purposes of the application, it would ignore the opportunity as well as the importance of engaging Missions in discussions of the proposed activity. Please do note that no activity in a country will be approved in the final award without Mission concurrence. Please also see the response to question # 15&28 above.

31. For the Program Design component of the RFA, is it acceptable to carry out activities (data collection and analysis, needs assessments, etc.) to develop a program design methodology for future program implementation (i.e. not implemented in the field during this activity)?

    Yes. The goal is to develop and document an approach to cooperative development program design.

32. Page 16 of the RFA states that the applicant must "provide a letter from the concerned mission/s approving the proposed field activities." If we are not able to obtain this letter before proposal submission, will mission concurrence be accepted at a later date?

    Mission concurrence is required prior to the final award, Please also see the response to question # 15, 28&30 above.

33. Will the RFA support the promotion of South-South cooperative development alliances?

    Yes, but the emphasis in this is clearly for alliances that engage U.S. cooperatives in mutually-beneficial business relationships with emerging and developing economy cooperatives.

34. The text on page 3 of the RFA states that the full applications should be received by the mission(s)/bureau(s) no later than July 13. The Application Timeline on page 3, however, states that Applications are received by Missions/Bureaus by July 12. Can USAID please clarify the deadline for applications to be received by Missions/Bureaus and by USAID DC?

    Please see the response to question # 15, 28&30 above.

35. In case an applicant proposes a global or regional approach to whom should the application be sent to? Can USAID provide the contact information for various bureaus and regional offices as Annex H only includes contacts for USAID Missions?

    If this is your intention, please contact thcarter@usaid.gov to describe the nature of what you are proposing and he will provide appropriate contact points.

36. Page 1 of the RFA lists one of the USAID Priorities as the President's Global Engagement Initiative. Can USAID please clarify what this initiative is?

    Please see specific changes # 1 in SECTION A above.

37. Will USAID consider programs in countries other than those listed on the priority list in Annex G?

    Yes.

38. Can USAID please confirm the circumstances under which the Mission/Bureau deliveries are required? Is a Mission/Bureau delivery required only if the proposed project will have an on-the-ground presence in the country/region?

    Yes.

39. The RFA references not conducting programming non-USAID eligible countries. Please provide a list of such countries, with particular interest in the Latin American region.

    There is not an official agency list as country eligibility may change depending on the legislation and USF foreign policy. Likely non eligible countries are:
    North Korea, Cuba, Syria and Iran.

40. On pg. 8, the RFA states that Annex B includes a description of the CDP Program Evaluation. Annex B is the Technical Application Summary Format. Could USAID provide this description?

    Please see specific changes # 2&14 in SECTION A above.

41. On pg. 8, the RFA states that the full list of recommendations from the FY2009 program evaluation of the CDP is annexed. However, it was not attached to the solicitation. Could USAID provide it?

    Please see specific changes # 14 in SECTION A above.

42. On page 17, the RFA states, "The applicant should submit two copies, one original unbound application and one bound copy." How should the unbound copy be held together? Is a 3-ring binder sufficient for a bound copy or would USAID prefer a spiral binding?

    The purpose of the unbound application is to permit duplication. Therefore a three-ring binder or strong, removable clips are preferred.

43. In the Technical Application Outline, 3.2.6 states "How will achieving these results benefit cooperatives and their members, and on what scale?" and 3.2.8 asks "How will achieving these results contribute to cooperatives and their members?" Could USAID provide the distinction between these two questions (other than the mention of scale)? How would an applicant's answer to 3.2.6 and 3.2.8 be different?

    Please see specific changes # 5 in SECTION A above.

44. On page 31 the link to get more information on a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan does not work. Can USAID please provide the correct link to the page with additional information on the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan?

    Please try: http://transition.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf.

45. The links to planning matrices at the bottom of page 40 do not work. Could USAID provide examples of planning matrices?

    You are welcome to use the search engine you prefer to find planning matrices as examples. The following are provided:

    http://www.fao.org/docrep/V9741E/v9741e09.htm
    http://www.methodfinder.net/index.php?page=methods&methodID=15
    http://www.wau.boku.ac.at/fileadmin/_/H81/H811/Skripten/811332/811332_G3_log-framehandbook.pdf
    http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/guide/annexb/index.htm
    http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/Toolkit-files/08-58296_tool_10-3.pdf
    http://www.knowledgeplanning.com/logicalframework.pdf
    http://www.toolkitsportdevelopment.org/html/resources/2A/2A049D5E-E038-4FFB-B9B9-93A34FF55F5E/08%20Logical%20Framework.pdf
    http://www.gdrc.org/ngo/logical-fa.pdf

    None of these are endorsed by USAID. Almost all logical framework matrices suffer from the weakness that the focus of attention, the lines between the boxes, are often ignored or simply consigned to an assumptions column.

