

ATTACHMENT II
USAID Responses to Questions received
Continuation

34. Question: I am getting ready to apply for the above mentioned funding and I have a few questions. I wanted to know is this a dollar amount or is this translated into the currency of where the funding will be? Lastly, is this a fixed term of 5 years with indefinite renewal funding availability or just a 5 year contract in general?

USAID Response: USAID intends to award a Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide US\$24 million in total USAID funding over a five (5) year period.

35. Question: We are going through the application and submission information and would appreciate some clarification on the SF-424 series. I see that SF-424A and SF-424B are specifically mentioned in the materials as required. However, are any other forms from the SF-424 Family <<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.htm>> required as part of our submission?

USAID Response: No other forms are required.

36. Question: On page 29 the NOFO states, “The applicant must identify a private sector partner that has demonstrated strong working relationships with senior-level MINERD personnel, understands the challenges being faced by MINERD, and has the capacity to communicate effectively with MINERD personnel across the different management levels.” Does USAID require that each NOFO applicant must submit a sub-partner/awardee that is from the private sector at the time of application? If so please define the USAID qualifications that determine if a partner is private sector.

USAID Response: At this stage, applicants are expected to identify private sector prospect(s) with the given background that could align with the development goals of the Basic Education Recovery activity. Thus, it is not required to submit a sub awardee at this stage. USAID’s private sector engagement policy is linked at footnote 33 of the NOFO.

37. Question: The NOFO indicates that this Activity “should build on the teacher training and coaching processes developed under the USAID Read Activity” (p. 13). Please provide a link to the USAID Read Activity final report or any other pertinent documentation that would be needed in order to understand the progress made on teacher training and coaching made by the USAID Read Activity.

USAID Response: USAID’s Read Program final report is being produced, therefore has not been published. The Read activity has published documents in USAID’s [Development Experience Clearinghouse](#).

38. Question: On page 42 the NOFO states, “The Applicant (including major sub-awardees) must

ATTACHMENT I

USAID Responses to Questions received

1. Question: "General: Given public holidays in the US and Dominican Republic, would USAID kindly consider extending the deadline for proposal submission?"

USAID Response: No.

2. Question: "General: Can USAID confirm that the type of schools targeted is fully public schools only?"

USAID Response: Confirmed.

3. Question: "Section A.11.3, page 28: "The applicant shall intentionally include marginalized youth populations such as LGBTQI+ youth, orphans, youth that are trafficked and smuggled, young people with disabilities, youth of Haitian descent, Venezuelan youth migrants, and youth living with human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS)." The Activity focuses on interventions for pre-first to third grade learners. Youth engagement is not mentioned under the anticipated activity goals, results, or intermediary results. Can USAID please remove this requirement or clarify how marginalized youth populations are expected to be involved in this Activity?"

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

4. Question: "Section C.2, page 35: "USAID has established a mandatory minimum recipient cost share of US\$2.4 million for the award." Could USAID please revise the cost share obligation to be 10% tied to the awarded value rather than a fixed amount?"

USAID Response: No. Any modification to the total estimated amount during implementation will also take into account the required cost share.

5. Question: "Section D.3, page 37: "10 point font can be used for graphs and charts." Would USAID allow tables to comply with the same 10 point font requirements as graphs and charts? As an example, this would allow applicants to be more responsive to all requirements of the work plan within the pages allowed."

USAID Response: Yes.

6. Question: "Section D.5.e, page 39: "The application must include a viable and feasible implementation plan, including an outline of an illustrative year one work plan (no more than 2 pages), informed by evidence and the local context." Can USAID please confirm that the implementation plan and illustrative year one work plan may be included as a two-page annex not subject to the 25-page limit?"

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

7. Question: "Section D.5.e, page 39: "The technical approach must include a sound Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan." Can USAID please confirm that the MEL Plan may be included as an annex not subject to the 25-page limit?"

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

8. Question: "Section D.5.f, page 40: "The Management and Staffing Plan should include the following elements: An organizational chart..." Can USAID please confirm that the organizational chart may be included as an annex not subject to the 25-page limit?"

