



SUBJECT: Annual Program Statement # 72066020APS00002

This updates the questions and answers for this APS.

Funding Opportunity Title:

Foundational Literacy for Improved Educational Resilience (FLIER)

Issuing Office:

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Sincerely,

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**APS # 72066020APS00002, Foundational Literacy for Improved
Educational Resilience (FLIER)
Questions and Answers**

The updated questions and answers to this Annual Program Statement 72066020APS00002 are below:

#	Questions	APS Page	USAID Responses
1	<p>Page 18 of the APS reads “All eligible interested organizations or companies are restricted to submitting only one Concept Note as the Prime Applicant.” However, the first frequently asked question on page 34 indicates that an organization can submit more than one Concept Paper in response to this APS. Can USAID please clarify?</p>	18	FAQ is updated in amendment 01.
2	<p>Can Applicants submit a concept paper as a prime and be on a separate Applicant’s concept paper as a sub?</p>		Yes
3	<p>How many awards does USAID intend to make under this APS?</p>		Multiple awards or none. The exact number is unknown
4	<p>Page 16 refers to the Global Development Alliance (GDA) Annual Program Statement, can USAID please clarify how the GDA APS is related to the FLIER APS?</p>	16	This reference is deleted in Amendment 01
5	<p>Is USAID envisioning applications from individual Implementing Partners or is USAID open to applications from a consortium of Implementing Partners?</p>		A consortium is welcome; please note that only one offeror will be the prime awardee, responsible for overall management and communication with USAID. They will be the award recipient.
6	<p>Will USAID restructure Implementing Partner consortiums of successful concept papers after the concept paper stage?</p>		USAID will assist potential partners in meeting one another if that is desired.
7	<p>Can USAID please specify by what time concept papers will be due?</p>		9 am EST

8	<p>On page 15 of the APS, Figure 1 states “if desired, consult with Mission technical office regarding proposed concept”.</p> <p>a. Will the mission technical office be available to consult on proposed concepts with all interested Applicants?</p> <p>b. How should such consultations be set up?</p>	15	Yes. After concept papers
9	<p>If USAID anticipates making multiple awards to serve the various principles/elements, how does USAID anticipate the management and coordination/synergy of multiple Implementing Partners operating in the same geographic area with the same targets?</p>		<p>USAID will ensure coordination, including by 1) adding specific contract language holding partners responsible for coordination; 2) holding quarterly partners’ workshops on-site; 3) and empowering one of the partners to facilitate the provincial education (PROVED) authority’s quarterly meeting on USAID education activities, which USAID will attend.</p> <p>Note that not every principle or element in Table 1 necessarily needs to be addressed through the life of this APS.</p>
10	<p>Does USAID anticipate awarding CYERA before the first round of FLIER concept papers?</p>		Yes
11	<p>Should Applicants take into consider a possible CYERA project when designing their proposed activities?</p>		It is up to the applicant to propose what they feel is the best approach.
12	<p>Is there a certain amount of an established partners award that should be allocated for new or underutilized partners?</p>		No.
13	<p>Is the \$4M crisis modifier in addition to the \$38M funding available? That is, if the proposed project has a budget of \$10M, would the total award with crisis modifier be \$14M?</p>		Yes.
14	<p>Will USAID provide comments on the concept paper summary budget if the concept paper is conditionally accepted?</p>		Yes.

15	<p>In the APS on page 12, it states “USAID anticipates the use of the available, USAID-sponsored materials from current and past activities, including those from Accelere 1! for reading instruction in the East of the country (Ituri, South Kivu and Tanganyika), the use of the available Ciluba material in Équateur, and the use of the available Lingala material in a small number of schools on the outskirts of Kinshasa.” Given the language in education policy, it is our understanding that Lingala materials should be used in Équateur rather than Ciluba materials. Can USIAD confirm our understanding?</p>	12	<p>Yes, unless there is a specific Ciluba-speaking language group in Equateur you propose targeting.</p>
16	<p>The APS on page 13 reads, “Applicants are encouraged to consider cost-effective means of reinforcing these skills as part of the FLIER activity’s interventions under sub IR 3.1, (“Language bridging programs for minority language using children implemented).” Can USAID please share the IRs and sub IRs of the FLIER activity?</p>	13	<p>All references to a results framework are deleted in Amendment 1.</p>
17	<p>On page 8 and page 9 of the APS, there are references to a FLIER results framework. Can USAID please share the FLIER results framework?</p>	8, 9	<p>All references to a results framework are deleted in Amendment 1.</p>
18	<p>With the multiple rounds of concept paper submissions and the ability for Applicants to address any number of principles/elements, how will USAID ensure full program coverage and cost efficiency?</p>		<p>Full program coverage is not required.</p> <p>Also, during co-design, USAID and its partners will collaborate to address program coverage and cost efficiency.</p>

