

Reconciliation Activity

Questions and answers

The original NOFO is hereby amended to incorporate the following questions and answers. In addition, the NOFO has been amended. See NFO Reconciliation Amendment 1 file. The NFO Reconciliation Amendment 1 file now represents the most updated NOFO.

I. Questions on submission of the concept paper and full proposal

1) Question: I hope you are well. The reason for my email is to ask instructions to download the document from the NOFO - 514-15-000012 RECONCILIATION ACTIVITY , available on the website of Grants.gov announcement. It is not possible to download the document from the updated version of the call?

R: The Document is available to be downloaded on www.grants.gov , when you search for the NOFO 514-15-000012 you may find it on the tab of related documents.

2) Question: Would it be possible to provide a non-scanned version of the NOFO to ensure that all information is readable?

R: We will provide a PDF version via www.grants.gov.

3) Question: A few days ago we contacted USAID to introduce ourselves and get more information about the Call RECONCILIATION ACTIVITY, at the time the call was not open and we were asked to keep an eye on www.grants.gov . Now that you are officially open the call and have access to all the information, we want to know if the Full Announcement has Spanish version and if it can be obtained. We also want to know if there is some kind of form or list of documents necessary because the Application Package tab has no files to download.

R: The official language for the RFA is English. There will be no Spanish version available. For the first part of this two-stage process there are no documents that need to be used. Please follow instructions in Section D of the NOFO.

4) Question: I am writing you because I want to know whether a university based in Colombia can submit a proposal for the Reconciliation Activities Program?

R: Yes

5) Question: Could you tell me please whether the application process is physical, online or by mail?

R: As Stated on Section D in 1.3 Application Submission Procedures. Electronic Submission (e-mail) is the media for submitting the application and it must be sent to the Agreements Officer and the Agreements Specialist.

6) Question: Submission instructions. Section D, 1.3 of the NOFO indicates that applicants may upload applications to www.grants.gov. However, the following paragraph states that applications should be sent by e-mail to the Assistance Officer (AO) and Assistance Specialist (AS). Would USAID please confirm that e-mail submission of the application to the AO and AS is sufficient?

R: Reference to uploading documents to grants.gov will be deleted.

7) Question: On page 2 of the RFA, applicants are instructed to submit electronically to bogotausaidofficeAA@usaid.gov, Mr. German Gutierrez at ggutierrez@usaid.gov, and copy Ms. Curtrice Dorsey at cdorsey@usaid.gov. On page 28 of the RFA, applicants are instructed to submit the application to Ms. Curtrice Dorsey and copy Mr. German Gutierrez. Can USAID please confirm which individual is to receive the application directly and which one is to be copied?

R: Electronic Submission (e-mail) is the media for submitting the application you must send it to the individuals and email addresses mentioned in the cover letter

8) Question: On page 2 of the RFA, Mr. German Gutierrez is referred to as Acquisition and Assistance Specialist and Ms. Curtrice Dorsey is referred to as Agreement Officer. On pages 27 and 28 of the RFA, Mr. German Gutierrez is referred to as Assistance Specialist and Ms. Curtrice Dorsey is referred to as Assistance Officer. Can USAID please confirm the titles of these individuals?

R: Both Mr. Gutierrez and Ms. Dorsey happily respond to both titles.

9) Question: Will USAID provide comments on applicant's concept paper prior to submission of full proposal?

R: Yes.

10) Question: Will USAID accept additional questions from applicants selected for the Full Application Stage of the NOFO?

R: No.

11) Question: Given the two-stage procurement process, will there be an opportunity for the organizations participating in the second stage of the procurement to submit a second round of questions for clarification?

R: No.

12) On Page 29 of the RFA, USAID provides instructions on the concept paper submission. In addition to the 5-page concept paper and 5 pages of annexes, would USAID permit the inclusion of a cover page and cover letter for the concept paper stage, not counted towards the total page limitation?

R: No.

13) Question: Section D, 1.4 of the NOFO states that we should include at most 5 pages for any annexes to the concept paper. Could USAID please specify what may be included or what it expects to evaluate in the annexes at the concept paper stage?

R: No. Any annexes provided are at the applicant's discretion.

14) Question: ¿Las propuestas en que idioma deben de ser presentadas?

R: The official language to present all proposal is English.

15) Question: Can USAID provide an estimated timeline between concept note submission, notification to applicants of advancement to next stage and the full proposal submission deadline?

R: At this time USAID expects:

Notification for Invitation to Submit a Full Application: November 30, 2015

Deadline for Submission of Full Application: January 12, 2015

16) Question: Following submission of the Concept Paper on October 29, when does USAID expect to notify the organizations selected to participate in the second-tier, Full Application Stage? Can USAID provide guidance on the expected deadline for submission of full applications?

