



USAID | MALI
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

April 17, 2014

**Subject: RFA No. 688-14-000005 – Amendment 1
Mali High Impact Health Services II**

Dear Prospective Applicant:

This Amendment 1 provides answers to questions raised by potential applicants by the deadline in Attachment A (Questions/Answers) and Attachment B (Salary Range for Local Professions) and in the following downloaded documents:

- ATN Plus final report;
- Keneya Ciwara and Keneya Ciwara II final reports;
- MOH standards and norms (volumes 1,2,3,5 and the PNP dissemination Curriculum)

In addition, a Summary Budget Template (Attachment C) is provided which applicants are encouraged to follow in developing the detailed cost application, and a Key Personnel Summary sheet (Attachment D), to be completed and submitted as an Annex to the technical application.

Except for the specific changes transmitted through this amendment, all other terms and conditions of the RFA as published remain unchanged.

Sincerely,

JoAnn C. Sparacino
Agreement Officer

Attachment A: Questions/Answers
Attachment B: Salary Range for Local Professions
Attachment C: Budget Template
Attachment D: Key Personnel Summary sheet

ATTACHMENT A - QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

General questions

1. The RFA indicated to provide service delivery according to MOH standards. Can USAID please clarify if an applicant can introduce other standards?

Answer: Yes. We encourage partners to introduce new internationally proven standards but this should be coordinated with the Ministry of Health.

2. Can USAID please confirm if Essential New born Care (ENC) includes management of sepsis, birth asphyxia and preterm births?

Answer: USAID follows host country norms and procedures. The June 2013 MOH standards and norms (provided in attachment in grants.gov), includes management of sepsis, birth asphyxia and preterm birth. In regard to the management of sepsis, birth asphyxia and preterm birth these are already being piloted in a few areas by USAID but certainly must be strengthened and scaled up under this activity.

3. The activity builds on technical approaches that have proven to be effective. As we would seek to build on these successes and accelerate gains, does the documentation of these approaches by previous implementing partners exist in the DEC? We are unable to find any reports or evaluations from the CARE Keneya Ciwara project or PSI Pathways to Health activities in the DEC.

- Could USAID please provide the final evaluation report for the Keneya Ciwara I and II projects and the final evaluation of the ATN and ATN Plus project?

Answer: The final reports for ATN Plus, Keneya Ciwara and Keneya Ciwara II are uploaded with this amendment. USAID/Mali does not have a final evaluation report to share.

4. Page 22 of the RFA, in Section 1.3., references an institutional capacity development plan that applicants must address. May this capacity development plan be included as an annex, outside of the application's page limitations (25 pages)?

Answer: Yes

5. In Section 1.5, page 27, can USAID please clarify "five percent of recipient employees working under the award" is limited to staff 100% devoted to the project?

Answer: Yes

6. On pg. 28, the RFA states that, "The M&E Plan shall present: i) measurable, achievable and time-phased benchmarks and indicators with clear links to the national-level indicators specified in Section 1.3 of this RFA and in USAID/Mali's overall Performance Management Plan (PMP) (see Annex 3)." Is the applicant expected to include all of these indicators from Annex 3 in the PMP, or choose those most relevant?

Answer: USAID/Mali expects that applicants will choose the most relevant indicators based on their proposed approach. However, USAID/Mali, like other missions, receives annually updates from Washington on all relevant indicators linked to the health overall program. Therefore, this activity will need to abide to required indicators set annually which will be discussed in depth during implementation.

7. On pg. 32 of the RFA, Section 3.1.3 states that applicants "shall provide as part of its initial workplan and all subsequent annual workplans a completed Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan describing how it will implement all Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) conditions that apply to the proposed activities." Do applicants need to include indicators to measure environmental mitigation within our PMP, or should those only remain in the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan?

Answer: They should remain in the EMMP

8. Anticipated Funding sources/importance of each component

On pg. 9 of the RFA, Section 1.1 states that “Intensive nutrition and water supply and sanitation services will also be provided by other USAID partners in targeted high-risk geographic areas.” However, Table 3 on pg. 15 lists Water Supply and Sanitation (WASH) and Nutrition as health services that needs to be supported under the activity. Can USAID please clarify the degree to which WASH and Nutrition will be components of this project?

