

Amendment 1 to APS "M-OAA-GRO-LMA-08-715"

The purpose of this Amendment is to change the closing date for submission of full applications (if requested), and to provide a summary of questions and answers from the public discussion held at USAID/Sudan in Juba on 24 July 2008.

1. The submission date for full applications, if they are requested, is hereby changed from 21 September 2008 to Friday, 19 September 2008 by 2pm Washington, DC time.
2. Attached below are the questions and answers stemming from the public discussion held at USAID/Sudan in Juba on 24 July 2008.

(Note that written questions received will be answered in a second amendment, which will follow shortly).

END OF AMENDMENT

Annual Program Statement Questions/Answers July 24, 2008

The Questions and Answers that have arisen in this public forum will appear on www.grants.gov.

The URL for the APS document and all attachments is:
http://www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/countries/sudan/grants.html

John May, the USAID Agreement Officer and Helene Carlson, the USAID Juba Program Officer, made a brief welcome and introduction. John May explained that USAID has issued an Annual Program Statement (APS) that asks for Concept Papers to propose activities against the APS. The closing date for the submission of Concept Papers is August 8, 2008. The Concept Papers will then be reviewed against the set of criteria outlined in the APS and from this process USAID will contact select organizations to request a formal application for a Grant. The review process for the Concept Papers will begin on August 11, 2008.

A second round of Concept Paper review will take place in January, subject to the availability of funds. The closing date for submission of Concept Papers for the second round is January 14, 2009.

There are page limits imposed on the Concept Papers and Grant Applications – this information can be found on Pages 11 and 13 of the distributed APS. Due to the volume of expected Concept Papers to be review, this limit will be strictly adhered to and information contained in any submission above the page limit will not be considered.

Helene Carlson then provided a brief background and indicated that the objective of the APS is to build the capacity of state and local governments in the Three Areas and the four Southern States bordering the Three Areas to deliver government services to citizens. She also highlighted that:

- USAID's preference is to see a consultative/ participatory process led by local governments in prioritizing the delivery of services the community wants.
- There will be a maximum total of six awards – a maximum of one award each for the border states and a maximum of two awards for the Three Areas.
- USAID does not require but welcomes proposals from consortia or partnership arrangements.
- USAID does not require but welcomes proposals that address the multi-sectoral issues.

- Organizations are encouraged to follow the published guidance very closely, as some of the available funds have been earmarked for specific activities – all submissions should take this into account.

The floor was then opened for Questions and Answers.

Q1. What is the projected timeline for awarding the grants?

A1. The closing date for the Concept Papers is August 8, 2008 and the actual review and selection process will take two weeks, then the applicants whose concept papers are chosen as candidates for funding will be notified and asked to submit full applications. The closing date for grant applications/proposals is September 21, 2008.

Q2. After the application/proposal review and signing when does the project begin?

A2. As soon as is possible. One of the criteria for evaluating the Concept Papers is the mobilization time required, as USAID/Sudan would like the activities to start as soon as possible to utilize the 'dry-season' as effectively as possible.

Q3. Up to \$34.5 million has been set aside for the BRIDGE Program. Will you use up all the money in the first round or will some funds be held in reserve for the second round of Concept Paper reviews?

A3. No funds are being "reserved" for the second round in January. If sufficient applications are received, it is possible that all available FY 2008 funds could all be awarded in the first round of submissions.

Q4. The APS says there is an interest in integrating Title II Food Aid in this program?

A4. Food for Peace is still in the decision-making process on Title II Multi-Year Assistance Programs for FY 2009, but it is unlikely that there will be one for Sudan. It may be possible that emergency Title II assistance could be used for developmental relief purposes in conjunction with the BRIDGE Program, so we encourage designs that would integrate these resources.

Q5. The APS includes building capacity of local government. Is there opportunity for Sudanese Civil Society Organization to participate in the APS?

A5. USAID/Sudan is leaving open the possibility of awarding grants to any non-governmental organization. As a multi-sectoral approach is being encouraged, any organization that has the capacity and experience should submit a Concept Paper. Experience is an important evaluation criterion.

Q6. How do USAID priorities relate to the government of Sudan priorities? Have there been consultations with the GOSS or GNU in drafting the APS?