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

9. Question: "General Budget Requirements: Can USAID confirm that program activities should be included in "Other Direct Costs" category as per SF 424 instructions, as Annex 1 has included program activities under "Contractual?"

USAID Response: If program activities will be subawarded, they must be included under the contractual cost category.

10. Question: "Section D.5.h, page: 42: "The Applicant (including major sub-awardees) must provide information regarding its recent history of relevant performance for its cost-reimbursement, contracts, grants and/or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed 3 awards." Can USAID confirm that the Applicant and any major sub-awardees are to submit a total of 3 awards (in Past Performance Information Forms - Annex 4) for its most recent history of relevant performance?"

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

11. Question: "Section D.6.d, page 43: "The applicant must refer to and complete (fill) the attached ANNEX 1 – DETAIL & SUMMARY BUDGET TEMPLATE." Can USAID confirm offerors are permitted to use their own budget template as long as the major cost categories align with the SF 424-A?"

USAID Response: Applicants must use the 'Detailed & Summary Budget Template' provided in ANNEX I to the NOFO. Applicants may add additional lines as applicable.

12. Question: "Section C.6.d, Annex 1, page 43: "Summary Budget, inclusive of all program costs (federal and non-federal)." Budget template Annex 1 does not include any reference to cost share; can USAID please allow offerors to use their own budget template that includes cost share?"

USAID Response: Applicants can add a cost share line item to the 'Detailed & Summary Budget Template' provided in ANNEX I as applicable.

13. Question: "Section D.6.h, Annex 4, page 48: "The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative

agreements involving similar or related programs...” Please confirm that the Past Performance Information Forms (Annex 4) and the history of performance are to be included only in the Cost Application. Please confirm that this also removes the requirements listed in D.5.h (Past Performance and Institutional Capability), page 42 for the Technical Application.”

USAID Response: Requirements for submission of the Technical application are clearly identified in Section D.5 of the NOFO. Requirements for submission of the Business (Cost) application are clearly identified in Section D.6 of the NOFO.

14. Question: “Q1: Could you provide clarification on what is meant by “limited support for preschool and early childhood teachers” as mentioned in the NOFO? Given its fundamental role in enhancing efficiency in the first cycle of primary school, we’re particularly interested in understanding the limitations related to this particular level.”

USAID Response: For pre-primary grades, the interventions will provide support in the form of resources and teacher training (which may include ongoing support/mentoring to teachers and those who support teachers) to improve children’s emergent literacy skills and ease the transition between pre-primary and primary school.

15. Question: “Q2: Would a minimal level of intervention for teachers in the second cycle of the primary level be considered? Taking into account, the continuity and of students towards those grades?”

USAID Response: The activity must focus on working with Pre-primary and grades in the first cycle of primary school.

16. Question: “Q3: In a general sense, regions of the country are mentioned as targets that should be the subject of the Activity. Is the decision regarding the specific regions, and and schools to be included relies on the applicant? Or will it be determined later in collaboration with USAID/MINERD? Are there any expectations regarding estimated scope of the Activity in terms of number of schools and/or students?”

USAID Response: Please refer to section 6 of the Program Description. Applicants may propose an estimated number of schools and/or students based on their proposed technical approach and budget.

17. Question: “Q4: In the IR2 section regarding improved socio-emotional well-being from pre-primary to 3rd grade, it mentions a program to be created for students and interventions to enhance these skills within the school team. Are these activities expected to be carried out in collaboration with MINERD’s guidance and psychology department or does it refer to targeted external programs for teachers?”

USAID Response: Please refer to Intermediate Result 2: Social and emotional wellbeing in targeted schools improved for grades pre-first to third, “MINERD has developed and is revising its Education System Norms for Harmonious Interactions in Public and Private Education Centers under the Office of Psychology and Orientation that should be considered in the development of the Activity’s SEL program. MINERD should provide concurrence of the planning and roll out of

the proposed activities.”

18. Question: “Q5: Since remedial actions should be complemented as mentioned in the documentation, utilizing the “national reading curriculum (Con Base), and it also requests to integrate UDL into the curriculum. Is “Con Base” already designed with the UDL approach? Will there be space for reviewing and adjusting Con Base based on findings, and evidence of application?”