Answer: As stated in the RFA this activity will cover the regions of Koulikoro, Kayes, Gao, Sikasso and Bamako. Please note that as USAID already has an Intensive nutrition and WASH project in the region of Sikasso only the following districts must be covered by this activity: Kolondieba, Yanfolila, Selingue and Yorosso. However in Year 2 the following districts of Koutiala, Kignan, Kadiolo will also need to be covered by this activity.

On pg. 9 of the RFA, Section 1.1 states that “USAID/Mali’s support for HIV, NTDs, and other targeted services (e.g. fistula care) has been and will continue to be provided through other USAID partners”. However, Table 3 on pg. 15 lists HIV/AIDS Prevention, Treatment and Care as a health service that needs to be supported under the activity. Can USAID please clarify the degree to which HIV/AIDS will be a component of this project?

Answer: Most of USAID HIV/AIDS activities are targeted towards key populations which are being implemented through other partners. However, the HIHS activity should incorporate HIV prevention activities that are appropriate at the community level. Particular emphasis should be on increasing demand for Voluntary HIV testing and counseling provided at VCT centers and HIV testing for all pregnant women for referral to VCT.

The table below provides the anticipated breakdown of funding sources for this activity.

<i>FP/RH Activities</i>	<i>45%</i>
<i>MCH Activities</i>	<i>16%</i>
<i>Malaria Activities</i>	<i>16%</i>
<i>HIV/AIDS</i>	<i>13%</i>
<i>WASH and Nutrition Activities</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>100%</i>

9. HIV, NTDs and other targeted services:

- Page 9 of the RFA discussing programs targeting HIV, NTDs and other targeted services. Can USAID please clarify where these services are and what services they are providing?

Answer: The main thrust of USAID's HIV activities are towards key populations (Sex Workers and their clients and partners and MSM) and Positive Health Dignity and prevention. USAID's focus for this programming is in Kayes, Bamako, Mopti, and Sikasso. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) fund services in Bamako, Kayes, and Segou, while the Global Fund's Plan International Focuses on Koulikoro, Koutiala, Kita, Kenieba, and Gao region. A comprehensive package of services is provided.

- Can USAID please clarify if the applicant is responsible for all services listed in the Table 3, on page 15-16 of the RFA? What level of effort should be given to the last column in the table?

Answer: Yes, the applicant is responsible for all services listed in the table. Please note that the columns in this table are linked and interdependent in order to achieve required outcomes.

10. Geographical Coverage

- Under Section 1.2.2, page 19, table 4, the Sikasso region has 9 health districts. In 2013 a new health district called Niena was created. Can USAID clarify if this new district will be included in the activity?
- Additional districts have been created as a result of existing districts being split up (i.e. Niena in Sikasso and Kolabancoro in Koulikoro). Can USAID please confirm if the applicant is expected to implement in the additional districts as well?

Answer: The activity will cover the entire regions targeted throughout its life. Note that all newly created districts falling under the target geographical area must be covered.

- Under Section 1.2.2, page 19, table 4 for the Gao region, there are four health districts within the region but the table indicates that there is only one district. Can USAID please clarify if this activity will support 4 health districts in Gao or just one?

Answer: The RFA clearly states that the region of Gao will be taken into account only if security permits and only 1 district (district of Gao) will be covered by this activity.

- Given the complex political situation in Gao, does USAID anticipate the need for the HIHS II Activity to open an office in Gao, or should support be provided from the other project offices?
 - Section 1.2.2. of the RFA, on page 18, indicates that the activity is expected to cover “all districts of Koulikoro, Kayes, Sikasso etc. ... ” and should “expand to cover Gao.” However, on page 19 the reference to the numbers of people, CSREFs, and CSCOMs in MHIHSII target areas indicate that our focus should be only on the district of Gao rather than the whole region. Please confirm if we should plan to expand to cover all the districts in Gao region, or just the District of Gao within Gao region when we expand.
 - The table of activity areas on page 19 of the RFA mentions one health district in Gao where the project is expected to work, whereas page 199 of the RFA lists both Gao and Ansongo districts. Could USAID please clarify which district(s) in Gao region the project is expected to work?

