



# USAID | BENIN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

May 10, 2016

Solicitation No.: SOL-680-16-000009  
Issuance Date: May 11, 2016  
Questions due Date: May 19, 2016  
Closing Date: May 30, 2016  
Closing Time: 03:00 PM noon local time

Ladies and Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: Solicitation Number: SOL-680-16-00009, Resident Hire USPSC- GS 13 for Development Outreach and Communications (DOC) Specialist (DOC)- USAID/BENIN

*USAID/BENIN is an equal opportunity employer. We encourage all qualified candidates to apply. Persons with disabilities will be assisted and receive reasonable accommodation.*

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Benin is seeking applications from qualified U.S. Citizen residing in Benin, interested in providing personal services as described in the attached solicitation.

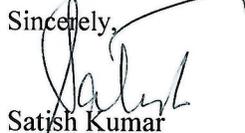
Submission shall be in accordance with this solicitation and at the place and time specified. In order to be considered for the position a candidate must meet the minimum qualifications listed in the solicitation. Any questions as well as submission of applications in responses to this solicitation must be directed to:

Lucrece Boko, Acquisition and Assistance Assistant  
USAID/Benin  
Office of Acquisition and Assistance  
Boulevard de la Marina,  
01 BP 2012  
Phone 229-97971176  
Cotonou, Republic of Benin  
Email address: [lboko@usaid.gov](mailto:lboko@usaid.gov)

Please cite the solicitation number and position title within the subject line of your email. Any attachment provided via email shall be in a format compatible with Microsoft Word 2003 or PDF and not zipped. Applications letters and forms a302-3 must be signed. Incomplete and unsigned applications will not be considered.

USAID/Benin anticipates awarding one (1) Resident U.S. Citizen PSC contract as a result of this solicitation, subject to availability of funds. USAID/Benin reserves the right not to award any contract as a result of this solicitation. This solicitation does not represent a commitment on behalf of USAID. The US Government is not obligated to make an award or to pay any costs associated with the preparation and submission of an application in response to this solicitation.

Sincerely,



Satish Kumar

Sr. Acquisition & Assistance Specialist  
USAID/Benin, OAA

U.S. Agency for International Development  
C/O American Embassy, 01 B.P. 2012  
Cotonou, BENIN

Tel: (229) 21300513, 21301792, 21304651,  
21301636, 21301411, 21307047; 21367500  
Fax: (229) 21-30-12-60  
<http://www.usaid.gov/bj>

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**I. SOLICITATION INFORMATION**

1. SOLICITATION NUMBER: SOL-680-15-000008
2. ISSUANCE DATE: May 11, 2016
3. CLOSING DATE: May 30, 2016 at 3.00 PM Benin Time.
4. POSITION TITLE: Development Outreach and Communication Specialist
5. MARKET VALUE: GS-13 (US \$73,846 to US \$96,004). See IX-COMPENSATION - for further information
6. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: 12 months with one option year extension (Subject to availability of funds)
7. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: Cotonou, Republic of Benin.
8. SUPERVISION: Supervisory Program Officer
9. AREA OF CONSIDERATION: Only U.S. Citizens Residing in Benin

***This is a USPSC Resident Hire position. Applicant must be a US Citizen residing in Benin. U.S. Resident Hire means a U.S. citizen who, at the time of hire as a PSC, resides in the Cooperating Country as a spouse or dependent of a U.S. citizen employed by a U.S. government agency or under any U.S. government-financed contract or agreement, or for reasons other than for employment with a U.S. government agency or under any U.S. government-financed contract or agreement. A U.S. citizen for purposes of this definition also includes persons who at the time of contracting are lawfully admitted permanent residents of the United States.***

**II. STATEMENT OF DUTIES**

**A. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND**

USAID has supported development efforts of Benin since 1962, investing approximately half a billion dollars in foreign assistance in the areas of health, governance, education, and economic growth. USAID/Benin maintains a \$23 million per year program in the health sector, which focuses on the control and treatment of malaria, and improves practices for maternal and child health and family planning. USAID also has several smaller programs in Benin supporting vulnerable populations, improving gender equity, expanding participation in the electoral process, and combatting transnational organized crime. In addition, USAID agricultural sector programs run out of the regional Mission in Ghana operate in Benin and coordinate closely with USAID/Benin staff.

