

**USAID/EGYPT
ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT
TITLE: CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTERS SUPPORT
NUMBER: APS-263-11-000001
Issued on June 22, 2011**

I. OVERVIEW

Through this Annual Program Statement (APS), The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) intends to support programs of Egypt-based organizations which respond directly to Egyptian-identified needs in the area of education development. This APS is conducted under the authority of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, as amended. In addition to funding provided through this APS, the United States Government also supports the education system in Egypt through other means, including through other programs of USAID. Organizations interested in receiving funding for programs are invited to carefully read this APS in its entirety and to follow the grant application guidance in order to apply for funds.

If necessary, USAID will hold information sessions on the APS for organizations which are interested. If conducted, these sessions will be advertised and conducted in English. Please email CDCquestions@USAID.gov if you are interested in attending an information or application writing workshop.

Please direct questions concerning this APS to CDCquestions@USAID.gov.

Local Address: USAID, 1A Nadi El Etisalat Street, Off El-Laselki Street, New Maadi, Cairo, Egypt. Fax: +20-2-2516-4739; Tel: +20-2-2522-7000.

Applications should be sent in English to USAID via e-mail: CDCAPS@USAID.gov Please contact USAID if there are technical or other difficulties with submitting the application by e-mail.

This APS will be open until June 21, 2012.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Egyptian, U.S. and international organizations are eligible to submit applications under this APS. USAID encourages organizations to submit applications in

partnership with other local U.S. or international organizations, including public and private universities.

III. FUNDING

Subject to the availability of funds, multiple awards totaling up \$4 million are expected to be available to support the establishment and management of university-based Career Development Centers (CDCs) over a three-year period, culminating with complete integration into the host university. This amount may be adjusted. USAID retains the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted in response to this APS.

It is expected that grants provided through this mechanism will range in value from \$250,000 to \$3,000,000 per award. However, in exceptional circumstances, these amounts may be adjusted depending on the grant timeframe, the applicant's institutional capacity, the geographic scope of the proposed program, proposed impact and the type and extent of partnership or other teaming arrangements that are proposed.

IV. AREA OF INTEREST

Career Development Centers

USAID's Office of Education and Training proposes to support the establishment and management of state-of-the-art university-based Career Development Centers (CDCs) through a three-year award utilizing Cairo Initiative Workforce Development funding. This APS outlines ideas and possible activities aimed at improving the long-term capacity of Egyptian universities and NGOs to assist students and recent graduates in their transition from education to employment.

Activities for the establishment and management of Career Development Centers (CDCs) may include, but are not limited to, training, technical assistance, sub-grants, the provision of equipment and supplies, and operating costs. In addition to programmatic activities, applicants may include activities to strengthen the internal organizational, management, and financial capacity of local Egyptian organizations if needed to support the CDCs. Such activities include acquisition of equipment, software, communications technology, and skills training in areas including grant management, communication, strategic planning, participatory assessment, advocacy, financial management, file management, etc.

All proposed activities shall directly and predictably relate to the achievement of the program objective. Assistance provided must not be used to support political causes or parties. Applicants are encouraged to propose the best mix of approaches and activities to achieve program results.

i. Summary

Egypt suffers from a serious youth unemployment problem in large part because many Egyptian youth lack the basic education and sufficient skill set to enter the work force. One especially challenged cohort of Egyptian youth includes current university students and recent college graduates. As employer demands increase for well-trained employees, increased core employability skills become ever more important. These include information technology (IT) proficiency, career-specific technical/vocational skills, entrepreneurial skills, and interpersonal/soft skills, as well as strong Arabic and English language ability. Two other important factors contributing to youth unemployment are student access to available employment opportunities through well-structured databases and lack of job-search knowledge.

ii. Objective

This APS complements the objective of the government of Egypt's National Action Plan on Youth Employment 2010-2015 (NAP) to increase youth employment and provide productive jobs for young people who seek to join the labor market. This approach supplements USAID's previous and existing higher education and workforce development activities by reaching out to a broader audience of young Egyptians. This APS is aligned with the second goal of the recently approved and internationally applicable USAID education strategy (http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/education_and_universities/documents/USAID_ED_Strategy_feb2011.pdf).

