



USAID | BENIN
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

USAID **50** ANNIVERSARY

Issuance Date: March 10, 2014
RFA Clarification Questions Due: March 17, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. Local time
Closing Date: April 7, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. Local time

Subject: Request for Applications (RFA) Number: RFA-680-14-000001
RFA Title: Community RAFT (Resilience and Action to reduce Flood Threats)

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for assistance funding from qualified Benin local women nongovernmental organization (NGO) networks to implement a two year program entitled "Community RAFT (Resilience and Action to reduce Flood Threats)." The authority for the RFA is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. The Recipient will be responsible for ensuring achievement of the program objectives. Please refer to the Program Description for a complete statement of goals and expected results.

Applicants under consideration for an award that have never received funding from USAID will be subject to a pre-award audit to determine fiscal responsibility, ensure adequacy of financial controls.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID intends to provide approximately \$1,000,000 in total USAID funding to be allocated over the two (2) year period. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

Award will be made to that responsible applicant(s) whose application(s) best meets the requirements of this RFA and the selection criteria contained herein. 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 an application. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. In addition, final award of any resultant grant(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 grant, all preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.81, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the grant program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (22 CFR 226, OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organizations, OMB Circular A-21 for universities, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations), may be paid under the agreement when awarded.

This RFA is being issued and consists of this cover letter and the following:

1. Section I, Funding Opportunity Description;
2. Section II, Award Information
3. Section III, Eligibility Information;
4. Section IV, Application and Submission Information
5. Section V, Application Review Information
6. Section VI, Award and Administration Information
7. Section VII, Agency Contacts
8. Section VIII, Other Information

This RFA and any future amendments can be downloaded from <http://www.usaid.gov/bj>.

- a) Select "Contracting" under USAID/Benin, then under "Current USAID/Benin Solicitations"
- b) select "RFA-680-14-000002 for Community RAFT (Resilience and Action to reduce Flood Threats)" from the home page to download the RFA.

Any clarifications/questions concerning this RFA should be submitted in writing to Cosmas Apedo, via email at capedo@usaid.gov with copy to Francine Agblo at fagblo@usaid.gov and oaadocs@usaid.gov by the date listed above. If there are problems in downloading the RFA from the Internet, please contact Cosmas Apedo for a complete copy of the RFA or for technical assistance.

If it is determined that the answer to any question(s) is of sufficient importance to warrant notification to all prospective recipients, a Questions and Answer document, and/or if needed, an amendment to the RFA, will be issued. Therefore, questions should be submitted by no later than the date and time indicated at the top of this cover letter.

Applications must be received by the closing date and time indicated at the top of this cover letter at the place designated below for receipt of applications. Late applications will not be considered for award. Applications must be directly responsive to the terms and conditions of this RFA. Telegraphic or fax applications (entire proposal) are not authorized for this RFA and will not be accepted. Applications and modifications thereof shall be submitted in envelopes with the name and address of the applicant and USAID-Benin-680-13-000001-RFA inscribed thereon, and should be sent via courier to:

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Benin
Attention: Cosmas Apedo
Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
Rue Caporal Bernard Anani
01 BP 2012
Cotonou, Benin

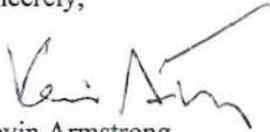
In the event of an inconsistency between the documents comprising this RFA, it shall be resolved by the following descending order of precedence:

- (1) Section IV – Application and Submission Information
- (2) Section V - Application Review Information (Selection Criteria)
- (3) This cover letter

For the purposes of this RFA, the term "Grant" is synonymous with "Cooperative Agreement"; "Grantee" is synonymous with "Recipient"; and "Grant Officer" is synonymous with "Agreement Officer".

The applicant shall submit applications in BOTH electronic and hard copy format as described in Section IV. It is the responsibility of the recipient of the application document to ensure that it has been received in its entirety and USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Armstrong", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kevin Armstrong
Mission Director/Agreement Officer
USAID/Benin

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The funding opportunity description is provided in the attached Program Description (**Attachment 1**).

II. Award Information

A. Estimate of Funds Available

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID intends to provide approximately \$1,000,000.00 in total USAID funding for the life of the activity.

B. Type and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID/Benin anticipates awarding one (1) Cooperative Agreement (CA) resulting from this RFA to the responsible applicant whose application conforming to this RFA offers the greatest value (see Section I of this RFA) to the U.S. Government (USG).

