



USAID | PHILIPPINES

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Issue Date: March 7, 2016
Deadline for Questions/Clarifications: March 17, 2016
Closing Date: April 21, 2016
Closing Time: 12 noon, Manila, Philippines time

Subject : Notice of Funding Opportunity
RFA-438-16-000001

Program Title : Mongolia's Emerging Leaders Activity

Dear Prospective Applicant:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Mongolia is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified US and non-US nongovernmental organizations, private voluntary organizations, public international organizations, for-profit organizations, and consortiums of US, local and/or international organizations, to fund Mongolia's Emerging Leaders Activity. Eligibility for this award is not restricted. See Section C of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) for eligibility requirements.

Subject to the availability of funds, an award will be made to one responsible applicant whose application best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity and the selection criteria contained herein. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.

For the purposes of this NFO, the term "Grant" is synonymous with "Cooperative Agreement;" "Grantee" is synonymous with "Recipient;" and "Grant Officer" is synonymous with "Agreement Officer." Eligible organizations interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and the evaluation process.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NFO and must meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NFO.

This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. Potential applicants should regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity. Applicants will need to have available or download Adobe program to their computers in order to view and save the Adobe forms properly. It is the responsibility of the applicant to

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RFA-438-16-000001
Mongolia's Emerging Leaders Activity

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The successful Applicant will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives. Please read each section of the NFO.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

Issuance of this NFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of questions, comments or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Hilgendorf', with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Nathan Hilgendorf
Agreement Officer
Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance

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SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

I. Background

Twenty-six years ago, Mongolia, a country of three million people, made what they still call their "decision for democracy" after decades mired in USSR orbit and centuries of external rule. Mongolia today is an inspiring multi-party democracy that has developed civilian-led democratic institutions and a democratic legal framework. Since its transition to democracy, Mongolia has pursued an ostensibly non-aligned foreign policy, maintaining strong trade and diplomatic relations with neighboring Russia and China, while also developing close relations with "third neighbors," including the United States, Japan, South Korea, and the European Union, among other partners. However, more than 90 percent of Mongolia's exports end up, or at least pass through, China and more than 90 percent of Mongolia's petroleum stocks are imported from Russia. The economic dependence of Mongolia on China and Russia leaves Ulaanbaatar, as a practical matter, extremely reluctant to take foreign policy stances that differ substantially from those of either giant neighbor.

Mongolia's 1992 Constitution laid the foundation for political, economic, and social change. With one exception, Mongolia has maintained peaceful and regular transfers of power over seven successive parliamentary and six presidential elections.¹ The next parliamentary elections are scheduled for June 29, 2016, with presidential elections set for 2017. Human rights are generally well respected, the media generally are free, and genuine political competition exists. These successes are all the more remarkable given that constitutional democracy has developed without a previous history of democracy or social pluralism, which analysts conventionally believe to be necessary for democracy to flourish.

Mongolia is a parliamentary republic, with all legislative power vested in the Great State Assembly (Great State Khural), a unicameral parliament of 76 members elected for four-year terms. This body elects the Prime Minister upon nomination of the President and confirms Cabinet members upon nomination by the Prime Minister, in consultation with the President.

The central government is led by the Prime Minister, though the Mongolian Parliament is the constitutionally recognized "highest organ of state power." The Cabinet consists of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretariat, 15 portfolio ministries, and a minister without a portfolio who is responsible for the cross-ministerial coordination of large development projects. The Cabinet Secretariat, which has ministerial status, coordinates and monitors both central and sub-national administrative bodies. Constitutional amendments made in 2000 enabled members of parliament to hold two positions in the Cabinet simultaneously. Currently, more than half of Cabinet members are Members of Parliament, which, in the context of Mongolia's small parliament, compromises horizontal accountability between the legislature and the executive. Supreme power lies with the central government, with sub-national governments only capable of exercising power when the central government delegates or devolves powers. Such powers can subsequently be revoked or curtailed.

Judicial power ultimately rests with the Supreme Court. Members of the judiciary are vetted by the "Judicial General Council" but appointed by the President. In practice this undermines the judiciary's independence from political institutions. In general the Mongolian judicial branch is staffed by

¹ A riot occurred in the capital city in the aftermath of parliamentary elections in 2008.

competent professionals, but innumerable credible reports document that corruption and denial of due process are major factors in the criminal justice system whenever the interests of politically or economically influential Mongolians are at issue. The timing and handling of corruption cases, as well as the targeting by officials of political opponents within and across party lines, create suspicion and erode credibility.

Today, despite some weaknesses, Mongolia represents a model of peaceful democratic transition for the region and is viewed by international observers as a stable democracy. This contrasts sharply with some former Soviet states, which, following a brief stint of democracy in the early 1990s, have returned to a state of authoritarianism. Mongolia's is a remarkable achievement in democratic consolidation, given that the country is sandwiched between two authoritarian regimes: China and Russia. In the Polity IV² list of 167 countries, Mongolia ranks among the countries with full democracy, whereas Russia is classified as a mixed-authority regime, and China is classified as an autocracy. Mongolia is also one of the few countries in the region to be ranked as free³ by Freedom House, enjoying the same classification as Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and Taiwan. According to Freedom House's definition, a free country is characterized as being open to political competition and possessing a climate of respect for civil liberties, significant independent civic life, and independent media. By these measures, Mongolia has reached an acceptable international standard for democracy.

Mongolia has also been an effective exporter of democracy across East, Central, and South Asia. It is a democratic mentor to the emerging democracies of Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Burma, and it has reached out to several of Asia's aspiring democracies with offers of assistance to move their nascent democracies forward, including East Timor, Bhutan, Nepal, Cambodia, and Laos. Mongolia has established the International Cooperation Fund (ICF) to support its mentoring of these emerging democracies. In turn, the ICF has asked the United States to support its work and help build its capacity. Despite these important democratic achievements and Mongolia's geopolitical importance as a functioning democracy in Asia, the integrity of Mongolia's democratic system is challenged in three key ways.⁴ First, the system of checks and balances is weak among the branches of government and between central and sub-national levels of government. Second, a blurring between business interests and political power results in conflicts of interest and grand corruption. Finally, implementation of laws and execution of government functions are inconsistent. Laws, rules, and policies exist but are often selectively implemented, particularly when vested interests of power, influence, and wealth are involved. These three weaknesses have led to an environment of growing income inequality and disparities in power in which business and political elite, who have an advantage in manipulating the rules of the political game, can engage in illegal acts for personal gain with impunity. As a result, Mongolian citizens increasingly feel that public services and the machinery of government too often do not adequately serve the interests of the people. In particular, young Mongolians are increasingly frustrated and disenfranchised, which raises the risk that the next generation of leaders will look to non-democratic forms of government as a way out of Mongolia's political and economic crises, rather than strengthening their democracy as the best way to guarantee the future political and economic independence of Mongolia.

² Polity IV, published by the Center for Systemic Peace, examines the qualities of democratic and autocratic authority in governing institutions in 167 countries. The Polity scheme consists of six component measures that record key qualities of executive recruitment, constraints on executive authority, and political competition. See <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm> for additional information.

³ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2015 Index. See <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2015#.VrqZIPmqo5g> for details.

⁴ USAID's Mongolia Democracy and Governance Assessment, 2010

In light of these challenges, together with commentators' observations of regressing trends in the values of liberal democracy, Mongolia's democracy faces real tests ahead: can the political institutions respond to citizens' hopes for prosperity and betterment of their lives? Will the next generation of leaders reverse the "decision for democracy" of their parents' generation in favor of the models of governance practiced by their two large neighbors that appear to bring swifter economic returns?

II. Problem Statement

Improving governance effectiveness and accountability in Mongolia is contingent on resolving three primary areas of concern: a weakening system of checks and balances, the blurring between business and political power, and inconsistent implementation of the law and government functions. Addressing these governance challenges will require increased citizen engagement in the democratic process through more active participation in decision-making processes, particularly those that respond to national and local needs. Strengthening representation and voice in the political process will require a new crop of democracy champions, a vibrant civil society, and unbridled avenues for citizen engagement and participation, including by previously marginalized groups.

As such, this activity will focus on addressing the issues that limit citizen engagement, and particularly the engagement of younger citizens, in the democratic process. These issues include the following⁵:

- 1. Leadership is underdeveloped.** Even prospective reformist political leaders are challenged by the current party system and practices, which rely on informal influence networks; the high cost of entering election campaigns; and limited access to knowledge. Short-term survival consistently trumps sustained advocacy of viable policy positions. Not only political leaders, but also civil society leaders (of citizens' unions, reformists, innovators, and intellectual leaders, etc.) face challenges effecting real change in the landscape and furthering their organizations' missions in significant ways.
- 2. Higher rates of women in government promote transparency and build a robust democracy, but there are too few.** Women in leadership have demonstrated an ability to contribute towards more honest and less corrupt governments and promote positive development in the education and health sectors.⁶ Higher numbers of women participating in Mongolian leadership roles and in key governance institutions could have a positive effect on strengthening government and policy delivery of services, but support for women leaders is currently insufficient.
- 3. The current political system does not foster the emergence of strong individual champions for reform or advocates for change.** The principles of "democratic centralism" infiltrate parties and practices, causing protracted phases of bargaining over issues, with reform advocates' policies and their merits often succumbing to slow deaths. Reformists are often unable to persist in the face of waning political will or an inability to access the upper echelons of power, continuing the status quo.

⁵ Adam Smith International (2015), Integrated Report: an integrated analysis of economic, political, and social issues that support or hinder growth and poverty reduction in Mongolia. See <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/mongolia-economic-political-social-analysis-report.aspx> for details.

⁶ National Democratic Institute, 2013.

4. **Stakeholders' inexperience diminishes engagement and consensus-building for inclusive development.** Despite an apparent recognition on the part of representatives of government, the private sector, and civil society of the need for quality dialogue and engagement to formulate shared views and goals, sufficient capacity to do so is lacking. Functioning fora facilitating constructive engagement, particularly from young people, are rare, and a culture of evidence-based discussion and debate has not developed.