This APS addresses the mismatch of relevant skills to the job market and low employability among current university students and recent college graduates. An anticipated end result is a cadre of young Egyptians with improved employability and interpersonal skills and the ability to create and capitalize on job opportunities in various sectors.

iii. Description of Desired Results

Successful applicants will provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Higher Education's (MOHE) internal unit for career development and employability, as

necessary, as well as to any existing individual university infrastructures (for example, the Technical Center for Job Creation at Cairo University).

The initial, primary focus of this APS is the start-up and sustainability of CDCs as integral units of existing universities. Successful applicants will work throughout the life of this program to assist universities to assure the long-term sustainability of the CDCs. Universities, both public and private, receiving USAID assistance through this APS must commit to funding and maintaining the CDCs after the program end-date. Applicants that have a pledge from universities indicating a commitment to investing resources in a CDC will be viewed positively.

This APS supports the creation or improvement of CDCs on university campuses. This could include:

- Working with self-selected universities first (i.e., those who express the highest interest and commitment to the program);
- Mobilizing university administration to designate space and staff to operate CDCs as integral parts of the campus' student services;
- Procuring limited equipment, such as computers, database and presentation technology, and other furniture and equipment;
- Building institutional capacity of CDCs as well as CDC and university staff to provide student assessment, training services and career counseling;
- Connecting CDCs to employers who can offer internships, job information, and employment opportunities;
- Connecting universities with potential Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) partners to provide expertise and funding in the establishment and development of the CDCs; and,
- Improving university space to ensure that each CDC is an effective, inviting, professional environment.

Once established, CDCs will become an integral part of the university infrastructure;

- Connecting employers, universities, and students to ensure that education and training are relevant to local labor market needs;
- Providing a broad range of employability skills training based on comprehensive individual assessment (topics may include entrepreneurship, presentation skills, time management, teamwork, English language, and computer training);
- Creating and/or support internship programs, corporate training partnerships, and career fairs;

- Providing comprehensive career management training;
- Engaging university alumni to participate in mentoring opportunities for current students and graduates; and,
- Creating links between employers and university job seekers including training linked to job commitments.
- Conducting market studies, nationally and locally to ascertain labor demands.

Career guidance is a key factor in the CDC equation since it provides students with an opportunity to learn about and consider different career paths. As youth increase their knowledge and skills, CDCs should provide them with practical experiences that further prepare them to transition to a career. Nearing graduation, students should focus on a range of specific job-search skills, such as presentation, interviewing, work ethic, networking, and personal marketing.

The role of the private sector is also critical to the short-term and long-term success of the CDCs. Shortly after CDC start-up, successful applicants should review existing and/or conduct new labor market assessments to ascertain potential employment opportunities and gaps in students' skill sets. Such assessments will further identify what jobs are really in demand and the skills needed to fill that position. Throughout the duration of program activities, employers must be consistently consulted and networked. Concrete activities must be developed to link employers and young Egyptians through practical learning such as internships. Such activities would ideally include employment offers upon university graduation. Employers should feel comfortable contacting universities in order to provide feedback and recruit qualified candidates.

iv. Illustrative Indicators

Plans for Monitoring Performance:

Monitoring, evaluating and reporting of performance will be in compliance with ADS 203 guidance. A Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) will be required for each grant awarded. Output level indicators will be used to measure short term activities and will be as much as possible disaggregated by gender and geographical location. USAID will agree with the recipient on the final PMP. The PMP should meet all ADS quality criteria of validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity. The recipient shall be responsible for selecting indicators, collecting baseline data, setting targets, collecting indicator data and submitting performance reports.

Suggested Foreign Assistance Framework standard indicators include:

- Number of host-country individuals trained as a result of United States Government (USG) investments involving higher education institutions;
- Number of USG-assisted higher education institutions' activities that address regional, national, and local development needs;
- Number of USG-supported organizational improvements that strengthen the institutional capacity of host-country higher education institutions; and,
- Number of host-country institutions with increased management or institutional capacity as a result of USG investment involving higher education institutions.

