USAID | DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Issue Date:	December 13, 2019
Deadline for Question:	January 09, 2020
Closing Date:	February 17, 2020
Closing Time:	17:00 Kinshasa Time

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity, Number: 72066020RFA00002

Program Title: "Child and Youth Education Response Activity'' (CYERA)
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 98.001

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a cooperative agreement from qualified entities to implement the "Child and Youth Education Response Activity" (CYERA) program. Eligibility for this award is not restricted.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant(s) who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NOFO. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the NOFO has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on www.grants.gov or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.7.g.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, Applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

Issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Andre-Guy Soh
Agreement Officer

Table of Contents

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID's supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

1. Summary

Title: Child and Youth Education Response Activity (CYERA)

Purpose: Crisis- and conflict-affected Congolese children and youth acquire foundational skills through responsive education opportunities.

Scope: The Child and Youth Education Response Activity (CYERA) will target children and youth (both girls and boys) living in crisis- and conflict-affected communities of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu, with the capacity to deliver rapid education services in other provinces (e.g., Haut Uele, Tanganyika, Kasaï Central) if and when requested based on anticipated needs.

2. Context

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the fifth most fragile state in the world[1], with a humanitarian context characterized by recurrent patterns of conflict and displacement, exacerbated by epidemic outbreaks and natural disasters. Prolonged conflict in certain parts of the DRC is complex, with ethnic, international, and financial interests at play at all geographic administrative levels. These interests, compounded by poor governance, often leave local populations subject to the tyranny of warlords and armed groups that have taken advantage of the opportunity presented by the lack of rule of law.

Protracted emergencies characterize the eastern provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri as well as Haut Uele, the Greater Kasai region and Tanganyika, resulting in severe consequences on the well-being of the affected populations. In the last 12 months, the Ebola epidemic and the associated, initial international response have aggravated the significant development challenges of the DRC. The second worst Ebola outbreak in history began in August 2018 and continues unabated. There are now 2,070 deaths related to the Ebola virus disease (EVD), with the infection rate increasing exponentially in the face of fierce community resistance and the severe challenges faced by the Government of the DRC (GDRC) and its partners. At the moment, the Greater Kasai is also grappling with emerging crises, with over 400,000 Congolese returning from Angola from October 2018 to January 2019, 25% of whom are children, but potentially sufficient donor assistance based on the absorptive capacity there.

Children and youth (girls and boys) in the DRC are exposed to multi-dimensional

[1] Fund for Peace (2019) – Fragile States Index Report 2019: http://fundforpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/9511904-fragilestatesindex.pdf

idiosyncratic and aggregate shocks and stresses. With an estimated 4.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)[2], the already stretched education system is under tremendous pressure to ensure access to quality education for the estimated 1.8 million school-aged children in need. Many children find themselves in conflict and disease-ridden conditions throughout the country. Schools are closed and attacks on schools are common, resulting in families who are forced to flee. In the Kasai regions alone, there were 639 verified and unverified incidents from 2016-2017, including shelling, burning, looting, and military occupation of schools[3]. Destruction of school infrastructure, disruption of the school calendar, and insufficient teachers in conflict-affected zones severely limit access to education for girls and boys. In mining areas, education for indigenous and transient populations (migrants) is even more complicated. Tensions rise and numerous anecdotes exist of children being banned from school if they are not from the area.

Children that are enrolled in school usually suffer from inadequately trained teachers, lack of quality teaching and learning materials, and overall, inferior education systems and facilities. Students may find themselves attending schools in insecure environments, with poor infrastructure, and with teachers that are demotivated, or that struggle with their own traumas and challenges. Adolescent girls in conflict and displaced settings are especially at risk for sexual and gender-based violence, which often leads to early pregnancy and forced marriage with subsequent dropping out of school and entry into the workforce at a precocious age. The dropout rate among girls between the fifth year of primary school and early years of high school is high. Physical and psychosocial protection in and around schools is a crucial need, as education has been demonstrated to serve as a protective factor for girls, significantly reducing their risk of experiencing gender-based violence (GBV)[4]. Discriminatory gender attitudes and norms that normalize violence and prioritize the education of boys over girls further exacerbate gender disparities in educational access. Corporal punishment is still an all too common practice in the classroom - often justified by religious authorities that reference Biblical scripture - but there is a growing concern to minimize this particular form of punishment. In times of conflict and mayhem, the presence of these characteristics is amplified.

Conflict and displacement also exacerbate the systemic barriers to access to education, with economic hardship resulting in parents unable to pay school fees. In the large majority of cases, school fees have increased over time. Even worse, these fees are regulated at the provincial level, with one consequence being more students drop out or do not complete their primary certificate. Although education is legally a constitutional right that should be free of charge, the failure of the state to fund education means that most children can only attend if their families directly fund the cost of their enrollment/attendance, or if they are able to access educational assistance through charity or development/humanitarian programming[5]. The free primary education policy (2010)

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[2] https://www.unhcr.org/dr-congo-emergency.html

[3] UNICEF (2017). Press Release 01 June 2017. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/drcongo/en/press-releases/150000-children-greater-kasai-region-need-emergency-support-continue-education

[4] Landis, D. (2018). Examining Participation in Formal Education and Exposure to Violence among Girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

[5] Ferf, A., Hilhorst, D., and Weijs, B. (2012). Livelihoods, basic services and social protection in Democratic Republic

has never been fully implemented.

Despite these challenges, there is continued and growing optimism. The new Presidential administration has prioritized education - as well as women's empowerment - displaying great interest in improving teachers' living conditions and integrating out-of-school children. Recent assessments indicate a shifting of parents' attitudes around girls' education and an increased recognition of education as a path to stable employment and financial stability for women[6]. Furthermore, there is an increasingly capable cadre of civil society organizations (CSOs), local NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), and faith-based institutions who have stepped in to help respond to the needs of out-of-school children and youth. These organizations manage nearly three quarters of non-formal education opportunities – including accelerated learning program centers (CRSs) and technical and vocational education centers (CAPs) – and an important number of formal schools. Private sector primary schools are also a key actor, especially in the face of Trafficking in Person (TIP) sanctions. A leading survey[7] of alternative education programs in North and South Kivu found 'a tremendous gap between the need for alternative education and the actual provision of service'. For example, in North Kivu in 2015, there were approximately 48,000 registered students in alternative education programs, skills training, and basic literacy classes across 411 centers and programs in North Kivu. This number represents roughly 5% of the school-age, out-of-school children population. There are few international actors beside USAID present in this sector in the east.

3. Problem Statement & Resiliencies

USAID's education activities are designed to complement USAID's Counter Trafficking in Persons Field Guide, which identifies a lack of access to education and gender stratification as key factors that exacerbate vulnerability to trafficking. As a result of recurrent crises (e.g. armed conflict, health emergencies, and natural disasters), children and youth, particularly the most marginalized, face multiple barriers to acquiring foundational skills:

- Education access is delayed, interrupted and/or curtailed.
- Large equity gaps exist, especially in terms of access.
- Alarming rates of child marriage, early pregnancy, and gender-based violence contribute to high dropout rates among adolescent girls.
- School fees limit the number of children who enroll in, stay in, and complete a full cycle of basic education, especially for the poorest and displaced families.
- Education actors have limited crisis preparedness capacity and thus education response efforts are delayed, leading to significant gaps in education.
- School infrastructure is poor, under attack, and/or inadequate to keep students, teachers, and school personnel safe and protected from harm.

Nobody grows up wanting to be a child soldier, living in an inhospitable forest with an

of Congo (Working Paper 2). Retrieved from Overseas Development Institute (ODI): https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7717.pdf.

[6] ACCELERE FINAL GENDER ANALYSIS AND GENDER IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY 2015

[7] USAID ECCN (2013) Alternative Education in the DRC, Final Research Report," Dec. 2013., p.30

empty stomach, but if it's the only job that's available, it quickly becomes their journey to independence. Despite the aforementioned barriers, Congolese place enormous emphasis on education in all its forms, and when resources and opportunities are available, families prioritize education for their children, both girls and boys. Education is widely perceived as protective and provides a pathway out of cycles of poverty, conflict and instability. At the same time, there is a history of investment in the Congolese education sector that can be leveraged, including well-established humanitarian and development coordination architectures, as well as established religious networks and a private sector responding to educational needs. Finally, the new Congolese government has identified education as a key priority.

4. Theory of Change

USAID posits that:
If crisis- and conflict-affected children and youth have increased access to crisis-responsive education opportunities; and
If teachers and educators deliver quality instruction, responsive to the social and emotional needs of those affected by crisis and conflict;
If there are capable and competent local entities to continue supporting education activities in times of crisis or trouble,
Then crisis- and conflict-affected children and youth will acquire foundational skills and individual well-being will increase.

USAID recognizes that, given the complexity of the current development landscape, the sub-results defined under this theory of change may need to be periodically revisited, and potentially adjusted in accordance with an ongoing, iterative analytical approach. It is essential that the broader USAID community undertake both formal and informal monitoring and learning actions, underpinned by staff skills and processes, that periodically examine ongoing progress with respect to the key drivers for transformative and sustainable development. USAID's convening authority on this subject and in these geographic zones should be fully utilized.

If the above development hypothesis holds, CYERA will advance USAID/DRC's Country Development and Cooperation Strategy. This activity will contribute to USAID/DRC's Development Objective 2—Lives improved through coordinated development programs—by strengthening education service delivery, increasing access to education services, and improving collaboration between education actors. At the same time, CYERA will contribute positively to Transitional Objective 3—Foundation for durable peace strengthened in eastern DRC—by strengthening individual and community resilience through education, by strengthening the institutional resilience of local actors, and by restoring services for conflict-affect populations in eastern DRC.

5. Achieving Results

In the DRC, conflict and crisis are all too recurrent in the lives of children and youth. Despite this reality, communities, families and children are remarkably resilient. Through this activity, USAID will mitigate the impact that recurrent crises and conflicts have on the acquisition of foundational skills and invest in crisis-responsive education services, such as social and emotional learning support, that lead to measurable learning outcomes for crisis-affected children and youth. By strengthening the responsiveness of education services, both in terms of access and quality, USAID believes sustained learning in foundational skills is achievable. Foundational skills that are essential for the protection, sustained learning and future success of crisis-affected children and youth include reading, math, and social-emotional skills[8]. Additional risk-specific knowledge and skills may also be required to keep children and youth safe and learning[9].

Intermediate Result 1: Increased access to responsive education services

USAID seeks to support a flexible and responsive program that can effectively respond to the education needs of children and youth affected by crisis and conflict. In order to increase access to education services, programs must be able to address the multiple, compounding barriers that limit access, especially for the most marginalized children and youth. In the crisis- and conflict-affected intervention areas, economic, social and cultural barriers to education are generally worse for displaced populations, children/youth 10 years of age or older, adolescent girls, children with disabilities, and children from language minority groups and indigenous forest communities.

