



U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

294-2004-014

Date Issued: May 10, 2004
Closing Date: June 25, 2004
Closing Time: 4:30 PM (Tel Aviv Time)

**Subject: REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) NO. 294-2004-014
PALESTINIAN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR NEEDED
EMPLOYMENT (PINE) PROGRAM
U. S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WEST BANK AND GAZA**

This program is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The United States Government, as represented by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission to the West Bank and Gaza, is seeking applications from U.S. private voluntary organizations (USPVOs) and/or U.S. non-governmental organizations (USNGOs), and public international organizations (PIOs) to implement a two to three year educational and youth services infrastructure program in the West Bank and Gaza, subject to the availability of funds, as described in the following Request for Applications (RFA).

USAID is seeking applications which will enable the U.S. to continue to meet the two objectives of its Community Services Program in the West Bank & Gaza – the objectives of both job creation and community service delivery. These dual objectives are identified under PINE to finance educational and youth services infrastructure through labor intensive activities to create much needed short-term employment opportunities for jobless Palestinians. Successful applicants to the PINE Program will provide educational infrastructure in the most poorly served locations and in so doing provide short-term employment opportunities where the availability of jobs is lowest. The program will thus have the double benefit of providing tangible, long-term benefits to communities while creating short-term employment opportunities (thereby putting money into the Palestinian economy and supporting household incomes). It is designed to operate despite the problems of constrained access and mobility, and to involve beneficiary communities as much as possible in the planning, implementation, and follow-up of activities.

Please be advised that USAID/West Bank & Gaza intends to make multiple awards for educational and youth services infrastructure activities to be implemented over a period of 24 to 36 months through this RFA, subject to the availability of funds, performance,

and local circumstances. The total amount of funding may increase or decline depending upon availability of resources. It is expected that there will be multiple awards ranging from \$2.5 to \$4.5 million in size. Applications should be presented in a manner that divides activities geographically (northern West Bank, southern West Bank, northern Gaza, southern Gaza) and present budgets accordingly. USAID reserves the right to fund one or all geographic modules so proposed.

USAID recommends that organizations that apply to this solicitation provide a minimum of 25% cost sharing, either through direct funding, beneficiary contributions, in-kind assistance, or a combination thereof. Pursuant to ADS 303.5.10, the 25% cost share level is recommended as the minimum reference point. Higher levels of cost sharing would be preferred. The Agreement Officer shall make the final determination and assess whether or not the applicant's cost share contributions (e.g. categories or items) meet the standards set in 22 CFR 226.23 for U.S. organizations.

All applications must be submitted using a U.S Government Form SF-424, which can be found on the USAID Web site: WWW.USAIID.GOV. All applications must be in English and submitted directly to Erin E. McKee, Agreement Officer, Office of Contracts Management, USAID c/o American Embassy, 71 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv, Israel (local address) or USAID, Unit 7228, Box 26 APO, AE 09830 (U.S. mailing address). An original, two copies and a floppy diskette (in MS Word or MS Excel format) must be provided.

Applications should note the RFA number and be submitted in sealed envelopes with the name and address of the applicant. If an application is mailed, it should be sent by certified mail no later than June 15, 2004. The USPS post mark will determine timeliness. Applications sent via courier service must be received by the due date. Loss or misdirected courier packages received after the due date will be considered as having been submitted late.

Applications which are submitted late or are incomplete or non-responsive may not be considered in the review process.

USAID considers this requirement to be primarily assistance for a public purpose, rather than the acquisition of services. Accordingly, an assistance instrument (i.e., a cooperative agreement), in lieu of a contractual relationship, has been determined to be the most appropriate vehicle for transferring U.S. institutional experience in this area to the Palestinian people in the West Bank & Gaza. Under an assistance instrument, USAID's involvement is on a partnership basis, as opposed to the relationship established under a contract where the Agency is acquiring specific goods or services for its own use or benefit.

Pursuant to USAID directives, it is USAID's policy not to award fees under assistance instruments.

Other reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (OMB Circular A-122 for nonprofit organizations), may be paid under the agreement.

If your organization is interested in submitting an application, please carefully review this Cover Letter and the contents of this package, which includes the following sections:

- Section I – Funding Opportunity Description
- Section II – Award Information
- Section III – Eligibility Information
- Section IV – Application and Submission Information
- Section V – Application Review
- Section VI – Award & Administration Information
- Section VII – USAID Contacts
- Section VIII – Other Pertinent Information

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of applicants. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. In addition, final award of any resultant cooperative agreement(s) cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award.

Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant; should circumstances prevent award of a cooperative agreement, all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Applicants should retain for their records one copy of any and all enclosures which accompany their application. If you are unable to submit an application, you are requested to so advise the issuing office.

Thank you for your consideration of this USAID initiative. We look forward to your organization's participation.

Sincerely,

Erin E. McKee

Erin Elizabeth McKee
Agreement Officer

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. PURPOSE

Successful USPVO/USNGO/PIO applicants (Recipients) under this RFA will be awarded a Cooperative Agreement to construct or renovate education and youth services infrastructure in needy areas of the West Bank and Gaza using labor and local materials intensive methods in order to maximize employment.