- A6. The BRIDGE Program is a product of consultations with the GOSS; it is in response to GOSS priorities and issues of concern. While the BRIDGE APS itself has not been reviewed by the GOSS, the technical review panel will include a representative from the GOSS. USAID has not consulted with the GNU.
- Q7. You said proposals are due by September 21, 2008. If we miss that due date is there another date when USAID will review late submissions?
- A7. The first batch of Concept Papers are due on August 8, 2008, and grants will be awarded a month or so after the application closing date of September 21, 2008. The closing date for the second batch of concept papers is January 14, 2009. If concept papers or applications are not submitted by the closing date for the first round, they can not be considered. Applicants would have to start over with a new concept paper and then participate in the second round. Concept papers may be submitted at anytime before the final closing date, but there will only be two rounds of evaluations as stated in the APS, so if the first round is missed concept papers would not be evaluated until the second round next January.
- Q8a. Annex A of the APS indicates that only \$500,000 is to be allocated for Maternal and Child Health activities and \$500,000 for Family Planning. Is this correct?
- A8a. Yes, this is correct.
- Q8b. And this is the amount of funding for all health activities in all of the four border states and the Three Areas?
- A8b. Yes, this is correct.
- Q8c. The APS page 9 mentions reducing incidence of Malaria, but Annex I does not show funding for malaria.
- A8c. No specific funds have been set aside for anti-malaria activities under the BRIDGE Program. USAID and the Global Fund are funding the procurement of bed nets separately, and anticipate that these will be available to partners for distribution through activities under BRIDGE.
- Q9. Can we link health activities with other programs?
- A9. Yes, you can do that. We *encourage* links between the BRIDGE Program and other programs operating in these geographic areas; USAID's programs as well as other donors and multi-laterals. That is why we included Annex B listing all USAID activities. We also encourage coordination with Sudan Recovery Fund projects.
- Q10. How is USAID going to allocate funds by location?

- A10. We don't plan to allocate funds by location. It depends on the proposals we receive.
- Q11. Will a proposal with less than the II program elements be at a disadvantage (referring to Annex I listing funding across II program elements)?
- A11. No, a proposal can include as few or as many elements as you like. However, be aware that we are going to make at most one award per state in the Southern States, and a maximum of two awards to the three areas.
- Q12. Is there a link between the BRIDGE Program and OFDA funding?
- A12. We want you to build on what OFDA has accomplished. This program aims to create a "bridge" away from the relief approach that OFDA implements of actually providing services to building the capacity in State and County governments so that they can eventually provide those services.
- Q13. If we want to develop a Concept Paper that will encompass several states, is it better to submit one Concept Paper or should there be a Concept Paper per state?
- A13. You can do it either way; it is up to you. However, our preference for evaluation is to have separate Concept Papers for each state.
- Q14. On page 7, footnote 3 states that "In South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, activities should support government integration of service delivery and government institutions across all part of the states." Yet, in section C.2. above that, activities in the three areas are limited to only five locations in the three areas. Also, how can we work with the state governments if we are not allowed to work in the state capitals?
- A14. The identification of priority localities in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states is not intended to preclude activities in other parts of these states. USAID seeks a concentration of assistance in these localities, but recognizes that organizations may also conduct activities in other parts of the states to effectively support state integration and state and county government capacity building.
- Q15. What will be the maximum number of awards?
- A15. We anticipate that there will be a maximum of one award for each border state and two awards for the Three Areas. That is a maximum total of 6 awards.
- Q16. What are the allowed geographic codes for the APS? Will the DFA provisions apply?

A16. Waivers will be treated on a case-by-case basis

Q17. In the concept paper you say to “outline the results you propose to achieve” and for the grant application instruction you indicate to “state the targets.” What is the difference here?

A17. The Concept Paper should outline in broad terms the impacts that you will expect to make. Given that the Concept Paper is very brief, we do not expect that the applicants will provide a great amount of detail.

However, in the grant application you will have to expand in more detail and will need to quantify the proposed results with specific targets.

Q18. Are we required to provide environmental impact analysis?

A18. It will be determined after the award. If the proposed activity could have an environmental impact, USAID/Sudan will work with you on the required Initial Environmental Examination (IEE).

Q19. The stated purpose of the BRIDGE Program is to support the CPA. What will we do if the CPA fails apart?

A19. We don't know.

Q20. With the small amount of health funding in FY08, is it possible that the amount in that sector will go up in later years?

A20. It is possible, and we hope it will.

Q21. Does USAID have a strategy to facilitate access for organizations to the Three Areas?

A21. No, but it is under discussion.

Q22. In reference to Question 5, the Southern Sudanese should be given opportunity to participate in this process and be included in proposed activities. This is part of local capacity building.

A22. Point well taken. We encourage it.

Q23. Is the funding levels outlined in the APS only for FY08?

A23. Yes

Q24. The performance period is stated as three years. Can we just program for two years.

A24. Yes, you can propose in your Concept Paper activities that may be accomplished in two years. Please note, however, that if you propose an activity that may take longer than three years, we will only be looking at funding the first three years with USAID funds; you would need to show other funding for follow-on years.

Q25. After reviewing submitted Concept Papers, will USAID pair up implementers or suggest partnerships?