Evidence shows that education can protect crisis-affected children and youth, but only when it is of high quality[10]. Therefore, USAID will support crisis-responsive programs that ensure learning environments are safe and conducive for teaching and learning. Improving the safety of the learning environment through community participation, true (not prescriptive) empowerment or 'bottom-up school governance' approaches show promise as effective strategies for increasing student enrollment and attendance[11]. In DRC specifically, Torrente et al. (2015) found "parental support and monitoring in schools increases children's perceptions on the value of education and results in higher academic achievement."[12] Recent evidence also suggests that engaging families and communities to combat harmful social norms around safety and girls' rights is key to improving girls' access to education services[13]. Teachers and school staff also need support in developing positive discipline approaches and clear, transparent accountability structures for when abuses do occur.

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8 [USAID Policy Brief: Social and Emotional Learning and Soft Skills]

9 Examples of risk-specific content: Ebola prevention, GBV prevention, sexual and reproductive health, natural hazard response planning, etc.

10 Dryden-Peterson, S. (2011). *Refugee Education: A Global Review.* Geneva, Switzerland: UNHCR Policy Development and Evaluation Service.

11 Westhorp, G., Walker, D.W., Rogers, P., Overbeeke, N., Ball, D., and Brice, G. (2014) *Enhancing community accountability, empowerment and education outcomes in low and middle-income countries: A realist review.* EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.; IRC (2017). *Improved Management and Accountability: Conditions for Better Access and Quality of Primary Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo?*. Available at: https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/1310/drceducationgovernancefinaljanuary2017.pdf

12 Torrente, C. et al. (2015). *Improving the Quality of School Interactions and Student Well-Being: Impacts of a School-based Program in the DRC.* Journal on Education in Emergencies, 1(1), 48-91.

13 Landis, D. (2018). Examining Participation in Formal Education and Exposure to Violence among Girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

USAID-supported programs must address key barriers to education access that are exacerbated during a crisis, such as parents' financial capacity to cover education-related expenses. Given the large cohort of out-of-school youth, crisis-responsive education programs should support local civil society organizations that can sustainably expand the reach or absorption capacity of non-formal, alternative education opportunities for out-of-school youth. This could include accelerated education programs, catch-up, tutoring or other remedial education support, functional literacy and numeracy, community-based schools, or more innovative ideas.

USAID programs must take into account the gendered aspects of education barriers, prioritizing the needs of girls and young women while not excluding boys and young men. Girls Learning Our World Camps (GLOW) camps, first started by Peace Corps volunteers, are excellent examples of low-cost ways to build community trust and build individual skills and resilience. The purpose of such camps is to encourage individuals to become active citizens by building their self-esteem and confidence, increasing their self-awareness, and developing their skills in goal setting, assertiveness, and career and life planning. At the same time, USAID can integrate positive youth development and soft skills through training on leadership, self-esteem, nutrition, gender equality, personal finance, the environment and volunteerism. Evidence from DRC has demonstrated promising interventions to increase enrollment, retention and learning outcomes, particularly for girls. For example, the DFID-funded VAS-Y Fille! program set up savings and credit associations in conjunction with a series of discussions on resource management and entrepreneurial training, leading to significantly improved perceptions of education spending and increased attendance rates for girls as parents were able to better plan and pay for school expenses, and parents had increased household income. That same program also demonstrated considerable and steady increases in learning outcomes for girls enrolled in accelerated education programs.[14] Programs that target harmful social norms at the root of violence against women and girls have also been shown to reduce violence and stigma and increase support for survivors[15].

Given the recurrent nature of crises and conflicts in DRC, USAID seeks to support programs that build the capacity of local education and child protection actors to prepare, plan and respond to the needs of crisis-affected children and youth. Crisis preparedness and response efforts are intended to mitigate the disruption of services for crisis-affected children and youth, or accelerate the resumption of services, so that these individuals are protected and able to acquire lifesaving and life-sustaining knowledge and skills. Preparedness and planning should be data-driven, coordinated with other actors and, whenever possible, sequenced or layered with response efforts from other sectors (OFDA, FFP, FtF, etc.). Such efforts will ensure that USAID and the government's investments are not completely lost when a new crisis or conflict emerges, such as Ebola which has interrupted schooling and distracted educators, students, and provincial and sous-provincial administrators. Given the scale, frequency and likelihood of crises, partners will work closely with USAID staff to prioritize education response efforts.

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[14] Randall, J., et al. (2017). *VAS-Y Fille! Endline Report*. University of Massachusetts-Amherst
[15] Bezzolato, E. Deepan, P. O'Sullivan, V.; Lele, U. Le Roux, L. Palm, S. (2019). Rethinking relationships: from violence to equality in the DRC

In order for responsive education services to contribute to the intended goal of increased learning, USAID understands that a mix of short-, medium-, and/or longer-term interventions may be required. USAID seeks to support programs that can be nimble in their education response efforts, supporting communities to respond to acute shocks as well as building individual and community resilience to long-term stresses and recurrent shocks.

Summary of <u>minimum</u> key sub-results:

- Learning environments are gender-responsive, safe and conducive for teaching and learning.
- Parents have increased financial capacity to cover education-related expenses.
- Civil society and communities have expanded - and increased access to - formal and non-formal education opportunities, including community schools and vocational training.
- Five local organizations are selected and mentored/coached to become direct USAID recipients after year 3.
- Local education actors implement education crisis response plans.
- Individuals reached through GLOW camps.
- Provincial and national (if applicable) truth and reconciliation dialogues and conferences used to mobilize and further issues of critical, long-term importance

Intermediate Result 2: Improved delivery of quality, gender- and crisis-responsive foundational instruction

Evidence demonstrates that safe and supportive classrooms are necessary, but not sufficient, to improving learning outcomes for learners.[16] Therefore, USAID seeks to support programs that improve the quality and crisis-responsiveness of instruction in order to achieve measurable learning outcomes for crisis- and conflict-affected children and youth. Improved instructional quality is the goal of all basic education interventions, both formal and non-formal.

In order to achieve measurable learning outcomes for crisis-affected children and youth, USAID will support programs that are aligned to DRC-contextualized INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies[17]. In line with these standards, USAID will support crisis-responsive education programs that ensure locally developed, linguistically appropriate teaching and learning materials (TLMs) are available and used. As described in the Programmatic Approaches section, programs must use teaching and learning materials developed by USAID or other donors, aligned to the National Basic Education Curriculum (*Programme Nationale de l'Enseignement Primaire*), and procured through the local market. Millions have already been devoted to such high-quality materials and more resources now need to reach those most in need and focused

[16] USAID (2018). *USAID Education Policy*. November 2018.
[17] INEE, Save the Children and UNICEF (2016). *Normes Minimales de l'Éducation en Situations d'Urgence: RDC Nord Kivu.* Available at: https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/normes-minimales-de-leducation-en-situations-durgence-rdc-nord-kivu

on the Journey to Self-Reliance (sustainability). As a result, costs for the development or validation of new TLMs are not allowable or reimbursable except with written AOR and Office Director approval.

USAID will also support programs that sustain and expand the reach of teacher professional development and school-based coaching. Given the adverse experiences that crisis-affected children and youth are or have experienced and the impact of chronic poverty on child development, teacher professional development must prepare individuals to support the wellbeing of learners and build skills that help them be more resilient. As stated in the USAID Education Policy (2018), "Gaining foundational reading, math, and social and emotional skills are strong predictors of whether an individual will stay in school, obtain a degree, get and maintain a job–or become involved in a crime." Teacher professional development and support should thus focus on building the knowledge and skills. Additional training topics may include classroom management, positive discipline, or other risk-specific content.

The body of DRC-specific evidence on teachers, classroom instruction and learning outcomes has significantly grown over the past five years and should be applied to any programs supported by USAID. One key area of learning is about the relationship between perceptions of the school environment and learning outcomes. Teachers, especially in crisis- and conflict-affected communities, play a critical role in ensuring classrooms and learning environments are safe, supportive and conducive for learning. Evidence demonstrates that "approaches that integrate academic and social-emotional support may be a viable option to improve student academic outcomes in different regions of the DRC."[18] In addition, the positive learning outcomes demonstrated through USAID's OPEQ activity were in part attributed to improved students' perceptions of teacher fairness and respect, especially for girls.[19] When taken together, improved perceptions of teachers and improved learning outcomes contribute to students' resilience and psychosocial well-being.

Additionally, enhancing children's social-emotional competencies, such as communication, conflict management, and problem-solving skills, and assisting them with building positive peer-to-peer relationships can contribute to the prevention of emotional, physical[20], and sexual violence[21]. Programs that develop the skills of adolescent girls have been particularly successful in preventing risky sexual behavior and delaying early marriage, two main drivers of drop out in the DRC. In addition to addressing issues of safety in the classroom, programs should ensure that all curriculum, teaching and learning approaches and strategies are gender-responsive and do not

[18] Torrente, C et. al (2019). *Improving Primary Education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: End-Line Results of a Cluster-Randomized Wait-List Controlled Trial of Learning in a Healing Classroom*, Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, DOI: 10.1080/19345747.2018.1561963

[19] Torrente, C. et al. (2015). *Improving the Quality of School Interactions and Student Well-Being*, 48-91.

[20] Sandra J. Wilson et al., "School-based Interventions for Aggressive and Disruptive Behavior: Update of a Aeta-Analysis." American Journal of Preventive Medicine 33, no. 2 (2007): S130-S143, https://doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2007.04.011.

[21] Kristin L. et al., "Perpetration of Partner Violence and HIV Risk Behaviour Among Young Men in the Rural Eastern Cape, South Africa." AIDS 20, no. 16 (2006): 2107–2114.

perpetuate any harmful biases or norms.

Finally, Congolese teachers face "cumulative hardships" including increased workloads, insufficient and infrequent pay, limited opportunities for professional development and displacement[22]. This may lead to a perception of "financially preying" on families and students, among other things. As can be expected, global evidence demonstrates a positive relationship between teacher well-being and their students' social, emotional and cognitive development[23]. As such, USAID seeks to support programs that improve teachers' occupational well-being, motivation, and social and emotional skills, in sustainable fashions where possible. Together these components of crisis-responsive programs help teachers become even more resilient in the face of chronic stress and acute shocks. USAID also recognizes the relationship between improved learning environments (IR 1 sub-result), access to teaching and learning materials (IR 2 sub-result), and teacher well-being[24]. Programs must take a gendered approach to improving teacher well-being given the specific hardships that Congolese female teachers face, particularly those in crisis- and conflict-affected communities. In addition, by monitoring teacher wellbeing, USAID and its partners can ensure programs do not create additional stress or workload burdens on the already stressed education workforce, particularly female teachers and school directors.