USAID considers this requirement to be primarily assistance for a public purpose, rather than the acquisition of services. Accordingly, an assistance instrument (in this case a Cooperative Agreement), in lieu of a contractual relationship, has been determined as the most appropriate vehicle for this program. Under an assistance instrument, USAID's involvement is on a partnership basis, as opposed to a contractual relationship in which the Agency acquires specific goods or services for its own use or benefit.

B. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

USAID/West Bank and Gaza seeks to support multiple educational and youth services infrastructure projects that will start quickly, maximize the use of local materials and labor, and provide infrastructure and generate employment in the most poorly served and most economically deprived locations in the West Bank and Gaza.

The sectoral focus of the Palestinian Infrastructure for Needed Employment (PINE) Program will be much more limited in scope than earlier USAID/West Bank and Gaza Community Services Program (CSP) initiatives, including the Community and Rural Services Program (CRSP), Village Services Program (VSP), Emergency Employment Generation Program (EEGP) and Job Opportunities through Basic Services (JOBS) Program. The PINE Program will finance basic educational infrastructure and youth-related facilities. It is expected that the bulk of USAID funding under this RFA will be devoted to educational infrastructure but final funding allocation decisions will be made at the time of award. The concentration on educational and youth services infrastructure is based on the extensive and positive experience with these areas under the CSP, the demonstrated and growing need for schools and youth facilities in the West Bank and Gaza, and the relatively smaller size of PINE compared to earlier phases of the CSP. Whereas CSP has until now had a proposal-driven sectoral focus, PINE has clear sectoral parameters within which applicants can work. The end result will be that in spite of more modest resources, USAID will be able to improve its visibility, its leadership profile, and the quality and durability of its relationship with supported communities because of the clear programmatic focus and its ability to deliver tangible, lasting results.

Educational Infrastructure

School construction and renovation provide high levels of employment while contributing to the short- and medium-term development of the education sector and

addressing the educational needs of youth. USAID has supported construction and renovation of schools in the West Bank and Gaza since the 1970s, mostly through USPVOs. In 1996, USAID funded two UNRWA projects for construction and rehabilitation of schools under the Small Scale Community Infrastructure Program. Three schools were built in Gaza and one was built in the West Bank, in addition to the rehabilitation of dozens of schools. Through the CRSP, VSP, EEGP and JOBS (started 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002, respectively), USAID has continued to support PVO efforts to build and renovate schools. To date, USPVOs and PIOs, with their local partners in 220 communities, have completed the construction or renovation of nearly 1,100 educational rooms, nearly 400 kindergartens, and over 53,000 square meters of playgrounds benefiting about 1.2 million Palestinians. In doing so, nearly 500,000 person days of employment were generated.

Youth Services Infrastructure

As with educational infrastructure, construction and renovation of similar facilities designed to serve youth provide high levels of employment while contributing to the needs of a disproportionate share of the Palestinian population. USAID has made significant contributions to this sector through the CRSP, VSP, EEGP and JOBS Programs. Through 2003, nearly 600 youth facilities had been built or renovated along with almost 64,000 square meters of outdoor playgrounds. However, despite USAID's efforts over the past several years, the needs of communities continue to outpace available Palestinian Authority (PA) and donor resources. The high birth rate and already disproportionately youthful population suggest that these needs will continue to expand exponentially.

Locations

The PINE Program's target geographic area characteristics will be poor, needy urban neighborhoods and rural locations. The most important factor in geographic site selection is demonstrated need of the community. Applicants should make the case for need, based on the universe of available data from economic, health and social studies. Heavy weighting will be given to the persuasiveness of the argument that the proposed communities have been appropriately and accurately targeted to receive USAID's support, and that these communities are in relatively greater need compared with the needs of other communities, including some that may be in relatively close proximity.

Labor Intensity and Local Materials Usage

The PINE Program encourages labor intensive interventions that maximize the use of local materials.

Potential applicants are encouraged to consider, where appropriate, a mix of activities, including new school construction, extensions to existing schools, replacement of old schools, and rehabilitation of inadequate school buildings. Educational infrastructure

includes creating and renovating playgrounds or recreational areas for schools, and appropriate water and sanitary systems for schools.

Labor intensity and local materials usage will be important factors in the application review. This will continue the emphasis (begun in the latter phases of the CSP) on labor intensity and the multiplier effects on the economy through the increased use of local materials. Applicants' demonstrated appreciation of the importance of these issues will be considered in the technical evaluation process and only those proposals that can show how at least an extra 10-15% can be gained in the combined use of both domestic labor and domestic materials will be considered to be innovative. As a benchmark, the average cost to USAID of creating one person day of employment in the education sector (defined in the Mission's Geographic Information System (GIS) as construction/renovation of classrooms, kindergartens, outdoor school facilities, etc.) under the first four phases of the CSP is thus far running at about \$62, considering only direct program expenses.