USAID/Benin requires a DOC Specialist to provide its technical expertise to develop and implement a communication strategy designed to educate the Beninese population and other stakeholders on USAID's work. The DOC reports directly to the Supervisory Program Officer at the USAID/Benin

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Office, which is under the authority of the Country Representative and Regional Mission Director for USAID/West Africa.

The DOC serves as USAID/Benin's principal liaison with all mission teams, implementing partners, and the Embassy Public Affairs Section, on the development and implementation of the Office's overall communications strategy, including the formulation of mission-wide messages.

The DOC collaborates closely with, and follows media policy set by the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer and Press and Information Officer on all media outreach, interagency events, and VIP visits. The DOC also serves as the primary liaison with USAID's Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA), and with the communications teams based in the agency's Africa Bureau (AFR) and pillar bureaus, notably Global Health (GH), and regional Mission in Accra.

The DOC interacts with senior managers throughout the Embassy, with local and international press contacts, and with senior Government of Benin and visiting USG officials. The incumbent is a member of the Office's senior management team. At this time, the DOC does not supervise any staff.

The DOC advises and works closely with implementing partners on production of videos, stories and other publicity materials and on the planning and logistics for outreach and local media events which are numerous due to limited mass media and internet access around the country. The DOC also collaborates closely with technical offices and implementing partners, providing oversight, advice and guidance in developing and implementing USAID/Benin's Development Outreach and Communications Strategy.

S/he maintains regular contact with and collaborates with U.S. Embassy Public Affairs and Press Officers (PAOs) to ensure that senior Embassy personnel are properly apprised of USAID-managed public activities and projects and that policies and procedures regarding outreach communications are adhered to and that USG interests are protected.

Finally, as USAID/Benin transitions from a full Mission to Office status, the DOC will begin to play a more elevated role in drafting and ensuring superior quality control of internal reporting and planning documents.

The DOC supports USAID/Benin in the achievement of its objectives by regularly developing high quality, multi-format, and consistent public information communications and outreach to Beninese and American audiences, as well as regional stakeholders.

The DOC also, as appropriate and relevant, adapts agency-wide communications priorities and messaging to Mission-specific audiences and stakeholders, and contributes Mission-generated information, data, stories, photos, and video to USAID headquarters' public information and publicity efforts. The ultimate goal of the DOC function is to promote a better understanding of, and sustained support for, USAID's foreign assistance among all stakeholders in Benin and the U.S.

### **B. MAJOR DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION:**

#### **Strategic Communications Planning and Coordination (25%)**

Work closely with USAID/Benin technical teams, partners and the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section, to provide oversight, advice, and guidance to achieve maximum exposure and understanding of U.S. development efforts and special initiatives in Benin, as defined by the Chief of Mission,

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USAID Regional Mission Director, and Representative, and to set priorities for USAID media and public outreach accordingly. The DOC will also ensure sound coordination and quality control for internal documents, including program performance reporting and other strategic communications such as the Congressional Budget Justification.

Refine and implement the Office's communications and outreach strategy to increase understanding of, and support for, USAID programs among external target audiences. The Office Communications Strategy should take into account the cost/benefits of communications tools and support distribution to the broadest numbers of priority audiences possible. Manage any communications-related contracts for services to implement the strategy, such as events management, photography, video production, advertising, translation, and so forth. The incumbent will manage the DOC annual budget and performance monitoring in coordination with the Supervisory Program Officer.

Provide guidance and advise implementing partners (who receive USAID funding) on Mission and Agency-wide communications and outreach priorities, messages, online and other vehicles for dissemination, communications and media policies. Convene implementing partner (including contractors, grantees, and business) meetings with participation of the Representative and Chief of Mission to convey and update on USG foreign assistance goals in country and priorities for outreach.