III. Activity Rationale

This activity will contribute to the achievement of Mission Objective 2.1 of U.S. Embassy Ulaanbaatar's Integrated Country Strategy, 2015 -2017: *The United States maintains support for Mongolian efforts to improve governance and monitors those efforts to determine their effectiveness in securing concrete advancements benefitting the Mongolian public and particularly its vulnerable populations.* As Mongolia seeks to promote its reputation as an emerging democracy and role model for similar post-socialist and other post-Soviet states, the Mongolian government must continue to make its institutions more responsible to, and respectful of, its citizens. Enhanced participation in government by the Mongolian public, in turn, will correlate with enhanced adherence to relevant international norms.

This activity will also contribute to the achievement of Development Objective 2 of USAID's Mongolia Country Development Cooperation Strategy: *Governance Effectiveness and Accountability Improved.* Under this Development Objective, USAID seeks to assist Mongolia to achieve more effective and accountable governance by revitalizing citizen engagement in the democratic process, bolstering fairness and transparency, and promoting decision-making that responds to national and local needs. This Development Objective can have a significant impact on strengthening the legitimacy of Mongolia's government. Proposed governance reforms, strengthened by public engagement, can help put Mongolia on the path to eliminating conflicting business and political interests. Greater accountability and transparency in government decisions and management can more likely ensure that economic and social benefits are equally distributed among the population.

The senior leaders in today's Mongolia are among those who made the decision for democracy in 1990. They spent their formative years studying under a socialist-dominated system, many of them in the former Soviet Union. In spite of Mongolia's 25 years of democracy, many citizens, including many young people, do not understand democratic fundamentals or the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy. Even the reformers among them no doubt are challenged to break out of the mold of the identified trio of Mongolia's major obstacles toward a stronger democracy and better governance.

In contrast, emerging young leaders in government, civil society, media, and other sectors have grown up under a freer, albeit flawed, system; are globally connected thanks to the rapid rise in connectivity; and are more open to new ideas. Thus, they offer a promising pathway for changing the political culture of Mongolia and ensuring that its democracy survives and thrives well into the future.

The development hypothesis of this activity is that concentrated exposure to democratic values and ethical precepts can enable emerging leaders to internalize those values and precepts and begin to practice them. This exposure can produce a cadre of emerging leaders who possess a more democratic and corruption-intolerant value system and who can constitute a critical mass. As that critical mass ascends into more senior levels of power, it can influence Mongolia's government and civil society in beneficial ways. Over time, these new leaders can shape the system to strengthen healthy checks and

balances among government institutions; safeguard against influence-peddling and model ethical behavior; and enforce laws and carry out government functions consistently and transparently. By inculcating such values in at least two cohorts of emerging leaders over the course of the activity, these leaders will be able to mutually support each other through a virtuous network of alumni with like-minded values and commitment to reform.

The U.S. Government has experience in this type of activity. President Obama's Mandela Washington Fellows Program, now in its third year, is based on the development hypothesis outlined above. A full 1,000 young African leaders from around the continent⁷ have now gone through the program and are making change in their home countries. In 2016, another 1,000 will participate. In Asia, the Young Southeast Asia Leaders' Initiative, or Y-SEALI, carries out a similar program, selecting Fellows each year from a number of nations in Southeast Asia. Applicants are encouraged to become familiar with these two programs: <https://youngafricanleaders.state.gov>; and <https://youngsoutheastasianleaders.state.gov>.

IV. Activity Goal and Objectives

This activity will support the development of emerging Mongolian leaders while strengthening principles and values in democracy and good governance throughout Mongolia. **The activity's primary goal is to increase citizen engagement in the democratic process, influence public servants in ways that enhance good governance, and promote decision-making that responds to national and local needs.** The objectives are to:

1. Inculcate in the next generation of Mongolian leaders the democratic values and know-how to engage constructively with and within their government on good governance;
2. Spread this knowledge and know-how to young leaders from other emerging democracies; and
3. Promote civic education among Mongolia's youth to build the foundation for a sustained democracy.

V. Activity Components

The activity should have three components that correspond to the three objectives cited above:

- 1. A U.S.-Mongolia Emerging Leaders Program**
- 2. A Mongolia Emerging Leaders Alliance**
- 3. A Program on Civic Education for Mongolia's Youth.**

Consistent with U.S. government policy and the embrace of democracy programs, the three components outlined below should be designed in ways that take explicit affirmative steps to include women, LGBTI persons, and persons with disabilities. Some background information is offered in the section on gender and other considerations in this document.

⁷ The number of Fellows from each country each year varies, from the single digits to close to 50 from the largest countries.

The first component, the **U.S.-Mongolia Emerging Leaders Program**, should foster young Mongolian leaders' exposure to U.S. democratic values, democratic institutions, legislative processes, and anti-corruption procedures through both an exchange program in the United States and training, mentorship, and leadership activities in Mongolia. In Mongolia, the leaders should engage constructively with their government on topics and in ways that strengthen good governance. The program should particularly target emerging leaders aged 25-40 with aspirations for leadership in Parliament, the judiciary, government service, the private sector, and civil society. By targeting this group, the Emerging Leaders Program can have a near-term, positive impact on strengthening Mongolia's legislature, overall legislative process, civilian-led democratic institutions, and civil society.

Recruitment for the Emerging Leaders Program could be by way of an annual application process for young Mongolian leaders who fit the emerging leadership criteria. Participants should be chosen through an objective process⁸ that is based on criteria that encompass demonstrated leadership, potential for higher levels of leadership, and commitment to democratic ideals and transparency, among others.

Each program cycle might run up to one-year's duration of leadership development that takes place intermittently both in the United States and Mongolia. Though the program should not require a full-time commitment for the year, applicants should have the concurrence of their employers for their participation.

Illustratively, an early segment of the program might involve intensive, possibly multi-week learning modules, including academic coursework and leadership training, in the United States. At the end of the training, the participants might be paired with mentors in government, civil society, or the private sector. Under the coordination of the implementing partner, mentors and the implementing partner would engage mentees in a program of constructive interaction with government, strategic outreach activities, and identification of additional young leaders in Mongolia.

An alumni network developed under the program will continue leadership development of participants after the program ends. A cadre of democracy advisors that can continue collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Mongolia should emerge at the end of the activity. This cadre could potentially extend to a regional leadership role for Mongolia in mentoring emerging democracies, which is a post priority.

Expected Results:

- At least two cohorts of emerging leaders take part in the program.
- Program participants are active in constructive engagement that addresses the major impediments to the consolidation of democracy in Mongolia.
- A thriving alumni network continues the thrust of the program.

The second component, the **Mongolia Emerging Leaders Alliance**, might seek to capitalize on the capabilities of young Mongolian leaders through their mentorship of young leaders from other emerging democracies. The Alliance could establish a network of young leaders from Mongolia and other emerging democracies, starting with those countries with which Mongolia is already working to strengthen their democracies. This list could easily be expanded to include other emerging

⁸ The selection process may involve the participation of the U.S. Embassy in Mongolia.

democracies, focusing on those that are part of the U.S. House Democracy Partnership as a starting point.

The Alliance could be similar to the U.S.-Mongolia Emerging Leaders program, with the distinction that the Alliance would bring emerging leaders from the other emerging democracies to Mongolia for exchanges, internships, workshops, and summits. Young leaders who have participated in the U.S.-Mongolia Emerging Leaders Program might travel to these emerging democracies to mentor and support Alliance Fellows from those countries. The Alliance offers the possibility of a near-term, positive impact on strengthening Mongolia's legislature, as well as the legislatures of other emerging democracies, by providing further opportunities to promote democratic values and strengthen citizens' ability to engage constructively with and within their governments.

A similar process and criteria used in the Emerging Leaders Program can be applied to select Alliance Fellows from the participant countries: demonstrated leadership, potential for higher levels of leadership, and commitment to democratic ideals and transparency, among others. Young leaders with aspirations for leadership in Parliament, the judiciary, government service, the private sector, and civil society could be targeted for the Alliance. The emerging leaders' network would include the Alliance Fellows.

Expected Results:

- Substantive outreach to other emerging democracies has taken place.
- Mongolian participants have interacted constructively with peers in targeted emerging democracies.
- A cadre of emerging leaders exists in the participating countries, has established a functioning network, and is constructively engaged in actions that promote democracy and good governance.

The third component, **Civic Education for Mongolia's Youth**, would deliver civic education to high schools, youth-led non-governmental organizations, and community organizations throughout Mongolia. The program might develop and implement innovative methods to increase young people's understanding of the principles of democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society. Illustratively, the component could include interventions within the education sector or through the local People's Representative Khurals or youth-led non-governmental organizations.

Civic Education can draw lessons from a United Nations Development Program (UNDP)-funded activity, the Youth Empowerment through Civic Education Program, which was carried out by the Mongolia Centre for Citizenship Education⁹. The UNDP program, which focused on youth empowerment and participation, led to an updated focus on democratic citizenship and human rights in the civic education curriculum for pre-school, primary, and middle schools that was adopted by the Ministry of Education. It also demonstrated that youth can be active and informed participants in Mongolia's democratic processes and can play an important role in overcoming challenges for the consolidation of democracy. The Centre translated and printed *Foundations of Democracy*¹⁰ textbooks, teachers' guides, and other

⁹ See http://www.mn.undp.org/content/mongolia/en/home/operations/projects/democratic_governance/youth-empowerment-through-civic-education-.html for additional information.

¹⁰ The **Foundations of Democracy** series engages K-12 students in four key concepts to understanding politics and governance: authority, privacy, responsibility, and justice. The multidisciplinary curriculum draws from many fields of study, including

training materials that were developed in collaboration with the California State Bar’s Center for Civic Education.