R: See answer number 15.

17) Question: Para aplicar a la convocatoria es necesario que la organización este inscrita en el sistema de grants?

R. No.

II. Questions on the truth commission.

18) Question: Page 11, Objective 1 Problem Statement states “The legal framework for peace mandates the creation of a truth commission if an agreement between the FARC and GOC is signed Therefore, one of the components of this first objective should be technical assistance to the GOC for the design and implementation of a truth commission.” Question: As the truth commission agreement between FARC and GOC was signed last June, which addresses the design of the commission, and understanding that this agreement states that the Commission will be an independent body in which FARC and GOC will have specific roles. Please clarify how this agreement signed between FARC and GOC fit within Objective 1 and the larger NOFO, including expected results and illustrative indicators.

R: The truth commission referred to in Objective 1 is the one resulting from the overall peace agreement between the GOC and the FARC to be signed if negotiations are successful.

19) Question: Page 12, Objective 1, Problem Statement, states: “USAID hopes to play an important, supportive role but will also have limited resources compared to the scope of the challenges ahead.” Question: Please clarify the extent of USAID’s role in the establishment of the commission vis-a-vis other international and national stakeholders in defining and implementing roles and responsibilities.

R: The applicant must assess the scope of the challenges ahead and outline in its proposal “the extent of USAID’s role in the establishment of the commission vis-a-vis other international and national stakeholders in defining and implementing roles and responsibilities”, taking into account it’s technical knowledge regarding the role of the Government of Colombia and other relevant actors.

20) Page 19, Donor Coordination, states “The Project will work where USAID has a comparative advantage over other donors and on those activities identified as most critical.” Question: In regards to

the establishment of the truth commission, please clarify which other donors will be involved and in which areas/activities does USAID have a comparative advantage.

R: In its research process to design a strategy, the applicant should identify “which other donors will be involved and in which areas/activities does USAID have a comparative advantage”.

III. Questions on budget, payment and salaries

21) Question: On page 35 of the NOFO, Limitations, third paragraph references the Standard Provisions for Allowable Costs (December 2014). This Standard Provision is for non-U.S. organizations only and does not apply to U.S. based organizations. As such, please delete this paragraph.

R: USAID will place the appropriate clauses in any award at the time of the award.

22) Question: On page 35 of the RFA, “Additional Requirements for Personnel Compensation – Limitations”, the RFA states that “applicants must consider an Exchange Rate of COP \$2,350 per US\$1 to estimate its costs.” Given that the current exchange rate is approximately COP \$3,080 to US\$1, can USAID please confirm that we should use the COP \$2,350 rate?

R: USAID confirms that applicants should use the COP \$2,350 rate

22) Question: ¿Los recursos (50.000.000 USD) corresponden a la financiación de un año o a la financiación de los cuatro años de la actividad?

R: In reference to Section B. 1 in the NOFO, USAID intends to provide between \$50,000,000 and \$55,000,000 in total funding over a four-year period.

23) Question: On page 56, the NOFO states that, “The Award Budget will be made in Dollars, and payments will be made to the Recipient in Colombian Pesos, at the US official exchange rate at the time of process.” If an award is made to a US non-profit organization, will payment be in USD through the organization’s letter of credit?

R: Yes, if a Non Profit Organization has a LOC, the Award Budget will be made in Dollars, and payments will be made to a US Recipients in dollars. Payments to local recipients will be made in Colombian Pesos (COP \$), at the U. S. official exchange rate at the time of process.

24) Question: In regards to section 4, page 56 “Payment Terms for the Award,” please confirm the SF-1034 is not required for cooperative agreements and that recipients may utilize their established letter of credit with the U.S. government.

R: The SF-1034 is not required for recipients that have established letters of credit with the U.S. government.

25) Question: On page 56 of the NOFO, 4. Payment Terms for the Award, it states that “The Award Budget will be made in Dollars, and payments will be made to the Recipient in Colombian Pesos.” As payment is this method to U.S. based organization will create uncertainty regarding value of actual payment as well as additional burdens of exchange rate costs, and as U.S. based organizations provide most payments in USD, not local currency, this type of payment received from the U.S. Government

represents an additional risk which would need to be approved as an additional cost by USAID. As such, please revise to "...payments will be made to the Recipient in USD."

R: See Answer 24.

26) Question: In regards to section 4, page 56 "Payment Terms for the Award," please confirm that international organizations may be paid in U.S.D., not Colombian Pesos.

R: See Answer 24.