19	On page 9, under the “Drive decision-making and investments using evidence and data” key programming principle, there is a reference to modifiers described in section 1.13 of the program description. Can USAID please identify section 1.13?	9	The reference should be to Section VI, Crisis Modifiers, page 13.
20	Must proposals plan to reach all the targeted geographic zones or would USAID consider concept papers that target 1-2 of the zones in order to achieve depth of service delivery?		USAID is interested in the best approach the partner can make, no matter the number of zones the partner proposes.
21	If multiple Applicants receive a concept paper pass, will all Applicants participate in co-design with USAID together or on a one-on-one basis between an Applicant and USAID?		USAID will determine this based on the content of the concept papers and if it makes sense for certain organizations to collaborate.
22	Should there be successful concept papers at each round, will co-design happen after each round?		Yes.
23	On page 15 of the APS, Figure 1 states “Co-design based on USAID DRC’s questions and comments for restructuring”. What will be USAID’s process for providing comments on restructuring?	15	USAID will contact successful applicants individually, where necessary and appropriate.
24	Will USAID make awards between concept paper rounds? If yes, will this decrease funding available for subsequent rounds?		Yes and Yes.
25	Are Applicants who submit concept papers at the third round at a disadvantage due to other Applicants moving forward in the process who are address the same elements/principles?		Yes, if an applicant’s specific idea, approach, and specific geographic area has already been proposed.

26	<p>Page 19 states that USAID/DRC will accept applications in which “the Resource Partner/leveraging is embedded in the Implementing Partner’s application.” Would a scenario in which the Implementing Partner intends to generate private sector funds as part of their approach, but does not have a specific Resource Partner identified, meet this requirement?</p>	19	<p>That scenario would call into question the realism of the planned approach, thus putting the concept into a less desirable category of acceptance. However, it is not infeasible that that would disqualify the applicant.</p>
27	<p>Page 18 references 1:1 leveraging. However, Section II. Cost Sharing or Matching does not include a specific required percentage or amount. Can USAID please specify the required percentage or amount?</p>	18	<p>Applicants are encouraged to propose a cost-share percentage, which will influence the desirable category of acceptance. USAID has removed the reference to a 1:1 leverage in Amendment One.</p>
28	<p>Can USAID please clarify how cost sharing, cost matching, and leveraging are defined in the context of this APS?</p>		<p>Applicants are encouraged to propose a cost-share percentage, which will influence the desirable category of acceptance. USAID has removed the reference to a 1:1 leverage in Amendment One.</p>
29	<p>What reporting and tracking requirements will be attached to leveraged funds?</p>		<p>The successful applicant has the responsibility for maintaining its Memorandum of Understanding with its Partners; tracking contributions received from the Partners; and regularly reporting back to USAID on such contributions and the leverage amount</p>
30	<p>Will leveraged funding be binding or auditable?</p>		<p>Cost Share is auditable. Leverage is not. See ADS 303.3.10 and 303.3.27 for more information.</p>
31	<p>Can leverage be in the form of in-kind resources, including but not limited to technical expertise, goods and services, market access and related investments?</p>		<p>Yes.</p>

