

1. On page 1 of the RFTOP, the estimated cost range is listed as \$16,000,000 to \$17,000,000. However, on p.13, under the heading a) Grant Program, it states "the contractor will design and implement a \$17.1 million program." Please clarify the correct funding ceiling.

The correct cost range for this Task order is \$16,000,000.00 to \$17,000,000.00

2. On 11-13, under the title C) Task Order Components, there is a "Component B", but there is no Component A that precedes it. Can USAID please provide Component A, if it has been omitted, or clarify that there is no Component A?

Under C) Task Order Components there are three separate components: Component "A" (which is not labeled) A) Technical and institutional strengthening described on page 11-12 ; Component "B" (labeled) B) Technical assistance, institutional strengthening and support to the GODR, described on page 12-13 and; component "C" (also not labeled) C) HIV/AIDS Grant program, described in pages 13-15.

3. On page 14, the RFTOP states: "The grant program should include a rapid response mechanism for awards not to indigenous NGOs, CBOs and FBOs." It seems that this statement was made in error, and that the rapid response awards should be made to indigenous organizations. Can USAID clarify this statement?

Please delete the word "not" in this sentence.

On page 15-16, under the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation heading, there is mention of an indicator list and of an Attachment A that describes the FY2007 and FY2008 upstream and downstream indicators, neither of which are included with the RFTOP. Can USAID please provide the indicator list and Attachment A?

Please find the list of indicators on Attachment 1.

4. On page 16, under the heading Quarterly and Annual Progress Reports, it states that the quarterly reports should include financial information and status of Host Country counterpart contributions. Can USAID clarify what the Host Country counterpart contributions refer to?

Host country contributions when support is given to the government can be measured by what the government contributes to the project whether financially or in-kind. The Contractor must be able to certify that these counterpart contributions are accurate. Counterpart contributions to NGOs can be financial or in-kind and the methodology for calculating them can be mutually agreed upon beforehand.

5. On page 19, the RFTOP states, "The Staffing Plan should account for all proposed staffing, but specific individuals need not be named against those positions except as described below." Can USAID please clarify which are the positions referred to in the preceding statement? Can the offeror assume that it is acceptable to provide names for only proposed key personnel positions?

Only the names of key personnel positions have to be included.

6. *Do institutional capabilities and past performance references count toward the page limit or can they be included as an annex?*

They count toward the 40 page limit and they can't be included as an annex.

7. *Please clarify that the tables on page 23 and 24 are the "summary matrices" referred to on page 23 of the RFTOP.*

Yes, the "summary matrices" refer to the tables with the headings "Cost element" and "amount." Please note that the sum of \$5,200,00.00 under the line item "Grants under contract refers to the approximate amount to be given under the NGO Grant program"

8. *Can the offeror submit an electronic version of the proposal? If so, can offerors submit the electronic version to meet deadline requirements and send a hard copy simultaneously (allowing 1-2 days past an electronic version deadline for shipping time)? If electronic submissions are acceptable, what is the size limit for email submissions with attachments? If there is a size limit, in what format would you like the submission, in the case that the attachments are over the size limit?*

Electronic submissions by e-mail are not acceptable. USAID/DR will only accept hard copies (one (1) original and five (5) copies), and one (1) CD containing both the technical and cost proposals. The CD shall be submitted along with the hard copies. Files on the CD should be saved in word and excel.

9. *Please confirm that no additional certifications are required for TASC3 Consortium partners on this particular task order proposal.*

At this point, no additional certifications are required.

10. *Should the offeror list hired consultants under the Direct Labor section of the budget and list subcontractors' consultants separately under the Subcontracts/Consultants section?*

Yes.

11. *In the budget requirements section of the RFTOP, there is a G&A line item for the "direct labor" section of the proposal, as well as a G&A line item for the whole budget. Should the offeror have a line item for each of these two sections (Direct Labor and Other Direct Cost) or should there be one line item reflecting total G&A for the project?*

Please use the G&A line item only once reflecting the Total G&A for the project.

12. *Does the Y1 work plan form part of the 40-page limitation for the Technical Proposal, or can the workplan be an annex?*

Yes, it is part of the 40 page limit. No, it can't be included as an annex.

13. *The RFTOP requires an offeror to divide the level of effort between 1) regions (65/35 split on page 10) and between 2) the government and non-government assistance (60/40 on page 10). Should those percentages be reflected in the budget*

submission? If so, should they be reflected annually (for each year's budget detail) or for the total life of the project?

Yes, the percentages should be reflected in the budget submission for the total life of the project.