Brief implementing partner meetings convened by technical offices on communications and outreach priorities, policies, and best practices. Oversee and ensure consistency of branding and marking per guidelines and advise USAID staff and contractors and grantees on developing branding and marking plans; coordinate with the Mission Contracting office on partner requirements and adherence.

### **Media and Public Relations (30%)**

Advise the Senior Mission Management and other USAID staff on press and media relations in collaboration with the Embassy Public Affairs Section. Ensure a targeted, coherent, and consistent message from all USAID staff and partners. Promote separate, pro-active, targeted media or outreach activities. These activities are specifically designed to push accurate information about USAID programs into local, regional and national markets, through the selective use of radio, television, newspapers, magazines, public service announcements, advertisements, billboards; and traditional communications. Monitor local and international press coverage, awareness and attitudes of USAID programs and monitor effectiveness of messages.

The DOC drafts, reviews and substantively edits proposed speeches and public statements for Mission officials, or the Ambassador when engaged in USAID events. Drafts and finalizes content for briefing materials, videos on project activities, the website and social media, brochures, press releases, booklets, handouts, signs, and other public relations materials. The DOC evaluates the quality and appropriateness of messaging and presentation for target audiences as well consistency with USAID communications priorities, key messages, and branding. The DOC will oversee the weekly summary of events and submissions to various USAID internal and external platforms.

In collaboration with the State Department's Public Affairs Office (PAO) and Information Officer, serve as the principal USAID contact for representatives of the local and international media in Benin to promote story ideas and feature stories on USAID programs. Maintain contacts with Western and local journalists from all media outlets. Advise and work with Embassy PAO to expand opportunities to keep media abreast of USAID/Benin programs, including TV, radio and other media. This may include arranging interviews, briefings, and site visits to USAID projects. As appropriate, organize media tours and facilitate contacts among members of the media with USAID officials and

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implementers to encourage in-depth coverage of USAID programs in the local and/or international media.

Collaborate with technical teams, the embassy PAO or Information Officer, and others to respond to inquiries from the general public and media about USAID programs, policies or practices.

### **Event Planning and Management (20%)**

Serve as, or collaborate closely with, the primary Mission point of contact for USAID-related site visits by USG officials or other VIP visitors. Plan and coordinate VIP site visits or conference participation and media availability as necessary. Due to the high volume of official visitors to Embassy Addis, also serve as site officer or media officer or occasionally control officer for official interagency (non-USAID) visits as requested by the Embassy or PAS. Coordinate with embassy-wide teams on inter-agency VIP visits and conferences. Lead the preparation of schedules, briefing materials, scene setters, briefings with partners, constituents, and other donors as warranted. Plan or support planning of all logistics related to visits and accompany visitors as required to photograph and/or prepare or publish social media and website posts on the activity. Coordinate or support field travel and public outreach activities for USAID events for the Regional Mission Director, Representative or other senior interagency officials.

Draft or review all public statements prepared for the Regional Mission Director, Ambassador or USAID Representative, to ensure quality, accuracy, consistency and appropriateness of messaging. Review and edit press releases, speeches, and talking points drafted by implementing partners or mission staff for USAID events, rewriting as necessary; review and edit mission-wide presentations; review and edit internal BCLs and scene setters for VIP visits.

Write or review briefing materials and memorandums for the ambassador and his/her deputies when participation in USAID events is warranted or desired. Plan and oversee maintenance of a mission-wide calendar of USAID public events, VIP visits, major field trips in close coordination with USAID/Benin leadership and implementing partners, as well as the Embassy Public Affairs Section, to ensure scheduling reflects Mission outreach priorities, affords adequate preparation time, and optimizes media outreach, and most effectively uses limited communications and outreach staff and resources.