Answer: The RFA clearly states that the region of Gao will be taken into account only in year 2 if security permits and only 1 district (district of Gao) will be covered by this activity. As stated in the RFA, colocation is encouraged only when possible.

- Can USAID please clarify if there will be additional resources to cover for program implementation in Gao?

Answer: Only 1 district (district of Gao) will be covered by activity which has already been incorporated in this activity, therefore no additional resources will be provided.

11. Application due date and time:

- In the cover letter, USAID states that the proposal is due May 14, 2014. Could USAID specify the exact time and time zone of the deadline?
- Can USAID please confirm that an electronic submission of the proposal is due by 5:00PM Local Time, May 14, 2014?

Answer: Electronic applications are due by midnight Washington time on May 14, 2014.

12. Page limitation versus Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:

- On pg. 32 of the RFA, Section 3.1.3 states that offerors must include “an illustrative monitoring and evaluation plan that will demonstrate how the applicant will establish baselines and targets, and measure progress towards the stated targets and objectives.” Will the M&E plan be counted as part of the 25 page proposal limit?
- Section 3.1 of the RFA, instructions for the technical application (page 31), states that Monitoring Plans are not included in the application’s page limitation (25 pages). Should the full M&E Plan be included as an annex, outside of the page limitation? Or, would USAID

prefer to see some narrative discussion of M&E within the 25 pages, and only the M&E/PMP table included as an annex?

Answer: The RFA states, on page 31, Section 3.1 that the monitoring and evaluation plan is not included in the page limitation.

13. Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP):

- On pg. 32 of the RFA, Section 3.1.3 states that applicants “shall provide as part of its initial workplan and all subsequent annual workplans a completed Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan describing how it will implement all Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) conditions that apply to the proposed activities.” Please confirm that the draft Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan may be included in the annexes and is not subject to the proposal narrative page limit.
- On pg. 22 of the RFA, Section 1.4 states that applicants must submit an “environmental mitigation and monitoring plan which will address the environmental concerns especially with respect to waste management...” What format should applicants use to present the environmental plan?

Answer: The draft EMMP is to be included in the annexes, therefore not counting towards the page limitation.

The EMMP format template can be found at: <http://www.usaidgems.org/mitMonRep.htm>

14. On pg. 32 of the RFA, Section 3.1.4 states that offerors need to submit a “Management Plan that provides assurance that the activity will be managed in a professional, efficient and collaborative manner to achieve the stated objectives and results.” Please confirm that the draft illustrative implementation plan (table) including first year work plan may be included in the annexes to complement the narrative to be included in the technical approach section of the proposal.

Answer: The Management Plan mentioned in 3.1.4 is different from the Implementation Plan / Work Plan mentioned in Section 3.1.3. Instructions for submitting the latter are that it is to be included in the annexes.

15. Section 3.1 of the RFA (page 31) states that the “management structure” may be outside of the page limitation. Can you please clarify what is meant by “management structure”?

Answer: Please read 3.1 as “Management structure/charts”.. i.e. all documentation supporting the proposed management plan.

16. On pg. 32 of the RFA, Section 3.1.3 states that “The application shall also provide a sustainability plan which will be clear on how the activity will build on and expand existing platforms to foster stronger systems and sustainable results.” Is this sustainability plan expected to be incorporated into the 25-page technical proposal or can it be a separate annex?

Answer: The sustainability plan mentioned in 3.1.3 is a narrative, part of the technical approach. If the applicant determines that a chart is needed to support it, the chart may be in the annexes.

17. Past Performance Report(s):

- Section 3.1 of the RFA (page 31) calls for the Past Performance Report to be outside of the page limitation. Section 3.1.5 further describes the requirements for Past Performance. Please confirm whether all of the Past Performance information required by the RFA may be included as an annex only, with no separate Past Performance discussion within the page limitation of the main technical narrative.