The envisioned Civic Education program might target high school students. It might support curriculum development and hold a series of training activities aimed at instilling civic knowledge and citizenship skills in young voters, students, community youth groups, youth-led non-governmental organizations, young leaders, and activists. Further, the end purpose of the new knowledge and skills would be to motivate and encourage students’ active participation in community and country affairs. In addition, the program might organize a nationwide advocacy campaign and support outreach activities, with the goal of ensuring youth participation in decision-making at local levels. Partnerships with other donors and non-government sectors already active in civic education should leverage funding and build on the existing knowledge base.

This third component offers the possibility of a longer-term positive impact on strengthening Mongolia’s legislature and legislative process by instilling in young people the democratic values and ideals that are the foundation of a sustained democracy.

Expected Results:

- Appropriate resources – both human and information – exist to educate secondary students on the principles of democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society.
- Through constructive partnerships, that education has taken place in a number of secondary institutions around Mongolia.
- The education has resulted in demonstrable age-appropriate actions that promote democracy and good governance.

As mentioned in the section below on Instructions for Applicants, USAID/Mongolia is open to recommendations from applicants if, in the applicant’s considered technical judgment, the applicant does not believe it is feasible to carry out an activity including all three components in the time and with the funds allotted.

VI. Expected Outcomes of the Activity

The activity’s overall outcome should help achieve Development Objective 2 of USAID’s Mongolia Country Development Cooperation Strategy: *Governance Effectiveness and Accountability Improved*. Illustrative outcomes include:

- Emerging leaders strengthen civil society organizations to channels citizens’ demands and advocate for change;
- Emerging leaders participate more actively in legislative processes at the national and sub-national levels;

political science, literature, and environmental studies. The Foundations of Democracy series was developed and is published by The Center for Civic Education, based in California and associated with the California State Bar. The Center for Civic Education has a close relationship with Mongolia’s Center for Citizens’ Education and has given it the rights to translate and use its materials in Mongolia.

- Emerging leaders and their constituents advocate for legislative measures that strengthen checks and balances, avoid conflicts of interest between politics and business, and foster consistent and transparent enforcement of law and government functions;
- Established networks among Emerging Leaders Fellows and between Emerging Leaders Fellows and Alliance Fellows sustain momentum that cultivates democratic principles and their practice; and
- High school students demonstrate increased understanding and command of democratic principles and the ability to put these principles into practice.

VII. Monitoring and Evaluation

This activity is based on the premise that learning and development at the individual level helps facilitate the leadership process at the group level, and that participation in collaborative group processes provides experience and feedback that enhances a person’s development at the individual level.¹¹ As such, the proposed activity should focus on developing individual leaders to become positive change agents. Accordingly, the activity indicators should focus on documenting personal change among those who participate in USAID-supported activities, as well as community, social, and political changes that result from individual collaboration with various democracy and governance actors.

The prospective awardee should develop a detailed Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and submit it for USAID approval no later than 90 days after the award date. The awardee and USAID will agree on the final choice of key indicators that would be most useful for activity management and credibly reflect each component’s actual performance. The awardee will collect data regularly and keep records to validate data quality.

A monitoring system to track progress and impact of interventions should be a focus. The awardee is expected to develop a database containing key information for all participants and alumni of the three components. The database is integral to the maintenance and sustainability of the alumni networks described in the Activity Components.

To the extent practicable, the activity should have a final performance evaluation. Below are potential evaluation questions to assess the effectiveness and impact of activities:

- Was each of the three program objectives achieved? What is the empirical evidence for the judgment in each case?
- What were the key factors that facilitated or inhibited achievement of activity objectives?
- What does the activity reveal about the causal relationships between access to leadership development of emerging young Mongolian leaders and civic education among youth on the one hand, and governance effectiveness and accountability on the other hand? Does our experience confirm the development hypothesis and current understanding of these relationships?

¹¹ Wagner, Wendy, “The Social Change Model of Leadership: A Brief Overview,” *Concepts & Connections: A Publication for Leadership Educators*, National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, (2006) Vol. 15, Issue 1, pp. 8-10.

- How should the activity leverage these insights? Were there significant differences in the experiences of women and men or in the experiences of LGBTI individuals and youth with disabilities?
- Are there barriers to accessing youth leadership development opportunities? What are the characteristics of these barriers? How did the activity mitigate and/or overcome these barriers? Were there significant differences in the barriers experienced by women relative to men or by LGBTI individuals and youth with disabilities? How should future programs of this nature attempt to mitigate and/or overcome such barriers?

Collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) should be integrated within activities. The activity should have several CLA activities that can share lessons learned from implementation and ensure creative dissemination of findings. The activity might hold planning meetings for the implementing partner and USG staff and organize a forum where lessons learned from leadership development can be shared.

VIII. Gender and Other Considerations to Promote Inclusion

Mongolia's 1992 Constitution is considered one of the most progressive in the region in terms of gender equality. Barring discrimination based on sex, the Constitution guarantees men and women equal rights in political, economic, social, and cultural fields, as well as in family affairs. In practice, however, men predominate in business and politics in senior decision-making positions in government at all levels. A 2011 Law on Gender Equality was passed to increase the participation of women in the political, economic, and civic spheres. While women comprise 60 percent of all university students, as well as 60 percent of all judges, they hold only nine parliamentary seats (14.5 percent), despite a 20 percent quota on female candidates in the 2012 parliamentary elections.¹² Women still remain sidelined from the key governing bodies that determine political and legislative priorities.

Mongolian culture is generally not open or welcoming to alternative or non-traditional sexual orientations and gender identity.¹³ Traditional norms place pressure on lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons to conform or hide their identities. At the personal level, some instances of significant violence toward LGBTI persons has been recorded, including severe forms perpetrated by ultra-nationalist groups and individuals, as well as instances of harassment and stigma. Little sensitization takes place among civil servants, including health professionals and law enforcement officers, about LGBTI human rights and ways to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Many persons with disabilities in Mongolia live in poverty, as their incomes mostly consist of well-intentioned but stifling government allowances. Less than three percent of Mongolia's adult disabled community members are employed. Since Mongolia ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009, the government has carried out various actions to develop relevant policies and legal documents. The government has also published and distributed among public servants and authorities manuals and brochures to promote the rights of vulnerable people and organized seminars and workshops.¹⁴ At the same time, the general public and target groups have sometimes criticized the low quality and efficiency of the actions. Further, a January 2015 report by the Disabled People's

¹² Freedom House, *op. cit.*

¹³ UNDP, USAID (2014), *Being LGBT in Asia: Mongolia Country Report*, Bangkok.

¹⁴ United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Mongolia Report, 3 July 2013.

Organizations of Mongolia submitted to the United Nations indicated that persons with disabilities are prevented from independently participating in elections. No legislation exists on delivering and making communication means available, particularly sign language, Braille, and talking book, or providing publications with plain language to inform persons with intellectual disabilities during an election campaign. However, a comprehensive law adopted in February 2016 and modelled on the U.S. Americans with Disabilities Act, should help correct some of these deficiencies. No disabled person has been elected to the State Great Khural or a regional government body. The activity should act forthrightly on the gender issue of the imbalance in power among men and women in business and government. The selection of Emerging Leaders Fellows and Alliance Fellows should be based on a set of criteria that includes careful consideration of gender equality and sexual orientation and gender identity concerns. Citizen advocacy and legislative initiatives should address gender inequality and remove barriers for equal participation of people with disabilities among the other topics they take up. Female youth, LGBTI persons, and persons with disabilities should have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from Civic Education activities.

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SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

I. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

Subject to funding availability, USAID intends to provide \$2,500,000 in total USAID funding over a two-year period. The ceiling for this program is \$2,500,000. Actual funding amount is subject to availability of funds.

USAID intends to award one (1) Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this NFO.

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

II. Start Date and Period of Performance for Award

The period of performance anticipated herein is two (2) years. The estimated start date will be upon the signature of the award.

III. Substantial Involvement

USAID will be substantially involved in the management of this award in the following areas:

1. Agreement Officer approval of Key Personnel and any changes in those personnel as designated below:
 - Activity Director. The Activity Director is responsible for overall technical direction and management. S/he will supervise implementation and ensure that activity objectives are met. S/he will also serve as the main representative of the activity and the principal interlocutor with USAID/Mongolia, as well as with Mongolian ministries and other local, U.S.-based, and international counterparts. S/he is expected to play a proactive role in forging partnerships and leveraging resources to sustain the implementation of the activity.
 - Operations Manager. The Operations Manager has operational responsibility to carry out the three activity components. S/he is responsible for managing resources and for developing and implementing a system for tracking and reporting on progress.
2. Agreement Officer's Representative approval of Annual Implementation Plans, including budget;
3. Agreement Officer's Representative approval of the selected participants for the two Fellows programs; and
4. Agreement Officer's Representative approval of the monitoring and evaluation plan and any adjustments to that plan.

IV. Title to Property

Property title under the resultant agreement shall vest with the Recipient in accordance with the Property Standards in 2 CFR 200 Subpart D.

V. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for this activity is **937**.

VI. Purpose of the Award

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject activity is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of Mongolia's Emerging Leaders Activity which is authorized by Federal statute.

The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. The Recipient using its own unique combination of staff, facilities, and experience, has the primary responsibility for employing whatever form of sound organization and management techniques may be necessary in order to assure proper and efficient administration of the resulting award.

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SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

I. Eligible Applicants

There are no restrictions on potential Applicants to this NFO. All U.S. and non-US nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations (PVOs), public international organizations (PIOs), consortiums of organizations, and for-profits (provided they forego profit), may participate.

USAID welcomes applications from organizations which have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The successful applicant will be subject to a responsibility determination (which may include a pre-award survey) issued by a warranted Agreement Officer (AO) in USAID.

The Recipient must be a responsible entity. Details on USAID's pre-award responsibility determination policy and procedures can be found at our Agency website, at our automated directive system (ADS) chapter 303, section 303.3.6: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>. For public international organizations (PIOs), see ADS 308.3.2.1.

