

**Strengthening Women's Contribution to the Formal and Informal Economies in the
Middle East and North Africa
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) – SFOP0005852**

Questions and Answers

1. **Question:** The above NOFO refers, is the award ceiling of USD 3m the maximum that potential applicants are eligible to apply for in this NOFO? It is my understanding that the total program has 6m, with NEA/AC already responsible for component 1 (I assume at 3m).

Answer: This NOFO is for two components and a total award ceiling of \$6 million, with component I being for up to \$3 million and component II being for up to \$3 million, pending availability of funds. Per the NOFO on page 11, “The resulting award will utilize an incremental funding mechanism and will only fund the first increment in the initial award. Up to approximately \$3,000,000 is available for the first increment of funding (ceiling amount). It is estimated that the first increment will provide funding for component one activities and deliverables for an initial 24 months of the award (anticipated: October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2021). The second increment will provide funding for an additional 36 months (anticipated: October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2024) for a total five-year period of performance. The second increment of funding – which will be for component two activities and deliverables – is contingent upon the availability of funds and will be awarded at NEA/AC’s discretion.”

2. **Question:** Can an applicant consider only 1 of the eligible countries and still get the award through a consortium? It is my understanding that apart from the flagged countries, all MENA countries are eligible for this NOFO.

Answer: As detailed in the NOFO on page 3, we seek to support projects with activities in the broader MENA region. Please note that the United Arab Emirates was inadvertently left off of the list and that the NOFO has been revised to reflect this change. The NOFO now states that “While no physical activities may take place inside Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, or the United Arab Emirates, available data on these countries should be included in the comprehensive index.” Applicants should apply for any or as many eligible countries as the organization deems appropriate to be responsive to NEA/ACs request. NEA/AC will not create a consortium. Applicants can choose to create a consortium and apply collectively through one application. The final countries for programmatic activities included in any award made as a result of this announcement will be determined through negotiations with NEA/AC.

3. **Question:** On page 3 of the NOFO there is a reference to a comprehensive index “While no physical activities may take place inside Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Oman, Saudi Arabia or Yemen, available data on these countries should be included in the comprehensive index.”

Answer: The comprehensive index is the regional comparison assessment referred to in activity/deliverable #3 under component one and activity/deliverable #2 under component 2 on page 8 of the NOFO. Please note that the United Arab Emirates was inadvertently left off

of the list and that the NOFO has been revised to reflect this change. The NOFO now states that “While no physical activities may take place inside Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, or the United Arab Emirates, available data on these countries should be included in the comprehensive index.”

4. **Question:** Can we request an extension on the current deadline of June 20, 2019?

Answer: There is currently no extension planned for the detailed deadline of 17:00 (ET) eastern time on June 20, 2019. If there should be any changes revising the deadline date and time, the NOFO will be revised accordingly and updated on SAMS Domestic and grants.gov. Aside from this, NEA/AC is not in a position to grant exceptions to the submission requirements outlined in this announcement.

5. **Question:** Can you confirm that proposed on-the-ground activities in Libya would be acceptable? If so, are there any special considerations for Libya as there are for Iraq because there are active combat zones in the country currently?

Answer: An applicant can propose on-the-ground activities in Libya. Current policy for NEA/AC-funded activities in Libya includes no travel to Libya by third-country nationals nor American citizens. Please note that NEA/AC will work with the recommended applicant on any special considerations during negotiations and throughout implementation of the award. Also, as detailed on page 3 of the NOFO, the final countries for programmatic activities included in any award made as a result of this announcement will be determined through negotiations with NEA/AC. Please note that the United Arab Emirates was inadvertently left off of the list and that the NOFO has been revised to reflect this change. The NOFO now states that “While no physical activities may take place inside Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, or the United Arab Emirates, available data on these countries should be included in the comprehensive index.”

6. **Question:** If an interested nonprofit organization has a country-specific focus, is it appropriate to apply for funding to carry out projects in a specific MENA country although proposals that include as many countries as possible are preferred?

Answer: As detailed in the NOFO on page 3, we seek to support projects with activities in the broader MENA region. The NOFO continues that “While no physical activities may take place inside Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Oman, Saudi Arabia or Yemen, available data on these countries should be included in the comprehensive index.” Please note that the United Arab Emirates was inadvertently left off of the list and that the NOFO has been revised to reflect this change. The NOFO now states that “While no physical activities may take place inside Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, or the United Arab Emirates, available data on these countries should be included in the comprehensive index.” Applicants should apply for any or as many eligible countries as the organization deems appropriate to be responsive to NEA/ACs request. The final countries for programmatic activities included in any award made as a result of this announcement will be determined through negotiations with NEA/AC.

7. **Question:** Is the \$6,000,000 the expected total grant funding from DOS or the total project cost as it sometimes referred to in the funding description? Assuming a 5% cost-share and the DOS grant amount is \$6,000,000, couldn't the total project cost be \$6,300,000?

Answer: As detailed in the NOFO on page 11, "Contingent on the availability of funds, NEA/AC intends to provide up to approximately \$6,000,000 in Economic Support Funds in total funding for approximately one (1) award over a five year period through this announcement. Funding for this Cooperative Agreement will be provided on an incremental basis subject to the availability of funds and successful performance." Applicants are required to propose a minimum of 5% of the total proposed U.S. government requested funds. As such, if an applicant proposes \$3,000,000 for the U.S. government requested funds, the required cost share that must be proposed is at least \$150,000, which results in a total proposed project cost of \$3,150,000.

8. **Question:** For purposes of budgeting, can DOS clarify if final deliverables are required in English only or in English as well as Arabic, and/or a third language (e.g. French)?