A25. We cannot do this. It is up to each organization to seek out and form partnerships if they want to do so. .

Q26. Will individual Concept Papers be made public?

A26. No

Q27. Will there be updated annex for FY08?

A27. No

Q28. A budget summary is required to be submitted with the Concept Paper. Can we expect more funding?

A28. Up to \$34.5 million is available for FY08. While we hope the level of funding will be similar in FY09 and FY10, we can in no way predict how much funding will be available year to year.

Q29. Is a budget summary required for the concept paper?

A29. Yes

Q30. Can we expect to implement a three-year program or do we have to submit a proposal every year?

A30. You don't have to submit a proposal every year.

Q31. Does the BRIDGE Program link with other USAID mechanisms?

A31. No

Q32. As a point of clarification, can we submit a three-year program with the assumption that more money will come in the second and third year?

- A32. It is our intent that these will be up to three year programs, but we can only commit right now to providing the first year of funding. Years two and three will be *subject to the availability of funds* in FY09 and 10.
- Q33. The BRIDGE Program focuses on building local government capacity. Has USAID conducted consultations with local government entities in the Three Areas and in the Border States? Awardees have to work closely with state and county governments. What is the role of the local governments?
- A33. USAID has not held consultation with individual state or local governments. We will include a representative from the GOSS on the review panel.
- Q34. Does USAID encourage or discourage partnerships with state and local governments. If one NGO forms a partnership with the local government, won't that exclude other NGOs from talking to them?
- A34. It depends on how you define "partnerships." We expect applicant organizations to work closely—in partnership—with local governments in the design and implementation of this program in order to build the capacity of those entities. However, that does not mean the formation of formal "Partnerships," where local governments actually receive funds. USAID will not directly fund local or state government entities.
- Q35. Given the current situation in the Three Areas, when we submit a proposal to work in those areas, do we assume things will normalize?
- A35. We hope the situations will normalize, but cannot make any predictions.
- Q36. Currently some programs in the Three Areas are accessed and managed from Khartoum. Could we manage our BRIDGE Program from Khartoum, or does it have to be managed from Juba?
- A36. You can propose to manage the activities from either location.
- Q37. You indicated that a GOSS representative will be on the evaluation panel for southern state Concept Papers. Will the GNU be represented in the review of Three Area Concept Papers?
- A37. No.
- Q38. If a consortium is developed, should we allocate a certain amount of the budget for each partner in the consortium?
- A38. You could. It is up to you.

Q39. Can you say what your preference is for geographic or sectoral spread within a state?

A39. Through this solicitation we are expecting your experience or assessments in these areas to help us understand what can be accomplished. So after consultation with the local community and local government, you need to tell us what the sectoral priorities are in specific geographic locations.

Q40. What will happen in areas where USAID has other projects? What will happen with those existing projects in those areas, like Equatoria?

A40. The creation of this Program does not have any impact on other USAID activities in other areas of Sudan. The continuation of those activities is decided on by the merits of and need for them.

Q41. Will current projects be impacted by the APS?

A41. No.

Q42. Are there other funding opportunities in other areas?

A42. We can only talk about the BRIDGE APS in this forum. For other opportunities, you need to check www.grants.gov.

Q43. How did USAID develop the funding levels by sector?

A43. When funds are received from Congress, they are often earmarked monies and special requirements on how the monies can be spent are placed on USAID. Some of the funds in this APS are earmarked such as water and family planning. Other levels are determined by the amount of funds made available to the Mission and by Mission priorities.

Q44. Can we avoid overlap with other donor activities or coordinate our activities with other donors' projects?

A44. Yes, we strongly encourage coordinating with other donors programs.

Q45. How will the management of the BRIDGE Program fit into the current USAID management structure?

A45. That will be decided internally.

Q46. To confirm, are we designing a three-year program without knowing how much is available for years two and three?

A46. Yes

- Q47. Is the \$34.5 million for one year, or can we spread the amount requested over three years?
- A47. The \$34.5 million is only FY08 funds and they are intended to be expended in the first year of the program to maximize impact.
- Q48. Will there be a second APS Q&A?
- A48. No. There will be individual discussions with the organizations whose Concept Papers are selected for development into full applications. These will be private conversations between USAID and individual organizations.
- Q49. In the Three Areas you have stated there will be a maximum of two awards and a maximum of one award for each border state. Can we submit one concept paper covering the four border-states or should we do individual concept papers?
- A49. It is up to you. The same evaluation criteria will be applied regardless.
- Q50. If consortia or partnerships are formed, does one organization have to take the lead or can the agreement be with all the organizations?
- A50. Awards will be made by USAID to one organization, so in a group one will have to agree to take the lead and be responsible for fulfilling the agreement.