### **Public Information, Briefs, Publicity Materials, and Stories (15%)**

Work with technical and program officer directors and teams to identify, draft or re-write as necessary and regularly contribute information, news or stories about USAID Benin programs, results and impact on participants to various USAID/W online newsletters, blogs, websites, and outreach activities or campaigns managed by LPA, E3, GH, AFR, West Africa Regional Mission, among others.

Provide the Embassy and other interested parties with information on programs, and see to a timely response to all general information requests. Work with staff to develop or adapt briefing materials for a variety of uses and target audiences in Benin or in the U.S; prepare VIP briefing and press packets for use during site visits or media events, and select information to be included.

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The DOC must take into account the need to identify and focus on key sectors that have a natural appeal to either local and/ or U.S. interests as well as USG policies and priorities; the importance of ensuring that publicity material used will be non-controversial; and that the material is visually appealing, well-defined, and contains a human interest element. The incumbent will develop or review and disseminate all outreach materials to promote USAID programs, including fact sheets, website and social media content, photo essays, video and any special campaigns for online, broadcast, and print media.

Travel to the field to identify and capture success stories, photos, and videos when feasible, for publication and dissemination through the USAID Impact Blog, Transforming Lives, or Frontlines Magazine, Flickr photo essays, You Tube video playlist, and the Benin section of the USAID.gov website.

Update public project profiles, list of implementing partners, and information on where USAID is working and with whom in particular regions to be available for site visits and reporting or filming projects, as needed. Establish a system for USAID/Benin teams to draft, update, or review briefs, project profiles, and website content and any other published information on programs on a regular basis.

### **Online Media Tools and Outreach (10%)**

The incumbent is responsible for the USAID website and development of and updating USAID/Benin's social media accounts on Twitter, Flickr, and You Tube, in addition to regular contributions to the Embassy Cotonou Facebook page. Regularly assess the appropriateness of new media tools in the local context.

Other Perform any other duties as assigned or required.

### **III. POSITION ELEMENTS**

#### Supervision Received

Employee is directly supervised by the Mission's Supervisory Program Officer. The incumbent is expected to work with a certain degree of independence and periodically update supervisor on the progress of his/her work. Performance is reviewed by the supervisor on annual basis.

#### Supervision Exercised

None; however, he/she will provide guidance and technical direction concerning writing guidelines to all development objective teams in the Mission.

#### Available Guidelines

Guidance for USAID policies and procedures can be found in the Automated Directive System (ADS) and Outreach Manual, Mission Orders and Mission Notices.

#### Exercise of Judgment

Employee is expected to exercise a high degree of judgment in recommending and carrying out analysis and maintaining relevant development objective team, media, and implementing partner contacts.

#### Authority to Make Commitments

None; employee is not authorized to make financial commitments on behalf of the United States Government.

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### Nature, Level, and Purpose of Contacts

Personal contacts are with local media, U.S. Embassy personnel, USAID/Washington, and USAID technical staff and their implementing partners.

### Time Required to Perform Full Range of Duties after entry into the Position

The will be a six-month probationary period. The employee will be required to perform the full range of duties/responsibilities of the position within this period.

## IV. **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

This position requires a combination of leadership, expertise, analytical, technical, and managerial skills. The incumbent must have superior writing skills and be able to work under time pressures. The incumbent must be familiar with and be able to work well in an overseas environment and with a wide range of governmental, non-governmental and corporate counterparts. The successful candidate must be capable of crafting a strategic communications plan and information messages in various media formats (e.g. press releases, website content, stories, tweets, blogs, presentations, etc.) targeting a variety of audiences.

The successful candidate will demonstrate knowledge and expertise regarding planning, strategy, and adherence to policies and procedures that will support development outreach communications activities. Knowledge of how the press operates to facilitate troubleshooting and ability to advise USAID/Benin on the best press outlets to use for given purposes is highly desired. Knowledge of USAID's work, business practices and protocols is highly desired, as is a general understanding of U.S. and international development assistance and familiarity with the region.

