



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION No.: RFI-268-19-LDO-01

Issuance Date: October 30, 2019

Response Due Date: November 12, 2019; 5:00 PM Beirut, local time

Subject: Input into Planning for USAID/Lebanon Initiative to Deliver Essential Assistance and Services (IDEAS) and Water Sanitation and Conservation (WSC) Programming

The United States Government, represented by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Mission in Lebanon, is publishing this Request for Information in order to obtain information and input from all interested entities on two potential activities in Lebanon: Initiative to Deliver Essential Assistance and Services (IDEAS) and the Water, Sanitation, and Conservation (WSC). The information will be used to help make planning decisions and influence activity design to improve future development outcomes, and is published in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 10 and FAR 15.201(e).

This is an RFI, not a Request for Proposals (RFP), and is not to be construed as a commitment by the U.S. Government to issue any solicitation or ultimately award an agreement on the basis of this RFI, nor to pay for any information submitted as a result of this request, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any comments.

Any funding proposals submitted in response to this request will not be considered. Responses to this notice must be received by no later than the due date and time stated below in this notice. All information provided will become the property of USAID, will not be returned, and will not be released publicly. USAID reserves the right to use information provided by respondents for USAID's own purposes. Proprietary information must not be sent. USAID reserves the right to, or not to, incorporate any, some, or none of the comments received from this RFI into any subsequent solicitations or design documents.

It is the potential applicant's responsibility to monitor the site for the release of any further information. It should be noted that responding to this RFI will not give any advantage to any organization in any subsequent procurement. All types of organizations and firms are strongly encouraged to provide information/comments. Any information submitted in response to this notice is voluntary.

All responses must be submitted electronically in Annex 1 in English to Contracting Officer Amy McQuade at amcquade@usaid.gov and a copy to Joseph Kawal at jkawal@usaid.gov. Responses to this RFI will be accepted through November 12, 2019 at 5:00 PM Beirut local time. No basis for claims against the U.S. Government shall arise as a result of a response to this request for information or from the U.S. Government's use of such information. FAR Clause

52.215-3 REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR SOLICITATION FOR PLANNING PURPOSES (OCT 1997) is attached and made part of this RFI. USAID is not responsible for any costs incurred in responding to this RFI.

Thank you for your interest in USAID/Lebanon economic growth programs and we look forward to your comments.

Sincerely,
Amy McQuade
Supervisory Contracting/Agreement Officer

52.215-3 Request for Information or Solicitation for Planning Purposes (Oct 1997)

(a) The Government does not intend to award a contract on the basis of this solicitation or to otherwise pay for the information solicited except as an allowable cost under other contracts as provided in subsection 31.205-18, Bid and proposal costs, of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(b) Although “proposal” and “offeror” are used in this Request for Information, your response will be treated as information only. It shall not be used as a proposal.

(c) This solicitation is issued for the purpose of: “Requesting Comments” to the concept for a new program.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION No.: RFI-268-19-LDO-01
USAID/Lebanon Local Development Office

Background

The strategic focus of USAID/Lebanon's activities is to help Lebanon become stable and self-reliant in the long-term. Underpinning this strategic approach is the Mission's emphasis on creating more jobs through private sector engagement and more effective educational institutions as well as improving the delivery of essential services by strengthening public institutions, community capacity and management of key resources. In the latter instance, if essential public services are delivered in a more effective and self-reliant manner, then Lebanese communities will experience less competition and conflict over resources, an improved quality of life, and increased public confidence in governmental bodies. The burden of providing essential public services has shifted substantially from the central government to such sub-national entities as municipalities, regional water utilities, and non-governmental organizations. If these entities are capacitated to deliver these services more effectively, then USAID believes this will contribute to increased political stability and national resilience.

Although empowered by law to deliver many of these services, the vast majority of Lebanon's municipalities, particularly those in smaller and rural communities, lack the financial and human resources, as well as the technical capacity to fulfill this role. USAID believes that supporting municipal unions and other groups of municipalities may be an approach that can help overcome some of the aforementioned constraints. For example, municipal unions exhibit flexibility in how they are constituted. There are no constraints in the number of municipalities, geographic area, or population size that can constitute a union, and they can undertake joint projects that benefit all or some of its constituent members. These and other characteristics explain why municipalities have shown increased interest in forming municipal unions as a means of undertaking larger-scale projects and additional services. Under the proposed Initiative to Deliver Essential Assistance and Services (IDEAS), USAID is considering ways to incentivize groups of municipalities and communities to cooperate and collaborate to deliver essential services by pooling of scarce resources, leveraging economies of scale, and sharing private sector expertise and efficiency.