27) Question: The requirement on page 33 for annual salary history for the most recent three years for key and non-key personnel, while a standard requirement for acquisition actions, is not a usual requirement for assistance. Per 2 CFR 200.430 non-profit organizations are required to comply with their established written policy for compensation, applied consistently to both Federal and non-Federal awards. Can USAID clarify if this requirement was intended to only apply to for-profit applicants, or is it intended to apply to all organizations? In addition, requiring résumés for all non-key personnel seems excessive and inconsistent with the language on page 30 "Annexes" which requires resumes for key personnel and long-term professional staff. Can USAID please clarify its intent here?

R: "G. Indicate the name, annual salary, and expected level of effort of each person charged to the Activity. Provide resumes showing work experience and annual salary history for at least the three most recent years for all identified and proposed long/short term key and non-key personnel."

The following statement is inserted in lieu thereof:

"G. Indicate the name, annual salary, and expected level of effort of each person charged to the Activity."

28) Question: The requirement on page 35 that salary or wage cannot exceed the employee's current salary or wage does not allow for employees to be taking on positions with more responsibility as a part of this application. This restriction also does not seem to be consistent with 2 CFR 200.430, which requires non-profit organizations to comply with their established written policy for compensation, applied consistently to both Federal and non-Federal awards. Can USAID clarify if this requirement was intended to only apply to employees continuing in their same position without taking on additional work or responsibilities if an award is received?

R: This section has been revised. See amended RFA.

29) Question: May the applicant propose a 5 percent increase above the highest rate of annual salary or wage received during any full year of the immediately preceding three (3) years for personnel starting salaries and wages?

R: Salaries and wages must be reflective of the "market value" for each position.

30) Question: Please provide the most recent FSN scale and Local Compensation Plan for Colombia.

R: No.

31) Question: Page 35, Additional Requirements for Personnel Compensation, Limitations (1), states “No individual salary or wage may exceed the employee’s current salary or wage, or the highest rate of annual salary or wage received during any full year of the immediately preceding three (3) years without the approval or the AO.”

R: See Answer 29.

32) Question: Page 35 of the NOFO, Limitations: Please delete the last line which states: “No individual salary or wage may exceed the employee’s current salary or wage, or the highest rate of annual salary or wage received during any full year of the immediately preceding three (3) years without the approval of the AO”. In keeping with the OMB authorized cost principles, such restrictions would require a deviation authorized by OMB[1] .

R: See Answer 29.

33) Question: On Page 33 of the RFA, regarding items to include in the budget narrative, item “F. The procurement plan for commodities.” Please confirm that the procurement plan for commodities can be omitted if the offeror does not plan on purchasing any commodities.

R: Yes.

34) Cuáles son los criterios para definir overhead?

R: If the apparently successful applicant has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, the recipient may choose to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR 200.414(f)). If the prospective applicant chooses the de minimis rate, the AO must incorporate the 10% indirect cost rate in the award budget and the recipient must follow the requirements in 2 CFR 200.414(f).

IV. Questions on cost share and leverage

35) Question: I write to you with a question relating to the call for applications for the program entitled: "Reconciliation Activity." However we would like further clarification on the cost-sharing requirements. If I understand correctly, the TOR states that the winning group will be required to raise an additional 20% of the award to further its activities. The TOR then says that it is expected that an additional 21 million dollars will be raised in alliance with local partners to leverage activities. 21 million is, of course, more than 20% of 50-55 million. Do the sections on cost-sharing and leveraging refer to the same thing or are these separate issues? Could you elaborate further on what each of these categories (cost sharing and leveraging) entails and what would be expected by USAID of the winner bidder?

R: Cost Share and Leverage are separate and exclusive of each other, explained as follows:

Cost share:

As per ADS 303.3.10 “Cost share refers to the resources a recipient contributes to the total cost of an agreement. Cost share becomes a condition of an award when it is part of the approved award budget. The cost share must be verifiable from the recipient’s records; for U.S. organizations it is subject to the requirements of 2 CFR 200.306, and for non U.S. organizations it is subject to the Standard Provision, “Cost Share”; and can be audited. If a recipient does not meet its cost share requirement, the AO may

apply the difference in actual cost share amount from the agreed upon amount to reduce the amount of USAID funding for the following funding period, require the recipient to refund the difference to USAID when this award expires or is terminated, or reduce the amount of cost share required under the award”.

USAID suggests 20% of the total amount of the agreement as cost share for the Reconciliation activity but it is up to the applicant to commit to a percentage.

Leverage:

As per ADS 303.3.27 “Public-Private Partnerships Leveraging represents all of the non-USAID resources (excluding cost sharing) that are expected to be applied to a program. Leveraging is limited to Public-Private Partnership awards. Leveraging includes resources that third-parties bring to the program without necessarily providing them to the recipient of the USAID assistance award. These parties may include the host government, private foundations, businesses, or individuals. The recipient is not responsible for meeting the leveraging amounts/resources and leveraging is not subject to audit”.