The U.S. Government may: (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept other than the lowest cost application, (c) accept more than one application, (d) accept alternate applications, and (e) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

C. Period of Performance

The period of performance anticipated herein is approximately two (2) years from the effective date of award.

The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed award may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed cooperative agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Qualified applicants may be Benin local women or social services non-governmental organization (NGO) networks.

B. Local Registration

All local institutions must be registered as a legal entity in Benin.

Definition of local organization:

- Be organized under the laws of the recipient country;
- Have its principal place of business in the recipient country;
- Be majority owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the recipient country or be managed by a governing body, the majority of whom are citizens or lawful permanent residents of a recipient country; and

- Not be controlled by a foreign entity or by an individual or individuals who are not citizens or permanent residents of the recipient country.

The term “controlled by”, means a majority ownership or beneficiary interest as defined above, or the power, either directly or indirectly, whether exercised or exercisable, to control the election, appointment, or tenure of the organization’s managers or a majority of the organization’s governing body by any means, e.g., ownership, contract, or operation of law.

C. Cost Share or Matching

Although there is no general legislative requirement that recipients of grants or cooperative agreements must cost share, cost sharing is an important element of the USAID-recipient relationship. Applicants are encouraged to contribute resources from their own, private or local sources for the implementation of this program.

Contributions can be either cash or in-kind and can include contributions from the applicant, local counterpart organizations, program clients, and other donors (but not other U.S. government funding sources). Cost sharing contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-122 – Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations which can be found at the following link <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122.html>. Information regarding the proposed cost share should be included in the SF 424 (for U.S. organizations only) and the Budget as indicated on those documents. The cost sharing plan should be discussed in the Budget Notes to the extent necessary to demonstrate its feasibility and applicability to the activity.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. POINT OF CONTACT

Cosmas Apedo
USAID/Benin – OAA
Rue Caporal Bernard Anani
01 BP 2012
Cotonou, Benin

Tel: 00229-21-30-73-45; Ext 2119
Email: capedo@usaid.gov

Any questions concerning this RFA must be submitted in writing to Cosmas Apedo via internet at capedo@usaid.gov and copy to oaadocs@usaid.gov, and to be submitted no later than the date and time indicated on the top of the cover letter of this RFA. Oral explanations or instructions given before award will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this RFA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment of this RFA.

B. FORMS

Applicants may submit the application using the SF-424 series (not a requirement), which includes the:

- **SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance**
- **SF-424A, Budget Information - Nonconstruction Programs**, and
- **SF-424B, Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs**

C. PRE-AWARD CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF THE RECIPIENT

In addition to the certifications that are included in the SF 424, applicants must provide the following certifications, assurances and other statements. Complete copies of these Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements may be found as an attachment to this RFA (see attachment 3).

- a. A signed copy of the certification and disclosure forms for “Restrictions on Lobbying” (see [22 CFR 227](#));
- b. A signed copy of the “Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers” for covered assistance in covered countries;
- c. A signed copy of the Certification Regarding Terrorist Funding required by the Internal Mandatory Reference [AAPD 04-14](#);
- d. A signed copy of “Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking”
- e. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants; and
- f. All applicants must provide a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.

Applications shall be submitted in two separate parts: (a) technical proposal or management plan, and (b) cost or business application.

D. APPLICATION PREPARATION GUIDELINES

USAID will accept applications from the qualified entities listed in Section III A of this RFA.

Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this RFA. Failure to do so will be at the applicant’s risk. All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the application format. Section V addresses the technical evaluation procedures for the applications. Applications which are incomplete are not directly responsive to the terms, conditions; specifications and provisions of this RFA may be categorized as non-responsive and eliminated from further consideration.

Applications shall be submitted in two separate volumes: (a) technical and (b) cost or business application. Technical portions of applications should be submitted in an original and two (2) copies and cost portions of applications in an original and one (1) copy. All copies of the technical and cost/business applications must be separately placed in sealed envelopes clearly marked on the outside with the following words "USAID Benin 680-12-000001 RFA Technical or Cost/Business (as appropriate) Application". These individual envelopes must then be bundled together to be received as one complete package.

The application should be prepared according to the structural format set forth below. Applications must be submitted no later than the date and time indicated on the cover page of this RFA. **Applications shall be prepared in English.** Applications in any other language shall be treated as non-responsive and eliminated from further consideration.

Applicants should retain for their records one copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany their application. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person signing the application. To facilitate the competitive review of the applications, USAID will consider only applications conforming to the format prescribed below.

E. TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORMAT

The technical application will be the most important item of consideration in selection for award of this proposed activity. The application should demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this activity. Therefore, it should be specific, complete and concise and arranged in the order of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

The Technical Application may be submitted in French or English and should not exceed 15 pages in length, exclusive of annexes. If the application is submitted in French, prior to award, the applicant must provide an English translation of the technical and cost application. English is the official language of this procurement. Therefore the final application should be submitted in English. In the event of inconsistency between any terms of the English application and the French application, the English language meaning shall control. Translation costs are the applicant's responsibility to bear. The Technical Application should consist of the following sections:

- (1) Cover Page (1 page);
- (2) Application Executive Summary (3 pages);
- (3) Program Narrative (12 pages)
 - a) Technical approach of the applications
 - b) Past performance of the applicant
 - c) Management Plan and Institutional Capacity
- (4) Annex
 - a) Budget
 - b) Budget narrative

Page limitations are specified below for each section; applications must be in MS Word and/or Excel on letter paper (8-1/2 by 11 inch), single spaced, 11 pitch or larger type font "Times New Roman", and have at least one inch margins on the top, bottom and both sides and tabs to distinguish each section.

Applications may contain matrices, tables and figures if they synthesize needed information. Applications may contain text boxes, and text may be in no smaller than 10-point font, as long as the boxes are formatted so as to not unduly interfere with readability. Cover pages, Application Executive Summary, Attachments, and other supporting documentations do not count within the 16 pages limitation.

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purposes, should:

- (a) Mark the title page with the following legend:

"This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed - in whole or in part - for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this applicant as a result of - or in connection

with - the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets _____; and

(b) Mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following legend:

"Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application."

E.1 Cover Page: A single page (1) with the names of the organizations/institutions involved in the proposed application. In addition, the Cover Page should include information about a contact person for the applicant, including this individual's name (both typed and his/her signature), title or position with the organization/institution, address, e-mail address and telephone and fax numbers. Also state whether the contact person is the person with authority to contract for the applicant, and if not, that person should also be listed.

E.2 Application Executive Summary: A three (3) pages brief description of proposed activities, goals, and anticipated results (both quantitative and qualitative). Briefly describe technical and managerial resources of your organization. Describe how the overall program will be managed. State the bottom line funding request from USAID and the bottom line funding secured from other sources (state sources and amounts) for the proposed activity. The application summary should be concise and accurate.

E.3 Program Narrative: In eleven (12) pages, please describe your proposed strategy and approach and the experience and personnel capabilities of the Applicant, excluding bio-data and other attachments. The narrative should provide a clear description of what the Applicant proposes to do and application's structure should reflect the selection criteria listed below. The following sections should be included:

Technical Approach

The description of the technical approach should include:

a) The Program Approach must include a clear description of the conceptual approach and the general strategy (i.e. methodology and techniques) being proposed; outline specific, focused activities, explain how the approach is expected to achieve the proposed objectives; describe a plan that will enable the activities to continue after the activity is completed, and propose a sound and effective monitoring and evaluation plan. Applicants must specify annual and end-of-program results in the design of the activity that directly contribute to the expected results. Applicants are encouraged to propose innovative activities designed to reach the desired outcomes/results.

b) Applicants must discuss their rationale for selecting the communities and women's groups with which they will be working and how the selection of communities and community organizations will enable the objectives of the activity to be achieved.

c) Applicants must provide a program implementation plan including main activities of the program. List on the vertical axis the activities, and on the horizontal axis the following information: (i) name of implementer(s); and (ii) time frame, noting estimated dates of

completion. Indicate when the proposed program will be fully operational. The applicant is encouraged to propose innovative implementation mechanisms to reach the desired results and an aggressive but realistic schedule of activities as steps toward achieving proposed results. The implantation plan should clearly outline links between the proposed results, conceptual approach, and should include a realistic timeline for achieving the annual and end-of-program results. This plan will be considered illustrative for the purposes of evaluating applications; however, once the award is made, finalizing the implementation plan will be a key activity.

d) Applicants are strongly encouraged to highlight any innovations they plan to bring to this activity and to indicate how they plan to ensure that the structures put into place through Community RAFT continue after planned activity funding comes to an end.

Organizational Past Performance:

Describe at least three (3) projects which the organization, both the primary Applicant and any partners substantially involved in implementation has implemented involving similar or related activity over the past six years. Applicants should include the following:

- Name and address of the donors for which the activity work was performed and primary location(s) of work;
- Current telephone number and e-mail address of a responsible representative of the organization for which the activity was performed;
- Contract/grant name and number (if any); annual amount received for each of the last six years; beginning and ending dates; and
- A brief description of the activity/assistance activity.