### Education (15 points):

The incumbent must have a a Master's degree in journalism, communications, public relations or affairs, international relations, international development, public administration, development/area studies, and/or social studies.

### Work Experience (25 points):

The candidate must have eight or more years of progressively responsible experience, with at least three years of experience working in developing countries and notable experience working on development-related themes. Proven coordination and organizational skills within multi-cultural work environments are required. Strong communication and interpersonal skills are required.

### Language Proficiency (20 points):

Required to read, write and speak fluent English (Level IV) and French (Levels Speaking-3/Reading-3) is desired. The candidate must be fluent in both spoken and written English and be able to serve as both editor and speechwriter when called upon producing high quality narrative. Native level fluency in English (reading, writing, and speaking) is required. Effective written and oral communications are absolutely critical to perform successfully in this position. Proficiency in French is required.

### Writing Skills (20 points):

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Applicants must provide one writing sample with their application. The sample should be between 500 and 750 words, and should demonstrate the applicant's ability to clearly communicate complex ideas. Samples must be by the applicant; co-written articles are not accepted. There will also be a 30-minute writing exercise during the interview process.

### Skills and Abilities (20 points):

Demonstrated ability to exercise sound, independent, professional judgment. Excellent organizational and critical thinking skills. Excellent written and verbal communication skills with ability to translate highly technical material into easy to understand narrative. Exceptional interpersonal skills, with the ability to influence relationships positively. Ability to take initiative working with the direction of management; must be able to take ownership of projects, creatively problem solve and see through to completion.

Incumbent preferably has knowledge of technical aspects involved in the production process of different public outreach products and activities, such as editing, graphic design, printing, photography, video, broadcasting, advertising, and publishing. Familiarity with using a digital camera, tablet and smartphone, and ability to plan and oversee photography, print, video production processes are required

USG Facility Access security clearance (or the ability to attain one) is required.

### Computer and Internet Proficiency:

Computer skills in Microsoft Office, especially Word and PowerPoint, layout, photo editing, and other relevant software are required. Internet and social media skills in targeting specific audiences are required (e.g Twitter, Facebook, You Tube, Flickr, or equivalents). Familiarity with databases, website content management systems (e.g Drupal), blog or online newsletter software, a plus.

## **V. SELECTION PROCESS:**

After the closing date for receipt of applications, a committee will be convened to review applications and evaluate them in accordance with the evaluation criteria. Applications from candidates who do not meet the required selection criteria will not be scored. As part of the selection process, finalist candidates may be interviewed either in person or by telephone at USAID's discretion. Reference checks will be made only for applicants considered as finalists. If an applicant does not wish USAID to contact a current employer for a reference check, this should be stated in the applicant's cover letter, and USAID will delay such reference check pending communication with the applicant. Only finalists will be contacted by USAID with respect to their applications. ***The final selected candidates must obtain security and medical clearances within a reasonable period of time (USAID will provide details regarding these clearances to the selected candidate).***

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### VI. LOGISTIC SUPPORT:

The logistic support provided by USAID/Benin includes office space and equipment, transportation in country for official meetings, work related travel arrangements/tickets.

### VII. TERMS OF PERFORMANCE

The Personal Services Contract will be for **one year** plus one option year extension. Exercising the option to extend the contract will be at the sole discretion of USAID/Benin and would depend on continuing need of services and availability of funds.

### VIII. INSTRUCTION TO APPLICANTS

Interested applicants must submit:

- (i) Most recent curriculum vitae or resume with cover letter;
- (ii) Completed, hand-signed form a302-3; form can be found on the following link <http://www.usaid.gov/forms>
- (iii) Three references, who are not family members or relatives, with telephone and email contacts;
- (iv) Biographical data sheet – Form AID 1420 (<https://www.usaid.gov/forms/aid-1420-17>)

The CV/resume must contain sufficient relevant information to evaluate the application in accordance with stated evaluation criteria. The applicant's references must be able to provide substantive information about his/her past performance and abilities. USAID/Benin reserves the right to obtain from previous employers relevant information concerning the applicant's past performance and may consider such information in its evaluation.