USAID Response: Please refer to the statement on page 12 of the NOFO: "To promote inclusion and learning for all, Applicants may consider in collaboration with MINERD how to integrate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into the curriculum, teaching and learning materials, training, and instruction to meet the needs of all learners."

19. Question: “Q6: As input for the Activity MEL Plan, would it be possible to access the standard indicators that USAID utilizes to monitor resource utilization within the framework of this Activity?”

USAID Response: Please refer to this link for the full list of all USAID education standard indicators:

<https://www.edu-links.org/resources/compendium-standard-pirs-education-programming>

20. Question: “Q7: Should the proposal be coordinated and involve all of the Ministries and entities mentioned in section 10.2 of the NOFO? Or only with those that are of greater relevance and incidence to the implementation proposal?”

USAID Response: Applicants are free to coordinate with Ministries and entities relevant to the technical approach to achieve the objectives outlined in the solicitation.

21. Question: “Q8: Could you please clarify the specific level of interaction that is being referred to regarding the suggested synergies with other institutions?”

USAID Response: The activity should seek to form synergies with institutions that can help advance the objectives and achieve the results of the activity.

22. Question: “Q9: Is there a plan to conduct an evaluation in 6th grade that would measure the difference between cohorts that participated in the Activity, and other cohorts that did not participate?”

USAID Response: No.

23. Question: “Q10: Could the omission of the ADP from the risk assessment be reviewed and addressed, given that it represents a significant obstacle and risk delay in the field?”

USAID Response: Please refer to section 5.Risk of the Program Description.

24. Question: “What is the total number of public schools expected to be served by the RFQ in the southern region and the borders of Haiti?”

USAID Response: Applicants to this NOFO (note: this is not an RFQ) may propose an estimated number of schools based on their proposed technical approach and budget.

25. Question: “What is the total number of principals and school leaders expected to be served by the RFQ?”

USAID Response: Applicants to this NOFO (note: this is not an RFQ) may propose an estimated number of principals and school leaders served based on their technical approach and budget.

26. Question: “What is the total number of students expected to be served by the RFQ in the southern region and the borders of Haiti?”

USAID Response: Applicants to this NOFO (note: this is not an RFQ) may propose an estimated number of students served based on their proposed technical approach and budget.

27. Question: “What is the total number of teachers expected to be served by the RFQ in the southern region and the borders of Haiti?”

USAID Response: Applicants to this NOFO (note: this is not an RFQ) may propose an estimated number of teachers served based on their proposed technical approach and budget.

28. Question: “How many cities in the Southern Region are expected to be served by the RFQ and what are the names of these locations and the total student population of each location and how many schools are targeted within the regions?”

USAID Response: Please refer to section 6. Geographic Focus of the NOFO. Applicants may propose an estimated number of schools and students based on their proposed technical approach and budget.

29. Question: “How many border locations of Haiti are expected to be served by the RFQ and what are the names of these locations and the total student population of each location?”

USAID Response: Please refer to section 6. Geographic Focus of the NOFO. Applicants may propose an estimated number of schools and students based on their proposed technical approach and budget.

30. Question: “Will funds be able to utilized for private school students and public school students?”

USAID Response: Funds should be utilized for public school students.

31. Question: “If an applicant has a negotiated unrestricted indirect cost rate and a negotiated

restricted indirect cost rate, will the applicant get to decide which of the two indirect cost rates to utilize for this funding opportunity?"

USAID Response: Applicants must follow the instructions in Section D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION.

32. Question: "Supplant or supplemental question: "Is this funding opportunity considered a supplemental grant or a supplant grant?""

USAID Response: No.

33. Question: "The question is "Is there a conflict-of-interest form that we must complete and submit with our RFP response"?"

USAID Response: No.

provide information regarding its recent history of relevant performance for its cost-reimbursement, contracts, grants and/or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed 3 awards.” Please clarify if the applicant and each major sub-awardee must provide information up to 3 past performances each or is these 3 past performances for the total consortium? If it is three for the total consortium must all major sub awardees and the applicant be represented in the 3 past performance documents? Please also define the USAID qualifications that makes a sub-applicant a major sub-awardee.