- Section 3.1.5 of the RFA, instructions for Past Performance (page 33), calls for “record of relevant past performance for up to five projects” for the applicant and any partners. Can you please clarify the number of past performance references – up to five total, or up to five for the applicant and up to five for each partner?
- On pg. 33 of the RFA, Section 3.1.5 states, “The applicant will also provide record of relevant past performance for up to five projects implemented over the past three years which best illustrate the applicant’s (and any partners’) performance and include the performance location...” Please confirm that each major organization (prime contractor as well as subcontractor organizations) may submit a maximum of five past performance references.
- Can USAID please confirm in Section 3.1.5 Past Performance, page 33 of the RFA that an applicant should submit 5 PPRs in total?

Answer: Applicants are encouraged to follow the guidance in 3.1.5 and provide a short narrative on relevant past performance in the technical application, within the page limitation; and then, when possible, provide a detailed record of past performance for up to five projects in the annex, not only for the prime but also for each of the proposed sub-partners.

18. Application format and size:

- For application submission, is there a size limit for attachments to e-mails?
- Please confirm that we can submit our application in PDF format, along with our budget in Excel?
- For enhanced readability and to comply with the Paper Reduction Act, may budgets be prepared for printing on 11 x 17 paper?
- Can USAID please confirm there is no page limit to the annex?
- May charts, tables and graphics use a font other than standard 12 point Times New Roman, provided these items are clear and readable?

Answer: The RFA has no size limit for attachments to emails. However, it is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all emails and attachments are of an adequate size for proper transmission and receipt by USAID. An application in PDF is acceptable at this stage of the competition. USAID has no preference on the paper printing size of the budget. There is no page limit to the annex. No font is prescribed in the RFA. USAID/Mali does not have any preference, other than legible.

19. Could USAID make available a copy of the SOAG that was recently signed by USAID and the Government of Mali?

Answer: The SOAG is an agreement between the Mali and U.S. governments and cannot be shared.

20. Will any property, such as furniture, equipment, or vehicles, be made available from another project?

Answer: None is anticipated at this time.

21. Could USAID make available the most current FSN Payscale?

Answer: USAID cannot share the local compensation plan. However, please find in Attachment B a guide for the salary ranges for USAID/Mali local employees.

22. Should we use the DSSR per diem rates? Or if USAID wants recipients to use other per diem rates such as those in the USAID Mission Order, could USAID make those rates available?

Answer: For the recipient’s employees, the application estimates must not go above the U.S. Government rates. The Mission Order referred to is under revision and the selected recipient will be provided with updated information at time of award. For that reason, it is recommended that the applicant complies with Malian government rates when budgeting travel costs for local government employees.

23. Could USAID please confirm that Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of Applicant are only required to be submitted by the prime organization of the consortium?

Answer: Each certification might have its own requirement. For more guidance, please go to: <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf> , specifically ADS 303.3.8

24. Can USAID please confirm that branding and marking costs are to be included in the budget, but a full Branding Strategy and Marking Plan is to be submitted after an award?

Answer: USAID will request a branding strategy and marking plan from apparently successful applicants only. For that reason, it is only at that stage that applicants will be requested to submit a final revised cost application that will capture branding strategy and marking costs.

25. On pg. 35 of the RFA, Section 4 states that criteria “are listed in descending order of importance”. Can USAID please assign numerical weight to the evaluation criteria?

Answer: USAID Mali, in accordance with recommendations in the procurement reform has opted for an adjectival system. No numerical weight will be used during the selection process.

The adjectival system in Section 4.3 of the RFA is hereby amended as follows:

Rating	Definition
<i>Outstanding</i>	<i>Application significantly exceeds requirements and indicates an exceptional approach and understanding of the requirements. Strengths far outweigh any weaknesses. Risk of unsuccessful performance is very low.</i>
<i>Good</i>	<i>Application exceeds requirements and indicates a thorough approach and understanding of the requirements. Application contains strengths which outweigh any weaknesses. Risk of unsuccessful performance is low.</i>
<i>Acceptable</i>	<i>Application meets requirements and indicates an adequate approach and understanding of the requirements. Strengths and weaknesses are offsetting or will have little or no impact on performance. Risk of unsuccessful performance is no worse than moderate.</i>
<i>Marginal</i>	<i>Application does not clearly meet requirements and has not demonstrated an adequate approach and understanding of the requirements. The application has one or more weaknesses or significant weaknesses which are not offset by strengths. Risk of unsuccessful performance is high.</i>
<i>Unacceptable</i>	<i>Application contains deficiencies, gross omissions, and/or significant weaknesses; fails to demonstrate an understanding of the scope necessary to attain the expected results; fails to provide a reasonable, logical approach to fulfilling the solicitation requirements. When applying this adjective to an application as a whole, the application must be so unacceptable in one or more areas that it would have to be significantly revised in order to attempt to make it other than unacceptable.</i>