Lebanon faces similar service delivery problems in its water sector. Although the country typically receives sufficient rainfall to meet its needs, poor management of water resources has placed Lebanon on the list of strategic countries under the U.S. Water for the World Act. According to the 2012 National Water Sector Strategy (NWSS), less than 10 percent of wastewater receives adequate treatment prior to being discharged into the environment (rural areas are the most underserved). Agriculture, which consumes 70 percent of the country's water resources, is also depleting and polluting water resources. As a result of USAID and other donors' assistance, The Regional Water Establishments (RWE) evolved to facilitate more proactive strategic planning to improve services, reduce financial deficits, and utilize modern

management systems for their day-to-day business. However the RWEs still require optimization of their operation costs and revenues in order to achieve financial sustainability, and they still require assistance to reduce wastewater discharge and the unsustainable usage of water resources. Under the potential Water Sanitation and Conservation (WSC) activity, USAID is considering support for the RWEs to improve public water and wastewater infrastructure, to improve efficiency of water management and to increase conservation of water resources.

Potential Areas for Programming

IDEAS may support unions of municipalities and other clusters of Lebanese towns and villages to deliver essential public services including but not limited to solid waste management, reliable electricity, and opportunities for improved livelihoods by utilizing the country's historic, cultural, and natural world heritage.

WSC might focus on rehabilitating and/or constructing wastewater treatment facilities as well as expanding wastewater collection networks to optimize wastewater treatment. USAID is also considering introducing cost recovery options and encouraging the use of renewable energy resources systems to offset utility operational costs and water-saving technologies and approaches by industry.

RFI Submission Instructions

Respondents must use the response template at the end of this RFI (Annex 1). Respondents are encouraged to copy and paste Annex 1 into a new document, provide their responses in that document, and email that document with the file name saved as "RFI-[Respondents last name]-[Respondent's institution]." Please see Page 1 of this RFI for submission date and contact information.

The issuance of this request will not restrict the Government's ultimate approach, if any. Respondents are advised that USAID is under no obligation to acknowledge receipt of the information, answer questions or provide feedback to respondents with respect to any information submitted. Any information submitted in response to this notice is voluntary. Not responding to this request does not preclude participation in any future solicitation, if any is issued.

Appendix 1
USAID/Lebanon/Local Development Office
Request for Information (RFI) Response Template

The total length of the RFI submission cannot exceed five (5) pages and must be submitted using 12 point Arial font, 8.5 x 11-inch paper (letter-sized), single-spaced, with one-inch margins, no graphics, with each page numbered consecutively. If the submitter has produced relevant reports, those reports may be included, but only as embedded links.

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Email:

USAID/Lebanon is interested in responses to the following specific questions. With the exception of Question 1, respondents may respond to all or as many of the questions listed below as are within the bounds of their technical expertise.

RFI Questions:

1. Has your organization participated in a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) co-creation process before, and would your organization be interested in participating in a BAA on the aforementioned assistance topics for Lebanon?
2. What types of innovative, renewable, and/or low/zero pollution energy systems would you recommend to help groups of Lebanese municipalities remedy significant power outages they are experiencing? Is it possible to network or modularize these systems to create more robust means of distributing the energy they produce?
3. What innovative approaches would you recommend USAID/Lebanon consider to address Lebanon's large-scale, solid waste management challenges?
4. How might Lebanon's rural communities leverage the country's historic, cultural, and natural patrimony to improve the livelihoods of its residents?
5. What does your organization consider to be the top challenges facing the ability of Lebanon to manage wastewater in an environmentally and financially sound manner and how does your organization propose the USAID/Lebanon address these challenges?
6. What does your organization consider to be the top priorities for enhancing the financial sustainability of Lebanon's regional water establishments and what are the most effective interventions that USAID/Lebanon can undertake to address these challenges?