Leverage is expected only for component 3. The leverage must be 1:1 (in cash and/or in-kind) of USAID resources for this component. Leverage can be sought from public or private entities.

36) Question: Qué significa apalancamiento para conseguir alianzas público - privadas? Las alianzas para el concept paper pueden ser solo con estos socios?

R. See Answer 35. Yes

37) Question: Cost share: According to ADS 303.3.10.2, cost sharing cannot be used as a separate factor during the merit review of applications. However, cost sharing may be considered in the merit review only if the funding announcement specifically addresses how it will be considered (e.g., assigning a certain number of additional points to applicants who offer cost sharing, or using cost sharing to break ties among applications with equivalent scores after evaluation against all other factors). Since this was not specified in the NOFO, can we assume that the statement on page 44, “Applications that do not meet the minimum cost share requirement, when applicable, are not eligible for award consideration” is an error? In sum, are applicants in fact REQUIRED to provide 20% cost share and will applications that do not have cost share (or less than 20% cost share) be penalized?

R: References to required cost share will be deleted. Cost Share is suggested and applicants that do not propose this will not be penalized.

38) Question: Regarding Leverage (p.26), what is the total amount of leverage required by USAID?

R: See answer 35.

39) Question: Regarding Leverage (p.26), is leverage expected under each objective or only under Objective 3?

R: See answer 35.

40) Question: Regarding Leverage (p.26), may the applicant allocate leveraged resources across all program objectives based on their best estimates given program design?

R: Yes.

40) Question: In reference to cost sharing and leverage conditions of the NOFO, can national and local government funds be part of the leverage (in cash and/or in kind) of activities under Objective 3?

R: Yes. See answer 35.

41) Question: In reference to cost share, on page 25 and page 44 the NOFO states that “USAID has established a suggested cost share of 20% of the Award’s projected value”; however, page 44 states that “Applicants that do not meet the minimum cost share requirement, when applicable, ...”. Can USAID elaborate on what is meant by “when applicable” and confirm that the “suggested” 20% is, in fact, a required minimum level for cost share?

R: See answers number 37.

42) Question: May the 20% of expected cost share for the program be counted as part of the \$21 million total leverage identified in Objective 3 (as the expected 1:1 leverage), or must the amount of cost share be treated as an additional amount beyond the total leverage we would propose under Objective 3?

R: See answer number 35.

43) Question: On page 37 of the NOFO, Cost Share, it states “Recipients are required to include cost share expressed as a dollar figure rather than a percentage.” Can USAID clarify if the resulting award would be held responsible for a cost share dollar value which was based on a total estimated ceiling? If in fact USAID only obligates a portion of that ceiling, for example, the resulting cost share would be disproportionate to the value of the USAID obligated funds. Please either delete the statement that “Recipients are required to include cost share expressed as a dollar figure rather than a percentage...” or please add the following as the last sentence, “Proposed cost sharing contribution levels assume the full obligation of USAID funding per the stated ceiling award amount.”

R: No.

44) Question: On page 44 of the NOFO, Cost Sharing, it states: “Applications that do not meet the minimum cost share requirement, when applicable, are not eligible for award consideration.” Please define the “minimum cost share requirement”, as the NOFO suggests that the contribution level is suggested only and not required/mandatory. Alternatively, if funding authority allows for “suggested” only, please delete the “minimum cost share requirement” language.

R: See Answer 37.

45) Question: Page 26, 3. Leverage, states, “Given the approximate total cost of the activity is \$50 to \$55 million and that objective 3 will be allocated 40% of that, total leverage should be around \$21 million.” Question: Please clarify if USAID anticipates that the \$21 million will be the total value of the grants fund and if grants are the only mechanism to be used in Objective 3.

R: USAID expects that the total value of grants funds could be approximately \$21 million. USAID would consider mechanisms other than subgrants if they meet program objectives.

46) Regarding Leverage (p.26), what is the total amount of leverage required by USAID?

R: See answer 35

47) Regarding Leverage (p.26), is leverage expected under each objective or only under Objective 3?

R: See answer 35

48) Regarding Leverage (p.26), may the applicant allocate leveraged resources across all program objectives based on their best estimates given program design?

R: Leverage for components other than 3 is not required. See answer 35

49) Cost share and leverage - Section C of the NOFO (pages 25-26) refer to cost share and leveraging. The suggested cost share amount is 20% of the award while the total leveraging amount is \$21 million. Is the leveraged amount in addition to cost share, i.e. USAID expects an award of \$50 million will include \$10 million of cost share and \$21 million of leveraged funds?

