USAID | SOUTH SUDAN
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES

Issue Date:	**June 14, 2023**
Concept Notes Submission Deadline:	**June 26, 2023, 11:59 pm Central African Time (CAT).**

SUBJECT: Amendment 01 to Call for Concepts Notes (Notice of Funding Opportunity - NOFO Number 72066823RFA00001

Activity Title: Tamkeen (an Arabic word meaning Empowerment)

USAID/South Sudan is issuing Amendment 01 to the subject NOFO. The purpose of this amendment is to make changes in Section C, D and E. Also changes to Attachment 01 will be reflected.

Details of the amendment are as described in the following page.

Sincerely,

Kevin M Sampson (affiliate) Digitally signed by Kevin M Sampson (affiliate) Date: 2023.06.16 10:35:11 +02'00'
Kevin Sampson
Agreements Officer
USAID/South Sudan

Attachments:
Attachment 1.1 – Amendment
Attachment A-Questions and Answers
Attachment B-Slides from Local Partners Capacity Building Session
Attachment C-Slides from virtual Pre-solicitation conference
Attachment D-List of participants to Virtual Pre-solicitation Conference.

Attachment 1.1

The NOFO is hereby amended as follows:

1. Under **Section C Eligibility Information,** page 27, Delete **part III Other (i)** in its entirety and replace with

i)" If the applicant proposes to partner with other organizations through sub-awards, it should present a clear structure in terms of roles and responsibilities of each sub-recipient, lines of authority, and managerial decision-making process. Resources should be shared among the sub-recipients based on their contributions to the program."

2. Under **SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION,** page 28 to 31, Delete it in its entirety and replace with;

I. Agency Point of Contact
Michael Loro
A&A Specialist
Office of Acquisition and Assistance
USAID South Sudan
mloro@usaid.gov and Awad Bako A&A Assistant abako@usaid.gov

II. Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted via email to: Awad Bako at

abako@usaid.gov with a copy to Michael Loro at mloro@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the Cover Letter, as amended. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

III. General Content and Format of Concept Papers Submission

a) OVERVIEW

The application process for the Tamkeen Activity will happen in five phases:

1. Concept Note Submission

2. Concept Note Review

3. Oral Presentation

4. Co-creation

5. Full Proposal Submission

USAID/South Sudan will be responsible for the review of Concept Notes and Full Application and management of any subsequent awards issued under this activity. Additional information about each phase of the Application and Review process is provided below.

Phase 1: Eight Page Concept Notes Submission

The Applicant should ONLY submit the information and materials specified and email the document to mloro@usaid.gov with a copy to abako@usaid.gov with the file name saved as: "**CONCEPT NOTE – NOFO No. 72066823RFA00001**".

The format and style of the submission shall follow the following guidelines:

- USAID will not review any pages in excess of the 8-page limit noted in the NOFO. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.
- Written in English.
- Use standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12-point Calibri font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers.
- a 10-point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables, however, must comply with the 12-point requirement.
- Submitted via PDF formats.
- **Concept Note Content:** Applicants must follow the format provided as **Attachment 1** to this NOFO.

Content above eight pages (excluding the cover page and supporting information) will not be reviewed. Concept Notes submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed.

After a Concept Note is received, USAID/South Sudan reserves the right to request supplementary information or pose clarifying questions to any Applicant. Requesting supplementary information or posing clarifying questions to one Applicant does not obligate USAID to do so with all Applicants, nor does it guarantee invitation to submit a full application.

Phase 2: Concept Notes Review

The submission will be reviewed in accordance with the merit review criteria under Section E and will be considered for further consideration after USAID's determination of meeting eligibility requirements and review criteria.

The purpose of the initial review and related communication is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further discussions regarding the proposed approach and activities. The initial review and communication will result in one of two outcomes:

- A decision to forego further consideration of the approach proposed in the Concept Note.
- An invitation for an oral presentation in Phase 3

Phase 3: Oral Presentation

The applicant(s) with successful **oral presentations** will be invited to participate in Phase 4 of the solicitation process.

Phase 4: Co-Creation Process (Shared Responsibility, Collaboration, and Communication)

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/South Sudan will invite the most highly qualified Concept Note and Oral Presentation applicant(s) to engage in a round of co-creation with USAID/South Sudan prior to submission of full applications. The aim of the co-creation phase is to further define activity objectives, design interventions and align timelines. Through discussions, both the applicant(s) and USAID/South Sudan may identify additional resources, partners, or strategies necessary to successfully implement the activity. This process may involve extensive discussions with USAID Mission staff or other experts, within or outside of USAID. Co-creation may happen in-person or virtually, through video conference, and phone calls.

By applying to the Tamkeen Activity opportunity, Applicants agree to allow USAID/South Sudan the right to share Concept Notes and Oral Presentation materials with appropriate external partners for the purposes of evaluation or co-creation. All parties privy to the contents of submitted Concept Notes and Oral Presentations, whether within or outside of USAID, will be required to keep contents in confidence.

If an Applicant does not succeed at the co-creation phase, the process ends for that Applicant.

If USAID/South Sudan decides to continue with the proposed activities following the co-creation phase, USAID/South Sudan may request a Full Application from Applicants, inclusive of all modifications, expansions, discussions, etc. resulting from the co-creation phase and will provide a Full Application template for completion. If co-creation results in a mutually acceptable concept, USAID will request a Full Application.