Since the PINE Program encourages labor intensive interventions, equipment and furnishings should be considered for counterpart or community contribution since these commodity purchases are inherently less labor intensive than actual construction and renovation work. Construction activities should, where appropriate, utilize small contractors, who often have less capital equipment than large organizations. Projects with high labor intensity should be targeted and engineering designs; technical specifications and any subcontracts awarded should encourage labor intensive methods and increased local materials usage. Projects with the potential of developing new and innovative approaches in this direction will be encouraged and carefully monitored for their possible demonstration effects.

Speed

Speed of implementation has proven an important part of USAID's work in community services and other fields. USAID recognized that maximizing labor intensity and local materials usage are at times contradictory to speedy implementation. Nevertheless, applicants are encouraged to propose creative and effective ways to accomplish both.

Sustainability

Infrastructure to be constructed under the PINE Program must have a sustainability plan. Applications should clearly establish the justification and priority setting of community-level needs (e.g., based on socio-economic standards, quality of life indicators, survey of available services, etc.) making the beneficiary communities themselves the first and most important link to long-term program sustainability. Applications must also demonstrate coordination with relevant Palestinian ministries and municipalities to ensure long-term staffing and equipping needs of proposed infrastructure will be met. The Palestinian authority to take responsibility for a specific project must commit, in writing, to its maintenance and upkeep at the time the specific project is proposed in an implementation plan.

Resource Leveraging and Donor Coordination

The PINE Program puts substantial emphasis on leveraging of resources from other donors, multilaterals, international and local organizations, implementing partners and communities themselves. USAID funding must serve as a catalyst to leverage support for needy communities. Applicants are expected to explain how a proposed program integrates community, counterpart and official donor and other outside contributions to the overall well being of a community. Quantifying resources to be leveraged is highly desirable.

Beneficiaries

This RFA requires clear identification of the number and types of beneficiaries to be served by proposed activities. It is expected that the short-term direct beneficiaries will be the thousands of Palestinians participating in the activities funded under the PINE Program, as well as their families. Beneficiaries will obtain needed employment through building infrastructure to meet the long-term development needs of their communities. Long-term beneficiaries will be the children and youth who will use the educational and youth-related facilities funded under the program.

Gender

Access to youth facilities, especially sports facilities, is sometimes more limited for females than males. Applicants proposing youth-related facilities interventions should describe in their proposals how they anticipate dealing with gender issues, especially access, as an integrated part of the activity. In the development of data bases and reporting on progress, partners will be expected to disaggregate data by gender where appropriate.

C. ADMINISTRATION OF AWARDS

Awards will be made in accordance with the USAID Standard Provisions and other applicable U.S. Government regulations, which are available on the USAID web site (<http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads>). For U.S. organizations, the award will be administered under 22 CFR 226, OMB Circulars and the USAID Standard Provisions. For PIOs, financial records will have to be available for audit in accordance with relevant USAID audit requirements for PIOs. Pursuant to ADS 308, "Application of USAID's Procurement Policies to a PIO":

If USAID is the sole contributor, USAID procurement policies and procedures will apply to purchases of goods and services by the grantee to the same extent as in grants to non-U.S. non-governmental organizations (see [ADS 303.5.15](#)), unless they are specifically waived.

If USAID is not the sole contributor but is still the largest contributor, USAID, with the concurrence of the Department of State, Office of International

Organizations (IO), may elect to negotiate the application of selected procurement and audit policies with the PIO to protect U.S. interests.

If USAID is a minor contributor to a program, USAID will rely on the international organization's procurement policies and procedures.

Recipients will be responsible for implementing funded activities for USAID, and will manage their planning, procurement, construction, and close-out. USAID will exercise substantial involvement in approving annual implementation plans, and all specific construction activities valued in excess of \$100,000. Coordination and collaboration is critical to the success of this activity. To ensure complementarity of activities and avoidance of duplication, all activities under the Agreement must demonstrate close coordination with existing USAID, UN, bilateral and other international assistance programs that are building educational and youth-related infrastructure, as well as relevant Palestinian ministries and agencies. Recipients will monitor and assess the implementation process and ensure adherence to the requirements further specified in the Agreement at the time of award.

As with prior phases of the CSP, partners will be encouraged to work closely with local Palestinian organizations, wherever possible. Applicants are free to submit proposals in consortia with local Palestinian NGOs. In all cases, a clear definition of the role of Palestinian cooperating entities, be they NGOs or local councils and PA ministries, will be required if such entities will participate in the identification, implementation and maintenance of program interventions.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. AWARDS AND AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Funding and Performance Period

As a general guide when preparing applications, please be advised that USAID West Bank and Gaza intends to make multiple awards for educational and youth services infrastructure activities to be implemented over a period of 24 to 36 months through this RFA, subject to the availability of funds, performance, and local circumstances.

The total amount of funding may increase or decline depending upon availability of resources. It is expected that there will be multiple awards ranging from \$2.5 to \$4.5 million in size. Applications should be presented in a manner that divides activities geographically (northern West Bank, southern West Bank, northern Gaza, southern Gaza) and present budgets accordingly. USAID reserves the right to fund one or all geographic modules so proposed.

B. SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

USAID plans to negotiate and award assistance instruments known as Cooperative Agreements with the successful Applicants for this activity. A Cooperative Agreement implies a level of “substantial involvement” by USAID as follows:

- approval of detailed annual work plans;
- designation of key positions and approval of key personnel;
- USAID approval of monitoring and evaluation plans, and USAID involvement in monitoring progress towards the achievement of program objectives during the course of the Cooperative Agreement;
- concurrence on the selection of sub-award recipients and/or the substantive provisions of the sub-awards; and
- case-by-case approval of specific construction activities over \$100,000 or having significant safety or environmental concerns.

Cooperative Agreements must describe in detail the anticipated Agency involvement during performance of the award. Substantial involvement shall be limited to the elements listed above, unless a deviation is authorized in accordance with ADS 303.5.3 (See ADS 303.5.3), and must be directly and specifically tied to the Program Description. The intended purpose of Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) involvement during the award is to assist the recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the agreement. The Agreement Officer may delegate the following approvals to the Cognizant Technical Officer, except for changes to the Program Description or the approved budget. Such changes, as first reviewed by the Cognizant Technical Officer, shall only be approved by the Agreement Officer.

1. Approval of the Recipient’s Implementation Plans

Where the timeline for the planned achievement of milestones/outputs discussed in the Program Description has not been established in sufficient detail when the award is executed, approval of this plan may be provided at a later date. Approval of these plans must be required no more often than annually; significant changes by the recipient to the approved plan will require additional approval.

2. Approval of Specified Key Personnel

Only those positions which are considered to be essential to the successful implementation of the award shall be designated as Key Personnel. It is USAID policy to limit this to a reasonable number of positions, generally no more than five positions or five percent of recipient employees working under the award, whichever is greater.

3. Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation

Where there are specific elements in the Program Description for which USAID's technical knowledge would benefit the recipient's successful accomplishment of stated program objectives, the joint participation of USAID and the recipient can be authorized. Where the Agreement Officer is satisfied that there is sufficient reason for Agency involvement and that involvement is specifically tailored to support identified elements in the Program Description, the following are examples of appropriate levels of substantial involvement:

- a. Collaborative involvement in selection of advisory committee members. USAID may also choose to become a member of this type of committee. Advisory committees shall concern themselves only with technical or programmatic issues and not routine administrative matters;
- b. Concur on the selection of sub-award recipients and/or the substantive provisions of the sub-awards;
- c. Approval of the recipient's monitoring and evaluation plans;
- d. Agency monitoring to permit specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects. All such activities must be included in the Program Description and negotiated in the budget of the award.

4. Agency Authority to Immediately Halt a Construction Activity

USAID has the authority to create a substantial involvement understanding in the award for specific construction activities as identified in the proposal. This clause in the award states that the Agreement Officer may immediately halt a particular construction activity where identified specifications are not met. The specifications for the particular construction activity must be reviewed and approved by USAID before funding will be provided under the award. Material changes to the specifications must be treated as an amendment to the award.

5. Agency Approval of Certain Construction Activities

USAID will require its own engineering approval of PINE Program construction activities greater than \$100,000 in value.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

USPVOs and/or USNGOs and PIOs may submit applications under this RFA. Palestinian NGOs will be encouraged to apply for sub-grants after award and under the terms and conditions set out by the USPVO/USNGO/PIO. All applicants under this solicitation must document thoroughly the following for successful consideration:

1. Demonstrated knowledge of and successful performance in community services infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza;
2. Financial accounting and management systems that meet U.S. Federal requirements;
3. Personnel with background and experience with small community infrastructure in the West Bank and/or Gaza;
4. Ability of personnel to move about in both the West Bank and Gaza; and
5. Experience and technical capacity to manage subcontracts and sub-grants, preferably for construction services.

B. COST SHARING

USAID recommends that organizations that apply to this solicitation provide a minimum of 25% cost sharing, either through direct funding, beneficiary contributions, in-kind assistance, or a combination thereof.

Pursuant to ADS 303.5.10, the 25% cost share level is recommended as the minimum reference point. Higher levels of cost sharing would be preferred. The Agreement Officer shall make the final determination and assess whether or not the applicant's cost share contributions (e.g. categories or items) meet the standards set in 22 CFR 226.23 for U.S. organizations.

C. PAST PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY

All potential recipients are subject to past performance scrutiny. Applicants must supply names of organizations, both commercial and Federal, from which they have received contracts or assistance awards for similar activities over the past three years. Reference information should include addresses and current telephone numbers of points of contact, award numbers if available, and brief descriptions of the work performed.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. PROCEDURE

All applications must be submitted using a U.S Government Form SF-424, which can be found on the USAID Web site: WWW.USAIID.GOV.

All applications must be in English and submitted directly to Erin E. McKee, Agreement Officer, Office of Contracts Management, USAID c/o American Embassy, 71 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv, Israel (local address) or USAID, Unit 7228, Box 26 APO, AE 09830 (U.S. mailing address). An original, two copies and a floppy diskette (in MS Word or MS Excel format) must be provided.