R: See answer number 35

50) Question: You said cost share is not required. If the applicant submits a cost share plan, wins the bid, and then is not able to come up with the stated %, then is this auditable?

R: Once the awardee has agreed to cost share, then the awardee is responsible for living up to its agreement and the amount is auditable.

V. Questions on key personnel

51) Question: Can USAID please clarify required key personnel positions?

R: Applicants are responsible for providing appropriate key personnel.

52) Question: Page 43 of the NOFO, Key Personnel 25 Points: Can USAID please expand on the Key Personnel qualifications and relevant experience that will be evaluated?

R: See Answer 51.

53) Question: Can USAID please clarify required key personnel positions?

R: See Answer 51.

54) Question: Que características considera USAID que debe tener el COP?

R. The key personnel evaluation criteria states the following:

USAID will evaluate the qualifications and relevant experience of proposed technical personnel. USAID will evaluate the management experience, the relevant technical skills with experience working with reconciliation processes, the interpersonal relations, the ability to work under difficult circumstances, the chief of party's English skills, and the ability to establish and maintain productive relationships with host country counterparts at all levels.

55) Question: Hay preferencia por un candidato colombiano?

R: See answer 54.

VI. Questions on evaluation:

56) Question: Page 19 indicates that USAID will require an impact evaluation. Does the recipient need to budget for this evaluation or will it be covered by USAID directly? Further, if the applicant wishes to budget and conduct its own mid-term and final evaluations, is this acceptable or will a USAID-funded evaluation be the only one required for the program?

R: This section of the RFA has been amended. USAID will conduct an independent performance evaluation rather than an impact evaluation. USAID will pay for the independent performance evaluation. If the applicant would like to perform additional evaluations with its own funds, it is welcome to do so.

57) Question: On page 22, USAID mentions that the AOR will be involved in the “d) Approval of the questionnaire for the national sample and special samples.” Could USAID please expand on what types of national samples will be required?

R: Page 22, The following statement is hereby deleted:

“4. Approval of the questionnaire for the national sample and special samples.”

58) Question: Page 19, Impact Evaluation states that “The activity will be subject to a rigorous impact evaluation . . . with the purpose to examine whether and to what degree effects reported by the activity are actually attributable to USAID’s efforts. Question: Please clarify if the applicant’s budget should include the costs of the evaluation or will it be directly performed by USAID.

R: No. See Answer 56.

59) Question: Page 19, Impact Evaluation states, “The recipient will be required to cooperate with and facilitate the work of an independent contractor who will design and implement an impact evaluation. This cooperation will assist in producing a rigorous impact evaluation It is expected that USAID/Colombia will complete design of an appropriate impact evaluation prior to the award of this activity.” Question: Please clarify what the applicant’s role will be in the design and implementation of the impact evaluation, e.g. establishing a baseline, treatment/control groups.

R: See Answer 56.

60) Question: Page 19 indicates that USAID will require an impact evaluation. Does the recipient need to budget for this evaluation or will it be covered by USAID directly? Further, if the applicant wishes to budget and conduct its own mid-term and final evaluations, is this acceptable or will a USAID-funded evaluation be the only one required for the program?

R: See Answer 56.

61) On page 20, the RFA states “...that USAID/Colombia will complete design of an appropriate impact evaluation prior to the award of this activity.” Could USAID provide clarification on what is intended?

R: See Answer 56.

62) Question: Does USAID plan to use an experimental or quasi-experimental design method to establish treatment and control groups for comparison purposes?

b. If so, within the eligible municipalities will USAID or the implementing organization be responsible for selection and evaluation of control and treatment populations?

c. If there are control and treatment populations planned, would this model only apply to Objectives 2 and 3, given Objective 1 is focused on strengthening GOC capacity?

d. If an experimental or quasi-experimental design is not intended, does USAID have thoughts on how impact will be measured?

R: See Answer 56.

63) On page 22 of the RFA, Substantial Involvement section 3.c.d states the AOR will be involved through: “Approval of the questionnaire for the national sample and special samples.” Question: Can USAID please clarify what is meant by the national sample? Are the referenced samples related to the impact evaluation described on pages 19-20 of the RFA?

R: See Answer 57.

VII. Questions on Audits

64) Page 37, Audit, states “The recipient must have an annual audit in accordance with the ‘Guidelines for Financial Audits Contracted by Foreign Recipients’ issued by the USAID Inspector General, for any recipient fiscal year in which the recipient expends a combined total of \$300,000 or more in all USAID awards,” Question: 2CFR200.501, (audit requirements) has increased the threshold to \$750,000, please confirm that the applicant should follow 2CFR200.501 (\$750,000).