USAID may contact references and use the past performance data regarding the organization, along with other information to determine the applicant's responsibility. The U.S. Government reserves the right to obtain information for use in the evaluation of past performance from any and all sources inside or outside the Government.

Management Plan and Institutional Capacity:

As part of the technical application, applicants must submit a Management Plan. The applicant should specify the organizational structure of the entire activity team, and describe how each of the components will be managed. "Implementing partners" are organizations that will have substantial implementation responsibilities. The management plan should identify potential implementing partners and clearly state the responsibilities of each proposed implementing partner in achieving the proposed results.

Applicants must also offer evidence of their technical and managerial resources and expertise (or their ability to obtain such) in activity management and their experience in managing similar activities in the past. Information in this section should include (but not limited to) the following information:

- a) Brief description of organizational history and experience;
- b) Sub-recipient or subcontractor capabilities and expertise, if applicable;
- c) Proposed field management structure and financial controls;

E.4 Annex:

- Budget

Applicants must submit an overall summary budget as well as a detailed annual budget.

In preparing the budget, the Applicants must provide sufficient cost information for the Agreement Officer to negotiate grant award amount is a reasonable and realistic indication of the actual costs of the effort. Stated another way, the budget should relate to results while also showing a type of cost for each budget line item. The budget must clearly display:

- The breakdown of all costs associated with the program according to costs of, if applicable, headquarters, regional and/or country offices;
- The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization involved in the program;
- The costs associated with, if applicable, external, expatriate technical assistance and those associated with local in-country technical assistance;
- The breakdown of the financial and in-kind contributions of all organizations involved in implementing this Grant; and
- The potential contributions of non-USAID or private commercial donors to this Grant.

- Budget Narrative

To support the costs proposed, please provide detailed budget narrative for all costs that clearly identifies the basis of all costs, such as market surveys, price quotations, current salaries, historical experience, etc. The combination of the cost data and breakdowns specified above and the budget narrative must be sufficient to allow a determination whether the costs estimated are reasonable and realistic.

The following section provides guidance on issues involving specific types of costs. Please note that applicants are **not** required to present their costs in the budget or budget narrative in the format or order below.

- i. Salaries and Wages – Direct salaries and wages should be proposed in accordance with the applicant’s personnel policies.
- ii. Travel and Transportation – The application should indicate the number of trips, domestic and international (if any), and the estimated costs per trip. Specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, duration of travel, and number of individuals traveling. *Per diem* should be based on the applicant’s normal travel policies (applicants may choose to refer to the Federal Standardized Travel Regulations for cost estimates).
- iii. Equipment – Specify all equipment to be purchased, including the type of equipment, the manufacturer, the unit costs, the number of units to be purchased and the expected geographic source.

- iv. Materials and Supplies – Specify all materials and supplies expected to be purchased, including type, unit cost and units.
- v. Communications – Specific information regarding the type of communication cost at issue (i.e. mail, telephone, cellular phones, internet etc.) must be included in order to allow an assessment of the realism and reasonableness of these types of costs.
- vi. Subcontracts/Sub-awards/Consultants (if any) – Information sufficient to determine the reasonableness of the cost of each specific subcontract/sub-award and consultant expected to be hired must be included. Similar information should be provided for all consultants as is provided under the category for personnel.
- vii. Direct Facilities Costs (if any) – Specific information regarding the cost of any facilities needed to perform program activities. The information provided should include the unit cost (rent), the time period the facilities are needed and the number of facilities. Only facilities that directly benefit the program activities should be included in this category.
- viii. Other Direct Costs – This may include the costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than insurance included in the applicant’s fringe benefits) as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The narrative should provide a breakdown and support for all other direct costs. If seminars and conferences are included, the applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs.
- ix. Indirect Costs – Local Institutions usually do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) letter with the US Government. Therefore no indirect costs should be included in the cost/business application submitted by local NGOs. Local institutions submitting applications should treat all indirect costs as direct costs.

Cost Evaluation

Cost has not been assigned a weight but will be evaluated for realism, reasonableness, and cost-effectiveness.

COST APPLICATION FORMAT

The Cost or Business Application is to be submitted under separate cover from the technical application. Certain documents are required to be submitted by an applicant in order for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. However, it is USAID policy not to burden applicants with undue reporting requirements if that information is readily available through other sources.