Summary of <u>minimum</u> key sub-results:

- Existing teaching and learning materials used.
- Teacher competencies and skills in foundational subjects, and gender- and crisis-specific instructional content, improved.
- Educational responses in zones affected by and susceptible to Ebola increased.
- Individuals reached through GLOW camps.
- Teacher well-being[25] improved.

6. Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

There are three fundamental purposes for monitoring and evaluating activity performance:

1. Reporting on activity progress:
    - through the tracking of critical output indicators on a monthly or quarterly basis to measure whether it is meeting specified targets,
    - through field visits that are "off the beaten path," unannounced to communities and project staff at times, by a range of staff and actors, and

[22] Wolf, S., Torrente, C., McCoy, M., Rasheed, D., & Aber, J. L. (2015). *Cumulative risk and teacher well-being in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.* Comparative Education Review, 59(4), 717-742.
[23] Jones, S.M., Bouffard, S.M., and Weissbourd, R. (2013). *Educators' social and emotional skills vital to learning*. Phi Delta Kappan, 94(8), 62-65.;
McCallum, F., Price, D., Graham, A., & Morrison, A. (2017). *Teacher wellbeing: A review of the literature*.
[24] Wolf, S., Torrente, C., Frisoli, P., Weisenhorn, N., Shivshanker, A., Annan, J., & Aber, J. L. (2015). *Preliminary impacts of the "Learning to Read in a Healing Classroom" intervention on teacher well-being in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. Teaching and Teacher Education, *52*, 24-36.
[25] Teacher occupational well-being is defined as self-efficacy, job stress and burnout, job satisfaction, and social-emotional competence [Falk, D. & Varni, E. (forthcoming). *Landscape Review: Teacher Well-being in Low Resource, Crisis, and Conflict-affected Settings*. INEE]

- through reporting on specified outcome and impact indicators using periodic performance monitoring and evaluation events held throughout implementation in special studies and at activity mid-term and closure.

2. Capturing knowledge about:
    - how the activity is progressing and the extent to which theories of change and their assumptions are still relevant and accurate,
    - whether external assumptions about the activity's operating environment and the contextual factors that influence the activity's performance remain valid and appropriate, as anticipated, throughout activity implementation, and
    - how effective, cost-effective, sustainable, adaptable, and acceptable various types of interventions are for this population in the DRC.

To support progress reporting, learning, reflection, and adaptation, the Recipient will develop a complexity-aware[26] Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan prior to implementation. The MEL Plan must define a sound and realistic approach to: (1) measure the quality, fidelity, effectiveness, outputs, and outcomes of the activity, (2) monitor key aspects of the context,[27] (3) learning and adaptation, and (4) evaluation. The MEL Plan should be planned, sequenced, and budgeted in a way that allows flexibility for MEL elements to be adjusted if necessary (i.e., not implemented or funded) and so that MEL results inform decision-making or management of the activity. The MEL Plan should abide by global best practices, build on existing measures and approaches validated and contextualized for use in the DRC, and generate evidence that reflects USAID's learning priorities for Education in Conflict and Crisis. Of course, the MEL Plan may be revised as needed over the life of the activity in response to changes in context, learning, updates to the theory of change, and so forth.

USAID or other donors have supported significant research and evaluation in the DRC over the years. Though the context shifts rapidly in the DRC and various activities serve different populations in different provinces, it will be important that the MEL Plan reflects what has already been learned in the DRC and that new research is limited and only undertaken with written AOR approval. Millions of dollars have already been devoted to research and evaluation - often with the findings not sufficiently utilized for decision-making or implementation adaptation - and more resources now need to reach those most in need and focus on the Journey to Self-Reliance (sustainability). Existing research includes:

- Project D'Amelioration de la Qualite de l'Education (PAQUED): final evaluation of teacher and student performance under PAQUED (2014) or the impact evaluation brief (2015)
- Opportunities for Equitable Access to Quality Education (OPEQ): impact evaluation project page, cumulative risk and teacher wellbeing (2015), final

[26] USAID's Complexity Aware Monitoring Discussion Note, available at https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/complexity-aware-monitoring-discussion-note-brief. Complexity-aware monitoring techniques are most useful for the elements of the Activity that may have an unclear cause and effect relationship to the outcomes or to the contexts.
[27] Context Monitoring: https://usaidlearninglab.org/monitoring-toolkit?tab=3&subtab=3

impact evaluation results (2019)
- Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (by IYDA and separately by Accelere! 1, both available on the DEC)
- Survey of Children's Reading Materials in African Languages in 11 Countries - Annex A: DRC
- EGRA & EGMA tools previously used in the DRC
- Valorisation de la scolarisation de la Fille (VAS-Y FILLES!)

Monitoring

The MEL Plan should describe the planned monitoring approach to (1) measure progress towards the activity purpose, outcomes and results and (2) monitor key aspects of the context, including assumptions or conditions that directly support the success of the Activity. The MEL Plan should report on a manageable number of outcomes, output, and context indicators to track progress towards the achievement of the activity goal and significant changes in the context. The plan must abide by best practices for monitoring, such as the use of unique identifiers, be complexity aware, and support adaptable management.

The use of standard indicators is required for output and outcome monitoring, and the awardee may suggest a limited number of custom indicators in the MEL Plan. For illustrative purposes only, a select number of indicators are provided here for consideration in the development of the MEL approach and Plan:

Strategy	Illustrative Indicators (disaggregated by sex, age-group, and crisis/conflict-affected)
Outcome	• Percent of out-of-school youth with improved reading skills following participation in USG-assisted programs • Percent of learners attaining minimum grade-level proficiency in reading at the end of school (or grade 6/CRS Level III) with USG assistance • Number of students who have improved social and emotional skills, as locally defined, with USG assistance • Percent of out-of-school youth with improved numeracy skills following participation in USG-assisted programs • Percent of learners that demonstrate improved well-being at the end of basic education opportunities supported with USG assistance
IR 1 outputs	• Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance[28] • Number of new entrants in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings with USG support • Number of formal and non-formal education opportunities with expanded enrollment capacity with USG assistance • Number of learning environments supported by USG assistance that

[28] Foreign Assistance Framework (FAF) indicator ES. 1-3

	have improved safety, according to locally defined criteria[29]
IR 2 outputs	• Percent of teachers providing quality classroom instruction with USG support[30] • Number of primary or secondary textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) that are inclusively representative provided with USG assistance [31] • Percent of teachers reporting improved well-being

For each indicator proposed, the MEL Plan should indicate methods for the determination of baseline values, annual targets and total targets that assures the reliability and validity of data collected. The MEL Plan should elaborate the process by which the indicators will be tracked and how monitoring processes and results will be used to inform activity management decisions. Proposed indicators should move beyond collecting data on inputs and outputs for the activity and propose a limited number of relevant outcome-level indicators to measure and track the progress of the program in achieving the activity results. Proposed indicators should be gender-sensitive and equity-focused, including appropriate disaggregation by sex, age group, and crisis/conflict-affected group, and any other relevant fragility dimension (e.g., by ethnic group, religion, or geographical location) or disability, if appropriate.

Context monitoring: ADS 201 defines context monitoring as, "the systematic collection of information about conditions and external factors relevant to the implementation and performance of a Mission or Washington Operating Unit's strategy, projects, and activities. This includes information about local conditions that may directly affect implementation and performance (such as non-USAID projects operating within the same sector as USAID projects) or external factors that may indirectly affect implementation and performance (such as macro-economic, social, or political conditions). Context monitoring should be used to monitor assumptions and risks identified in an activity logic model."

Additional guidance on USAID monitoring indicators can be found on the USAID Education Links website[32], including curated lists and performance indicator reference sheets of indicators for safety, equity and conflict sensitivity.

Learning

A critical component to adaptive management is low-cost and continuous and collaborative learning (see Section 1.7 Programmatic Approaches). The MEL Plan should detail the specific learning actions that the activity will undertake, including pause and reflect exercises, exchanges with other project activities, field visits, and knowledge capture at activity closeout and life of activity summary report. Low-cost learning actions are expected to engage and be useful not only to USAID, but to involve and inform activity beneficiaries. USAID has identified priority areas for learning relevant

29 Foreign Assistance Framework (FAF) indicator ES. 1 (NEW)
30 Forthcoming supplemental indicator for Education
31 Foreign Assistance Framework (FAF) indicator ES.1-10
32 https://www.edu-links.org/

to conflict and crisis-affected contexts.

Education Needs Assessments: A critical first component to education response efforts in any crisis- and conflict-affected contexts is the availability of valid, reliable and credible data on the education needs of children and youth. USAID seeks to support programs that are able to collect and make available education needs assessment data in a timely fashion, unless a Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) is already planned or available. USAID recognizes that nimble and responsive education needs assessment data collection is often best achieved through collaboration, coordination, and partnership. This may include working with local partners, facilitating the genuine participation of local education authorities, and building the capacity of a variety of actors to conduct needs assessments. Education needs assessments should be appropriately sequenced with multi-sector needs assessment. Needs assessments must include measures of short and medium- to long-term education needs, including aspects of education access (who is in vs. out-of-school; infrastructure, etc.), protection issues, as well as education quality (teacher skills and well-being, student well-being, foundational skills, etc.).

Education needs assessment data must be widely distributed using existing structures and data aggregators, such as USAID's Development Data Library[33] and the Humanitarian Data Exchange[34]. Making education needs assessment available as a public good is intended to inform not only programmatic responses funded by USAID, but also contribute to local education actor response and coordination efforts, expanding the reach of this activity. In addition, USAID's support to education needs assessment aims to support a shift in the education sector--away from response efforts that are based on partner capacity and towards education response efforts based on beneficiary needs.

Assessing Learning Outcomes: While USAID has invested in a variety of national and sub-national early grade reading assessments in DRC over the past decade, we understand that these measures may not be appropriate to monitor and adapt responsive programs to the learning needs of crisis and conflict-affected children and youth in this activity. USAID also recognizes that in periods of crisis, sustaining learning gains, or preventing regression of foundational skills, is a critical first step to improving learning outcomes. Crisis-responsive education programs should use existing tools, methods and best practices from DRC and the global field of education in emergencies to appropriately assess student learning under this activity. Learning assessments must appropriately measure the key learning outcomes of concern for this activity (reading, math and social and emotional skills, etc.) and be sensitive to change over short periods of time. Please consult the data already available on the Early Grade Reading Barometer and propose appropriate ideas.