II. Cost Sharing or Matching

Consistent with the nature of this activity as a cooperative agreement, USAID's expressed policy on partnerships, and the evaluation criteria set out later in this document, USAID seeks a partner that is able to bring resources of its own to the activity. The expectation is that applicants will propose a counterpart contribution that is not less than ten (10) percent of the grant funds. A higher percentage than that is welcome. The contribution can be cash or in-kind. Illustrative in-kind contributions are: part-time dedication of existing staff to the activity, office space, meeting facilities, communications support, and vehicle support. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements, refer to 2 CFR 200.306.

In addition to outlining the counterpart contribution, applicants should propose how they would coordinate and partner with relevant government and non-government actors in Mongolia, as well as those in any countries participating in the Alliance.

The hope is that the counterpart contribution, coordination, and partnerships with other actors can materially augment the activity scope and augur well for its sustainability.

III. Other

Applicants may submit only one (1) application under this NFO.

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SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

I. Agency Point of Contact

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Name | Ma. Belinda de la Torre |
| Title | Supervisory Acquisition & Assistance Specialist |
| Street Address | US Embassy, 3 rd Floor, Annex 2 Building Roxas Boulevard 1000 Ermita, Manila, Philippines |
| Email | mdela@usaid.gov |
| Phone and Fax numbers | +63-2-301-4927; +63-2-301-6000; +63-2-301-6213 (fax) |

II. Questions and Answers to RFA:

All questions and/or comments regarding this RFA should be submitted by email to the following email address: manila-roaa-rfa@usaid.gov no later than **2400H, March 17, 2016** to provide sufficient time to address the questions and incorporate the questions and answers as an amendment to this solicitation. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this RFA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment to this RFA, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant.

III. Application for Federal Assistance

The Applicant must complete the Application for Federal Assistance consisting of the following standard forms: SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance; SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-construction Programs, and; SF-424B, Assurances – Non-construction Programs. These can be found at: <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>.

IV. Application Submission

Technical and Cost/Business applications must be submitted separately.

Applications must be received on or before the closing date and time indicated in the cover letter of this RFA. Any late or incomplete applications may be considered at the discretion of the Agreement Officer (see ADS 303.3.6.6). Applications may be submitted electronically or in hard copies. If submitting electronically, USAID acceptance is upon receipt of the electronic copy. However, please submit a hard copy to follow, which can be received after the closing date.

The application must have the name of the applicant on the cover page of both the technical and cost applications. The applicant's authorized representative shall sign the application and certifications. 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. Applicants should retain for their records at least one copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany their application. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person authorized to sign the application.

It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time.

1. Hard copy submission

- a. Hard copies of applications shall be submitted in sealed envelopes or packages addressed to the office specified in the cover letter of this RFA, with the RFA number, the name and address of the applicant, and whether the contents contain technical and/or cost applications noted on the outside of the envelopes/packages.
- b. Applicants are to submit one (1) original and four (4) hard copies of their technical application and one (1) original and one (1) hard copy of the cost applications.
- c. Telegraphic or fax applications are NOT authorized for this RFA and will not be accepted.
- d. The address for hand-carried and courier-delivered applications is:

Nathan Hilgendorf
Agreement Officer
US Agency for International Development
US Embassy, 3rd Floor, Annex 2 Building
1201 Roxas Boulevard
1000 Ermita, Manila, Philippines
Ref: RFA-438-16-000001
Technical/Cost Application

2. Electronic submission

- a. The address for electronic copy submission is: **manila-roaa-rfa@usaid.gov**.
- b. Software for email attachments must be: Microsoft Word (for narrative text) and Excel (for budgets). All formulas in the Excel spreadsheets must be visible (no locked cells). Documents requiring a signature may be sent as a PDF.
- c. The attachments should be formatted with a 5MB limit per email. Zipped files are allowed.
- d. For multiple emails, please indicate in the subject line whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of multiple emails (if more than one is sent) and of attachments (e.g. "no. 1 of 4", etc.). For example, if the organization's name is ABYZ Consulting, and the cost application is divided and being sent in as two emails, the first email should have a subject line which says: "RFA-438-16-000001 ABYZ Consulting, Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".
- e. After the application has been sent by email, immediately check for confirmation that the attachments were indeed sent. If a transmission error is discovered, send the material again and note in the subject line of the email that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not wait for USAID to inform you that certain documents were not received, or that certain documents contained errors in formatting, missing sections, etc. Also, please do not send the same

email more than once unless there has been a change and if so, please note that it is a corrected email. Confusion may arise if multiple copies are sent of the same email.

- f. To avoid confusion, duplication, and overcrowding of USAID's email system, only one authorized person from the organization should send in the email submissions.
- g. Applicants are encouraged to obtain confirmation of receipt of their applications.

V. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. Technical Application

Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of the RFA.

Applicants should propose how they would plan and carry out an activity along the lines outlined in the Program Description. Applicants are invited to suggest their own name for the activity and/or for each of the activity components.

The technical application will be the most important item of consideration in selection for award of the proposed activity. It should demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this project. Technical applications should take into account requirements of the activity and the evaluation criteria found in Section E of this NFO. Therefore it should be specific, complete and presented concisely. A lengthy application may not in and of itself constitute a well thought out application.

a. Instructions:

The application should take into consideration the requirements of the program and the evaluation criteria shown below.

1) Technical Approach (Criteria #1)

The Applicant should demonstrate:

- understanding of the local context, technical requirements, and governance issues that the program aims to address;
- challenges, risks, and opportunities related to achieving the objectives outlined in the program description; and
- awareness of the roles of key stakeholders in the implementation of the program.

The Applicant should explain how the program will help achieve USAID goals and objectives. The technical approach should consider the questions posed in the Instructions for Applicants section.

The Applicant should, at a minimum, provide a full description of the proposed approach, illustrating a credible strategy for achieving the objectives outlined in the program description. The applicant should propose strategies that take into account the development constraints and detail how the activity might be sustained after USAID assistance is concluded. Substantive

attention to gender, LGBTI individuals, and persons with disabilities should be integrated into the proposed approach.

In presenting their application, Applicants should answer such questions as:

- What would be the essential elements of the activity and its three components?
- What would the minimum qualifications be for program candidates?
- Will English language proficiency be a deterrent to participation in the programs? If so, how would you overcome this challenge?
- How would the activity be publicized to attract diverse candidates? In addition to diversity in backgrounds, how would the activity promote the participation of women, LGBTI persons, and persons with disabilities?
- How would each cohort of Fellows be selected from the pool of candidates?
- How large would each cohort be for the Emerging Leaders component?
- What sort of commitment would prospective Fellows be expected to make to the program and about their future work?
- How would the arrangements with U.S. institutions of higher learning to act as hosts for the Fellows be set up?
- Would the cohort be sent to one institution or to several? What is the basis for this decision?
- Illustratively, what would the curriculum at the U.S. institution(s) consist of?
- What sort of training and exposure would take place in Mongolia before the U.S. exposure and after the return of the Fellows?
- How would the implementing partner foster constructive engagement between the Fellows and their government?
- How would mentors for Fellows be recruited? What characteristics would they need to have? Given the current state of democracy and governance in Mongolia, is it realistic to think that such mentors can indeed be identified? What would be the incentive for mentors to participate?
- How would the alumni network be constituted? Illustratively, what activities and mutual support would it undertake?
- How would adoption and internalization of democratic values and ethical conduct be measured?
- How would the Alliance component be designed?
- How would the selection of Alliance Fellows be undertaken?
- How would the civic education program be designed?
- How would activity funding be distributed among the three components for greatest program impact?
- How would the applicant leverage its counterpart contribution, coordination with other actors, and partnerships for maximum program impact?
- Given funding limitations and likelihood of impact, how does the applicant prioritize the three components? What modifications, if any, does the applicant recommend in the program description if those modifications would heighten program impact?
- How might the program be made sustainable at least in some measure?

2) Management and Implementation Plan (Criteria #2)

The Applicant should propose a management plan and describe how the proposed structure will contribute to achieving the objectives and results described in the technical application. Any contemplated sub-agreements should be outlined, along with reasons for the particular choice of organizations proposed as sub-grantees. As a means of building capacity in Mongolia, local civil society organizations are welcome. Delineation of roles, responsibilities, authority, and processes for decision-making within the applicant's team, between any home office and the field, and between any prime applicant and sub-grantees must be clearly articulated. The plan should demonstrate how the applicant will efficiently and effectively use the human, technical, and organizational resources at hand to accomplish the proposed program. It should also identify potential challenges in the management of the project and recommend ways to overcome those challenges.

The management plan should describe how the activity would be staffed in number of staff, the skills staff would require, and the responsibilities staff members would have.

The management plan should propose the Applicant's counterpart contribution, both in magnitude and elements of the cost-sharing. The Applicant's proposal for counterpart contribution will be valued at 10 points of the 25 points attributed to this evaluation criterion.

The management plan should also outline potential partnerships and coordination with leading institutions, other projects, and stakeholders. The Applicant should describe how the activity will coordinate with these entities to foster complementarity of activities and to maximize leveraging of resources.

3) Institutional Capacity of Applicant (Criteria #3)

The Applicant should demonstrate technical and managerial expertise that directly benefits the technical approach and reflects comparative advantages to implement the proposed approach. Applicants should likewise demonstrate a familiarity with the Mongolian context and the context of possible countries that would participate in the Alliance, with emphasis on any experience with exchange programs in Mongolia. Information in this section should include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Brief description of organizational history/expertise;
- Demonstrated experience in program management in Mongolia (a standing presence in Mongolia is preferred);
- Knowledge of the state of democracy and governance in Mongolia;
- Pertinent experience and representative accomplishments in developing and implementing exchanges, programs in leadership development, and civic education;
- Relevant experience with the proposed approach; and
- Institutional strength as represented by breadth and depth of experienced personnel in program-relevant disciplines and areas.

Similar information should be provided for every partner organization that would represent 25 percent or more of the total proposed project cost.