R: The CFR language is valid. However 2 CFR 200.503 states “A Federal Agency, Inspectors General or GAO may conduct or arrange for additional audits which are necessary to carry out its responsibilities under federal statute or regulation.” ADS 591 (Which is USAID specific regulation) states in 591.3.1.1 “U.S. nonprofit organizations that expend \$500,000 or more in Federal awards within their fiscal year must have a single (organization-wide) or program-specific financial audit conducted for that year in accordance with OMB Circular A-133” and 591.3.2.1(a) states “Foreign nonprofit organizations, host governments, and subrecipients that expend \$300,000 or more in USAID awards (i.e., organizations that receive USAID funds either directly or through a prime contractor or recipient) during their fiscal year, must have an annual audit conducted of those funds in accordance with the Guidelines for Financial Audits Contracted by Foreign Recipients.” As this language does not contradict the regulation from 2 CFR 200.503 until such time the internal rules are revised this agency specific requirement will apply.

VIII. Questions on geographical scope

65) Question: Selection of municipalities – Could USAID please clarify whether or not it expects applicants to propose up to 20 municipalities where the project will work as part of their full applications? The evaluation factors under Program Description on page 42 of the NOFO asks applicants to provide

“justification for the municipalities proposed under the criteria included in the NOFO.” It isn’t clear whether this means we should provide justification for all municipalities or only the seven municipalities listed on page 17 of the NOFO.

R: USAID expects applicants to propose up to 20 municipalities where the project will work as part of their full applications and provide justification for all of the proposed ones.

66) Question: Page 23 of the NOFO, 7. Authorized Geographic Code, provides authorized geographic code 937. Will USAID consider changing the Geographic Code to 935 as there could be significant savings with Geographic Code 935?

R: No.

66) Question: On page 17, the RFA states that the “project will work in maximum of 20 municipalities where at least 25% are considered urban centers. And lists seven municipalities (Bogotá, Medellín, Santa Marta Quibdó, Tumaco, Buenaventura, Apartadó) that “might be considered.” Should the list of seven municipalities be understood in the context of the 25% of urban centers to be selected or of the 20 total municipalities?

R: The list of seven municipalities is only an example.

67) Question: ¿Cuál es la prioridad geográfica de la actividad, rural o urbana?

R: The applicant must decide it and justify it.

68) Question: ¿Sabiendo que el proyecto quiere alcanzar 20 municipios, USAID ha priorizado algunos en el Valle del Cauca? En caso de no haberlo hecho, es posible sustentar la necesidad de intervenir con esta actividad en este departamento o sólo se tendrán en cuenta los que posteriormente USAID presentará en su lectura de prioridades (alto, medio, bajo)?

R: See Answer 65.

69) Question: La cobertura del proyecto es 20 municipios. Usaid espera enfocar estos municipios en algunas regiones del país, es decir, tener un enfoque regional, o espera cubrir la mayor parte del territorio colombiano?

R. USAID does not expect to cover the most part of the Colombian territory with such a small sample of municipalities. Applicants, based on their technical expertise, must come up with a geographical distribution proposal taking into account the criteria included in the NOFO, as well as the best use of available resources.

70) Question: Hay municipios o departamentos focalizados para intervenir con la propuesta?

R. No. See answer 65.

IX. Question on past performance

71) Question: On pages 37-38, USAID describes requirements for past performance references. Could USAID please clarify that five past performance references for programs occurring in the last three years

are required from the prime applicant and that up to three past performance references are required for any sub-grantee whose budget is at least 25% of the total cost?

R: The five past performance references for programs occurring in the last three years are required from the prime applicant and that up to three past performance references are required for any sub-grantee whose budget is at least 25% of the total cost.

72) Question: Pages 31, Cost Application Format, Annexes, lists as an annex “Documents to support History of Past Performance” and Page 38, History of Performance, indicates that this includes past performance references. Question: Because past performance references (PPRs) will be part of the Technical evaluation during the full application stage, should PPRs be included in an Annex to the Technical application instead of the Cost application? Question: If PPRs should be included as an annex in the Technical application, the applicant respectfully requests that it be excluded from the page limitation.

R: USAID is evaluating experience in the technical evaluation not past performance. The reference to past performance in the technical evaluation section has been deleted.

X. Questions on Transition Strategy

73) Question: On page 7, USAID describes its commitment to the principles of USAID Forward and that applicants are requested to incorporate a “transition strategy” that includes the selection of “a local organization...”. Could USAID please clarify if among a consortium of partners only one organization should be selected for mentoring, or if multiple organizations could be chosen? If only one organization, does USAID envision that the chosen organization phases into greater and greater responsibility for program implementation over the life of the four-year program?