USAID welcomes recommendations on custom indicators. Possible custom indicators could include:

- Number of men and women demonstrating improved skills;
- Number of men and women who secure employment following training;
- Number of men and women who continue education, obtain an internship, start a business, or engage in further professional training following CDC training;
- Number of CDCs established;
- Number of free services accessed;
- Number of fee-for-services accessed;
- Number of individuals connected to existing youth employability and entrepreneurial training programs; and,
- Number of career-fair private sector attendees.

v. Gender Equality

USAID has a special interest in the advancement of women's development. Applicants should strive to propose strategies that empower in an equal manner both male and female staff from universities and other organizations, whether as trainers, administrators, decision-makers on key steering committees, etc. Student or recent graduate beneficiaries as well should, when possible, be drawn equally from both sexes. Recognizing that women often face additional impediments to their professional and personal development, program activities (i.e., trainings, materials, internship opportunities, etc.) must strive to inherently recognize and reflect the fact that women are critical to successful national development.

vi. Environmental compliance

Applications should ensure compliance with Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 216 (22 CFR 216) and the Automated Directives System Chapter 204 on Environmental Procedures. Successful applicants should indicate how they will regularly monitor that components for this APS are designed and implemented effectively and in line with all regulations and procedures. This includes identifying and addressing new or unforeseen environmental consequences arising during implementation and how they will adaptively manage environmental compliance during implementation.

A. Approach

USAID strongly encourages applicants to consider the following three cross-cutting practices:

i. Build on Egyptian Experience

USAID encourages innovative applications that make use of existing materials and/or organizational capacities. Applicants are encouraged to identify this type of leveraging. Several Egyptian organizations have been involved in the areas covered under this APS.

ii. Explore Teaming / Partnership Arrangements

To increase program impact and sustainability, USAID strongly encourages applicants to consider partnership, teaming or other arrangements that make best use of existing organizational capacity. Approaches may involve the formal or informal establishment of coalitions, partnerships, consortia or other arrangements of civil society groups, public and private institutions, youth and others. Coalitions may involve sub-grant relationships and/or may involve the use of information technology or electronic media for outreach to targeted audiences, information gathering and sharing, and organizing activities with the private sector. Involvement of new USAID partners is welcome.

Approaches which connect organizations in different geographic areas and with different skill levels or skill sets are encouraged. For example, applicants may consider teaming Cairo-based universities or NGOs with universities and NGOs in other parts of the country. Organizations may consider teaming more established organizations with nascent organizations, or linking similar kinds of coalitions from different geographic areas. There are many other options that could be considered as well that draw on the strengths of different types of organizations.

iii. Conduct Innovative Outreach & Support Consensus Building

USAID welcomes applications which incorporate innovative outreach strategies using print, broadcast, and electronic media to reach current university students, recent college graduates, and private sector stakeholders.

USAID encourages applications that bring together relevant stakeholders from the public and private sector to build consensus on activities and approaches related to establishing and sustaining effective career development centers. This may include improving linkages between education institutions and the private sector, NGOs, or other institutions. Effective consensus-building processes are generally inclusive, participatory, egalitarian and solution-oriented.

B. Related USAID Programs

Applicants can find more information on other USAID/Egypt programs at <http://egypt.usaid.gov>.

V. APPLICATION PROCESS

Proposed programs should have an estimated value and performance period that is within the parameters described in APS Section III entitled Funding. USAID may opt to exclude from further consideration any submission which is not within these parameters.

No program expenditures will be paid by USAID, except those covered in a grant signed by the USAID Agreement Officer. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.

There are three steps in the application process:

A. Step One: Submit Application (not to exceed 12 pages in total)

Eligible organizations interested in applying for a grant in response to this APS are invited to submit an application and budget summary via e-mail to. Applications and all supporting material must be submitted in English.

A recommended template for the application and the budget submission are attached. In developing the submission, the applicant should carefully consider all information contained in this APS. The applicant should submit:

i. Program Summary (not to exceed 10 pages)

- a. Strategy – Provide a clear description of the strategy to be used to achieve the proposed goal and desired results with the ultimate goal of a sustained university-based CDC.
- b. Beneficiary Population and Geographic Range of the Program - Indicate the expected beneficiary institutions and numbers of beneficiaries of this program, and the area(s) in which the proposed program will be conducted.
- c. Development Plan and Activity Description - Include a short description of the activities that will be undertaken to achieve the proposed objectives, and provide a time line of implementation. All applications should include a statement addressing gender issues, such as how the program benefits or includes both men and women or how the applicant proposes to address gender disparity.
- d. Expected Impact - Outline expected indicators, results and the mechanisms that will be used to measure and monitor progress on at least a quarterly basis. Applications that support activities or capacity development which are expected to be sustained after the end of the award should be clearly explained.