14. Can USAID please provide a number or upper limit of past performance references that should be included?

Offerors shall provide detailed past performance information for themselves and any major Sub-Contractor, including a chart of not less than five relevant Awards performed within the last three years that are similar in size, scope and objectives to what is contained in the Statement of Work.

Please delete "any major sub-contractor" from this sentence.

15. Under the Cost Instructions, re. Salary and Wages, the RFTOP states that "Specific discussion of the estimated annual escalation of salaries and other costs can be found in Section H.7, Personnel Compensation". However, there is no H.7 in the RFTOP. Are you referring to associated clauses in the master IQC? Also are there any limits or specific instructions about escalation that we need to be aware of?

We're referring to associated causes in the master IQC.

*16. On page 14 of the RFTOP, what is meant by a rapid mechanism for awards **not** to indigenous NGOs? Is the word "not" a typographical error? The RFTOP states that "the grant program should include a rapid response mechanism for awards **not** to indigenous NGOs, CBOs and FBOs". Please clarify who the rapid response mechanism should target.*

Please delete the word "not" in this sentence.

The rapid response mechanism is aimed at small awards of approximately US\$5,000 per year which would cover special contingencies that may be time sensitive and is primarily aimed at small NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and civil society groups. These grants are not intended to cover activities which would otherwise be programmed under the regular grant application process to be set up for NGOs.

17. The RFTOP indicates that hard copy submissions need to include five copies of technical and one copy of the cost proposal. Does the Mission mean that we should include one original and five copies of technical and one original and one copy of cost?

Yes.

18. Will USAID consider excluding the following from the 40 page limitation: Acronym list and Illustrative First Year Workplan?

No.

19. Will USAID also consider excluding a Staffing Skills Matrix from the 40 page limitation?

No.

20. *What is the geographic code for this procurement?*

000 and 517.

21. *The cover letter states that along with the hard copy, the offeror should submit a CD with both proposals in an electronic format. Should the offeror submit the cost and technical proposals on separate CDs?*

USAID/DR will only accept hard copies -one (1) original and five (5) copies of the Technical Proposal, and one (1) original and one (1) copy of the cost proposal-, plus one (1) CD containing both the technical and cost proposals. The CD shall be submitted along with the hard copies. Files on the CD should be saved in word and excel.

22. *Can USAID provide an estimated value for the amount of grant funds to be disbursed over the life of the project?*

The estimated amount for grant funds to be disbursed is \$ 5.2 million.

23. *In Attachment I, Section II. Purpose (p. 4), the RFTOP states "This contract will... provide training and equipment technology needed to implement HIV/AIDS prevention". Can USAID provide an estimated value of the equipment/technology to be purchased by the contractor for this purpose under this task order?*

This amount will depend on the prevention activities proposed and agreed upon in the different grants to NGOs. Among cost to be considered are the two mobile units, vehicles for training activities and supervision and audiovisual and educational materials.

24. *On page 20, the RFTOP states that "USAID reserves the right to interview any personnel prior to field placement". Is this limited to key personnel or does it cover all personnel?*

The right to interview any personnel prior to field placement refers only to key personnel.

25. *Under the TASC3 Award, section H.22 "Grants under Contract," it states that, "The Head of the Contracting Activity (HCA) for the ordering activity must provide written approval to allow task orders for a USAID-direct contractor to execute grants up to \$100,000 (unless a deviation is obtained to have this threshold increased) with US organizations (not-for-profits or for-profits), providing conditions in ADS 302.3.4.8 are met." For the task order 17-07-005, would USAID provide a deviation to a US-based NGO in excess of \$100,000 or, alternatively, or would USAID permit multiple grant awards to a US-based organization during project implementation that are each under \$100,000?*

Once the task order is awarded, the RCO will discuss this with the Team Leader and the Mission Director if the CTO considers that it's something that s/he'd want to pursue.

26. *The cover letter states that hard copy proposal submissions must be "accompanied by a compact disk with both proposals in an electronic format." Page 23 of the RFTOP states "The Cost Proposal shall be submitted in a separate volume from the Technical." Please clarify whether a single CD should be submitted, containing BOTH technical and cost volumes.*

USAID/DR will only accept hard copies -one (1) original and five (5) copies of the Technical Proposal, and one (1) original and one (1) copy of the cost proposal-, plus one (1) CD containing both the technical and cost proposals. The CD shall be submitted along with the hard copies. Files on the CD should be saved in word and excel.