R: Language has been amended as follows: “USAID/Colombia is committed to the principles of USAID/Forward^[1] and the use of local institutions and personnel for implementation of its awards. As such, each applicant is requested to incorporate in its proposal a transition strategy that includes the selection of a local organization or organizations as a sub-recipient/s during the first year, along with a mentoring plan in the following key areas: 1) governance,^[2] 2) administration, 3) human resources management, 4) financial management, 5) organizational management, 6) program management, 7) project performance management, and 8) leadership and team dynamics. USAID would prefer to limit the number of organizations being mentored to a maximum of two in order to ensure intensive mentoring”

74) Question: On Page 7, the RFA references a Colombian organization that will be the target for USAID Forward. Is this limited to one organization or would more than one organization be possible?

R: See Answer 73.

75) Question: Page 7, Award Type, states that applicants incorporate “a transition strategy that includes the selection of a local organization as a sub-recipient during the first year, along with a mentoring plan . . .” in several key areas. Question: Please confirm that the applicant may incorporate more than one local organization in its transition strategy?

R: See Answer 73.

76) Existen criterios de selección para la Estrategia de transición / selección de una organización local - sub receptora durante el primer año, donde debe presentarse un plan de tutoría para esta organización en las 8 áreas clave?

R: No. The Applicant must define them in coordination with USAID.

XI. Questions on legal issues

77) Question: Page 20, Legal Consideration, lists procedural safeguards that must be used “to ensure that prospective beneficiaries of assistance have completely severed ties from the FTO”. Question: Will USAID please provide past examples in which such safeguards were used in a manner that aligns with the do no harm approach required in post conflict situations?

R: Page 20 states, "The following procedural safeguards help (emphasis added) to ensure that prospective beneficiaries of assistance have completely severed ties from the FTO." The RFA does not/not state that these procedural safeguards "must" be used. These are not requirements, but rather examples of best practices recommended by the U.S. Department of Justice, the agency responsible for interpretation of the material support statute. Generally speaking, it will likely be within the manageable control and interest of the Government of Colombia, not the awardee, to implement procedural safeguards during the DDR process to minimize the risk of inadvertent assistance to an individual who has not fully severed ties with an FTO. The examples are included so that the awardee has an understanding of, and will be able to evaluate, procedural safeguards and level of risk related to prohibited assistance to FTOs.

78) Question: Regarding the legal considerations on page 20, could USAID please clarify if USAID or the recipient is expected to perform the “Formal and rigorous vetting to ensure the individual has left and has not returned to the FTO”?

R: See answer 77

XII. Questions on alliances and consortiums

79) Question: ¿Las propuestas deben ser presentadas en bloque con organizaciones de base?

R: This Agreement will only be awarded to one organization. However, the application can be the result of a consortium. In the case of a consortium a prime recipient should be identified and must be the one to submit the application.

80) ¿La recomendación es hacer propuestas conjuntas con agencias gubernamentales, con autoridades locales o regionales?

R: The applicant must decide whether the proposal is presented together with other entities and with whom. See answer 77.

81) La conformación de un consorcio significa que todos deben ser incluidos en el DUNS?

R: In case of a consortium only the prime will have to be registered.

82) Question: Do subgrantees need to be in DUNS?

R. See answer 81

83) Question: La conformación de un consorcio significa que todos deben estar incluidos en DUNS?

R. See answer 81

84) Question: La alianza debe estar establecida desde antes de presentar la propuesta o ésta puede darse durante la ejecución?

R: Consortium need to be formalized before the proposal is submitted and the prime partner must be clearly identified. Alliances for the implementation can be developed during execution.

85) Question: Un solicitante principal puede compartir bajo la figura de consorcio el desarrollo de un objetivo específico o componente?

R. Yes.

XIII. Others

86) Question: On page 35 of the NOFO, Limitations, the third paragraph states that CCNs employed under this Cooperative Agreement “are considered by USAID as employed by the Applicant for a specified period not to exceed the Agreement Period.” Can USAID please confirm that this statement is fully compliant with all local labor laws – which may or may not consider local employees as long-term employees, not contract-only employees?

R: It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure compliance with local labor laws.

87) Question: Is the expectation that this program will only move forward with the signature of a Peace Agreement with all groups? If so, do we expect to this program to begin upon signature of the Peace Agreement or prior to the signature of the Peace Agreement?

R: No. The Program will move forward independently of the signature of an agreement. However, support to the truth commission is subject to the signature of a peace agreement between the GOC and the FARC.

88) Question: Reference 36 on p. 17 does not appear to be linked to the criteria Municipalities where the Latin American Public Opinion Project survey for 2014 has shown the least reconciliation prone environment. The survey linked is a comparative study of countries in Latin America, and does not include municipalities in Colombia. Can USAID please confirm whether the reference is correct, and if not, what is the correct source of information for USAID’s analysis of the least reconciliation prone municipalities?