The Cost Application shall consist of the following:

- Cover Page
- SF-424, SF-424A and SF-424B
- Mandatory Certifications and Assurances
- Acknowledgement of any amendments to the RFA

- Budget
- Budget Narrative
- Documentation for applicants who do not have a current NICRA or who have never received an award from the U.S. government as explained more fully below.

The following sections describe the documentation that applicants for Assistance award must submit to USAID prior to award. While there is no page limit for this portion, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary details to address the following:

Cover Page: A single page with the names of the organizations/institutions involved and the lead or primary Applicant clearly identified. Any proposed sub grantees (or implementing partners) should be listed separately. In addition, the cover Page should provide a contact person for the prime Applicant, including this individual's name (both typed and his/her signature), title or position with the organization/institution, address, telephone and fax numbers and e-mail address. State whether the contact person is the person with authority to contract for the Applicant, and if not, that person should also be listed with contact information. Applications signed by an agent shall be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person signing the application. The DUNs number and SAM Registration of the applicant should also be listed on the cover page.

SF-424, SF-424A and SF-424B

All Applicants may submit their applications using the SF-424 series which includes:

- SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A Budget Information – Non-construction Programs, and
- SF-424B Assurances – Non-construction Programs

The SF-424 forms are attached in this RFA (see **attachment 4**) - (see also Section VIII)

Mandatory Certifications and Assurances

Applicants must submit the following mandatory certifications:

- PART I – Certifications and Assurances
 - Assurances of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federal Assisted Programs
 - Certification regarding Lobbying
 - Certification Covering Terrorist Financing
 - Certification of Compliance with standard provisions entitled “Condoms” and “Prohibition on the Promotion or Advocacy of the Legalization or Practice of Prostitution or Sex Trafficking”
- PART II – Other Statements of Recipient

These certifications and assurances are attached as **Annex A** to this RFA.

Acknowledgement of Any Amendments to the RFA

Applicants shall acknowledge receipt of all amendments, if any, to this RFA by signing and returning the amendment as part of the cost application. The Government must receive the acknowledgement by the time specified for receipt of applications.

Other Documentation

a. Teaming (if applicable): If the applicant is a group of organization that has actually formed a separate entity – i.e. a joint venture – for the purposes of this application, then the cost application must include a copy of the documents that set forth the legal relationship between the partner organizations. If no joint venture is involved, the cost application should include a complete discussion of the relationship between the applicant and its partner organizations, how work under the program will be allocated and how work will be organized and managed. The Budget Narrative described above should discuss which team member is bearing a particular cost where appropriate and justify and explain the cost in question.

b. Financial and Other Resources: The cost application should include information on the applicant's financial status and management. All applicants should submit information relating to whether there has been approval of the organization's accounting system by a U.S. Government agency, including the name, address, and telephone number of the cognizant auditor. If the applicant has made a certification to USAID that its personnel, procurement and travel policies are compliant with applicable OMB circular and other applicable USAID and Federal regulations, a copy of the certification should be included with the application.

Organizations that have never been awarded a U.S. government contract or grant must present the following documentation:

- (a) Audited financial statements for the past three years;
- (b) Organization chart, by-laws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable;
- (c) Copies of the applicant's accounting, personnel, travel and procurement policies. Please indicate whether any of these policies have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the U.S. government. If so, provide the name, address, email and phone number of the cognizant reviewing official. **Similar information should be submitted for all partner organizations.**

Unnecessarily elaborate applications: unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective application in response to this RFA are not desired and may be construed as an indication of the applicant's lack of cost consciousness. Elaborate artwork, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

c. Responsibility: Applicants should submit any additional evidence of responsibility deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. The information submitted should substantiate that the Applicant:

- (a) Has adequate financial resource or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the Agreement.

- (b) Has the ability to comply with the Agreement conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, non-governmental and governmental.
- (c) Has a satisfactory record of performance. Past unsatisfactory performance will ordinarily be sufficient to justify a determination of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance.
- (d) Has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics.
- (e) Is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a Cooperative Agreement under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO).
- (f) The DUNs number and SAM Registration of the applicant should also be listed on the cover page as any applicant without an active profile in SAM will be prevented from new spending in USAID systems (GLAAS/Phoenix). The link to access the SAM website is: <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>

An award shall be made only when the Agreement Officer makes a positive determination that the applicant possesses, or has the ability to obtain, the necessary management competence in planning and carrying out assistance programs and that it will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID.