27. Attachment II, Part 3 (Proposed Personnel and Staffing Plan – page 20) states "Offerors shall also submit not less than three (3) references of professional contacts, with complete contact information (current), including e-mail addresses and telephone numbers, for each proposed individual." Personnel references are not included in the list of required/permitted attachments on page 18 of the RFP. Please confirm that references should be submitted as a separate attachment.

No, they can't be submitted as separate attachments/annexes. They count toward the 40 page limit of the proposal.

28. *Attachment II, Part 1.3 (Proposed Personnel – page 20) states "The Staffing Plan should account for all proposed staffing, but specific individuals need not be named against those positions except as described below." Please clarify which personnel must be identified by name.*

Only the names of key personnel positions have to be included.

29. *The Draft Performance-Based Management System (PBMS) does not appear in the evaluation criteria listed under Attachment III. Please clarify how the PBMS will be evaluated.*

The Draft performance-based management system will not be scored and it's not part of the evaluation criteria.

30. *Section 5 (Past Performance – Page 20) - "Offerors shall provide detailed past performance information for themselves and any major Sub-Contract, including a chart of not less than five relevant Awards performed within the last three years that are similar in size, scope and objectives to what is contained in the Statement of Work ... The proposal should include a chart listing the Key Personnel (not included in page limitation) proposed for all such Awards received over the last three years." Please clarify whether this chart must be submitted for subcontractors, in addition to the Prime Offeror.*

Please delete "any major sub-contractor" from this sentence.

31. Budget Line Item Definitions and Illustrations (Page 24) – "Biographical Data Sheets are required for all proposed staff being proposed..." Please confirm that the contractor may propose "To be determined" positions, which would not require Biographical Data Sheets.

The positions "to be determined" do not require the submission of a Biographical Data Sheets.

32. *Could USAID please clarify that 'exclusive commitments' are not required or desired from individuals named as key staff? Is this also the case with local organizations serving as subcontractors and partners on a bid?*

Exclusive Commitments are not required. It also applies to proposed subcontractors and partners.

33. *On page 11 of the RFTOP it states "it is expected that the contractor will collaborate with other USG contractors and grantees, such as ..." Health sector coordination is listed twice (under number 1 and 3), was this error or is there another example that is missing?*

Yes this was an error. Health sector coordination should not be listed twice, please delete point number 3 ("health sector reform efforts,") as it is already mentioned in point number 1.

34. *On page 14 of the RFTOP, it states "the grant program should include a rapid response mechanism for awards not to indigenous NGOs, CBOs and FBOs. It is expected that approximately six to eight rapid response grants be provided annually". Please clarify the meaning of "grants", are there two types of grants, to indigenous organizations and to "other" organizations. Are these second type smaller or bigger? Are these to the government institutions?*

Please delete the word "not" in this sentence.

The rapid response mechanism is aimed at small awards in the environs of US\$5,000 per year which would cover special contingencies that may require a rapid response and is primarily aimed at small NGOs or civil society organizations. These grants are not intended to cover activities which would otherwise be programmed under the regular grant application process to be set up for NGOs.

35. *On page 28, under institutional capabilities, there is mention of evaluation points for "strength of first year work plan" but no mention of the M&E plan in their evaluation criteria. Please clarify.*

The Technical Evaluation Criteria only calls for the evaluation of the strengths of the first year work plan. The M&E plans will be used as a reference when collaboration is established with the USAID/DR Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism (MEASURE).

36. *Please se clarify if a waiver has been granted already for Grants under Contract or if we will need to request one.*

The waiver has to be requested at the time of Task Order award.

37. *On page 16 there is a reference to Attachment A containing the indicators. The RFTOP did not include an Attachment A with indicators. Can you please make the indicators available?*

Please find the list of indicators on Attachment 1.

38. *It is unclear how much should be set aside of the \$17 million for the grants program. Could USAID clarify how much funding will be available for grants on top of the \$17 million for the program indicated in the cover letter?*

The estimated amount for grant funds to be disbursed is \$ 5.2 million.

39. *RFTOP page 20 says USAID neither requests nor desires exclusivity agreements for proposed staff. However, on page 18 Attachment II Instructions to Offerors, Item I. Technical Proposal, an attachment for Letters of Commitment from Proposed Personnel is specified. Please clarify for which personnel (key or otherwise) letters of commitment are required.*

Exclusive Commitments are not required. It also applies to proposed subcontractors and partners. Letters of commitment are required for key personnel and they shall be included as part of the annexes.

40. *Based on the guidance provided on page 18 of the RFTOP, it is our understanding that we should not provide letters of commitment or support from proposed partner organizations. Is this correct?*

That is correct.