4) Key Staff (Criteria #4)

The Applicant should propose well-qualified key personnel who will be responsible for managing and carrying out the activity. The Applicant must describe the individual qualifications, experience, and capabilities that demonstrate the capacity of each of the proposed key staff members to carry out the proposed program. The Applicant should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the key personnel positions and provide a detailed explanation of how the education, capabilities, and experience of the proposed key personnel could effectively contribute to the successful implementation of the program and the achievement of its objectives. Applicants should also submit three references, with complete contact information, for each key personnel candidate.

b. Format

Technical applications shall not exceed forty (40) pages using 11 point Calibri font, single-spaced using 8 ½ x 11 paper with 1-inch margins. Pages should be numbered at the bottom. Unnecessarily elaborate brochures, art-work and other presentation aids 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 prospective recipient's lack of cost consciousness. Any pages in excess of the above mentioned limit may not be reviewed. Tables, charts, graphs and graphics contained in the technical application, not otherwise excluded below, are included within the page limitation.

Applicants may use annexes for required supplemental information.

To facilitate the competitive review of the applications, applications must conform to the format prescribed below:

- 1) Cover page [not included in page limit], to contain the following information:
 - RFA number and title for which this application is being submitted
 - Applicant name
 - Applicant address
 - TIN
 - DUNS
 - Point of contact's name, email address, mobile and phone numbers information for technical and cost applications
 - Names of sub-awardees/sub-recipients, if any
- 2) Table of Contents listing all page numbers and attachments [not included in page limit]
- 3) List of acronyms [optional and not included in page limit]
- 4) Executive summary [not included in page limit but not to exceed one (1) page]
- 5) Annexes [not included in page limit] should be tabbed and named (e.g. Annex A, Annex B, etc.)
 - Required annexes:
 - ❖ Draft Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan
 - ❖ Organizational chart
 - ❖ Curriculum Vitae of the key personnel (3-page limit per CV)
 - ❖ Past Performance References (3 references)
 - ❖ Draft Branding Strategy and Marking Plan

- Optional Annexes are permitted and may include curriculum vitae of additional named personnel and letters of commitment from partners, if any.

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 purpose, should:

- 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 {insert sheet numbers}.”

- 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.”

c. Required Annexes:

1) Draft Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan:

The plan should identify appropriate milestones, gender sensitive indicators and targets, as well as plans to gather and utilize existing baseline data. The M&E Plan is expected to reflect concern for results and include proper impact and output indicators. Applicants are encouraged to use the indicators suggested in the Program Description and additional USAID standard indicators as applicable. Indicators should be disaggregated by gender and age, as appropriate and feasible. The schedule for data collection and detailed plans for data analysis, review, and reporting should be described. Applicants are directed to adhere to ADS 203 (November 2012) for guidance in the preparation of M&E Plan.

2) Organizational Chart

Applicants must submit a detailed organizational chart for USAID’s review. The organizational chart should be both structural and functional. At a minimum, it should clearly define the communication and reporting structure for Key Personnel and all activity staff. The supervisory responsibility, authority, and accountability for all staff should be included in the chart. Relationship with the home office may be included, as can STTA staff, where appropriate. Functionally, the chart should include bullets to briefly describe job functions and roles of staff. The chart should not exceed two pages in length.

3) Past Performance References

- a) Past Performance. The Applicant should present up to three contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements, not necessarily with USAID, in which the primary Applicant has implemented similar or related programs during the past three years. This information is to include projects of similar complexity and magnitude involving technical assistance to the education sector. If the Applicant is a consortium, provide information on past experience for all identified partners. Reference information is to include the contract information for an official point of contact, award or contract numbers, and a brief description of the work performed by the Applicant's partners and/or sub-awardees/sub-recipients. Copies of certificates of Project Completions or any evidentiary documentation should be forwarded as an Annex to the technical application.
- b) Past Experience. Applicants may supply a table showing previous experience by award, not to exceed one page. In the table list, show the following:
 - ❖ Name of awarding organization or agency;
 - ❖ Address of awarding organization or agency;
 - ❖ Place of performance of services or program;
 - ❖ Award number;
 - ❖ Amount of award;
 - ❖ Term of award (begin and end dates of services/program);
 - ❖ Name, current telephone number, current fax number, and email address (if one is available) of a responsible technical representative of that organization or agency; and
 - ❖ Brief description of the program

4) Draft Branding Strategy and Marking Plan

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all USAID programs, projects, 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. Under the regulation, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan, but only by the "apparently successful applicant," as defined in the regulation. The Agreement Officer will review the proposed Marking Plan for adequacy and will negotiate, approve and include the Marking Plan in the award. Failure to submit or negotiate a Marking Plan within the time specified by the Agreement Officer will make the apparent successful applicant ineligible for award.

2 CFR 700.16(f) requires that Applicants submit a Branding Strategy & Marking Plan that describes:

- a) How the program, project, or activity is named and positioned.
- b) How it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and cooperating country citizens.
- c) Identifies all donors and explains how they will be acknowledged.
- d) Contains the required information on naming and positioning the USAID-funded program, project, or activity;

- f) Promotes and communicates to cooperating country beneficiaries and citizens that the USAID-funded program, project, or activity is “from the American People”; and
- g) Is consistent with the stated objectives of the award.

Further information on Branding & Marking can be found in ADS Chapter 320: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf>, or in the Branding website at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding/assistance.html>.

2. Cost/Business Application

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

The Cost/business application must be completely separate from the Applicant’s technical application. A summary of the budget must be submitted using Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance), 424A (Budget Information – Non-construction Programs) and 424B (Assurances-Non-construction Programs). The budget should be expressed in US Dollars.

USAID will evaluate the cost/business application separately for cost effectiveness and realism. The cost application must be realistic, reasonable, allowable, allocable, and cost-effective. To do so, USAID will require detailed cost information from the Applicant organizations.

a. Cost Submission

The Applicant’s proposed budget’s cost elements should follow the object class categories in SF-424B, specifically: Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Construction (if any), Other (Direct Costs), and Indirect Charges. Illustrative description of the cost elements are provided below:

- 1) Personnel – Applicants must propose direct salaries and wages in accordance with their personnel policies;
- 2) Fringe Benefits – If the Applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant should use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an Applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the application should propose a rate and explain how the Applicant determined the rate; in this case, the narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, FICA, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries;
- 3) Travel – The Applicant should indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, estimated as necessary to carry out the proposed scope of work, and their estimated costs. Applicants must specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, the duration of travel, and number of individuals who would be traveling. If applicable, applicants should base per-diem calculations on current, published U.S. Government per diem rates for the localities concerned.
- 4) Equipment – Estimated equipment (i.e. model number, cost per unit, quantity)
- 5) Supplies - Estimated office supplies and other related supply items;

- 6) Contractual – If applicant proposes to utilize contractors or sub-awardees, indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown per contractor or sub-awardee following the same cost format as the applicant’s. This element also includes short-term expert services rendered by persons who are members of a particular profession or possess a special skill and who are not officers or employees of the awardee/recipient. Costs of consultants should be broken down by person months or days.
- 7) Construction – Costs associated with proposed construction, if any.
- 8) Other Direct Costs – Applicants should detail any other direct costs, including the costs of communications, report preparation, passport issuance, visas, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than insurance included in the applicant’s fringe benefits), equipment, office rent, etc.;
- 9) Indirect Costs – These remaining costs (indirect) that are to be allocated to intermediate or two or more final cost objectives. Indirect costs and bases as provided for in an applicant’s indirect cost rate agreement with the Government, or if approved rates have not been previously established with the Government, a breakdown of bases, pools, method of determining the rates and description of costs. The Applicant should support the proposed indirect cost rate with a letter from a cognizant, U.S. Government audit agency, a Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement (NICRA), or with sufficient information to determine the reasonableness of the rates. (For example, a breakdown of labor bases and overhead pools, the method of determining the rate, etc.).

The Applicant must submit a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement NICRA if the organization has such an agreement with an agency or department of the U.S. Government. If no NICRA the Applicant should submit the following:

Reviewed Financial Statements Report: a report issued by a Certified Public Account (CPA) documenting the review of the financial statements was performed in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services; that management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation. The account must also state the he or she is not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements; or

Audited Financial Statements Report: An auditor issues a report documenting the audit was conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS), the financial statements are the responsibility of management, provides an opinion that the financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the company and the results of operations are in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework (or issues a qualified opinion if the financial statements are not in conformity with the applicable financial reporting framework.

- 10) Cost Sharing: The Applicant should estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources to be mobilized over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting Cooperative Agreement.

The Applicant must provide an electronic copy of the two-year budget (in Microsoft Excel), with calculations shown in the spreadsheet. Calculations and formulas shall be accessible and not hidden or protected by password. The budget narrative (in Microsoft Word) must show in detail the total costs for implementing the activity. It must provide detailed budget notes and supporting justification for all proposed budget line items. It must clearly identify the basis of all costs, such as market surveys, price quotations, current salaries, historical experience, and if applicable, activity cost contributions for in-kind services, USAID share amounts, cash contributions (all cash must be converted to US currency), or resource leveraging for the period of performance.

The budget should provide estimates of the activity based upon the total estimated costs for the Agreement. Applicants should minimize their administrative and support costs to maximize the funds available for project activities.

Applicants should minimize administrative and support costs for managing the project in order to maximize the funds available for project activities.

If the Applicant is a consortium, the cost/business application must include documents that reflect the legal relationship among the parties. The document(s) should include a full discussion of the relationship among the parties, including the identity of the applicant that the USG will treat for purposes of administration of any cooperative agreement, identity of the applicant that will have accounting responsibility, how the applicant proposes to allocate effort under any cooperative agreement, and the express agreement of the principals of the Applicant organization to be held jointly and severally liable for the acts of omissions of the other.