All applicants are advised that pursuant to ADS 303.5.8 an executed set of Certifications and Representations must be provided prior to award of an Agreement. Should negotiations commence, the Agreement Officer will request the requisite documentation

from the successful applicant at that time. Pursuant to 22 CFR § 226.81, it is USAID's policy not to award fees under assistance instruments. Other reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (OMB Circular A-122 for nonprofit organizations), may be paid under the agreement.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, the U.S. Government reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. USAID expects to review all applications received on June 25, 2004 at 4:30 P.M. Tel Aviv time.

B. SUGGESTED OUTLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications must be strictly limited to **no more than** twenty (20) pages in length, using 12 point font, excluding annexes. Within the outline suggested below, applicants should address the factors cited in Section V.B. below, as appropriate. In addition to the narrative section of the application, the annexes will be used to judge the applicant's organizational experience, proposed staff and budget. The annexes may also include relevant information about partner PVOs/NGOs, where applicable.

The suggested outline for the technical application is:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Program Description
 - A. Goals and Objectives
 - B. Background and Problem Statement
 - C. Proposed Interventions/Technical Approach/Expected Impact
 - D. Proposed Geographic Areas for Interventions and Rationale for Site Selection
 - E. Estimation of Numbers and Types of Beneficiaries
 - F. Proposed Methodology for Maximizing Labor Intensity
 - G. Proposed Methodology for Maximizing Local Materials Usage
 - H. Identification and Explanation of Role of Local Development Partners
 - I. Detailing of Resources to be Leveraged
 - J. Sustainability Plan
 - K. Performance Monitoring Plan
 - L. Management Plan (including key personnel)
 - M. Implementation Schedule
 - N. Financial Plan/Cost Proposal
- III. Annexes
 - A. Detailed Budget
 - B. Relevant Organizational Experience
 - C. Curricula Vitae for Key Staff

C. INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

All applications must be submitted using a U.S. Government Form SF-424, which can be found on the USAID Web site: WWW.USAID.GOV.

All applications must be in English and submitted directly to Erin E. McKee, Agreement Officer, Office of Contracts Management, USAID c/o American Embassy, 71 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv, Israel (local address) or USAID, Unit 7228, Box 26 APO, AE 09830 (U.S. mailing address). An original, two copies and a floppy diskette (in MS Word or MS Excel format) must be provided.

All applicants are advised that pursuant to ADS 303.5.8 an executed set of Certifications and Representations as listed below must be provided prior to award of an Agreement. Should negotiations commence, the Agreement Officer will request the requisite documentation from the successful applicant at that time. Pursuant to 22 CFR § 226.81, it is USAID's policy not to award fees under assistance instruments. Other reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (OMB Circular A-122 for nonprofit organizations), may be paid under the agreement.

The required Certification and Representations are:

- A. A signed copy of the certification and disclosure forms for "Restrictions on Lobbying" (see [22 CFR 227](#));
- B. A signed copy of the Certification Regarding Terrorist Funding required by Internal Mandatory Reference [AAPD 04-07](#); and
- C. For U.S. organizations, a signed copy of the Mandatory Reference "[Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs](#)".

Non-U.S. organizations must submit this certification if any part of the program will be undertaken in the United States;

Following application review, applicants will be advised if negotiations are to be initiated, additional information is required, or if a decision has been reached not to fund the application.

D. PROHIBITION AGAINST TRANSACTIONS WITH LISTED INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

- (a) Applicants are reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and

organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the Recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws.

(b) One of the applicable orders is Executive Order 13224, dated September 24, 2001. The web site of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), of the Department of Treasury, contains the text of that order and a list of the individuals and entities designated thereunder. It also contains lists of individuals and entities designated under other applicable statutes, regulations and Executive Orders. See <http://treasury.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sanctions/terrorism.html>.

(c) USAID reserves the right to review, and either approve or reject, the following subawards if proposed under an agreement: (i) any contract or subcontract in excess of \$100,000 with a non-U.S. organization or individual; and (ii) any grant or sub-grant to a non-U.S. organization or individual, regardless of the dollar value. Furthermore, the written consent of USAID is required before certain other forms of assistance may be provided to a non-U.S. organization or individual. These include in-kind assistance such as renovation of an NGO's facilities, repair or replacement of a company's equipment, and training activities (other than training in West Bank/Gaza lasting 80 hours or less). The details of these requirements are described in notices issued by USAID from time to time. No approval (or failure to disapprove) by USAID shall relieve the Recipient of its legal obligation to comply with applicable Executive Orders and laws.

(d) The successful Applicant(s), and each recipient of a subaward described in the preceding paragraph, agrees to promptly notify USAID's cognizant technical officer (CTO) in the event of any significant change in its activities or management, including any significant change in its "key individuals". For purposes of this requirement, "key individuals" means (i) the program manager or chief of party for the USAID-financed program; (ii) the principal officer and deputy principal officer of the organization (e.g., executive director, deputy director, president, vice president); (iii) principal officers of the organization's governing body (e.g., chairman, vice chairman, treasurer and secretary of the board of directors or board of trustees); and (iv) any other person with significant responsibilities for administration of USAID-financed activities or resources.