R: The right link is: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/colombia/Colombia-Informe-Especial-2015-070915-W.pdf>

89) Question: On page 30 of the RFA, Section 1.2 Full Application Stage, Annexes section, describes “Letters of support, intent or commitment from prospective resource partners and draft MOUs that describe the roles, responsibilities, and contributions of the each of the alliance partners related to objective three.” We have two questions associated with this section:

a. Can letters of support, intent or commitment or MOUs be written in Spanish?

R: Yes.

b. Can such letters of intent, support or commitment be for alliance partners related to Objectives 1 and 2 as well?

R: Yes.

90) Question: Since you are not expecting exclusivity with local partners, are you still expecting letters of collaboration with local partners included in the concept paper and proposal.

R: The RFA has been amended to discourage exclusivity. There is no requirement for letters of commitment at the concept paper stage.

91) Question: Is USAID accepting exclusive partnerships local Colombian partners at the RFA stage?

R: See answer 90.

92) Question: Applicant review information – Under Section E1, Concept Paper Merit Review Criteria, the NOFO states under Management structure that USAID will evaluate how the management structure will support the strategy to achieve results. At the concept paper phase will USAID only be evaluating the management structure, or does it also expect applicants to include information regarding other aspects of program management, such as the start up plan?

R: At concept paper stage, USAID will evaluate “how the management structure will support the strategy to achieve results.” See evaluation criteria.

93) Question: Page 7, Theories of Change, states that “These theories of change are built on the assumption that reconciliations, understood as the process of seeking to ‘engender a minimum basis of trust so that there can be a degree of cooperation and mutual reliance between individuals’ in a post conflict situation, contributes to durable peace”. Question: Please clarify how this definition of reconciliation fits into the GOC’s strategy of co-existence, as GOC is not incorporating reconciliation into any of the formal publicized entities in charge of transition to post agreement scenarios? E.g. in the truth commission agreement, the objective of the commission is to clarify truth, coexistence and guaranteeing no repeats, the document states that the commission contributes to reconciliation, prioritizing coexistence as its main purpose. In other official documents, there is not mention of reconciliation, but coexistence as a main challenge for post conflict.

R: Applicant must propose a strategy to achieve expected results according to the criteria explained in the NOFO.

94) Question: Page 8, Background, states “The Victim’s Law also entitles victims to assistance, attention, protection, reparation, and restitution of land, regardless of whether the perpetrator is the State or a member of an illegal armed group. Question: Will USAID provide the applicant with recent studies, including impact evaluations, on the impact of the Victim’s Law or any other relevant studies or evaluations?

R: All applicants may use any public documentation available. USAID will not provide any further documentation.

95) Question: Page 16, Objective 3 Problem Statement, states “USAID is interested in partnering with the private sector . . . to foster strategic alliances and partnerships that leverage expertise and resources with results focused on market-driven solutions that are sustainable and complementary with USAID’s objectives.” However, Page 17, Objective 3 Expected Results states: “(1) Community-based initiatives for reconciliation identified and supported.” Question: Please confirm that USAID will also fund non-market driven reconciliation projects identified by community-based initiatives.

R: Yes

96) Question: Page 43, Program Description, states “The results the applicant believes it can achieve during each phase of the program.” Question: Please clarify if “phase” refers to the PMEP and what will be measured at different stages or must the applicant identify distinct phases in the technical.

R: The applicant must identify distinct phases in its application.

97) Para aplicar a la convocatoria es necesario que la organización este inscrita en el sistema de grants?

R: No.

98) Question: En la propuesta técnica solo se esperan buenas prácticas ya probadas en otros países?

R. No. Lessons learned and best practices from Colombian experiences are also expected.

99) Question: La propuesta debe ser necesariamente a cuatro años?

R. Yes

100) Question: Cuál es el monto de apoyo máximo otorgado por USAID para la propuesta?

R. 50-55 million USD

101) Question: Do you have any targets for beneficiary numbers?

R. No

102) Question: El anuncio del acuerdo en la Habana modifica o puede alterar los términos de la actual convocatoria?

R. No. The terms for the call of proposals remain unchanged.

103) Question: USAID espera que en el concept paper se coloquen metas de los indicadores?

R. No.

104) Question: La propuesta debe apuntar a un solo componente o a los tres?

R. All three components should be included in the proposal.

105) Question: Dentro de las propuestas se tendrán en cuenta los procesos afrocolombianos? Temas de minorías y discriminación histórica?

R. See program description objective one and program description “Other Consideration”

106) Question: Nos podrian dar mas informacion sobre el adendo que publicaran?

R. The revised NOFO is being published with this Q&A document.