Evaluation

The MEL Plan may also consider the inclusion of evaluation triggers, that would signal the need for USAID or other development actors to consider an evaluation on a specific

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[33] https://data.usaid.gov/

[34] https://data.humdata.org/

component of the activity at a particular time. While it is not possible to determine whether something unexpected will occur during implementation that will necessitate an evaluation, it is possible to consider during the planning stages what potential situations may serve as an evaluation trigger. The following situations may serve as triggers for conducting a previously unplanned evaluation:

- A key management decision is required, but there is inadequate information to make it;
- Performance information indicates an unexpected result (positive or negative) that should be explained, such as unanticipated results affecting either men or women;
- Beneficiary, partner, or other informed feedback, suggests that there are implementation problems, unmet needs, or unintended consequences;
- Issues of sustainability, cost-effectiveness, or relevance arise; or
- The validity of Results Framework hypotheses or critical assumptions is questioned.

The most appropriate evaluation methodologies should be suggested in order to answer evaluation questions efficiently and quickly enough to inform decision-making. Complexity-aware approaches may be useful.

USAID may contract an independent evaluation of this activity through a parallel mechanism that will be separately funded and managed by USAID. In such an event, the Recipient is required to collaborate with USAID/DRC and the Evaluation Contractor on the following:

- Performance, mid-term or other evaluation designs to align with the activity implementation plan.
- Selection of intervention areas (geographic).
- Selection criteria and recruitment process for participants/schools/communities,
- Joint review of activity performance monitoring plan with an Evaluation Contractor to ensure project monitoring data collection is sufficient to monitor changes in the activity design over time and implementation fidelity.
- Cost data.
- Information regarding the timing for the recruitment of participants, collection of data, and initiation of services to participants.
- Participation in annual reviews of the performance monitoring plan and actuals, facilitated by an evaluation contractor.

7. Programmatic Approaches

Geographic and Demographic Targeting: CYERA will target children and youth (both girls and boys) living in crisis- and conflict-affected areas of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu. Initial obligations should target “wrap around activities” in Ituri and the Kivus. This activity should have the capacity to expand to Haut Uele, Kasaï, Kasaï Oriental, and Tanganyika if requested. Due to the high-risk and fluid nature of the DRC context, partners must be nimble and ready to adjust depending on shifting needs and constraints.

Special emphasis on Ebola-affected zones, including the broad Okapi, Garamba, and Virunga Park zones, may be required by USAID. (At this time, USAID requests that the successful applicant set aside $4 million of this award for potential responses to the development challenge in the broad Okapi, Garamba and Virunga and/or affected zones.) USAID and the successful applicant will determine the number of districts and packages implemented by the highest areas of vulnerability and inclusion of the most vulnerable children and youth populations. Vulnerability key criteria include as number of out-of-school children, level of violence/insecurity, primary school completion rate, youth unemployment, and/or rates of early pregnancy/marriage.

Inception Phase: A critical phase of the award will be an inception phase to provide up-to-date analysis and understanding of the current conflict and crisis dynamics, the nature of the problems to be addressed, and where the activity might best intervene to achieve the activity purpose. During this phase, the successful applicant will also identify local organizations/entities intervening in the education sector that have the potential to become direct USAID recipients and develop a realistic and achievable organizational capacity building and mentoring plan to support them. Further interventions may be informed by the findings of the inception phase, including any studies, and pilots to be carried out. During the inception phase, the applicant will utilize collaborative planning (with USAID and key stakeholders) in order to engage appropriate resources in the design, scale and sequence of this activity. This will allow the activity to create maximum impact, while employing an iterative and adaptive approach. The inception phase will also allow for seamless transition of knowledge and capacity from current USAID education programs. The inception phase is expected to be an appropriate duration of time to allow for activities with students, teachers, or communities to begin at the beginning of the next academic year after the award is signed.

Adaptive Management: Adaptive Management will be key to the success of CYERA, given its crisis-responsive approach. Adaptive management refers to making adjustments in intervention tactics or design based on iterative learning, thereby customizing the intervention. As such, establishing implementation decision points/milestones will be necessary during the life of the activity. While CYERA may need to test an array of approaches, to ensure results, it will need to learn from its experiments and quickly home in on those that are getting results, drop those that are not, and adapt approaches where indicated. Such an approach will also require a flexible monitoring system (see Section 1.6), across intervention components, private sector and public sector actors, and development partners.

Conflict Sensitivity: USAID requires partners to take into account conflict dynamics in all activities, and to demonstrate in their applications how they will do so throughout the implementation of the activity. Conflict sensitivity refers to the discipline and capacity of an organization to:

- Understand the conflict context in which programs are being implemented;
- Understand how the conflict context might affect programs and how programs might affect the conflict context;
- Act on this understanding to minimize risk of negative impacts on programs

(i.e., staff, beneficiaries, communities, results) and the conflict dynamics; and

- Identify options for positively impacting the conflict context.

It is essential that partners implement programming under this award in a conflict-sensitive manner with upfront and continuing contextual analysis and monitoring that inform interventions throughout the life of the activity. The Recipient shall use recent and existing USAID Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERAs) from Accelere! 1 and IYDA to assist in initial or mid-program risk analysis[35]. The need for additional or more localized conflict analyses and rolling assessment should be determined during the inception phase and at appropriate intervals during implementation in very close collaboration with USAID.

Identifying and strengthening 5 local organizations:

USAID/DRC is interested in seeing at least 5 capable, effective and committed local organizations emerge from this award and become direct recipient or USAID funding. It is therefore important to devote significant time and resources in identifying those organizations already rooted in their communities and with some of form of potential and the capacity to grow and effectively occupy the space currently occupied by international organizations.

Collaboration with Governmental and Non-Governmental Actors: Given the policy and operational constraints of working in DRC, USAID seeks to support programs that collaborate with a range of actors, both governmental and non-governmental- TIP sanctions permitting. The program will need to have the flexibility to advance sub-results in the face of unpredictable changes in context. For example, partners must be able to sustain programming through community-based or non-governmental organizations - if operational and programmatic desirable - and if collaboration with government actors is restricted.

At the same time, education programs must align to DRC formal and non-formal education policies and curricular standards. The program must avoid creating a programmatic approaches or incentives that create parallel education structures. When possible, the program should engage closely with government education authorities, building their individual and institutional resilience capacities, so that education service can be responsive to the needs of crisis- and conflict-affected children and youth.

Gender: Partners shall assess, develop a strategy for and carefully monitor activity implementation to ensure that girls and boys are equally benefiting from this activity's interventions. Programs should include strategies and activities to achieve the expected results in promoting gender equality and female empowerment as part of or in complementarity to other proposed program interventions.

Partners shall hire a Gender Advisor to develop a specific strategy that addresses how

[35]RERA Toolkit available at: https://www.edu-links.org/resources/rapid-education-and-risk-analysis-rera-toolkit-1

gender issues and social norms affect education practices and behaviors. Partners must build off of the materials developed and lessons learned under recently ended and on-going girls' education interventions, such as VAS-Y Fille!, EAGLE, REALISE, and ACCELERE!, C-GBV, and IYDA, etc. A wide array of analyses, materials, and promising approaches specific to the DRC already exist and financial resources and staff time must leverage these resources. Project approaches must also consider the link between gender and conflicts – i.e. how are gender relations affected by conflicts and what are the resulting impacts on education. Partners should integrate identified gender and socio-cultural issues throughout the project cycle, including the selection of project beneficiaries, design of activities, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. There may be needed to modify gender activities to address changing circumstances or take advantage of additional gender integration opportunities as they arise.

Cost guidance: The applicant shall comply with the cost data collection and reporting as outlined in USAID's Cost Reporting Guidance and Annexes, which is available on the internet and which can be downloaded at https://www.edu-links.org/sites/default/files/media/file/USAID%20Cost%20Reporting%20Guidance%202018%20FINAL%20%281%29.pdf . In collaboration with USAID, the applicant will select from the list of categories found in the USAID Cost Reporting Guidance to create cost codes relevant for the activity. Sub-codes for development and implementation activities for categories with a substantial development component must be included. The USAID Cost Reporting Guidance provides a list of additional optional sub-codes.

With respect to the development of curricular materials, as previously noted the Recipient must use, reproduce or provide supplements to existing teaching and learning materials. USAID, and others, have provided substantial support to the development of teaching and learning materials in DRC and globally. These include:

- ACCELERE!
    - Reading Materials
    - Math Pilot Materials
    - ALP Curriculum Level 1 & 2
- OPEQ
    - Teacher Training Materials for Social and Emotional Learning
- PAQUED
    - Interactive Radio Instructional Materials
- Safe Healing and Learning Spaces
    - SEL Scripted Lessons
- IYDA
    - ALP Curriculum Level 3 (Reading, Math, Work Ready Now! Be Your Own Boss)

8. Coordination and partnerships

Coordination and partnerships are critical to the success of this activity. Given the long history of donor support in eastern and central DRC, there are a number of robust and effective programs that serve similar target populations with complementary activities including those funded and planned by other donors, private sector entities and the

GDRC. USAID/DRC also has a history of funding activities in the TO3 and DO2 priority areas and has several important initiatives underway at the time of the release of this NOFO. The Recipient should have or develop strategic partnerships with these, as well as with public sector institutions such as universities, training centers, and GDRC stakeholders they deem key to the success of the activity.

1.8.1 CSOs and private sector entities

As mentioned in section 1.2, there exists a dynamic network of civil society organizations, including local NGOs, CBOs, and faith-based institutions that have stepped in to help respond to the needs of conflict and crisis-affected children and youth, including the provision of non-formal education services. Applicants should carefully consider how to engage these, as well as youth-led and youth-serving organizations. Private sector schools are also viewed as a key actor with which to engage.

1.8.2 Identify other activities in targeted areas

Applicants are requested to identify activities with whom they could tangibly collaborate. This collaboration can include site selection so as to best leverage approaches (while not inundating target communities) and to ensure geographic coverage, use of existing teaching and learning materials. Linkages to reporting and shared indicators should be noted, as well as to the activity's learning agenda.

1.8.3 Strategic Partnerships with Public Institutions and the GDRC

Applicants should propose concrete options for strategic partnerships that would be beneficial to the proposed approach and reinforce the sustainability of the activity, considering that TIP sanctions may or may not be in effect post August 2020.

[END OF SECTION A]

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SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide $38,000,000.00 (Thirty-Eight Million 00/100 US Dollars) in total USAID funding over a five-year period.

2. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The anticipated period of performance is five years. The estimated start date will be April 1st, 2020.

3. Substantial Involvement

Consistent with ADS 303.3.11, USAID/DRC will be substantially involved in the implementation of the Child and Youth Education Response Activity. The intended purpose of the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) involvement during the implementation of the activity is to assist the recipient(s) in achieving the supported objectives.