41. *RFTOP page 15: states "...the Offeror should propose a monitoring and evaluation plan for addressing progress towards annual and end-of-strategy targets per indicators list below." However, no list of indicators is provided. Should the proposed M&E plan be separate and distinct from the Performance-based Measurement System requested as an attachment?*

Yes, the M&E Plan should be separate and distinct from the performance-based measurement system. The M&E plan includes program process and impact indicators as describes in tables 2 and 3 under Attachment I (attached) as opposed to the performance based system that identifies annual benchmarks (i.e. stepping stones to results indicators) against which the contractor's performance is measured.

Please find the list of indicators on Attachment 1.

42. *RFTOP page 16, the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation section, refers to a list of indicators described in Attachment A. There doesn't appear to be an Attachment A with the RFTOP. The two previous draft RFTOPs associated with this activity did include an Attachment A with indicators. Will you provide an Attachment A for our use or should we use the one provided with the draft RFTOPs? Please clarify.*

Please find the list of indicators on Attachment 1.

43. RFTOP page 18: in reference to planning for NGO financial and administrative institutional building, it is stated "The exact number is unknown and although this might change, 8 in Region V and 4 in Border Region are suggested for planning and budgeting purposes." Given that there are three distinct groups of NGOs described (new NGOs with no USAID experience, NGOs with some USAID experience but still in need of institutional support, and NGOs in need of only ad hoc assistance), it is not clear for which set of NGOs the plug figures are to be used for budget purposes. Do the 8 and 4 numbers refer to all NGOs described above or only to new NGOs (given that the exact number is unknown)? Please clarify also whether these figures are to be applied on an annual basis or over life-of-project.

The numbers of NGOs was provided only as a reference. Offerors should propose the number and types of organizations and budget accordingly. The amounts for grants should be presented for the total life of the project.

The cost range for this Task order is \$16,000,000.00 to \$17,000,000.00 The estimated amount for grant funds to be disbursed is \$ 5.2 million.

44. RFTOP page 18 indicates font should be "10 characters per inch." Could you please clarify if this is 11 or 12 point font?

Please use Times New Roman, 10 font.

45. RFTOP page 13 under a) Grant Program, states that the "Contractor will design and implement a \$17.1 million program aimed at providing technical assistance..." Does the \$17.1 million refer to the total ceiling (i.e., program operations, technical assistance plus the grants program) or solely to the grants program component? The RFTOP cover memo notes the task order will be funded at between \$16,000,000 and \$17,000,000. Please clarify the total funding size of the grants program.

The cost range for this Task order is \$16,000,000.00 to \$17,000,000.00 The estimated amount for grant funds to be disbursed is \$ 5.2 million.

46. RFTOP page 14, the Grants Program section, states "The grants program should include a rapid response mechanism for awards not to indigenous NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs. It is expected that approximately six to eight rapid response grants be provided annually." Please confirm that the rapid response mechanism for awards is for non-indigenous NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs. What is the expected size in dollar value of these grants to be issued to indigenous and non-indigenous NGOs?, Please provide the grant ceiling for small grants.

The rapid response mechanism is aimed at small awards in the environs of US\$5,000 per year which would cover special contingencies that may require a rapid response and is primarily aimed at small NGOs or civil society organizations. These grants are not intended to cover activities which would otherwise be programmed under the regular grant application process to be set up for NGOs.

47. RFTOP page 28 indicates the First Year Work Plan should be included in the Institutional Capabilities section of the proposal. Please confirm that this is the intended placement for the First Year Work Plan.

The First Year Work Plan should be included in the Technical Approach section of the proposal.

47. Based on the RFTOP Technical Evaluation Criteria on page 27-28 by which the technical proposal is to be organized, there does not seem to be a dedicated Management section. Should a Management section be included and if so, where should it be located?

Correct. RFTOP 517-07-005 does not request a management section in the proposals, therefore is up to the offerors to include it or not. Be aware that it'll not be part of the evaluation criteria, either.

48. Have there been representations made by the USAID Mission to the tax authority in the cooperating country for the exemption of implementing partners to be recognized?

Yes.

49. What assistance will be given by the Mission to assist implementing partners to establish their legal presence in-country (i.e., registration, accreditation) if required by the law of the cooperating country? Alternatively, will the host country counterpart to this project provide similar assistance?

USAID/DR provides guidance and letters of introduction for DR Visa obtention, Residence Permits, Vehicle Registrations, Tax exemptions for VAT taxes and Customs Taxes.