For more information on co-creation and its design approaches, see

https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/co-creation-discussion-note-ads-201

Phase 5: Full Proposal Submission

USAID/South Sudan will only accept Full Applications from Applicants invited to continue in the application process. It is expected that Full Applications will expand upon their Concept Note and Oral Presentation, incorporating any discussions, ideas, plans, feedback or changes from USAID/South Sudan and other partners discussed during the co-creation phase. The request for application will have further details on that process. **Note: USAID/South Sudan's Request for a full application should not be interpreted as a commitment of funds.**

USAID's Agreement Officer will engage in a final review, award negotiation, responsibility determination, cost/price evaluation, and other steps as needed prior to award. USAID may request additional information from the Applicant(s) concerning its technical approach, organizational capacity, management structure and past performance, cost application and representations and certifications. USAID may cancel the negotiation(s) and award process at no cost to the Government.

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM Registration

Applicants must obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and register in the System for Award Management (SAM) (https://sam.gov/) in order to be eligible to receive federal assistance, such as grants and cooperative agreements. Unless an exemption applies (see ADS 303maz), applicants must be registered in SAM prior to submitting the Stage 5 application for award for USAID's consideration. Recipients must maintain an active SAM registration while they have an active award. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or entity that is exempted from UEI/SAM requirements under 2 CFR 25.110) is required to:

1. Provide a valid UEI for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients.
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its final application.
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency.

Note that the registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video, on https://sam.gov/.

For the Concept Paper stage, USAID will accept submission without UEI.

[END OF SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION]

4. Under **SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION, pages 32 to 32,** Delete it in its entirety and replace with:

I. Review of Concept Notes

Once a Concept Note has been submitted in response to this opportunity, USAID will conduct an initial review of the Concept Note using the criteria outlined in the Merit Review Criteria and section below.

The purpose of the initial review and related communication is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further discussions regarding the proposed approach and activities. The initial review and communication will result in one of two outcomes:

- A decision to forego further consideration of the approach proposed in the Concept Note.

- An invitation to engage in an oral presentation, in-person or virtually.

After the oral presentation, USAID will inform Applicant(s) of one of two outcomes:

- The Applicant(s) is invited for more in-depth and specific co-creation discussions aimed at further developing the proposed approach and determining whether to request a Full Application.

II. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The concept will be reviewed by USAID Direct hire personnel against the eligibility criteria under section C and the merit review criteria under Section E. The decision to issue an award vest with the Agreement Officer.

III. CONCEPT PAPER MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

Any Concept Note submitted for this activity should propose an approach that satisfies these criteria and exhibits the characteristics set forth below. Concept Notes will be assessed according to the following merit review criteria using an adjectival rating system. *Very Good, Satisfactory, and Marginal.* Technical merit review criterion 1 is significantly more important than merit review criterion 2.

Criterion 1 - Technical Approach

- The extent to which the concept demonstrates a comprehensive viewpoint that shows innovations and approaches and lays out unique capability to achieving the results set forth in the Program Description.

- The extent to which the technical approach demonstrates how it will execute the objectives and achieve the expected results outlined in the Program Description. The concept must include enough specifics to demonstrate that the proposed approach is feasible and appropriate to the context and challenges to support children, adolescents, and families in the epidemic to improve HIV and health outcomes and reduce new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW).

Criterion 2 - Organizational Management and Staffing:

- Extent to which the management and staffing plan is sound and demonstrates managerial and technical ability to cost-effectively achieve the activity objectives.

- Extent to which the Applicant demonstrates experience and organizational capacity to accomplish the range of technical interventions described in the program description.

[END OF SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION]

5. Under **ATTACHMENT 1: CONCEPT PAPER TEMPLATE pages 37 to 38,** Delete it in its entirety and replace with:

Section I and II of your submission must not exceed five (8) pages (excluding cover page and supporting documentation) Submission must be in accordance with Section D.
The concept paper must be submitted to: mloro@usaid.gov with a copy to abako@usaid.gov

SECTION I – SUMMARY INFORMATION (Excluded from 8 Page Count)

A. NOFO Number and Title:

B. Proposed short and unique title of the activity.

C. Name and Contact Information of Applicant (POC Name, email and phone number)

D. Full Address of Applicant Organization.

E. Type of Organization. (e.g., US, non-US, multilateral, private, for-profit, non-profit)

F. List of Collaborating Organizations/Implementing Partners.

G. Total Amount of Funding Requested from USAID including $

H. Cost-share amount (if proposed) $_____

I. Proposed period of performance. (Number of years/months)

J. UEI number. _____

SECTION II – CONCEPT BODY (8 page maximum)

A. Concept Introduction: (Present a specific problem statement and development hypothesis)
B. Intervention Approach: (Present proposed solution/technical approach and basic implementation plan)

- Collaboration and Partnerships: (Identify strategic public and/or private sector partners and describe how you propose to work with them.)
- Cross-Cutting Issues integration: (Identify cross-cutting issues of youth, gender equity and women's empowerment specifically as it relates to your development hypothesis and proposed gender sensitive approach.)

C. Intervention results: (Identify tangible expected results of the program)
D. Management and Staffing Plan/Capacity (Discuss management plan and organizational capacity to meet objectives and accomplish technical approach)

SECTION III – SUPPORTING INFORMATION (Excluded from 8 Page Count but must not exceed 3 pages)
A. Management Structure: A graphic representation of the applicant's staffing and management structure.

[THE END OF ATTACHMENT 1: CONCEPT PAPER TEMPLATE]

[END OF AMENDMENT 01]