ii. Budget Summary (not to exceed 1 page)

Provide a budget summary which includes, at a minimum, the total funding requested from USAID and the cost share contribution (e.g. in cash, in-kind), if any, that may be contributed by the applicant from its own resources or other non-U.S. government sources. Budgets should be in US dollars. Applicants should distinguish, both in the budget summary and in a detailed budget spreadsheet (e.g. Excel), the CDC start-up (or establishment) costs and recurrent CDC management costs. USAID may request more detailed budget information during the review process.

iii. Technical / Administrative Capabilities (not to exceed 1 page)

Describe your organization's technical and administrative capabilities and past experience in conducting programs similar to the one proposed. Describe any partnership, consortium or coalition arrangements for the purposes of achieving the activities. Indicate the roles and contributions of all public and private sector partners.

iv. Past Performance (no page limit)

In a separate attachment, the application must list any similar or related programs conducted by the applicant or its partners over the past five years and include a brief statement of work performed. Reference information must include the location, award numbers (if available/applicable), a brief description of work performed and a point of contact for the award with current telephone numbers and/or e-mail. References other than those provided by the applicant may be contacted. A recommended template for providing past performance information is attached.

B. Step 2: Review of Application

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which they convincingly describe how:

- the applicant possesses the requisite capacity / capability to implement the activities efficiently and effectively;
- the proposed program directly responds to this APS;
- the proposed activities are likely to directly lead to the anticipated results;
and
- the proposed budget is realistic and consistent with the proposed activities and the results are objective, quantifiable, and measurable.

A successful application will propose a program that is responsive to the stated purpose of this APS, and is evaluated favorably against the evaluation factors. The three main evaluation factors (Technical Merit, Management, and Operational Approach and Cost Effectiveness) are of relatively equal weight.

1. Technical Merit - USAID will review the extent to which the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended results in a specific timeframe. This includes reviewing the relevance of the approach, whether the proposed activities are consistent with the objectives sought, how the activities are interrelated, how activities will be tracked, monitored and reported, and the degree to which the application incorporates lessons learned from similar programs or activities, builds on prior relevant programs or activities, and supports consensus building and the appropriate use of the media. USAID will review whether the proposed beneficiaries are strategically chosen, and whether the proposed performance targets appear reasonable and realistic. Applications which are expected to reach a greater number of beneficiaries and/or cover a wider geographic area will be more favorably considered. Applications should include a description of gender issues pertaining to the proposed activities and how the applicant proposes to address these issues.

2. Management and Operational Approach and Capability
 - a. Organizational Effectiveness: USAID will review the effectiveness of the approach in terms of internal structure, technical capacity, and ability to represent beneficiary interests. Partnership arrangements with other civil society organizations, which enhance the effectiveness and capabilities of program implementation, should be specifically outlined. Partnerships that build on the relative strengths of participating organizations – especially of Egyptian organizations - with clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each organization in the application, may positively affect the evaluated merit of an application. Applicants are encouraged to consider partnerships and coalitions, as appropriate, to broaden geographic diversity, promote greater inclusion and increase program reach. Where such partnerships and consortia include sub-grant relationships, the terms and conditions of such sub-grants should be clearly described in the application as well as the organization’s capacity and experience in managing sub-grants.

 - b. Past Performance: All applicants will be subject to a past performance review, with emphasis on prior projects, if any, which are similar to that which is proposed. Organizations without prior experience will receive a neutral rating in this category.

3. Cost Effectiveness - Proposed budgets will be reviewed to determine if the applicant's approach is cost effective, and makes use of existing resources, capacities, materials, tools, and other leveraged sources of funding. An application will be viewed more favorably if it proposes results which are objective, quantifiable, and measurable and if the costs can be tied directly to specific corresponding results.

A realistic commitment to cost share is generally viewed as enhancing the evaluated cost effectiveness of a program.