- Approval of Specified Key Personnel as concurred by the AOR and approved by the
  Agreement Officer (AO): USAID will approve Key Personnel and future changes.

- Approval of the Recipient's Implementation Plans by the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR): USAID will approve (a) annual work plans, and (b) any significant adaptations to the work plan or AMELP plan, for example changes based on coordination efforts or the evolving security situation.

- Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation:

1) Collaborative involvement in selection of advisory committee members, if the program will establish an advisory committee that provides advice to the recipient. USAID may participate as a member of this committee as well. Advisory committees must only deal with programmatic or technical issues and not routine administrative matters.
2) Concurrence on the substantive provisions of sub-awards. 2 CFR 200.308 requires the Recipient to obtain the Agreement Officer's prior approval for the subaward, transfer, or contracting out of any work under an award. This is generally limited to approving work by a third party under the agreement. USAID also reserves further approval rights for sub-awards or contracts, specifically, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the subawards.
3) Approval of the Recipient's Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (AMELP) by the AOR.

4) Monitoring by the AOR to authorize specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects. USAID monitoring will be required throughout the period of performance to continually facilitate its funding with that of other donors and activities.

- Agency Authority to Immediately Halt a Construction Activity: The Agreement Officer reserves the right to halt construction activities under the award, if applicable.

4. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this program is 935.

5. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Recipient

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the Child and Youth Education Response Activity (CYERA) which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted.

USAID welcomes applications from organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

2. Cost Sharing

The applicant shall estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources, recommended at 25% of total cost, to be provided over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants shall also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting award.

Proposed cost sharing or matching funds should be committed taking into consideration guidelines as stated in 2 CFR 200.306.

[END OF SECTION C]

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SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Agency Point of Contact

This notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) can be found on the internet at: www.grants.gov.

a) Agreement Officer for The Award resulting from this NOFO:

Andre-Guy Soh
Agreement officer
Office of Acquisition and Assistance
USAID/DRC
E-mail Address: asoh@usaid.gov

b) Point of Contact for Questions while the NOFO is open:

Malu Boyenge
Office Acquisition and Assistance
USAID/DRC
E-mail: mboyenge@usaid.gov copying KinshasaProposals@usaid.gov

Questions should be submitted no later than the date and time indicated in the cover page of this NOFO, to provide sufficient time to address the questions and incorporate the questions and answers as an amendment to this NOFO.

Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant.

2. General Content and Form of Application

Applications will be reviewed for responsiveness, in accordance with the guidelines below and the merit review criteria defined in this NOFO. The applications submitted in response to this NOFO must be in English and presented in two separate documents: A Technical Application and Cost/Business Application. The technical application is the most important item of consideration and must be specific, complete and presented concisely. The content and format for each part of the Application is set forth below.

3. Technical Application Format and Content

The technical application must demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the expected purpose and results of this program and fully respond to the technical evaluation criteria.

a. Format

Below please find the required format for the Application. The Application must:

- Be written in English;
- Be written on 8½"x 11" size paper (210mm by 297mm paper) or A4 paper with at least 12-point Times New Roman font, with at least one-inch margins on the top, bottom, and both sides., and be legible;
- Be single-spaced with consecutively numbered pagination; and
- Not exceed the page limitations defined in the outline below. USAID will not consider pages beyond the stated page limitations.

The application must contain the following sections and must not exceed the below page limits, for a maximum of 28 pages excluding annexes:

- Cover Page (1 page);
- Executive Summary (2 pages);
- Technical Application Body (25 pages); and
- Required Annexes (numbered - e.g.: Annex 1 but no page limitation).
  - Documentation of partnerships with consortium members, sub-recipients or private sector entities. The documentation should indicate the roles and responsibilities of each organization/entity and certify the commitment and availability of each organization/entity to perform under the Activity (In line with the principles of the J2SR, exclusive partnering agreements are not allowed under this NOFO; all Congolese organizations who apply as subs are encouraged to partner with several prime applicants);
  - Management structure or organizational chart(s) showing staff positions, partners and lines of supervision;
  - Resumes & references for all key personnel (two pages per resume only) and signed letters of commitment; and
  - Past Performance Reference Sheets.

The following items are not included in this page limitation:

- Table of Contents
- Acronym list

b. Content

Cover page (maximum 1 page) must include:

- Solicitation No.;
- The program title;
- Applicant organization name;
- Applicant organization address;
- Type of organization (e.g., for-profit, nonprofit, university);
- DUNS (Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System) and EIN (Employer Identification Number) number for primary Applicant;

- Primary point of contact (i.e., lead contact name, title, telephone number, email);
- Name of all organizations that are members of the partnership (if applicable),
- Total budget estimate (i.e., direct, indirect costs and cost share, if applicable), and
- Approval signatures by appropriate officials of the primary Applicant.

If the Applicant includes data that it does not want disclosed to the public or used by the USG for any purpose other than for evaluation purposes, it should:

a) Mark the cover page with the following legend:

"This application includes data that must not be disclosed duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government's right to use the information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers}."

b) Mark each sheet of data that it wishes to restrict with the following:

"Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application."

The Applicant may include any other information or graphics on the cover page that it determines are beneficial.

4. **Executive Summary (maximum 2 pages)** must present a synopsis of the key elements of the technical application i.e. this summary shall allow technical reviewers to quickly understand the Applicant's Theory of Change and Investment Approach, highlighting the most salient features of the Applicants' approach in improving learning outcomes, proposed key personnel and management plan, and capabilities to accomplish the desired results. The Executive Summary must summarize the key elements of the applicant's Technical Application, including, but not limited to, the technical approach, and any public-private partnerships, if applicable.

5. **Technical Application Body (maximum 25 pages)**

   The purpose of this section is to provide the information necessary to allow USAID to fairly and completely evaluate the Applicant under each of the merit review criteria specified in this NOFO. The Technical Application Body must include the following sections:
   1. Technical Approach
   2. Implementation Plan
   3. Management Approach, including Management Plan and Staffing Plan,

and
4. Institutional Capacity

1) Technical Approach

The application must include a clear description of the technical approach and general strategy (i.e. activities, implementation, methodology and techniques) proposed to implement the Activity. The applicant must include realistic strategies and interventions in the technical approach, clearly linking issues and problems with achievable solutions and demonstrate a sound understanding of the conflict dynamics.

● The Applicant must include a program hypothesis that clearly explains the theory or theories of change that underlie the proposed programmatic approach. This theory of change should articulate the specific, measurable and achievable results that will follow from proposed interventions. The Application needs to clearly and logically explain the assumed connections between proposed interventions and sub-results, as well as the contributions the activity will make to cross-sectoral outcomes (e.g. resilience, stabilization, conflict reduction, or peacebuilding). The theory of change must also indicate how key contextual factors will affect the success of the program.

The Applicant must clearly lay out a strategy and a concrete, step by step plan for selecting and coaching 5 local organizations and graduating them to USAID direct recipients by year 3 of the activity. This plan shall be clear, specific, grounded in DRC reality and sequenced to allow for periodic checkpoints during which the Applicant will assess progress towards specific internal capacity and capability goals, reflect and course correct.

● The Applicant must describe in detail the set of interventions proposed, how they will be layered or sequenced in target communities, and the intensity/duration of interventions. The technical approach shall demonstrate the program's ability to respond to the education needs in each targeted province in order to achieve broad, equitable impact.

● The Applicant must set realistic and achievable targets for key results under this activity. The methodology for target setting shall be described in some detail and provide in an Annex (in Excel format) the breakdown of calculations that were used to set targets. Target calculations may include, but are not limited to, the following indicators:

○ Percent of supported learners with improved learning outcomes (disaggregated by specific learning outcomes)
○ Number of learners in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings reached with USG education assistance
○ Number of learning environments supported by USG assistance that have improved safety, according to locally defined criteria
○ Number of education responses deployed

- The Applicant must detail out the teaching and learning materials, textbooks, tools/toolkits or programmatic guides from education programs in the DRC that will be used. Explain how local or global learning assessment measures will be adapted and scaled for crisis-affected learners in the DRC in order to monitor activity outcomes.

- The Applicant must describe an appropriate monitoring and evaluation strategy that balances both the need for accountability with the desire to learn and apply adaptive management throughout the life of the activity. Applicants should make clear how the approach to MEL will inform the overall Technical Approach. The MEL strategy should include a clear articulation of key indicators (both outcome and context), complexity-aware monitoring strategies, and other learning and evaluation approaches that will be used to inform decision-making, support program quality, and accountability. The applicant should also outline opportunities for periodic evaluative and/or learning events to be held over the course of the activity, as well as any evaluation triggers deemed necessary.

2) Implementation Plan

The Applicant must describe the proposed implementation zones and implementation strategy/strategies. Define the provinces selected for follow-on implementation [after core implementation provinces (i.e., North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, Kasaï Central)] over the life of the activity with sufficient justification and the process for selecting sub-provincial implementation zones. The implementation strategy should describe how an appropriate mix of short- and medium- to long-term interventions will be deployed over the life of the activity. The implementation strategy must also describe in some detail how the Applicant will adapt to changes in context, reach new geographic areas, and/or pivot between the proposed implementation strategies. The implementation strategy should demonstrate a strong understanding of the conflict dynamics, gender dynamics and operating environment in the targeted provinces.

3) Management Approach

The Applicant must present a Management Approach that clearly describes how the proposed activities will be managed. The Management Approach must include a Management Plan and Staffing Plan. Due to the potentially varied scale and scope of approaches funded through this NOFO, applicants are encouraged to propose their unique mix of key personnel that responds to the needs of this activity, though all applicants must propose a Gender Advisor as key personnel.

- The Management Plan must:
    - Describe the management structure that will be put in place to ensure achievement of the program outcomes and proposed results, including ensuring equitable gender management practices.
    - Describe the roles, responsibilities and capacity of all partners working on the

activity, including international, national, local and government partners.

- The **Staffing Plan** must:

    - Describe the proposed Staffing Plan, including number and responsibilities for key personnel. The Staffing Plan must show sufficient human resources in the technical, monitoring and evaluation, managerial functions necessary for successful implementation. The Staffing Plan must demonstrate cost effectiveness, promote gender equality at all levels/functions, be conflict sensitive and demonstrate its capacity to recruit and deploy Congolese professionals and experts to serve on this activity.
    - Provide a cogent description of the roles and responsibilities of key personnel, professional technical staff, and advisors. The Staffing Plan shall articulate why selected key personnel roles are critical to the achievement of the activity results. and demonstrate individuals that have the requisite knowledge, skills, experience, and language ability to effectively deliver results. USAID requires that each applicant include a Gender Advisor as key personnel.
    - Include in an annex an organizational chart. The proposed organizational structure must provide clear lines of management, supervisory authority, and technical responsibility.
    - Include in an annex the curriculum vitae (limited to 2 pages per individual) for all key personnel proposed using a standard format and including professional references. The Applicant must also provide a written and signed letter of intention from each key personnel indicating his/her: (a) availability to serve in the stated position, in terms of the number of days after award; and (b) intention to serve for a specified duration. Applicants are strongly discouraged from requiring key personnel to sign exclusivity agreements.