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

39. Question: On page 48 the NOFO states, “The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed 5 years,” Do sub-applicants also need to provide their history of performance? If so is this only reserved for major sub-awardees or all sub-awardees?

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

40. Question: On page 37 the NOFO states that the application must comply with, “the estimated start date identified in Section B of this NOFO must be used in the cost.” The estimated start date referenced in the NOFO page 33 is “November/December 2023”. Please provide an exact start date that should be used for the application.

USAID Response: The estimated start date is November/December 2023. We are unable to provide the exact start date, since it will depend on the finalization of the evaluation process of this funding opportunity.

41. Question: Please confirm that the 25 page technical application must include the Cover Page (1 page), Table of Contents (1page), Executive Summary (1 page) and an optional Acronym Page (1 page) that equals 3-4 pages of the application leaving 21-22 pages for the Technical Approach, Management and Staffing Plan (inclusive of an organizational chart and exclusive of key personnel CVs), Partnerships and Sustainability, Past Performance and Institutional Capabilities sections.

USAID Response: Refer to ‘SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION,’ ‘5. Technical Application Format,’ for content of the Technical Application. Also, See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

42. Question: Please confirm that key personnel CVs is the only allowable annex for the technical application.

USAID Response: See the Notice of Funding Opportunity, as amended (Amendment 001 and this Amendment), for annex requirements.

43. Question: Does USAID have a page limit for each of the key personnel CVs?

USAID Response: No.

44. Question: The provided “Annex 4 Past Performance Information Form Template” is about one page in length. Does USAID have a page limit (minimum and maximum) for each of the three Past Performances submitted in the technical application?

USAID Response: There is no page limit for each of the three Past Performances submitted as part of the technical application.

Question: Would USAID consider making the three Past Performance documents an annex in the technical application?

USAID Response: No.

45. Question: Would USAID consider making the Organizational Chart as an annex in the technical application?

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

46. Question: What is the Federal Assistance Listing Number for this program?

USAID Response: 98.001

47. Question: Section B.3.b states that one area of Substantial Involvement is:

“The Agency’s ability to immediately halt an activity if the recipient does not meet detailed performance specifications (for example, construction specifications). These would be provisions that go beyond the suspension remedies of the Federal Government for noncompliance as stated in 2 CFR 200, including non-performance. The award must state that the AO may immediately halt an activity when identified specifications are not met. The award must include the identified specifications when executed. The AO and Recipient must sign a bilateral amendment for any material changes to the specifications in the award.”

This term seems specifically applicable to awards that contemplate construction, which can be more readily quantified. Would USAID consider removing this area of substantial involvement as construction is not contemplated under this award? Or, in the alternative, would USAID provide the circumstances under which USAID would halt this activity?

USAID Response: USAID will remove construction-related substantial involvement language in the resulting award.

48. Question: Could USAID please indicate which Required As Applicable Standard Provisions it contemplates including in the proposed award?

USAID Response: The Required As Applicable Standard Provisions will be included in the resulting award as applicable.

49. Question: Would USAID please share the Local Compensation Plan for the Dominican Republic?

USAID Response: The Embassy's current Salary Scale is added as an attachment to the funding opportunity through this Amendment 002.

50. Question: Could USAID please review and align the Detailed Budget categories in Section D.6.d on pages 44-46 of the NOFO and the categories in the Annex 1 Detailed & Summary Budget template? Some specific inconsistencies are:

a. The NOFO's first category is 'Salaries and Allowances', but the budget template category is titled 'Salaries', and Allowances are included under 'Fringe Benefits' in the budget template (see lines 109-117). Please confirm Allowances may be detailed in a separate category and should not be included in the Fringe Benefits category.

b. The 'Travel and Transportation' category from the NOFO is titled 'Travel' in the budget template. Please also confirm, per above, that allowance travel may be included with other allowances in an Allowances category, rather than the Travel category.

c. The NOFO has the following categories:

- Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment & Supplies), Services, and Real Property
- Subawards

where the Budget Template has the following:

- Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractual

Please confirm that the Budget Template categories are the ones applicants should use.