46. There appears to be no reference to Annex J in the RFA. Could USAID explain its significance?

    Appendix "J" presents a typology of values with brief descriptions of their variations between Progress Prone and Progress Resistant societies. It may be that some of the value sets are relevant to cooperation and would therefore potentially find a place within an approach to the design of cooperative development projects. Please note that the typology presented is but one of many.

47. The RFA states that only MS Word and MS Excel files will be accepted. As signatures are required on the cover pages, certifications and assurances, and SF 424s, can these be submitted in PDF format?

    Pages requiring signatures can be provided as PDF files.

48. Could USAID confirm that the Letters of Commitment required as part of the cost application are the same as the "letters of agreement/understanding from each proposed partner cooperative or promotional organization that confirm that the partner has participated in developing and concurs with the implementation plan as well as specifying the financial and in-kind resources that it has committed to the partnership" listed under Concurrences in the selection criteria?

    Yes, Letters of commitment and other forms of agreement mean the same thing provided that they confirm the partner/s having participated in the planning, concurs with the implementation plan and includes specification of respective commitments, roles and responsibilities.

49. In the Cost Application Guidelines on page 23, point 7 asks Applicants without a current NICRA to submit additional Evidence of Responsibility. Would USAID confirm that only applicants without a NICRA need to submit additional evidence of responsibility?

    Yes, the requirement applies only to applicants without a current NICRA.

50. Within the Cost Application Guidelines on page 24, there is no section "D" between sections C and E. Is this a formatting error or was a section accidentally omitted?

    It is confirmed that this is a formatting error.

51. After the last RFA, our organization received back comprehensive comments on our application. We made the indicated changes. However the award was not increased to reflect the fact that we had made the changes?

    If each time an applicant responded to suggested improvements the award were increased, that could become an almost endless process. It would also create the possibility for unfair competition. The Technical Evaluation Committee does its best to evaluate each application as well as to communicate the strengths and weaknesses of each. It is expected that the feedback will be acted on. But the decisions of the TEC are final. However, feedback is important and we try to do our best to communicate what we see as strengths and weaknesses and hope you will incorporate these as you go forward. From the OAA perspective, the feedback is seen as a way to help you to become a better competitor the next time you apply.

52. The RFA states that the Agency anticipates awarding between four and 12 awards. Are those the lower and upper limits?

    No. They are simply an estimate. There could be fewer than four awards or more than 12. For this RFA, the TEC will evaluate each application on its own merits, not in relation to a potential minimum or maximum number of awards.

53. When addressing the Cooperative Development Design issue in the RFA, may the applicants also include producer associations, pre-cooperatives and similar groups?

    From the standpoint of the Cooperative Development Program, there is the assumption that there are unique elements that distinguish cooperatives from other forms of organization. The principles may differ. For example the International Cooperative

Alliance, the Raiffeisen cooperatives, the US Department of Agriculture all differ in describing their view of cooperatives. But there is commonality in relation to ownership, control and distribution of benefit and the reliance on mutual self-help are all central to cooperation regardless of the form. There are producer associations and pre-coops that may or may not operate in ways that are consistent with those elements. And donors have a tendency to create these organizations to pursue their own goals, a process that undermines the centrality of member-ownership and control, not to mention that of mutual self-help. If you want to include organizational forms other than cooperatives you would need to argue convincingly that the essential elements of that organization are consistent with the essential elements of cooperation and that the groups are not created to meet the goals of an outside entity but by and for the members themselves to meet their own goals.

54. If we currently have CDP activity in country may we expand our work there. If we are not working in a specific country, may we include an activity there, either on our own or in collaboration with another applicant?

    The bottom line is the requirement that you provide a sound rationale for wherever you propose to work. The TEC might agree with that rationale or not so it is difficult to answer a hypothetical question. Almost everything depends on our making a strong, rational, clear case for the choices you make. And your choices and their rationale will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria.

55. On page 12 applicants are requested to work with at least one other applicant. Is this a requirement or do you just gain or lose points depending on whether you do collaborate or not?

    The RFA is clear that you must propose to work with at least one other applicant on at least one issue. Please refer to page 16 of RFA where it says “must”.

56. This RFA calls for a project length of up to three years. If we speculate that there might be another RFA next year. Would that be for two years? And if there is a subsequent one would it be for one year?

    That is a hypothetical question we can’t really address. Should a subsequent RFA prove necessary, a decision on the time frame would be taken on its merits.

[END OF SECTION B]

END OF MODIFICATION #01 to the RFA # RFA-OAA-12-000024