4) Institutional Capacity

The Applicant must furnish evidence that it has, along with its proposed major partners (if any), the ability to efficiently plan, implement and monitor education activities in conflict settings or contexts similar to DRC. The Institutional Capacity must:

- Describe the operational and technical capacities that will be deployed to simultaneously respond to new crises while sustaining education programs that build resilience in areas of protracted crisis.
- Describe in some detail any capacities that will be developed or expanded to support education response in both acute crises and areas affected by recurrent crisis.
- Describe the capabilities for building local civil society operational and technical capacities and develop at least 5 or more strong local organizations and graduate them to direct recipients of USAID funding in outer years.

6. Cost Application Format

The Cost Application must be submitted separately from the Technical Application. While no page limit exists for the full cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The cost application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.

Prior to award, applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant's risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.205. Applicants should not submit any additional information with their initial application.

The Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):

a) Cover Page (See Section II.3(b) for requirements)

b) SF 424 Form(s)

The Applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the following SF-424 series forms found at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html:

- Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs, SF-424A
- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs, SF-424B

The instructions for each of these SF-424 forms can also be found at the above link.

c) Required Certifications and Assurances

The Applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with their application:

- "Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient" document found at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf
- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
- Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

d) Budget and Budget Narrative

The cost/business application should include a detailed budget narrative and justification that describes the total amount for implementation of the proposed activity. Please see the attached mandatory budget template to be submitted by the Applicant. The budget narrative should provide information regarding the basis of estimate for each line item, including reference to sources used to substantiate the cost estimate (e.g. the organization's relevant policies, payroll documents, vendor quotes, etc.).

Applicants have discretion in how to allocate budgeted resources between the Intermediate Results described in Section A (Activity Description), so long as sufficient resources are dedicated to achieving each Intermediate Result.

The Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:

- Summary Budget, inclusive of all program costs (federal and non-federal), broken out by major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the entire period of the program.

- Detailed Budget, including a breakdown by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

- Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the project.

The Detailed Budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

1) **Salaries and Allowances** – Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430 Compensation - Personal Services. The applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.

2) **Fringe Benefits** – (if applicable) If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate

approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant must propose a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the Budget Narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

3) **Travel and Transportation** – Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant's normal travel policies. When appropriate please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative.

4) **Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment & Supplies), Services, and Real Property** – Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The Budget Narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.

5) Subawards – Specify the budget for the portion of the program to be passed through to any subrecipients. See 2 CFR 200.330 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. The subrecipient budgets must align with the same requirements as the applicant's budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.

6) **Construction** – Construction will not exceed $500,000 per site and $1,000,000 total in construction assistance to a single entity, unless a 611(e) assessment on sustainability, operations and maintenance is completed, which is a pre-obligation requirement.

7) **Other Direct Costs** – This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.

8) **Indirect Costs** – Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200.414. The application must identify which

approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate methods:

Method 1 - Direct Charge Only
Eligibility: Any applicant
Initial Application Requirements: See above on direct costs

Method 2 - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)
Eligibility: Any applicant with a NICRA issued by a USG Agency must use that NICRA
Initial Application Requirements: If the applicant has a current NICRA, submit your approved NICRA and the associated disclosed practices. If your NICRA was issued by an Agency other than USAID, provide the contact information for the approving Agency. Additionally, at the Agency's discretion, a provisional rate may be set forth in the award subject to audit and finalization. See USAID's Indirect Cost Rate Guide for Non Profit Organizations for further guidance.

Method 3 - De minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)
Eligibility: Any applicant that has never received a NICRA
Initial Application Requirements: Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate an indirect rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The applicant must describe which cost elements it charges indirectly vs. directly. See 2 CFR 200.414(f) for further information.

Method 4 - Indirect Costs Charged as A Fixed Amount
Eligibility: Non-U.S. non-profit organizations without a NICRA may request, but approval is at the discretion of the AO

Initial Application Requirements: Provide the proposed fixed amount and a worksheet that includes the following:

- Total costs incurred by the organization for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year.
- Indirect costs (common costs that benefit the day-to-day operations of the organization, including categories such as salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting, or that benefit and are identifiable to more than one program or activity, such as depreciation, rental costs, operations and maintenance of facilities, and telephone expenses) for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year

- Proposed method for prorating the indirect costs equitably and consistently across all programs and activities of using a base that measures the benefits of that particular cost to each program or activity to which the cost applies.
  If the applicant does not have an approved NICRA and does not elect to utilize the 10% de minimis rate, the Agreement Officer will provide further instructions and may request additional supporting information, including financial statements and audits, should the application still be under consideration after the merit review. USAID is under no obligation to approve the applicant's requested method.

   1) **Cost Sharing** – The applicant identifies 25% cost-sharing over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting award.

e) Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407

Inclusion of an item of cost in the detailed application budget does not satisfy any requirements for prior approval by the Agency. If the applicant would like the award to reflect approval of any cost elements for which prior written approval is specifically required for allowability, the applicant must specify and justify the cost. See 2 CFR 200.407 for information regarding which cost elements require prior written approval.

f) Approval of Subawards

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization
- DUNS Number
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security Designation list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient in accordance with 2 CFR 200.331(b)
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation

g) DUNS and Broadstreet and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (DUNS number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid DUNS number for the applicant and all proposed subrecipients;
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient (https://www.sam.gov);
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application of plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

DUNS number: http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform

SAM Registration: https://www.sam.gov

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on https://www.sam.gov , navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

h) History of Performance

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, in a similar cost range, not to exceed five years as follows:

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;

- A brief description of the activity;
- Period of Performance;
- Award Amount;
- Reports and findings from any audits performed in the last five years; and,
- Name of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information including telephone numbers, and email address for each proposed individual.

If the applicant encountered problems on any of the referenced Awards, it may provide a short explanation and corrective action taken. The applicant should not provide general information on its performance. USAID reserves the right to obtain relevant information concerning an applicant's history of performance from any sources and may consider such information in its review of the applicant's risk. The Agency may request additional information and conduct a pre-award survey if it determines that it is necessary to inform the risk assessment.

i) Branding Strategy and Marking Plan

The apparently successful applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer and incorporated into any resulting award.

j) Funding Restrictions

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.330 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not exceed $500,000 per site and $1,000,000 total in construction assistance to a single entity, unless a 611(e) assessment on sustainability, operations and maintenance is completed, which is a pre-obligation requirement.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer.

Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.4 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

k) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term

i) Personal Conflict of Interest

1) An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.
2) The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

ii) Organizational Conflict of Interest

The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.

7. Funding Restrictions

- Construction will not exceed $500,000 per site and $1,000,000 total in construction assistance to a single entity, unless a 611(e) assessment on sustainability, operations and maintenance is completed, which is a pre-obligation requirement. Rehabilitation or retrofitting of existing school infrastructure is allowable. When rehabilitation or retrofitting of existing school infrastructure is conducted under this award, the recipient shall request prior authorization from the Agreement Officer keeping into consideration guidance related to Environmental Compliance as mentioned in Section F. Federal Award Information, Subsection 4. Environmental Compliance of this NOFO.
- Development or validation of new teaching and learning materials (textbooks, teacher instructional manuals, supplemental reading materials, teacher training guides, etc.) will not be allowed under this activity. Only reproduction or printing of existing education materials will be allowable and reimbursable.

8. **Branding and Marking Plan**
Applicants are not required to submit a Branding and Marking plan with their applications.

However, Applicants are requested to note that in accordance with 2 CFR 700.16 USAID will require the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan prior to award. The Marking Plan may include a request for approval of one or more exceptions to the marking requirements in 2 CFR 700.16 The AO evaluates the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (including any requests for exceptions) for approval consistent with the regulations contained in ADS 303 , 2 CFR 700.16, and ADS 320.

It is a Federal statutory and regulatory requirement (see Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended and 2 CFR 700.16) that all overseas programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under an assistance award or sub-award must be appropriately marked with the USAID identity. Under 2 CFR 700.16, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan by the "apparently successful Applicant." The apparently successful Applicant's proposed Marking Plan may include a request for approval of one or more exceptions to the marking requirements in 2 CFR 700.16.

The apparently successful Applicant will develop a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to ensure the program and publicity materials clearly communicate that assistance from the U.S Government is made possible by the generous support of the American people. Successful recipients will agree to follow the branding strategy and marking policies established for assistance awards under ADS Chapters 303 and 320. The details of these policies and the official USAID Graphic Standards Manual, which includes guidelines on proper logo use and positioning, verbal branding and attribution, and co-branding with implementing partner logos can be found on the USAID website at www.usaid.gov/branding . Adhering to these guidelines in the ADS and the Graphic Standards Manual are compulsory for all USAID funded program and communications materials.

USAID will notify the apparently successful Applicant for the draft Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. The approved Branding Strategy and Marking Plan will be attached with the award.

If the Administrator has provided a written determination for use of an additional or substitute logo or seal and tagline representing a presidential initiative or other high level interagency federal initiative, identify the alternate branding and marking standards to be used in the award see 2 CFR 700.16 or, for non-U.S. organizations, see the provision entitled “Marking and Public Communications Under USAID-Funded Assistance.”

USAID reviews and approves the apparently successful Applicant’s Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (including any requests for exceptions), consistent with the provisions “Branding Strategy”, “Marking Plan,” contained in the Certifications, Assurances, Other Statement of the Recipient and Solicitation Standard Provisions, and “Marking and Public Communications Under USAID-funded Assistance” contained in ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients; and ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations; 2 CFR 700.16; and ADS 320, Branding and Marking.
In contrast to “exceptions” to marking requirements, waivers to these requirements based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by the cognizant Mission Director or other USAID principal officer [see 2 CFR 700.16(5)].

Any questions about the applicability of either the Standard Provisions or 2 CFR 700.16 may be directed to General Counsel/Acquisition & Assistance (GC/A&A) or USAID’s Senior Advisor on Brand Management.

9. Past Performance

This section should include information sufficient to properly evaluate the application under the past performance criterion set forth in Section III.3.4 Institutional capacity. Specifically, the Applicant should discuss its capability and experience and also that of any major sub-recipients, their relevant capabilities and experience in implementing activities involving the program areas set forth in the Program Description, as well as experience in managing activities of similar size and complexity and in working with and collaborating with external partners. Past performance information should relate to the specific technical nature of the activity. The Applicant shall provide detailed past performance information, which should include up to three (3) relevant Awards (Contracts, Grants and Cooperative Agreements) performed within the last five (5) years that are similar in size, scope and expected results to what is contained in the Program Description. These should be provided in Annex.