ATTACHMENT B – SALARY RANGE

			ANNUAL		
Grade		Currency	Minimum Salary	Maximum salary	Job Title (Function) (illustrative)
FSN - 5	Annual	F.CFA	2,693,568	4,175,028	Clerk Typist
					Voucher Examiner
					Data Entry Clerk
					Supply Clerk
					Telephone Operator/Shipment Assist
FSN - 6	Annual	F.CFA	3,519,105	5,454,609	Document Control Clerk
					Files Management Supervisor
					Cashier
					Motor Pool Supervisor
					Property Records Supervisor
FSN - 7	Annual	F.CFA	4,542,995	7,041,647	Secretary , Office Manager
					Maintenance Foreman
					Maintenance Inspector
					Procurement Assistant
					Cashier
FSN - 8	Annual	F.CFA	5,962,785	9,242,313	Payroll Liaison Assist; Admin Assist.
					Shipment Specialist
					Development Program Assistant
					Project Management Assistant
					Voucher Examiner; Property Mgt Supervisor
FSN - 9	Annual	F.CFA	8,237,452	12,768,052	Budget Analyst
					Maintenance Specialist
					Human Resources Assistant
					Procurement Specialist
					Management Assist
FSN - 10	Annual	F.CFA	9,461,487	14,665,299	Dev Assist Specialist
					Supervisory Voucher Examiner
					Project Management Specialist
					Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
					HIV/AIDS Specialist
FSN - 11	Annual	F.CFA	11,041,502	17,114,330	Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
					Dev Program Specialist/Budget; Conflict Advisor
					Executive Specialist (Admiin)
					Proj Mgt Specialist; Systems Administrator
					Financial Analyst; M & E Specialist
FSN - 12	Annual	F.CFA	13,357,778	20,704,550	Chief Accountant
					Supervisory Financial Support Advisor
					Development Program Specialist
					Econ Development Specialist
					Sr. Acquisition & Assistance Specialist

ATTACHMENT C – BUDGET TEMPLATE

Please provide the information requested for each year of the activity for the prime and for all proposed sub-awards.

SUMMARY BUDGET

ITEMS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	TOTAL
LABOR						
Direct Long-Term Labor (Expatriate)						
Direct Long-Term Labor (Local)						
Direct Short-Term Labor (Expatriate)						
Direct Short-Term Labor (Local)						
Local Staff						
Home Office						
Allowances						
Fringe Benefits						
Total Labor						
TRAVEL, TRANSPORTATION & PER DIEM						
Assignment to Post and Entitlement						
International Travel						
Local Travel						
Per Diem						
Total Travel, Transportation & Per Diem						
EQUIPMENT						
Expendable Equipment & Supplies						
Vehicles & Non Expendable Equipment						
Total Equipment						
OTHER DIRECT COSTS						
Field Office						
Communication and Misc Office costs						
Equipment maintenance costs						
Home office costs, communication and other						
Total Other Direct Costs						

ACTIVITY COSTS						
Commodities						
Training						
Other						
Total Activity Costs						
Sub-Awards						
US NGOs						
Local NGOs						
Total Sub-Awards						
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS						
INDIRECT COSTS						
Overhead						
G & A						
Other Indirect Costs						
Total Indirect Costs						
TOTAL ESTIMATED AMOUNT						
Cost Share						

SUMMARY BUDGET BY FUNDING STREAMS

Sources of Funding	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
FP/RH						
MCH						
Malaria						
HIV/AIDS						
WASH and Nutrition						
TOTAL						

ATTACHMENT D – KEY PERSONNEL SUMMARY TABLE

	Position Title	Position Duties and Responsibilities	Candidate's Formal Education	Candidate's Relevant Technical Experience	Candidate's Relevant Experience, i.e. gender, location of work, training, knowledge, skills, etc.
1.					