Applicants must be available to start work o/a September 1, 2016. This availability must be indicated on the a302-3, which must be signed; those submitted unsigned will be rejected. Applicants should retain, for their records, copies of all enclosures accompanying their submissions.

Mark submissions "SOL-680-16-000009". Applications must be submitted by email by the closing date and time. Late applications will not be considered and will be handled in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) 15.412. **No response will be sent to unsuccessful applicants.**

USAID/Benin anticipates awarding one (1) Personal Services Contract as a result of this solicitation. This solicitation in no way obligates USAID to award a PSC contract, nor does it commit USAID to pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of the application.

Application packages may be submitted via email to with a copy to [lboko@usaid.gov](mailto:lboko@usaid.gov) . Please quote the number and position title of this solicitation on the subject line of your email application.

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### IX. COMPENSATION

The position has been classified at a GS-13 level. The actual salary of the successful candidate will be negotiated within that range depending on qualification and previous earning history. Salaries over and above the market value will not be entertained or negotiated. Only salaries and the benefits listed below will be paid.

### X. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSCs:

1. Form a302-3 at <http://www.usaid.gov/forms>
2. Questionnaire for National Security Positions (SF-86)\*\*,
3. Authority for Release of Information (AID 610-14)\*\*
4. Foreign Residence Data (AID 6-85)\*\*
5. Fair Credit Reporting Act of 1970, As Amended\*\*
6. Notice Required by The Privacy Act of 1974(AID 500-5) \*\*
7. Fingerprint Cards (FD-258)\*\*.

\*\* The forms listed 2 through 7 shall only be completed upon the advice of the Contracting Officer that an applicant is the successful candidate for the job.

### XI. SECURITY AND MEDICAL CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Security Clearance: If a U.S. citizen, the apparently successful applicant shall be required to obtain a Facility Access level security clearance as a pre-condition for employment.
2. The applicant selected to fill the position must receive medical clearance to work in USAID/Benin, Cotonou. Details of how to obtain such clearance will be provided after selection and acceptance of the job offer.

### XII. NOTICE REGARDING GOVERNMENT OBLIGATING FOR THIS SOLICITATION

This solicitation is no way obligates USAID to award a US PSC contract, not does it commits USAID to pay any cost construed in the preparation and submission of application.

### XIII. NOTE REGARDING COUNTER TRAFFICKING IN PERSON CODE OF CONDUCT

USAID employee in the Civil Services and Foreign Service, as well as individuals employed through PSC Contract must adhere to Counter Trafficking in Persons Code of Conduct. For information on the effort to counter all forms of human trafficking, including the procurement of commercial sex acts and the use of forced labor, visit <http://www.state.gov/g/tip>. For more information about USAID, visit <http://www.usaid.gov>

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**AS A MATTER OF POLICY, AND AS APPROPRIATE, A RESIDENT HIRE USPSC IS AUTHORIZED THE FOLLOWING:**

**\*Benefits:**

1. Employee's FICA contribution
2. Health Insurance and
3. Life Insurance
4. Pay Comparability Adjustment
5. Annual & Sick Leave

**\*Other than the benefits listed above, no other benefits or allowances will be paid to the selected candidate.**

**Federal Taxes:** USPSCs are not exempt from payment of Federal Income Taxes.

**XIV. CONTRACT INFORMATION BULLETINS (CIBs) OR ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE POLICY DIRECTIVES (AAPDs) PERTAINING TO PSCs.**

AAPDs/CIBs contain changes to USAID policy and General Provisions in USAID regulations and contracts. Please refer to this website:

[http://transition.usaid.gov/business/business\\_opportunities/cib/subject.html#psc](http://transition.usaid.gov/business/business_opportunities/cib/subject.html#psc) to determine which AAPDs/CIBs apply to this contract.

**END OF SOLICITATION # SOL-680-16-000009**

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