(e) This provision, including this paragraph (e), shall be included in all contracts, subcontracts and sub-grants issued under an agreement awarded pursuant to this RFA.

E. CONTENT OF APPLICATIONS

Applicants are requested to include the following in proposals:

1. An overall approach that focuses on:
 - a. why the specific infrastructure is being proposed;
 - b. why the geographic location(s) have been proposed;
 - c. how use of local labor will be maximized;
 - d. how use of local materials will be maximized;

- e. what non-USAID resources will be leveraged; and
 - f. how the program will be completed as quickly as possible and what specific steps will be taken to ensure speedy implementation
2. An implementation schedule that is feasible. The demonstration of rapid mobilization, start-up and completion of activities is essential.
 3. A clear, concise management plan that appropriately addresses issues such as management relationships, level of effort, description of staffing, past experience and qualifications of key personnel.
 4. A full description of hiring practices for this activity and wages expected to be paid under each job category. Activities supported by this program may not discriminate on the basis of religion, nationality, ethnic background, or the political affiliation of potential beneficiaries. Local labor laws and internationally recognized workers' rights must be followed.
 5. A description of relevant organizational experience, both in terms of sectoral expertise and familiarity with the situation in the West Bank and Gaza.
 6. A plan for institutional partnerships that appropriately divides responsibilities, and establishes arrangements for coordination.
 7. A description of coordination with relevant partners, including other donors, Palestinian Authority ministries, Palestinian NGOs, and the private sector.
 8. A financial plan to include cost-sharing by applicant, partner organizations and/or communities, other donors, etc. that outlines funding requirements sufficient to ensure desired results.
 9. Evidence that the applicant organization and its staff can manage the additional program and financial responsibilities, in cases where the applicant has other grants/projects in the West Bank and Gaza.
 10. An outline detailing procedures that will be followed by subcontractors and sub-grantees that will ensure adequate accountability for all USAID resources. Selected applicants will, however, be solely responsible to USAID for all funding.
 11. An organizational chart of the organization and the structure of the proposed team, including key personnel.
 12. A performance-monitoring plan will be required for demonstrating and recording impact and results, including numbers of beneficiaries, cost per person day of employment generated, etc. This plan must be consistent with USAID's Geographic Information System.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW**A. MANDATORY CRITERION**

1. An applicant must be a U.S. non-government organization or a registered public international organization (PIO).

B. WEIGHTED CRITERIA

The weighted criteria for evaluating applications are provided below.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE 20 POINTS

a. General Experience (10 points) -- Applicants should discuss their experience in community services development programs in the Middle East, especially those with an employment generation focus. Applicants must describe this experience in terms of number, size and duration of programs, and the range of infrastructure and/or services provided under the programs. Applicants should describe the organization's track record and statement of potential in deploying local staff to implement community services development programs. Applicants should also present CVs of proposed key personnel.

b. Region-specific Experience (5 points) -- Applicants should describe all direct organizational experience in the Middle East. West Bank/Gaza experience will be weighted more heavily than other Middle East experience and/or presence.

c. Education and Youth Services Infrastructure Experience (5 points) -- Applicants should describe all community services development experience in the fields of educational infrastructure and youth services infrastructure.

2. TECHNICAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY 20 POINTS

The technical approach should be methodologically sound and based on clear analysis of the problems to be tackled. The design should be well developed with clearly defined, achievable objectives responsive to demonstrated community needs. Evidence of an applicant's understanding of community needs should be reflected in program design. The sequence and timing of activities to be undertaken should be defined. Applicants must clearly state the intended results and how they propose to measure those results. Baseline data, where available, should be presented.

3. SITE SELECTION 15 POINTS

Applications should present persuasively the reasons for selection of project sites in keeping with the program's targets of poor, needy urban and rural locations. The demonstrated need of selected communities is the most important factor in site selection. Arguments should be based on data available from economic, health and social studies.

Information with respect to a community's need for particular educational or youth services infrastructure will also be weighed.

4. PLAN TO LEVERAGE NON-USG RESOURCES 10 POINTS

USAID is looking for innovative proposals which clearly articulate how limited USAID funds can best leverage community, counterpart and outside contributions to the overall well being of a program. Applicants must explain the valuation of in-kind contributions and other proposed cost-sharing mechanisms (e.g. overhead-sharing, cash contributions, equipment donations) that are not simply in-cash contributions.

5. EFFECTIVE PLAN FOR MAXIMIZING LABOR INTENSITY 10 POINTS

USAID is seeking applications that demonstrate highly labor intensive approaches to implementation activities so that creation of short-term employment opportunities is maximized. Applications must state the percentage of total costs allocated to employment, the number of person days of employment expected to be created, and the proposed cost of a person day of employment.

6. PLAN FOR MAXIMIZING LOCAL MATERIALS USAGE 5 POINTS

USAID is seeking applications that maximize local (i.e. West Bank and Gaza origin) materials usage. Applications must state the percentage of total costs allocated to materials, and explain approaches to maximize usage of local materials in proposed programs.