Applicants must provide detailed spreadsheets, budget narratives and notes for all costs, and explain how they were derived consistent with the following guidance on required information:

- The breakdown of all costs associated with the Activity according to costs of headquarters and/or regional offices, if applicable;
- The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization involved in the project, whether subgrantee or consortium member;
- The costs, if any, associated with external, expatriate technical assistance and those associated with local in-country technical assistance;
- The breakdown of any financial and in-kind contributions of all organizations involved in implementing the cooperative agreement;
- Proposed cost share/counterpart contribution from the applicant and partners;
- The costs proposed for “training” and “sub-awards” must be itemized within the budget narrative;
- Procurement plan for commodities if needed (although not encouraged); and
- Closeout costs: applicants must include in the required projected organizational budget any costs associated with terminating programmatic activities at the conclusion of the cooperative agreement.

The cost/business application should describe headquarters and field procedures for financial reporting and the management information procedure(s) to ensure accountability for the use of U.S. Government funds. Applicants must fully describe project budgeting, financial and related project reporting procedures.

b. Business Submission

- 1) The Applicant must complete Standard Form 424 (Application for Federal Assistance), 424A (Budget Information – Non-construction Programs) and the SF-424B, Assurances-Non-construction Programs, as indicated on the form. These forms are available at: <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>.
- 2) Required Certifications, Assurances per ADS 303
 - a) A signed copy of [Certifications and Assurances](#), which includes:
 - ❖ Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs (This assurance applies to Non-U.S. organizations, if any part of the program will be undertaken in the U.S.)
 - ❖ Certification Regarding Lobbying
 - ❖ Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206)
 - ❖ Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing, Implementing Executive Order 13224
 - ❖ Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons, Implementing Title XVII of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013.
 - b) Other certifications and statements found in Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient, ADS 303:
 - ❖ A signed copy of Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking
 - ❖ A signed Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking
 - ❖ Authorized Individuals
 - ❖ Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)
 - ❖ Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number
 - ❖ Letter of Credit with USAID, if any
 - ❖ Procurement Information
 - ❖ Type of Organization
 - ❖ Estimated Costs of Communication Products.
- 3) Certificate of Compliance

Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance.
- 4) Applicants should submit additional evidence of responsibility they deem necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. The information submitted should substantiate that the Applicant:
 - a) Have adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award.

- b) Has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, nongovernmental and governmental.
- c) Has a satisfactory record of performance. Past relevant unsatisfactory performance is ordinarily sufficient to justify a finding 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).

c. Potential Request for Additional Documentation

Upon consideration of award or during the negotiations leading to an award, the apparently successful applicant may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make an affirmative determination of responsibility. Applicants should not submit the information below with their applications. The information in this section is provided so that Applicants may become familiar with additional documentation that may be requested by the Agreement Officer. The additional information that may be requested are to substantiate:

- By-laws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable.
- Whether the organizational travel, procurement, financial management, accounting manual and personnel policies and procedures (especially regarding salary, promotion, leave, differentials, etc.) submitted under this section have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the Federal Government, and if so, provide the name, address, and phone number of the cognizant reviewing official. The applicant should provide copies of the same.

VI. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management

Dun and Bradstreet and SAM.gov Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements. Each applicant is required to:

1. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient;
2. Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

VII. Funding Restrictions

USAID policy is not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost principle under 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. of the Uniform Administrative Requirements may be paid under the anticipated award.

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

I. Overview

These technical evaluation criteria have been tailored to the requirements of this RFA to allow USAID to choose the highest quality application. USAID will award to the Applicant whose application best meets the program description.

The criteria that all applications will be reviewed against are listed below so that Applicants will know which areas require emphasis in applications. Applicants should note that these criteria serve as the standard against which all technical information will be evaluated and serve to identify the significant matters which Applicants should address.

Technical, cost and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other. Applicants are forewarned that an application with the lowest estimated cost may not be selected if an award to a higher priced application affords the Government a greater overall benefit.

All evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined, are significantly more important than cost. However, estimated cost is an important factor and the estimated cost to the Government increases in importance as competing applications approach equivalence and may become the deciding factor when technical applications are approximately equivalent in merit.

The Government may evaluate applications and award a cooperative agreement without discussions to an Applicant. However, the Government reserves the right to conduct discussions if later determined by the Agreement Officer as necessary. Therefore, each initial offer should contain the Applicant's best terms from a cost and technical standpoint.

The entry into discussion is to be viewed as part of the evaluation process and shall not be deemed by USAID or the applicants as indicative of a decision or commitment upon the part of USAID to make an Award to the applicant with whom discussions are being held.

II. Criteria

The evaluation criteria prescribed herein have been tailored to the requirements of this particular RFA. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to:

- Identify the significant matters which the Applicants should address in their applications, and
- Set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

All technical applications will be evaluated against the criteria by a Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC).

The relative importance of each criterion is indicated by the points assigned to them. A total of 100 points is possible for the complete application. The selection criteria below are presented below with relative order of importance, so that applicants will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of applications.

The selection criteria USAID will use to evaluate applications and their relative importance are found below.

a. Technical Approach (30 points)

The applicant should demonstrate:

- understanding of the local context, technical requirements, and governance issues that the program aims to address;
- challenges, risks, and opportunities related to achieving the objectives outlined in the program description; and
- awareness of the roles of key stakeholders in the implementation of the program.

The applicant should explain how the program will help achieve USAID goals and objectives. The technical approach should consider the questions posed in the Instructions for Applicants section.

The applicant should, at a minimum, provide a full description of the proposed approach, illustrating a credible strategy for achieving the objectives outlined in the program description. The applicant should propose strategies that take into account the development constraints and detail how the activity might be sustained after USAID assistance is concluded. Substantive attention to gender, LGBTI individuals, and persons with disabilities should be integrated into the proposed approach.

b. Management and Implementation Plan (25 points)

Does the applicant's proposed management plan describe how the proposed structure will contribute to achieving the objectives and results described in the technical application. Any contemplated sub-agreements should be outlined, along with reasons for the particular choice of organizations proposed as sub-grantees. As a means of building capacity in Mongolia, local civil society organizations are welcome. Delineation of roles, responsibilities, authority, and processes for decision-making within the applicant's team, between any home office and the field, and between any prime applicant and sub-grantees must be clearly articulated. The plan should demonstrate how the applicant will efficiently and effectively use the human, technical, and organizational resources at hand to accomplish the proposed program. It should also identify potential challenges in the management of the project and recommend ways to overcome those challenges.

The management plan should describe how the activity would be staffed in number of staff, the skills staff would require, and the responsibilities staff members would have.

The management plan should propose the applicant's counterpart contribution, both in magnitude and elements of the cost-sharing. The applicant's proposal for counterpart contribution will be valued at 10 points of the 25 points attributed to this evaluation criterion.

The management plan should also outline potential partnerships and coordination with leading institutions, other projects, and stakeholders. The applicant should describe how the activity will coordinate with these entities to foster complementarity of activities and to maximize leveraging of resources.

c. Institutional Capacity of Applicant (25 points)

The applicant should demonstrate technical and managerial expertise that directly benefits the technical approach and reflects comparative advantages to implement the proposed approach. Applicants should likewise demonstrate a familiarity with the Mongolian context and the context of possible countries that would participate in the Alliance, with emphasis on any experience with exchange programs in Mongolia. Information in this section should include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Brief description of organizational history/expertise;
- Demonstrated experience in program management in Mongolia (a standing presence in Mongolia is preferred);
- Knowledge of the state of democracy and governance in Mongolia;
- Pertinent experience and representative accomplishments in developing and implementing exchanges, programs in leadership development, and civic education;
- Relevant experience with the proposed approach; and
- Institutional strength as represented by breadth and depth of experienced personnel in program-relevant disciplines and areas.

Similar information should be provided for every partner organization that would represent 25 percent or more of the total proposed project cost.

d. Key Staff (20 points)

The applicant should propose well-qualified key personnel who will be responsible for managing and carrying out the activity. The applicant must describe the individual qualifications, experience, and capabilities that demonstrate the capacity of each of the proposed key staff members to carry out the proposed program. The applicant should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the key personnel positions and provide a detailed explanation of how the education, capabilities, and experience of the proposed key personnel could effectively contribute to the successful implementation of the program and the achievement of its objectives. Applicants should also submit three references, with complete contact information, for each key personnel candidate.

III. Review and Selection Process

1. Technical Evaluation

USAID will review all applications received that complies with the instructions in this RFA. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the criteria shown above.

a. Technical Approach

The extent to which the applicant demonstrated

- *understanding of the local context, technical requirements, and governance issues that the program aims to address;*
- *challenges, risks, and opportunities related to achieving the objectives outlined in the program description; and*

- awareness of the roles of key stakeholders in the implementation of the program.

Has the applicant successfully explained how the program will help achieve USAID goals and objectives? Has the applicant's technical approach thoughtfully considered the questions posed in the Section D.2?

Has the applicant, at a minimum, provided a full description of the proposed approach, illustrating a credible strategy for achieving the objectives outlined in the program description? Did the applicant propose strategies that take into account the development constraints and do these strategies detail how the activity might be sustained after USAID assistance is concluded? Was substantive attention to gender, LGBTI individuals, and persons with disabilities integrated into the proposed approach?

b. Management and Implementation Plan

The extent to which the applicant's proposed management plan will contribute to achieving the objectives and results described in its technical approach. How defined are the roles, responsibilities, authority and decision making within the team? Between field office and home office? Between the applicant and subgrantees/contractors? Between partner institutions, other projects and stakeholders?

What is the proposed counterpart contribution's magnitude and elements?

c. Institutional Capacity

The extent to which the applicant's institutional technical and managerial expertise demonstrate experience with exchange programs and familiarity with the Mongolian context. The extent to which the applicant has successfully implemented a student exchange program.

d. Key Personnel

The extent to which the proposed Key Personnel convincingly demonstrate the ability to successfully and effectively implement the proposed program.