Answer: Final deliverables are required in English and NEA/AC will consider translation costs for materials to be delivered in Arabic and French.

9. **Question:** The funding description states that stand-alone conferences and one-off roundtables are not allowed. Can DOS clarify if country workshops, seminars, and/or roundtables are allowed as part of convening and engaging stakeholders in-country?

Answer: One-time events such as stand-alone conferences and one-off roundtables are not allowed unless they fit in the design of the project. Holding workshops to convene stakeholders will be considered as long as they result in products, policies, or a project plan/design.

10. **Question:** Ramadan has made it very difficult to coordinate with regional partners and to get their full attention. Would DOS consider extending the grant deadline by three weeks so that regional partners can fully participate after Ramadan in the grant project design and complete all the necessary steps of the application process?

Answer: Ramadan Mubarak. There is currently no extension planned for the detailed deadline of 17:00 (ET) eastern time on June 20, 2019. If there should be any changes revising the deadline date and time, the NOFO will be revised accordingly and updated on SAMS Domestic and grants.gov. Aside from this, NEA/AC is not in a position to grant exceptions to the submission requirements outlined in this announcement.

11. **Question:** Are applicants permitted to propose activities in Gulf States not specifically prohibited by the NOFO, e.g. the United Arab Emirates?

Answer: Applicants are permitted to propose activities in locations not specifically detailed as prohibited for either physical activities nor any activities on page 3 of the NOFO under "Eligible Countries and Territories." Please note that the United Arab Emirates was

inadvertently left off of the list and that the NOFO has been revised to reflect this change. The NOFO now states that “While no physical activities may take place inside Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, or the United Arab Emirates, available data on these countries should be included in the comprehensive index.”

12. **Question:** Is NEA/AC able to share any information about the outcome of the first WEE procurement? Are there lessons learned or any findings that applicants should take into consideration?

Answer: NEA/AC does not have any lessons learned nor findings to share currently from the first WEE procurement for applicants to take into consideration.

13. **Question:** Are the regional comparative assessments listed under both component 1 (bullet #3) and component 2 (bullet #2) on page 8 of the NOFO considered MEL [monitoring, evaluation, and learning] activities by NEA/AC? If so, given the expense of these assessments, would NEA/AC consider allowing applicants to include more than 3-5% of the total budget for MEL work?

Answer: The regional comparative assessments detailed under both component 1 (activity/deliverable #3) and component 2 (activity/deliverable #2) on page 8 of the NOFO are not considered monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Instead, monitoring, evaluation, and learning is meant for the performance of the project activities for the entirety of the award. Applicants are permitted to propose more than 3-5% of the budget for monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

14. **Question:** Appendix 3, page 12 requires a Program Director and Program Coordinator as key personnel, whereas the NOFO allows more flexibility. Are these two key personnel required or are applicants permitted to identify different key personnel?

Answer: Applicants should propose staff they deem to be key personnel in their applications. The key personnel detailed in an award agreement will be determined through negotiations between the recommended applicant organization and NEA/AC.

15. **Question:** Appendix 3 references that a “Sustainability Plan” is required, but this is not referenced in the NOFO. Can NEA/AC confirm if a Sustainability Plan is required, and if so what the page limit is?

Answer: Appendix 3 is intended to be a guide for preparing an application, which reflects documents that might be required in a NOFO. The prevailing document by which applicants should adhere is the NOFO. The NOFO does not detail that a sustainability plan is required, and therefore applicants are not expected to provide such a document in their proposal.

16. **Question:** Appendix 3 instructs applicants to include a “Results Monitoring Plan,” and the NOFO a “Logic Model.” Can NEA/AC confirm which is required, or both? If a results monitoring plan is required in addition to the logic model, what is the page limit?

Answer: Appendix 3 is intended to be a guide for preparing an application, which reflects documents that might be required in a NOFO. The prevailing document by which applicants should adhere is the NOFO. The NOFO does not detail that a results monitoring plan is required, and therefore applicants are not expected to provide such a document in their proposal. The NOFO does however detail on page 16 that a logic model is required, and that it may be no longer than three pages.

17. **Question:** Can NEA/AC clarify whether the explanation of monitoring and evaluation activities should be included in the program narrative or as a separate attachment? As a narrative accompaniment to the logic model table? If a separate attachment, is there a page limit?

Answer: Monitoring and evaluation of project activities should be detailed in the project narrative, as it is a component of the proposed project in its entirety.

18. **Question:** Can NEA/AC please elaborate on what is expected for the end of project evaluation scope at this stage, and where it should be included in the application?

Answer: NEA/AC cannot provide elaboration on an end of project evaluation scope at this stage as that would be informed by an applicant's proposed project design and activities.

19. **Question:** The NOFO refers to a "Project Timeline" as an application requirement, whereas Appendix 3 references that project timelines will count towards the "Optional Documents." Can NEA/AC confirm that the Project Timeline is a required application component and that it will not count towards the Optional Document 10 page maximum?

Answer: Appendix 3 is intended to be a guide for preparing an application, which reflects documents that might be required in a NOFO. The prevailing document by which applicants should adhere is the NOFO. The NOFO details on page 16 that a project timeline is required, and that it may be no longer than three pages.

20. **Question:** Can NEA/AC elaborate on the Data Analytics plan requirement? Does it pertain only to analysis of primary and/or secondary quantitative data, or must it also explain planned analysis of primary qualitative data?

Answer: Data analytics should include primary, secondary, quantitative, and qualitative data. For instance, unstructured data can be organized to allow generalization, estimation, and inference.