C. Step Three: Negotiation and Agreement of Grant Terms

If USAID's review results in a recommendation for funding, then the organization and USAID will enter final discussions to ensure all pre-award requirements are met and significant grant terms are negotiated and agreed. The exact details of this phase will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to each application; however, the following are common areas that require discussion and agreement prior to award:

1. Branding Strategy and Marking Plan - USAID has flexibility in branding approaches depending upon the type of activities proposed and the specific conditions of program implementation. Not all programs will require the same type of recognition of USAID support. Depending on the circumstances, the organization may be requested to propose a branding strategy and marking plan which provides for appropriate acknowledgment of USAID support, and which will become a material element of the grant.

Important, useful information on USAID's branding and marking policy can be found in USAID's on-line Automated Directive System (ADS) Chapter 320. ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "assistance" apply to this APS. ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "acquisition" do not apply to this APS. ADS Chapter 320 can be found on the USAID website:

<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf>

A helpful list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about branding and marking can also be found on the USAID website:

http://www.usaid.gov/branding/marketing_faq.html

2. Payment terms - This may include payment through the provision of advances, direct reimbursement, or payment through a fixed obligation grant where payments are made based upon the achievement of specific results.
3. Procedures concerning administrative reporting and logistical requirements for the program, including training components.
4. Cost sharing terms.
5. USAID-desired involvement during the implementation of the award. If it is substantial, a cooperative agreement form of grant may be awarded which will contain the details of USAID's involvement.
6. Other award terms including audit, special provisions and/or special award conditions.

VI. USAID EVALUATION AND FUNDING DECISION

A. Schedule of the Evaluation Process

USAID will review applications every three months beginning on August 31. USAID will inform unsuccessful applicants in writing, explaining briefly why the application was not selected for funding. Applicants may request a debriefing within 10 days of receiving this notification. USAID reserves the right to provide debriefings orally, in writing, or electronically.

B. Pre-Award Responsibility Determination

A pre-award evaluation will be conducted and will include an examination of the application's budget to ensure it is a realistic financial expression of the proposed program and does not contain estimated costs which may be unreasonable or unable to be charged under the program. Staff salaries will be considered reasonable to the extent that they are comparable to that paid for similar work in the relevant labor market; salary history will not be used to determine the salary range for a particular job category.

An additional pre-award 'survey' or assessment may be conducted if there is uncertainty about the organization's capacity to perform financially or technically, or if the organization has never had a USAID award, has not had any US

Government award over the last five years, or if for any other reason the Agreement Officer determines a pre-award survey is in the best interest of USAID. The areas covered by a pre-award survey or assessment will vary according to circumstances, but may include reviews to ensure the organization meets the necessary standards for financial management, program management, property, procurement, reports and records, internal controls, is in good financial standing, and has the technical capacity to conduct the proposed program.

VII. OTHER INFORMATION

USAID Automated Directive System (ADS), Chapter 303, contains USAID policy and procedures concerning "Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-governmental Organizations" and is available on our agency website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>.

Awards will include language prohibiting transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism; the same will be required in all subcontracts and sub-awards.

As further detailed in ADS 303, awards will be administered as follows:

- Awards to non-US organizations: in accordance with USAID Standard Provisions for Non-US, Non-Governmental Organizations.
- Awards to US organizations: in accordance with USAID Standard Provisions for US Non-Governmental Organizations, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars, and [22 CFR Part 226, Administration of Assistance Awards to U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations.](#)

Copies of referenced documents may be found via USAID ADS Chapter 303, including links to other websites. Copies of the referenced documents may also be requested from the points of contact listed in this APS.

A grant application will not be viewed as more desirable over another simply because it has a higher budget. Programs with modest scope and budget, which are viewed as having a strong potential for positive impact and results, are preferred over more expensive, less effective programs.

There are numerous firms and organizations that offer to provide assistance in preparing grant applications. The utilization of such services is at the sole

discretion of the applicant. USAID does not endorse any of these or require their use with respect to this APS. Further, any costs incurred for such services would not be reimbursable by USAID.

It is possible that an application recommended for funding does not actually result in a grant award, due to insufficient availability of funding, or because an organization is deemed not sufficiently capable of managing a USAID grant, or for other reason(s) which will be provided to the applicant.

A decision not to fund a program may occur at any phase of the evaluation process. No program expenditures will be paid by USAID, except those covered in a grant signed by the USAID Agreement Officer. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.