2. Cost Evaluation

The overall standard for judging cost applications will be whether:

- It is realistic and consistent with the technical application;
- Individual costs are considered reasonable based on an analysis to identify salaries and other cost categories considered to be excessive.
- The cost presents the best value to the government for the technical approach proposed;

While Cost is less important than technical and is not weighted, the cost applications of the apparently successful technical applications will be evaluated for cost effectiveness including the level of proposed cost share. Other considerations are the completeness of the application,

adequacy of budget detail and consistency with elements of the technical application. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability, to be measured for a responsibility determination.

The application with the lowest estimated cost may not be selected if award to a higher priced technical application offers a greater overall benefit for the program. All evaluation factors other than cost or price, when combined, are significantly more important than cost. However, estimated cost is an important factor and the estimated cost to the Government increases in importance as competing applications approach equivalence and may become the deciding factor when technical applications are approximately equivalent in merit.

Cost estimates will be analyzed as part of the application evaluation process. Proposed costs may be adjusted, for purposes of evaluation, based on results of the cost analysis and its assessment of reasonableness, completeness, allowability, allocability, cost efficiency and realism.

3. Cost Sharing

USAID has established a suggested cost share of no less than ten percent (10%) of the Award's projected value of \$2,500,000 for the recipient of the award. Leveraged non-USAID resources from private firms and institutions (such as equipment, training, level of effort and any in-kind contributions) may be considered part of cost share. Cost sharing may be also demonstrated either through direct funding, beneficiary contributions, in-kind assistance, or a combination thereof. USAID shall make the final determination and assess whether or not the Applicants' cost share contributions (e.g. categories or items) meet the standards set in 2CFR 200.

4. Selection Process

The overall evaluation methodology set forth above will be used by the Agreement Officer as a guide in determining the best value to the U.S. Government. This award will be made by the Agreement Officer to the responsible recipient whose application represents the best value to the U.S. Government after evaluation in accordance with the above technical and cost criterion under this RFA.

Once an apparent successful applicant is identified, additional information and discussion may occur between the applicant and USAID Agreement Officer before the Agreement Officer makes the final award decision. Award may be made without discussions.

III. Acceptability of Proposed Non-Cost Terms and Conditions

An application is acceptable when it manifests the Applicant's assent, without exception, to the terms and conditions of the RFA, including attachments, and provides a complete and responsive application without taking exception to the terms and conditions of the RFA. If an Applicant takes exception to any of the terms and conditions of the RFA, then USAID will consider its application to be unacceptable. Applicants wishing to take exception to the terms and conditions stated within this RFA are strongly encouraged to contact the Agreement Officer before doing so.

USAID reserves the right to change the terms and conditions of the RFA by amendment at any time prior to the application closing date. USAID also reserves the right to cancel the RFA at any time (including after application closing date).

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SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

I. Federal Award Notices

The selected Applicant will be notified by email following the selection. The award document will be sent for review and signature. All unsuccessful applicants will also be notified at the appropriate time.

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the 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 Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

II. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The award will be administered according to the following:

- For U.S. organizations, 2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, and ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental Organizations are applicable.
- For non-U.S. organizations, ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations will apply.

The applicable standard provisions will be attached to the final award document.

III. Reporting Requirements.

1. Financial Reporting:

The recipient shall account for expenditures for activities carried out under the award to ensure funds are used for their intended purposes. Financial reports shall be in accordance with 2 CFR 200.327. The Recipient shall submit to the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR), a quarterly financial report using SF-425 line item budgets, expenditures and accruals and a budget pipeline (balance remaining). A table with expenditures and accruals shall be submitted to the AOR no less than 15 days before the end of each (USAID) fiscal year quarter throughout the life of the project.

- a. For Organizations with a Letter of Credit (LOC):
 - 1) Quarterly Report: The recipient must submit an SF 425, the Federal Financial Report, via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (<http://www.dpm.psc.gov>) within 45 days following the end of each quarter. A copy of this form shall be simultaneously submitted to the Agreement Officer's Representative

(AOR) and the USAID/Philippines, Mongolia and the Pacific Controller (aidmnlrfsc@usaid.gov).

- 2) Final Report: The recipient must submit within 90 days following the estimated completion date of this award and, in accordance with 22 CFR 226.70 – 72, the original and three (3) copies of the final Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) to: (a) USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMP-LOC Unit ; (b) the Agreement Officer; (c) the Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR), and (d) the USAID/Philippines, Mongolia and the Pacific Controller (aidmnlrfsc@usaid.gov). The electronic version of the final SF 425 must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (<http://www.dpm.psc.gov>) in accordance with paragraph A.5.1.a(1) above.
- b. For Organizations without a Letter of Credit (LOC):
- 1) Quarterly Report: The Recipient must submit an SF 425, the Federal Financial Report, via electronic submission, within 45 days following the end of each quarter to the Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) and the USAID/Philippines, Mongolia and the Pacific Controller (aidmnlrfsc@usaid.gov). The Recipient shall include, as an attachment to the SF-425, expenditures by budget line item per quarterly performance reporting requirements.
 - 2) Final Report: The Recipient must submit within 90 days following the estimated completion date of this award and, in accordance with 22 CFR 226.70, the original and two copies of all final Federal Financial Reports (SF-425) to: (a) the Agreement Officer; (b) the Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR), and (c) the USAID/Philippines, Mongolia and the Pacific Controller (aidmnlrfsc@usaid.gov).
- Electronic copies of the SF-425 can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standardforms/ffreport.pdf> and <http://www.forms.gov/bgfPortal/docDetails.do?dId=15149>.
 -
 - Line item instructions for completing the SF-425 can be found at:
 - <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standardforms/ffrinstructions.pdf>

2. Performance and Other Reporting

Under USAID’s Evaluation Policy, the primary responsibility for final evaluations that assess the overall performance and results from a project rests with USAID. While the Recipient often provides supporting data and analysis, such evaluations will be designed, implemented and independently contracted by the Mission to assure objectivity and rigor. The Recipient may be requested by the mission to collect baseline data for this independent evaluation, if necessary.

The Recipient remains responsible for ongoing monitoring and evaluation (typically formative and mid-term evaluations) that inform management decisions by assessing whether projects are being implemented as planned, reaching targeted groups, and achieving expected outputs and outcomes. The Recipient will develop a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan within the first three months following cooperative agreement award and before major implementation actions are underway.

The M&E Plan will describe the agreed upon framework of goals, outcomes, and outputs for the project, along with indicators, baselines and targets defined for each, gender disaggregated where appropriate. The M&E Plan will also include a monitoring and evaluation plan that describes the evaluative work that the implementing partner will conduct for its own management decision-making, institutional learning, and accountability purposes. (See USAID Evaluation Policy and ADS 203, as revised, for more detailed guidance).

a. Work Plans

Life of Project Work Plan: On or about 60 days from the signing of the agreement, the Recipient shall open review discussions on the illustrative Life of Project Work Plan with the AOR. These discussions will be based on consultations and inputs from USAID, partners and stakeholders. The draft life-of-project Work Plan will be submitted for the determination of acceptance to the AOR within 30 days of the signing of the cooperative agreement.

Annual Work Plans: Within 30 days of signing of the cooperative agreement, the Recipient shall submit a draft work plan that covers from the date of signing through the end of the fiscal year. The draft will be based on the life-of-project Work Plan but will be revised with comments made during negotiations and with consultations with the AOR after signing of the cooperative agreement, if any.

The scope and format of the annual work plan will be agreed to between the Recipient and the AOR during the first two weeks of award of the Agreement. Subsequent annual work plans shall be submitted no later than four weeks before of the following year of implementation. The AOR will respond to the recipient on the implementation plan within five (5) days from receipt.

The annual work plan will detail the work to be accomplished during the upcoming year and should include the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan (see below) as well as the estimated monthly funding requirements for the implementation of the project necessary to meet all project objectives within the award. Any budgets attached to an annual work plan are informational only. They do not supersede the approved budgets included in the Agreement. Any changes to the budget require prior approval of the Agreement Officer in accordance with 22CFR226.25 (or relevant standard provision in the case of award to non-US organization).

With the written concurrence of the AOR, annual work plans may be revised on an occasional basis as needed, to reflect changes on the ground. Appropriate revisions must also be made to the M&E Plan.

As part of its initial work plan, and all annual work plans thereafter, the Recipient in collaboration with the USAID AOR and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this Agreement to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation. If the Recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

b. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan

Within 90 days of signing of the cooperative agreement, the recipient shall finalize the M&E Plan (working from the draft M&E Plan submitted during application) with clearly outlined targets, benchmarks, and performance measurement indicators and demonstrate how the proposed indicators are linked to the USAID/Philippines and the Pacific Project Indicators. The plan shall identify specific indicators for measuring the following aspects of the recipient's performance:

- progress toward meeting project objectives and sub-objectives;
- time frame for achieving these objectives and sub-objectives; and
- Client satisfaction and overall project impact.

Both quantitative and qualitative indicators need to be developed and special attention paid to data sources, collection methods, and data quality assessment.

As part of the initial work under the agreement, the Recipient will work closely with the USAID AOR to specify a method for determining target and control units and to develop mutually agreed upon cooperative agreement indicators. The Recipient will finalize the M&E Plan within the first 90 days of the cooperative agreement by commissioning surveys and conducting evaluations and assessments that will establish the base-lines for the activities and sub-activities and their expected targets for subsequent years. Project monitoring and evaluation comprises an essential component of this cooperative agreement for the following reasons:

- inform USAID of progress;
- enable detailed and on-going design of activities and sub-activities;
- build counterparts' capacity to collect and analyze the data for sound decision-making; and
- provide public awareness/outreach campaigns to demonstrate that results are being achieved.

The M&E Plan process will involve the collection of baseline and outcome data in an appropriate number of control units. The M&E Plan will discuss the method used to select measurable units, i.e. schools, districts, including both the treatment and control groups according to criteria that make a rigorous comparison possible; it will include a plan for gathering baseline data in both groups as well as for gathering outcome data periodically and in the final year of project implementation.