At minimum, the list should include for each referenced Award:

Past Performance Information (PPI) (To be completed by the Applicant)
1. Award Number:
2. Contractor/Recipient (Name and Address):
3. Type of Award:
4. Complexity of Work: ___________Difficult ___________Routine
5. Description, location, and relevancy of work:
6. Dollar Value of Work:
7. Date of Award: Award Completion Date (including extensions): _____
8. Status: ___________Active ___________Completed
9. Type and Extent of Subawards:
10. Name, Address, Telephone Number, and E-mail Address of the Awarding Contracting/Agreement Officer and/or the Contracting/Agreement Officer's Representative:

11. Names of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information:

If the Applicant encountered problems on any of the referenced awards, they may provide a short explanation and corrective action taken. Applicant shall not provide general information on their performance.

[END OF SECTION D]

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SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Technical applications will be evaluated by a Merit committee using the adjectival criteria shown in this section. The selection criteria below are presented by major category, so Applicants know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of applications.

“Technical Approach” and “Implementation Plan” are of most importance and of equal weight. Both are more important than “Management Approach” and “Institutional Capacity.”

Application should contain the Applicant’s best terms from both technical and cost standpoints. USAID reserves the right, but is not under obligation, to enter into discussions with one or more Applicants to obtain clarifications, additional details, or to suggest refinements in the proposed program description, budget, or other aspects of an application, if doing so is determined to be in the best interests of the U.S. Government.

The cost/business application will be evaluated by the Agreement Officer/Agreement Specialist with a cost effectiveness and realism analysis. The Agreement Officer will make the final selection.

1. **Technical Approach**
   The technical approach will be evaluated on the overall extent to which the proposed technical approach convincingly demonstrates the likelihood of successful implementation. This includes:

   - **Technical Soundness:** The degree to which the technical approach convincingly presents a logical, conflict-sensitive, evidence-based, and integrated theory of change for achieving results;
   - **Technical Clarity:** The description of the proposed interventions and how they will rolled-out (sequenced) to communities.
   - **Potential for Impact:** The degree to which the proposed program demonstrates the ability to articulate connections between interventions and sub-results to achieve maximum impact, through intensity and duration, for activity beneficiaries;
   - **Coordination:** The degree to which the proposed approach leverages USAID and other donor investments (e.g., TLMs, toolkits, etc.) to achieve the activity results**,** and applies the lessons learned from past investments in education in DRC; and,
   - **Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Strategy:** The degree to which the monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy is appropriate and feasible given the proposed technical approach and implementation plan.
   - **The degree to which the applicant’s proposed strategy to select and successfully train, mentor, coach and build the capacity of 5 local**

organizations to become direct USAID recipient is realistic, well-researched and clearly identifies/outlines risks and possible mitigation measures.

2. **Implementation Plan**

   The implementation approach will be evaluated on the extent to which it convincingly demonstrates the Applicant's ability to successfully implement this activity. This includes:
   - Clarity of identification of the proposed implementation zones and associated strategies, as well as justification for these decisions;
   - Appropriateness, soundness, and sustainability (as applicable) of the proposed mix of short-, medium-, and long-term interventions;
   - Approach to adaptability to change and pivot in response to the context, including geographic expansion; and,
   - Demonstrated understanding of the conflict dynamics, gender situation, and other operating environment norms.

3. **Management Approach**

   The management approach will be evaluated for its overall quality, including how it reflects a realistic and reinforced (but not overburdened) strategy that underpins the technical approach so that this activity has the best likelihood of achieving the intended results. This includes:
   - Overall cohesiveness and strength of the Management Plan and the associated organizational chart which illustrates the complementary value of each partner and the adequacy of institutional (partner) technical and logistical resources
   - Clarity and efficiency of partner make-up, including key roles, responsibilities, and capacity of all partners, including local NGOs and civil society organizations;
   - Solidity in the description of the roles and responsibilities of key personnel and technical staff and advisors;
   - Relevance of the roles of selected and the unique mix of key personnel and technical advisors to the achievement of the activity results
   - The strength of the proposed Gender Advisor;
   - Provision of clear organizational structure, including supervisory authority, and technical responsibility.

4. **Institutional Capacity**

   Institutional capacity will be evaluated on the existing capacity of the Applicant and its partners as demonstrated by its actual experience in providing similar programs and activities. This includes specifically:

- Demonstrated experience in the technical areas set forth in the Program Description, including the operational and technical capacities that will be deployed to simultaneously respond to new crises while sustaining education programs that build resilience in areas of protracted crisis;
- The description of any capacities that will be developed or expanded to support education response in both acute crises and areas affected by recurrent crisis;
- The soundness of the proposed interventions to improve and build the capabilities of civil society operational and technical capacities, as well as the sustainability and long-term impacts of this capacity development.

5. Business Review

The Agency will evaluate the cost application of the applicant(s) under consideration for an award as a result of the merit criteria review to determine whether the costs are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

The Agency will also consider (1) the extent of the applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested; (2) whether the applicant's plans will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency; and (3) whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

Proposed cost share, if provided, will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

The AO will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.205). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.207).

[END OF SECTION E]

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SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award.

2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements

For further information on how the award will be administered, please see the applicable provisions:

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations.

For US organizations: ADS 303, 2 CFR 700, 2 CFR 200, and Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental organizations are applicable, and found via the following link: https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa

For Non-US organizations: Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations, the prevailing Standard Provisions consists of ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-US. Non-governmental Organizations: https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab

3. Reporting Requirements

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.327: "Unless otherwise approved by OMB, the Federal awarding agency may solicit only the standard, OMB-approved government-wide data elements for collection of financial information (at the time of publication the Federal Financial Report or such future collections as may be approved by OMB and listed on the OMB Website).

This information must be collected with the frequency required by the terms and conditions of the Federal award, but no less frequently than annually nor more frequently than quarterly except in unusual circumstances, for example where more frequent reporting is necessary for the effective monitoring of the Federal award or could significantly affect program outcomes, and preferably in coordination with performance reporting."

Financial Reporting:

Financial reports will be due on a quarterly basis and will include budget versus the actual expenditures, along with a brief analysis of any variance. Reporting periods will coincide with the USAID/DRC fiscal year quarters, with reports due no later than forty-five (45) days after the end of each quarter, i.e. due dates on February 15th, May 15th, August 15th and November 15th.

a. The recipient(s) must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) on a quarterly basis via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (https://pms.psc.gov/). The recipient(s) must submit a copy of the Federal Financial Report (FFR) SF-425 at the same time to the Agreement Officer (AO) and the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR). Financial Reports shall be in keeping with 2 CFR 200.327. The Recipient(s) must also submit an electronic copy of the quarterly and final reports to the Controller, USAID/DRC/OFM, at KinshasaOFM@usaid.gov.

b. The recipient(s) must also submit an electronic copy of all final financial reports to USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMP/LOC Unit, Agreement Officer, and the AOR. The recipient must submit an electronic version of the final Federal Financial Report (SF-425) to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with paragraph (a) above. (Such the reporting requirements serve in liquidating payments). The SF 425 form and instructions are available on the www.grants.gov. website.

c. As part of their Quarterly Performance Reports, the recipient must submit, as an Annex, a Quarterly Financial Report that includes actual expenditures through that quarter, as well as projected expenditures for the coming quarter(s) of the Fiscal Year.

<u>Performance Reporting</u>:

The Recipient shall submit an electronic copy of the following reports in English to the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) for approval:

a. Annual Implementation Plans and Budgets

Annual implementation plans will identify a logical sequence of steps to be undertaken to implement each program component and must include an associated timetable. The Recipient may not include activities in the annual implementation plan that fall outside the parameters of the program description. The Recipient's annual implementation plan will describe how the Recipient intends to organize the upcoming fiscal year's work including setting activity priorities and how the Recipient will organize responsibilities amongst Recipient staff to ensure accomplishment of the tasks. The annual implementation plan should include a notional (quarterly) outline for subsequent years that reflects phasing in and timing of major tasks and activities. The Applicant should include how they will build on the success of previous activities as well as coordinate or leverage other partners' interventions, the USAID-funded activities noted as priorities in Section 1.8 of the Program Description.

- <u>Illustrative Year 1 Implementation Plan</u>: An Illustrative Year 1 Implementation Plan will be submitted as an annex to the Technical Application. A revised Year 1 Implementation Plan is due 30 days after award. USAID will provide written comments to the Recipient after award. Should the Year 1 Implementation Plan require further revision, the Recipient will revise and submit the revised implementation plan no later than 15 days after receipt of comments. If acceptable, the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will provide a written approval of the final Year 1 Implementation Plan to the Recipient. Failure to have an approved annual implementation plan in place may be viewed as a failure to comply with essential terms and conditions of the award. Significant revisions to the approved implementation plan will require the additional written approval of the AOR (and may require a revision to the approved AMELP).

  The Year 1 Implementation Plan should include, at a minimum:
  - A systematic presentation (i.e., Gantt chart) of activities to be accomplished under the different components and subcomponents, on a monthly basis, including the inception phase-related activities;
  - The proposed location of the activity;
  - Beneficiary selection;
  - The anticipated outputs and outcomes from each activity conducted;
  - The anticipated level of effort required from program staff and financial resources required to complete the tasks in the form of a budgetary forecast;
  - The identification of any assumptions used in preparing the implementation plan, as well as suggested alternatives if necessary;
  - The anticipated risks with regard to achieving the anticipated objectives of the program and how they will be mitigated; and
  - Any specific award terms or conditions that interfere with maximizing the developmental impact of the award.

- <u>Annual Implementation Plans</u>: Subsequent annual implementation plans will cover each fiscal year (October 1 – September 30) and are due no later than 30 days before the beginning of each USG fiscal year (October 1), to ensure that the new annual implementation plan will be in place prior to commencement of the new fiscal year. These plans will follow the same format as the initial Year 1 Implementation Plan and should also include an updated AMELP, if appropriate. The subsequent annual implementation plan shall include program adjustments reflecting lessons learned from prior year implementation.

- <u>Monthly Schedule of Activities</u>: This aims at bringing the Mission and other stakeholders up to date on planned activities on a monthly basis. The monthly schedule of activities shall be submitted to USAID, in English and French, no later than 10 days prior to the start of the month covered by that monthly schedule.