[END OF SECTION IV]

SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this particular RFA. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which applicants should address in their applications and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated. To facilitate the review of applications, applicants should organize the narrative sections of their applications in the same order as the selection criteria.

A. SELECTION CRITERIA

1) Technical approach of the applications (40 points)

Overall, the technical application adequately responds to requirements, including:

- a. Applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of activity objectives, including context of flooding situation in Benin and how it will be affected by climate change
- b. The application includes a work plan with activities that are clear, and results that are achievable.
- c. Applicant has demonstrated sufficiently that by working in the selected communities, the activity will be able to both achieve significant, demonstrable results and develop a replicable and effective structure for flood-preparedness planning and response. This should take into account community size, location, and history of recent floods.

- d. Applicant has provided sufficient analysis to show the women's groups chosen are capable of leading change in their communities.

2) **Past performance of the applicant (30 points)**

An applicant must provide a list of all its contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related activities during the six past years. The reference information for these awards must include the performance location, a brief description of the work performed, and a point of contact list with current telephone numbers. The TEC may consider other past performance information.

3) **Management Plan and Institutional Capacity (30 points)**

- a) The applicant and any proposed sub-partners will demonstrate clear capacity and experience to accomplish the range of technical interventions described in the RFA in collaboration with a range of partners.
- b) Overall staffing plan with clear roles and responsibilities for each key staff proposed.
- c) Degree to which the proposed staff have the necessary skills, experience and expertise to successfully carry out the project.

Cost Evaluation

Cost has not been assigned a weight but will be evaluated for realism, reasonableness, allocability, allowability and cost-effectiveness. Cost sharing, if any, will be evaluated on the level of financial participation proposed and the added value it represents to the program. Applicants may include cost sharing as a sub-element of cost effectiveness.

B. BRANDING STRATEGY AND MARKING PLAN

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all USAID programs, programs, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub-award, must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID Identity. See Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended; [22 CFR 226.91](#).

Under the regulation, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan, but only by the "apparent successful applicant," as defined in the regulation. The apparent successful applicant's proposed Marking Plan may include a request for approval of one or more exceptions to marking requirements established in [22 CFR 226.91](#). The Agreement Officer is responsible for evaluating and approving the Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan (including any request for exceptions) of the apparently successful applicant, consistent with the provisions "Branding Strategy," "Marking Plan," and "Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards" contained in [AAPD 05-11](#) and in [22 CFR 226.91](#). Please note that in contrast to "exceptions" to marking requirements, waivers based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by Mission Directors or other USAID Principal Officers, see [22 CFR 226.91\(j\)](#).

See Section VIII.

C. AWARD

Award will be made to responsible applicant whose application offers the greatest value, cost and other factors considered. The final award decision is made, while considering the recommendations of the TEC, by the Agreement Officer.

The Agreement Officer's decision about the funding of an award is final and not subject to review. Any information that may impact the Agreement Officer's decision shall be directed to the Agreement Officer.

Authority to obligate the Government: the Agreement Officer is the **only** individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either an Agreement signed by the Agreement Officer or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

[END OF SECTION V]

SECTION VI – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Notice of Award signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorizing document, which shall be transmitted to the Recipient for countersignature to the authorized agent of the successful organization electronically, to be followed by original copies for execution.

A. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The recipient shall be responsible to USAID/Benin for all matters related to the execution of the agreement. Specifically, the recipient shall report to the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) located within the Basic Education & Social Services Team (BESST) office.

B. MONITORING AND SITE VISITS

Because monitoring of the recipient and the grant activities is based on fixed-cost milestones, and is not tied to incurred costs, it is important that the Agreement Officer (AO) and Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) conducts appropriate monitoring and oversight of the recipient. They are encouraged to conduct site visits frequently to ensure that satisfactory progress is being made and the milestones are being met.

VI. Award Administration Information

All reporting requirements including the type of report and frequency are provided in the milestones table (**Attachment 3**).

VII. Agency Contacts

The Agreement Officer for this Award is:

Kevin Armstrong
Mission Director
USAID/Benin

The A&A Specialist for this Award is:

Cosmas Apedo
USAID/Benin - OAA

The AOR for this Award is:

TBD
USAID/Benin - SEP

VIII. Other Information

ATTACHMENTS AND ANNEXES

Attachments

- Program Description (**Attachment 1**)
- Branding Strategy - (**See Attachment 2**)
- FORMS – SF-424 (**Attachment 3**)

Annexes

- Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient (May 2006) (**Annex A**)
- Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants
- Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Recipients

Attachment: a/s