The Recipient in its monitoring and reporting will disaggregate by gender and geographical location the impact on the beneficiaries and provide analysis of gender data. For all the activities in the implementation of this project, if a single gender is disproportionately involved or benefited, the Recipient must explain the reason and whether or not it is appropriate. If deemed inappropriate and the result of a structural cause, the Recipient will inform USAID and suggest remedial interventions to improve the equity of implementation.

At a minimum, the M&E Plan shall include the following:

- Description of the Recipient's established system of Monitoring and Evaluation. The M&E Plan must validate the targets provided against the standard/custom indicators included in the Program Description. The established system refers to:
 - ❖ Organization-wide policies and procedures for monitoring and their relation to the award's M&E Plan.
 - ❖ Organizational staffing/expertise, roles, and responsibilities and how the staffing and expertise is to be used in the award's M&E Plan, including the roles of contractors and subgrantees.
 - ❖ Automated and other methods used to gather, store, manipulate, summarize, analyze, and/or report performance data.
 - ❖ Procedures for regular communication with USAID regarding the status of monitoring activities, including a means for early notification of problems.
 - ❖ Means of addressing a discovered lack of progress or success. Procedures will focus on learning from mistakes, analyzing them, and ascertaining the reason for missteps.
- Information about all activities to be monitored under the M&E Plan. The list of activities must be provided in a logical framework which:
 - ❖ Links activities to Agreement results—both those dictated by USAID in the program description and lower level or complementary results contained in the Recipient's approach.
 - ❖ Describes assumptions being made about the relationship of the activity to the Agreement result.
 - ❖ Identifies the indicators against which progress is to be measured. The M&E Plan must include all required standard/custom indicators provided in the program description.
 - ❖ Includes methods to be used for monitoring. Methods for monitoring vary according to what it is being monitored. Some activities can be observed easily and costs and outputs can be measured against the original targets and timetable. Other activities are less easy to monitor in terms of quantitative achievements, especially such intangible effects as awareness and empowerment and their direct link to project interventions. Indirect or proxy indicators may have to be identified, even if these cannot be verified. By considering these factors at the planning stage, expected results can be kept realistic and cost-effective and the Recipient can recognize that not all available and useful indicators are 'objectively verifiable.'
 - ❖ Provides an illustrative schedule for discrete monitoring activities tied to the overall project implementation plan.
- Gender Consideration:

To the greatest extent possible, the Recipient will seek to include both men and women in all aspects of this project including participation and leadership in e.g., meetings, training, etc. The Recipient shall collect, analyze and submit to USAID sex-disaggregated data and proposed actions that will address any identified gender-related issues.

In order to ensure that USAID assistance makes the maximum optimal contribution to gender equality, performance management systems and evaluations must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data when the technical analyses supporting the Agreement demonstrates that:

- ❖ The different roles and status of women and men affect the activities to be undertaken; and
- ❖ The anticipated results of the work would affect women and men differently.

c. Closeout Plan

Within one hundred eighty (180) days of the project's estimated completion date, the Recipient will submit to the AO and the AOR for review, a draft closeout plan which incorporates (a) the property disposition plan; (b) the in-country operations phase out plan; (c) the delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the award, and; (d) a time line for completing all required closeout actions, including the submission date of the final property disposition plan, and; (e) includes draft turnover documents.

d. Quarterly Reports

Except when otherwise required, the recipient will submit quarterly progress reports to the AO and the AOR within 30 days of the beginning of the month following the quarter to which the report refers, with the exception of the last quarter when an Annual Report will be required, and final quarter, when a Final Report is required. The report should contain, at a minimum:

- Progress (activities completed, benchmarks achieved, performance standards completed) since the last report by country and project area. The M&E Plan should be attached;
- Problems encountered and whether they were solved or are still outstanding;
- Proposed solutions to new or ongoing problems;
- Success stories;
- Qualitative data on project achievements and results;
- Documentation of best practices that can be taken to scale; and
- List of upcoming events with dates.

The required performance information must be supplied in the following standardized format:

- 1) Executive Summary – This section is a narrative summary of overall achievements against planned achievements and a brief description of any realized or potential performance challenges¹⁵. Achievements should be quantified against both principal and collateral agreement targets/indicators wherever possible, leaving detailed analysis for later sections.

¹⁵ Where performance challenges are caused by or related to management issues, the grantee shall include an additional reporting section on the matter, including the remedy taken or the proposed remedy to be taken.

- 2) Summary Table - The Executive Summary should be followed by a table which identifies all results and their corresponding targets/indicators. Overall agreement goals for each target and indicator shall be identified as well as planned and actual goals for the reporting period. In addition, costs incurred by result or group of results should be identified as well as planned and actual expenditures for the reporting period. This table is intended to serve as an at-a-glance data summary.
- 3) Correlation to M&E Plan - In this section, the recipient should describe how the performance being reported was monitored. This description should reference the M&E Plan methods used during the reporting period. If the M&E Plan was not strictly followed, the Recipient should provide a rationale for not using it. All required standard/custom indicators provided in the program description MUST be included in M&E Plan and discussed in this section.
- 4) Result by Result Analysis – This section will provide detailed analysis of the results summarized above as well as additional narrative regarding the achievements and challenges.
- 5) Financial Summary - This section is not a financial report: rather, it summarizes financial expenditure data in reference to achievements and project element funding. The most tangible statement in this section will be one regarding whether spending towards each result is “less than anticipated, on target with estimates, or more than anticipated.” Reports which indicate that expenditures are less or more than anticipated will be supported with rationale detailing the probable cause(s). Reports which indicate that expenditures are more than anticipated must also include a plan for ensuring that the performance of the result will be met within the estimated Agreement budget for that result.
- 6) Success Stories - At least four one-page success stories on project activities shall be submitted to USAID/Philippines and the Pacific in the periodic performance report. Review USAID guidance on “success stories’ available at <http://www.usaid.gov/stories/>.

Recipient in consultation with the AOR will develop a format of the quarterly reports, and upon approval of the AOR will submit reports on regular basis. These reports will describe the progress made in the quarter most recently ended with specific reference to the goals, outcomes and results, and specific activities included in the work plan and as specified in this program description.

e. Annual Reports

The Recipient shall prepare annual reports to summarize project progress relative to expected results and outcomes as outlined in work plans and against cooperative agreement deliverables. Annual reports will have two components: (a) A concise report rolling up quarterly reports with a short summary for public audiences (such as government & local communities); and (b) accounting of progress against metrics for inputs, process, outputs and results per the M&E Plan, and other information in standard formats required for USAID Annual Performance reporting. Part (b) will consist of: (i) a list of deliverables, reports and publications submitted during the year (by date/status), (ii) lessons learned; (iii) suggested steps to improve activity

performance and impact; and, (iv) concise narratives or a table to reflect any additional cooperative agreement. The annual report will serve as a basis for project evaluation, audit and management decision-making for budgetary considerations. It is essential that the annual report is complete, accurate and timely. Annual reports are to be submitted to the AOR by October 30 each year. Depending on the award date, the first Annual Report may not cover twelve months of activity.

f. Final report

The Recipient shall submit to the AO and the AOR, within ninety days following the termination of this cooperative agreement, a detailed final report, which includes a financial report detailing how funds were expended, by line item; a summary of the accomplishments and shortcomings of its performance under the cooperative agreement, referenced to the results required under this program description; a status report on all institutions with which Recipient worked to a significant degree; a complete list of all host country and international donor and financial institution contacts; a description of all institutions created and their expected future activities; methods of work used; budget and disbursement activity; and, recommendations regarding unfinished work and/or project continuation. The final/completion report shall also contain an index of all reports and information products produced under this agreement.

The report shall:

- Contain an overall description of the activities under the Program during the period of this Cooperative Agreement, and the significance of these activities;
- Describe the methods of assistance used and the pros and cons of these methods;
- Present life-of-project results towards achieving the project objectives and the performance indicators, as well as an analysis of how the indicators illustrate the project's impact on the accomplishment of the project's overall objectives;
- Summarize the project's accomplishments, as well as any unmet targets and the reasons for them including leveraging; and
- Discuss the issues and problems that emerged during project implementation and the lessons learned in dealing with them.

One copy of the Final Report will be submitted to the Bureau for Program Policy Coordination, Development Experience Clearinghouse in electronic format at:

USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse
M/CIO/ITSD/KM
Ronald Reagan Building, M.01
U.S Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523, USA
E-mail: docsuubmit@usaid.gov
URL : <http://dec.usaid.gov>

g. Foreign Tax Reports

A standard report will be prepared for each Fiscal Year and submitted prior to April of the following fiscal year.

h. Other Reports

Occasionally, USAID receives requests for information from other USAID offices, or other USG agencies. The Recipient is expected to be responsive to these requests to the greatest extent possible.

IV. Project Income

The Recipient shall account for Project Income in accordance with 2 CFR 200.307 (or the Standard Provision entitled Project Income for non-U.S. organizations). Project Income earned under this award shall be added to the project.

V. Environmental Compliance

An Initial Environmental Examination recommending **Categorical Exclusion** for the three components of this activity was approved by USAID's Asia Bureau Environmental Officer. The activities justify Categorical Exclusions, pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(1) and (2) because they do not have an effect on the natural or physical environment. Specifically, as currently planned, the envisioned activities fall into the following classes of action:

- Education, technical assistance, or training programs except to the extent such programs include activities directly affecting the environment (such as construction of facilities, etc.)
- Analyses, studies, academic or research workshops and meetings

If, during implementation, program activities are considered outside of those described above, an amendment shall be submitted. Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.3(a)(9), if new activities are added and/or information becomes available which indicates that activities to be funded by the project might be "major" and the project's effect "significant," this determination will be reviewed and revised by USAID or the awardee, in collaboration with the Contracting Officer's Representative of the project, and submitted to the Mission Environmental Officer and Bureau Environmental Officer for approval and, if appropriate, an environmental assessment will be prepared.

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SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

I. Agency Point of Contact

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II. Email for Application Submission: manila-roaa-rfa@usaid.gov .

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SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

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

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