● <u>Modifications Based on Security, Coordination, and Collaborative Learning</u>: Note that the Applicant might need to modify work plans from time to time based on coordination and collaborative learning efforts described in Section 1 (Program Description) and due to changes in the security situation. These modifications shall be determined in collaboration with the AOR.

b. Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP)

● The Recipient is required to have an AMELP capable of tracking and documenting progress against activity components. The AMELP should cover the entire life cycle from the award date through the estimated completion date and may be adjusted based on any changes in planned activities. The AMELP should reflect the award progress over the life of the activity and it is considered a critical tool for planning, managing, documenting, and evaluating performance. The AMELP should be reviewed and validated annually and revised if appropriate.

● An Illustrative AMELP will be submitted as an annex to the Technical Application. The revised AMELP is due no later than 90 days after the effective date of this award. USAID will provide written comments to the Recipient after award. Should the AMELP require further revision, the Recipient will revise and submit the revised AMELP no later than 15 days after receipt of comments. If acceptable, the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will provide a written approval of the final AMELP to the Recipient. Failure to have an approved AMELP in place may be viewed as a failure to comply with essential terms and conditions of the award.

At a minimum, the finalized AMELP will include:

1. A Program Briefer with the introduction of the program goal, theory of change, planned results, and contents of the AMELP document;
2. A Results Framework (RF) and simplified Foreign Assistance Framework that reflect the objectives described in the award;
3. The performance indicators that will be used to assess progress towards the Program goals and intermediate results;
4. The methodology and plan for data collection, review, analysis, reporting and internal control system, and the parties responsible for data collection and analysis.
5. An indicator tracking table that includes all indicators with targets for various fiscal years, sex disaggregation, and baseline data or the plan and timeline for gathering the baseline data;
6. Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) for all indicators;
7. The estimated cost associated with implementing the

AMELP;

8. A Data Quality Assessment (DQA) plan and procedures;
9. A Learning and Evaluation Plan and how the findings will be used to inform program implementation; and
10. A description of how gender considerations will be integrated into program implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

c. Quarterly and Annual Reports

- The Recipient will submit Quarterly Reports to USAID to reflect progress and activities of the preceding quarter. These performance reports will describe the tasks completed in the last quarter relative to what was anticipated by the approved implementation plan and will assess overall impact to date relative to the performance indicator targets.

- The quarterly reports will highlight any issues or problems affecting the schedule or impact of services provided by the Recipient. All data and output reporting will disaggregate data according to USAID regulations, including by gender and geographic location. Quarterly performance reports will present progress on all activities and will include the following information, at a minimum:

1. Brief outline of purpose and approach;
2. Status of progress towards objectives (summary narrative);
3. Status of overall progress per the approved Results Framework and the indicators as defined in the AMELP, and including reasons why established targets were not met or exceeded, if appropriate;
4. Summary of completed activities and progress towards results under this award during the timeframe of the report;
5. Explanation of quantifiable outputs of the tasks, if appropriate and applicable;
6. Description of key learning and/or evaluation activities undertaken, and how they have been shared and/or incorporated into program activities;
7. Identification of problems, delays or adverse conditions that impair the ability to meet the objectives of the award, including action(s) taken or contemplated by the Recipient, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation;
8. Description of any short-term consultants' progress and observations, identifying any significant issues, and a description of follow-on activities;
9. List of key reports/deliverables completed in the reporting period (to be included as annexes to the Quarterly Report);
10. List of major activities planned for the next quarter;
11. Programed USAID approvals, waivers or deviation requests anticipated during the next quarter;

12. A Quarterly Financial Report summarizing expenditures through that quarter, and including projected financial expenditures for the quarter(s) through the end of the Fiscal Year;
13. The status of required audit processes including for sub-awardees, if applicable;
14. The use of Small and Disadvantaged Business relative to the target identified, if applicable;
15. Reporting required by USAID/DRC toward Agency key issues, indicators, and the Mission Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS); and
16. Success stories and high-resolution photographs of program activities.

- There will be four Quarterly Reports due each year. The reports will be due no later than December 31, March 31, June 30, and September 30 of each year.

- USAID encourages the Recipient to provide high-resolution photographs, maps, and other graphics that can support the Agency's outreach to the U.S. Government and other stakeholders.

- The Annual Report will cover all the items included in the quarterly reports, with a focus on results over the entire award fiscal year. The Annual Report will be used by USAID to assess the status of the activity in relation to the time remaining for performance. Each Annual Report will include an assessment as to whether the objective of the award will be accomplished within the remaining time and available resources. The Recipient must submit Annual Reports in lieu of the 4th quarterly report each year to the AOR and to the Agreement Officer. The Annual Report must be submitted no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year other than the last year of contract performance, when the final report will be submitted.

d. Security Plan

- The Recipient must submit an annual security plan to the Agreement Office. The Security Plan is due 30 days after award. Should the Security Plan require further revision, the Recipient will revise and submit the revised Security Plan no later than 15 days after receipt of comments. Subsequent annual Security Plans must be submitted no later than 30 days after the end of each fiscal year.

e. Demobilization Plan

- The Demobilization Plan will include, at a minimum, an illustrative Property Disposition Plan addressing all requirements under contractual and local law for the transfer of property; a plan for the phase out of the award's operations; a delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the award; and a timeline for completing all required actions in the Demobilization Plan, including the submission date of the final Property Disposition Plan to the Agreement Officer.

- Both the illustrative and final Property Disposition Plans must include the inventory schedule required by 2 CFR 200.313, a plan for the disposition of property to eligible parties and a timeline for the disposition of such property. In addition, the Recipient will describe how all required prime and sub-award audits will be conducted after the demobilization of the Recipient. The Demobilization Plan must be approved in writing by the AOR and the Agreement Officer.

- The Plan is due not less than four months prior to the completion date of the award; the Recipient must submit a Demobilization Plan.

f. Program Final Reports

- The Final Report will provide a summary description of all work performed under the award and a substantive discussion of results achieved (as measured by performance indicator). The Final Report should include the final status of each component objective, the status of indicators relative to the established targets, lessons learned, ways to resolve any constraints identified, any opportunities for further refinement, enhancement, logical extension, or expansion of the completed work and how it fits into USAID's strategic objectives, any perceived problems, vulnerabilities, or weaknesses in the assistance provided, with recommendations for addressing the identified weaknesses, and a summary of lessons learned, and any particularly important success stories. The final report must also contain an index of all reports and informational products produced under this program.

- Along with the Final Report, a CD-ROM depository must be submitted, containing all written documents, reports and presentations. The depository must be organized in a user-friendly and searchable manner.

- The Final Report is due no later than 90 calendar days after the completion date of this award.

4. Environmental Compliance

The following details how the USAID will ensure environmental soundness and compliance in design and implementation in accordance with the 22 CFR 216’s determination (https://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/22cfr216).

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID’s activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include

environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs.
This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS), Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/200.pdf), which in part require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities.

The recipient(s)'s environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs:

- No activity funded under an agreement will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). Hereinafter, such documents are described as "approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation."

- In addition, the recipient(s) must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

- If USAID determines under the IEE that Negative Determination with Conditions applies to one or more of the proposed activities, this indicates that if these are implemented subject to the specified conditions, they are expected to have no significant adverse effect on the environment. The recipient(s) shall be responsible for implementing all IEE conditions pertaining to activities to be funded under this Agreement.

- As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the implementing partner in collaboration with the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

- If the recipient(s) plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

- Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

Unless the approved Regulation 216 documentation contains a complete environmental mitigation and monitoring plan (EMMP) or a project mitigation and monitoring (M&M) plan, the recipient(s) shall prepare an EMMP or M&M Plan describing how the Recipient(s) will, in specific terms, implement all IEE and/or EA conditions that apply to proposed project activities within the scope of the award. The EMMP or M&M Plan shall include monitoring the implementation of the conditions and their effectiveness.

- Integrate a completed EMMP or M&M Plan into subsequent Annual Work Plans into the initial work plan.

- Integrate an EMMP or M&M Plan into subsequent Annual Work Plans, making any necessary adjustments to activity implementation in order to minimize adverse impacts to the environment.

[END OF SECTION F]

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SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

The contact information, names and addresses of point of contacts, for this NOFO is as follows:

1. **Agreement Officer for the Award(s) resulting from this NOFO:**

   Andre-Guy Soh
   Agreement officer
   Office of Acquisition and Assistance
   USAID/DRC
   E-mail Address: asoh@usaid.gov

2. **Point of Contact for Questions while the NOFO is open:**

   Malu Boyenge
   Office Acquisition and Assistance
   USAID/DRC
   E-mail: mboyenge@usaid.gov copying KinshasaProposals@usaid.gov

[END OF SECTION G]

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SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

Applications with Proprietary Data

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

“This application includes data that must not be disclosed duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government’s right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers}.”

Additionally, the Applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

“Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application.”

[Guidance: Insert any other relevant information such as related programs or other upcoming or ongoing funding opportunities, links to applicable regulations & references, annexes, VAT Guidance.]

[END OF SECTION H]

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ANNEX 1 - ABREVIATIONS AND ACCROYNMS

Accronynms

ACCELERE!1:	Accès, Lecture, Rétention et Redevabilité - Activité 1
ADS:	Automated Directives System
ALP:	Accelerated Learning Program
AMELP:	Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan
AO:	Agreement Officer
AOR:	Agreement Officer Representative
CAP:	*Centres d'apprentissage professionnel*
CBO:	Community based organization
CDCS:	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CRS:	*Centres de rattrapage scolaire*
CSO:	Civil society organization
CYERA:	Child and Youth Education Response Activity
DEC:	USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse
DFID:	Department for International Development (UK)
DO:	Development Objective
DQA:	Data Quality Assessment
DRC:	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DUNS:	Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System
EGMA:	Early Grade Mathematics Assessment
EGRA:	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EIN:	Employer Identification Number
FFP:	Food For Peace
FtF:	Feed the Future
GBV:	Gender-based violence
GC/A&A:	General Counsel/Acquisition & Assistance
GDRC:	Government of the DRC
GLOW:	Girls Leading Our World
HHG:	Household grant
HoGY:	Household Grants for Youth
IDP:	Internally displaced person
INEE:	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IR:	Intermediate Result
IYDA:	Integrated Youth Development Activity
JENA:	Joint Education Needs Assessment
MEL:	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NOFO:	Notice of Funding Opportunity

OAA:	Office of Acquisition and Assistance
OFDA:	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
OMB:	Office of Management and Budget
OPEQ:	Opportunities for Equitable Access to Quality Education
OU:	Operating Unit
PAQUED:	Projet d’Amélioration de la Qualité de l’Education
PIRS:	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
RERA:	Rapid Education and Risk Analysis
RF:	Result Framework
SEL:	Social Emotional Learning
SKVC:	Strengthening Kivu Value Chain
TIP:	Trafficking in Person
TLM:	teaching learning material
TO3:	Transition Objective 3
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
USG:	United States Government