7. FINANCIAL PLAN 15 POINTS

The financial plan shall be fully supported by cost data adequate to establish the reasonableness of proposed costs. At minimum, the financial plan shall contain summary budget page, annual budgets for each year defined by major program activities, and detailed budget notes and supporting justification of all proposed budget line items. The total estimated amount for each major activity must be supported by detailed cost line items, such as personnel salaries and wages, fringe benefits, consultants, allowances, travel and transportation, per diem, training, equipment, subcontractors, sub-grantees, other direct costs and indirect costs. The applicant shall provide specific budget details and narrative information, in addition to percentage and total dollar amount, for proposed cost sharing. Cost sharing, once accepted, becomes a condition of payment of the federal share.

Note that the organization's financial management capacity is of particular concern, and it may be assessed as part of a pre-award survey carried out by USAID or its designee if deemed appropriate by the Mission's Agreement Officer.

8. EXIT STRATEGY**5 POINTS**

Applications should clearly and reasonably demonstrate how the program being proposed will continue to exist beyond the period of USAID financing.

Under this RFA, applications can propose to provide educational infrastructure or youth-related services infrastructure or both. As stated in Section D. "Program Description", it is expected that the bulk of USAID funding under this RFA will be directed to educational infrastructure, however, final funding allocation decisions will be made at the time of award.

C. COST SHARE DISCUSSION

Applications that do not meet at least the minimum cost-share requirement are not eligible for award consideration. Cost effectiveness is a required evaluation criterion in all competitive awards (see 303.3.5.2). Cost effectiveness includes cost-share, when required. If an applicant proposes a higher than minimum cost share, this may be considered within the "cost effectiveness" evaluation criterion.

In-kind contributions are allowable as cost share, in accordance with OMB Circular A-110 and 22 CFR 226.23. These include such things as volunteer time; valuation of donated supplies, equipment and other property; use of unrecovered direct costs, etc.

As part of the analysis of the applicant's proposed budget, the Agreement Officer will review the applicant's proposed cost share contributions (e.g. categories or items) for cost realism and to verify that they meet the standards set in 22 CFR 226.23 for U.S. organizations, or the Standard Provision entitled "Cost Sharing" for non-U.S. organizations. USAID's policy is not to apply its source, origin, and nationality requirements or the restricted goods provision established in the Standard Provision entitled "USAID Eligibility Rules for Goods and Services" to cost share contributions. The Agreement Officer may authorize the selected recipient(s) to attribute cost share contributions from sub recipients to the prime award.

VI. AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**A. NOTIFICATION OF REVIEW OUTCOME**

Following application review, applicants will be advised if negotiations are to be initiated, additional information is required, or if a decision has been reached not to fund the application.

After completion of negotiations with potential awardees, a notice of award signed by the Agreement Officer constitutes the authorizing document. Notice of Award will be provided to the authorized official at the headquarters of successful applicants by electronic means.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified at their main offices.

B. REPORTING

The organizations selected to carry out this program will report quarterly to the CTO in USAID's General Development Office (GDO) on all activities, including quarterly targets upon which they will jointly agree with the Cognizant Technical officer in annual implementation plans. Timing and content of reporting submissions will be consistent with USAID West Bank and Gaza's reporting timeframes for semi-annual and annual reporting. The detailed annual implementation plan (including a schedule) for year one must be submitted for approval to the USAID West Bank and Gaza designated Cognizant Technical Officer within 30 days of award of the Agreement. Recipients shall provide USAID West Bank and Gaza with two copies of quarterly reports, in a format to be agreed upon with the CTO. At a minimum, the quarterly report shall include a budget report (including accruals and disbursements) and a narrative report on activities (including identification of progress, problems, remedial action and resources/costs associated with specific sub-activities). A final report will be due 30 days following the completion date of the activity.

In addition, successful applicants will be required to participate in USAID's Geographic Information System (GIS), to provide the CTO with information required for USAID's biannual program reports, to provide USAID's public affairs team with periodic information on activities, and to submit a weekly update on activities expected to be no longer than one-half page in length.

VII. USAID CONTACTS

All questions concerning procurement matters related to this request should be submitted in writing, to the attention of Hourig Khoury, Procurement Specialist, at fax number 972-3-511-4893 or by e-mail to: hkhoury@usaid.gov no later than June 30, 2004.

VIII. OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

DISCLAIMER

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

ATTACHMENT: ANNEX I

ANNEX I

The Community Services Program – Background

In March 1995, USAID provided \$22.9 million in assistance through the Small Scale Community Infrastructure Project to create immediate, primarily short-term, jobs for Palestinians. This project established and funded a small enterprise loan program, school maintenance and construction, and after-school recreation activities. Results under this program were impressive. USAID assistance supported repairs at 100 schools, constructed 32 playgrounds, built 75 school boundary walls, and rehabilitated over 500 housing units. As a result of this program, approximately 330,000 person days of employment were generated over three years. The employment generated from these activities provided employment to Palestinians affected by closure and improved the basic infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza.