USAID Response: Applicants must use the 'Detailed & Summary Budget Template' provided in ANNEX I to the NOFO. Applicants may add additional lines as applicable.

51. Question: For approval of subawards, for those partners who are new to USAID and US Government funding, is it possible to submit proof of application for a UEI number if the applicant has applied for but not yet obtained a UEI number?

USAID Response: Yes.

52. Question: Are the cover page, TOC, list of acronyms, and executive summary considered part of the 25 page limit?

USAID Response: Yes.

53. Question: The NOFO states that the technical approach must include a sound Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan. The MEL Plan must reflect realistic, applicable indicators to measure achievements according to the desired outcomes of the Activity with appropriate disaggregations, realistic targets, and a robust methodology for data collection and verification plans. Do the plan details need to be part of the 25 page limit or can indicators and methods for

collection and verification be included in a chart attached as an annex?

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

54. Question: What are the required annexes for the technical application?

USAID Response: See the Notice of Funding Opportunity, as amended (Amendment 001 and this Amendment), for annex requirements.

55. Question: Are the past performance forms only supposed to be an annex to the cost application, or also to the technical application?

USAID Response: Requirements for submission of the Technical application are clearly identified in Section D.5 of the NOFO. Requirements for submission of the Business (Cost) application are clearly identified in Section D.6 of the NOFO.

56. Question: Should the past performance forms of every organization of a consortium be included in an annex?

USAID Response: Yes.

57. Question: Should every organization of a consortium produce 1 past performance form per award for a maximum of 3 awards?

USAID Response: Yes.

58. Question: For past performance and key personnel, what should be included in the actual technical application narrative versus attached as annexes?

USAID Response: Refer to 'SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION,' '5. Technical Application Format,' 'f) Management and Staffing Plan,' and 'h) Past Performance and Institutional Capability,' for the content of these sections of the Technical Application. Also, see specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

59. Question: Are the CVs and org chart the only annexes related to the management and staffing plan section?

USAID Response: See the Notice of Funding Opportunity, as amended (Amendment 001 and this Amendment), for annex requirements.

60. Question: Is the illustrative year one work plan an annex, or must it be included in the 25-page limit of the technical approach?

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 001 to the NOFO.

61. Question: Is annex 3 to the NOFO (branding strategy and marking plan template) supposed to be attached to the technical or to the cost application?

USAID Response: See specific changes in Amendment 002 to the NOFO.

62. Question: Could USAID clarify which regions specifically in the DR are non-USAID funded?

USAID Response: Non-USAID funded regions refers to regions of the country that will not be benefiting from this project. This taps into the sustainability component of the project.

63. Question: Page 16 of the NOFO states the project should coordinate with other USAID programs on the development of educational/training SEL and school safety materials for school police training. Could USAID specify which other USAID programs the project should coordinate with on the development of educational/training SEL and school safety materials for school police training?

USAID Response: The project may coordinate with USAID/Dominican Republic's Justice and Security activity, for example, for such an illustrative activity.

64. Question: What is the expected number of beneficiaries and/or schools per phase and/or year?

USAID Response: Applicants to this NOFO may propose an estimated number of beneficiaries and/or schools based on their technical approach and budget.

65. Question: What are the other targets per phase and/or year expected by USAID?

USAID Response: Applicants to this NOFO may propose the targets per phase and/or year based on their technical approach and budget.

66. Question: Up to how much of the budget can go to overhead?

USAID Response: Refer to 'SECTION D - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION,' '6. Business (Cost) Application Format,' 'd) Budget and Budget Narrative,' '8) Indirect Costs,' for indications and guidance regarding indirect costs.

67. Question: Based on information presented on page 12 of the NOFO, is it expected that the project provides material and remedial instruction intervention for middle and upper grades?

USAID Response: It is not expected.

68. Question: Do USAID and MINERD have an agreement already for this project?

USAID Response: USAID and MINERD have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that extends until September 2024.