In September 1999, USAID initiated a pilot Community Services Program (CSP), the first phase of which was known as the Community and Rural Services Program (CRSP). It was an immediate response to widespread Palestinian demand for improved basic services in rural and under-served urban areas. USAID awarded five grants, totaling \$23.6 million, to USPVOs working in partnership with Palestinian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to improve community services. Under the CRSP, thousands of Palestinians benefited from improved schools, health clinics, roads, water distribution networks, and wastewater treatment systems.

In 2000, USAID introduced the second phase of the CSP, known as the Village Services Program (VSP). Under the VSP, USAID awarded \$42.3 million to six USPVOs and one PIO between September 2000 and December 2000. These awards financed improved community services in clusters of 85 villages throughout the West Bank and Gaza.

In 2001, USAID began the Emergency Employment Generation Program (EEGP) to respond to the seriously high levels of unemployment resulting from the Intifada and border closures in the West Bank and Gaza. Under the EEGP, USAID awarded six agreements totaling \$17.4 million.

In 2002, USAID launched the Job Opportunities through Basic Services (JOBS) Program under which nine cooperative agreements totaling approximately \$60 million were awarded to seven USPVOs and one PIO. The JOBS Program was an expansion of the employment generation emphasis of the EEGP but it introduced more concern for sustainability of activities.

In summary, the first two phases of the Community Services Program, the CRSP and VSP, were designed to provide communities with needed social services and infrastructure. Importantly, significant levels of employment were generated through these programs. The second two phases, the EEGP and JOBS, had as their objective employment generation, using the provision of social services and infrastructure as a means.

Recognizing the immediate importance of job creation in the West Bank and Gaza, and the efficacy of using community-level assistance to generate employment, USAID is expanding its program of assistance under the “Improved Community Services” Strategic Objective (SO). This program will immediately provide work to the unemployed through its financing of improved educational and youth services infrastructure in villages, towns, and municipalities in the West Bank and Gaza.

The PINE Program

The Palestinian Infrastructure for Needed Employment (PINE) Program will address dual and interrelated problems of the West Bank and Gaza--the inadequacy of community educational and youth services infrastructure and the chronic lack of employment opportunities. Both financial and human resource constraints prevent the Palestinian Authority (PA) and its institutions and municipalities from meeting the educational and youth services infrastructure needs of the Palestinian people, which are constantly on the rise as a result of rapid population growth.

The PINE Program will also address the high level of unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza that has resulted from depressed economic activity, which, in turn, flows from the political crisis. Though unemployment levels have varied through the period of the Intifada, they have not been within reasonable levels at any time during the period and have, from time to time, been so high as to cause concerns about demonetization of the economy. Overall, the broadly defined unemployment rate is now about 30 per cent but is much higher in poorer areas.

The objectives of the PINE Program are to finance educational and youth services infrastructure through labor intensive activities to create much needed short-term employment opportunities for jobless Palestinians. The PINE Program will finance activities in the most poorly served locations in the West Bank and Gaza **and** it will provide short-term employment opportunities in locations where the availability of jobs is lowest. The program will thus have the double benefit of providing tangible, long-term benefits to communities while creating short-term employment opportunities. In this way, it will inject liquidity into the Palestinian economy and support demand and household incomes. The PINE Program is designed to operate despite the problems of constrained access and mobility, and to involve beneficiary communities as much as possible in the planning, implementation, and follow-up of activities.

Relationship to Mission Strategy

The PINE Program will be implemented under USAID West Bank and Gaza’s SO 8, Improved Community Services. Most activities will fall under Intermediate Result No. 1 (IR 1), Improved Physical Infrastructure. The program is also closely related to several Mission other objectives. It complements SO 5, Increased Access to Higher Education and Training. In addition, it complements the work of SO 1 in generating employment and of SO 7 in improving Palestinian health by enhancing school sanitary facilities.

Funding for this activity as well as direct management and oversight will come from the SO 8 team.

Relationship to Palestinian Authority Priorities

The PINE Program is consonant with the Palestinian Authority and World Bank preferences for donor financing. The first priority is direct budget support, which USAID by law cannot directly provide. After budget support, the PA and the World Bank’s second most preferred option for donor financing is public infrastructure development. The reason for this is straightforward – it injects liquidity into the economy, sustaining consumption and aggregate demand and benefiting the entire economy in much the same way as budget support does.

In addition to meeting a high priority of the PA, the PINE Program will be unique among all other donor interventions in the West Bank and Gaza in its assuming a leading role in the rehabilitation of educational and youth services infrastructure. When not providing direct budget support to the PA, the larger donors have tended to focus their efforts either on humanitarian responses such as the provision of emergency food, cash, shelter, drinking water, and support for UNRWA, or alternatively at the longer-term end of the development spectrum, in areas such as institutional capacity building and reform. This sector—public infrastructure development—represents the largely overlooked middle ground from a donor involvement point of view and as such an important opportunity for USAID to fill a critical void and demonstrate leadership.

***** END*****