32	<p>Geographic coverage 1: It is stipulated in the FLIER documentation that “depth of service delivery will be preferred over breadth of geographic coverage,” yet the percentages of beneficiaries are rather equally split between the different pre-identified target areas. Does that mean that one partner is expected to cover all the mentioned geographic locations, or is that the percentage is rather</p>		<p>See answers to questions 18 & 20. In short, one partner is not required to cover all the mentioned geographic areas.</p>
33	<p>Geographic coverage 2: Since the document mentions “<u>selected</u> marginalised and underserved zones in Ituri, South Kivu, Equateur Province et Kinshasa,” shall we expect more precision on the specific zones to be targeted or would it be up to the applicants to select the zones and justify their selection according to the criteria listed in the call?</p>		<p>Applicants are encouraged to specify zones that match their technical approach and their team’s expertise.</p>
34	<p>Type of applicant 1: Would a consortium of partners (INGOs, local NGOs, private entities) be a strongly encouraged modality?</p>		<p>Consortium of partners are welcome, and the technical merits of the applications are critically important.</p>
35	<p>Type of applicant 2: Does the stipulated condition of “not having receiving any funding from USAID as a prime partner over the last five years to qualify as a new partner” apply to individual country program offices of an organization or to an organization as whole? I.e. if People in Need received USAID funding for their mission in Syria, would it mean that People in Need DRC is already considered as an existing partner?</p>		<p>This criteria applies to the organization as a whole. Note that the criteria for a new partner is “as a prime partner over the last five years.” If an organization received funding from USAID in another country as a prime partner in the past five years, they would not meet this criteria.</p>

36	<p>Sectors of intervention: Would USAID consider interventions where education is interlinked with nutrition and WASH activities or is the CfP strictly adherent to one sector with no overlaps only?</p>		<p>No. There are strict limitations to what Basic Education funding can support, and WASH and nutrition are typically excluded and supported with other sectoral funds.</p>
37	<p>Can USAID share the most recent version of the DRC LCP to best ground cost estimates supporting the Concept Paper budget?</p>		<p>See Amendment 01.</p>
38	<p>Can USAID please confirm that resource partner relationships may include partnerships formalized in MOUs with existing, stand-alone development projects or private sector activities that do not contribute funds directly to FLIER, but use existing funds and activities to bolster FLIER results? Can USAID please provide guidelines on how to monetize such arrangements?</p>		<p>Eligible and quantifiable resource partners are those that contribute directly to FLIER, which applicants should carefully and clearly describe if they believe such partners are meaningfully contributing to FLIER results.</p>
39	<p>Can USAID confirm that a Prime Applicant may form a consortium of multiple resource partners?</p>		<p>Yes</p>
40	<p>Would USAID look unfavorably at the leveraging requirement being met in a combination of ways (multiple resource partners providing financial contributions, donated services, intellectual property, etc.)?</p>		<p>You may propose what best meets the technical evaluation criteria.</p>

41	<p>Page 18 of the APS states “All eligible interested organizations or companies are restricted to submitting only one Concept Paper as the Prime Applicant.” Can USAID confirm that this applies to individual rounds of Concept Paper submission and that interested groups may submit one Concept Paper as the Prime Applicant per round (up to a total of three Concept Papers)?</p>		<p>Yes, each round is a new opportunity for a prime applicant to submit a concept paper</p>
42	<p>Page 8 of the APS states that “FLIER will work with the DRC government where possible under TIP and, where not possible, will follow national standards and guidelines for instruction.” Can USAID please confirm which, and link to, the national standards and guidelines expected to be followed for work conducted under TIP sanctions?</p>		<p>Note: TIP sanctions are no longer a concern for the DRC as public schools are eligible targets under FLIER.</p> <p>National standards and guidelines for instruction referred to the Ministry’s decree that private schools follow national curricula and are to be inspected by the Ministry’s Directorate of Private Education.</p>
43	<p>Can USAID confirm if there is a minimum level of cost share expected or required per page 19 of the APS?</p>		<p>15% is a minimum.</p>
44	<p>Can USAID confirm that implementing partners may propose the percentage of cost share offered per Page 19 of the APS?</p>		<p>15% is a minimum.</p>
45	<p>The Concept Paper template on P.24 of the APS states that applicants are limited to a “maximum 3 pages per intervention”. Can USAID please confirm that this includes 3 pages per Principle addressed (presented in Table 1)? If so, given the important linkages between principles, can partners addressing</p>	24	<p>Yes</p>

	<p>multiple principles present one response with an overall page limit corresponding to the number of principles addressed (6 pages for 2 principles, 9 pages for 3 principles, etc.)?</p>		
46	<p>Can USAID confirm USAID’s expectation if the Principles/Elements in Table 1 are all expected to be represented in the proposed intervention? Or, if Elements are to be selected (as suggested on P.24), which are considered required (such as “FLIER focuses and concentrates on creating a strong literacy and social & emotional foundation for 6-9 year-old children in the FLIER target areas) and which are considered optional?</p>		<p>Principles/Elements are to be selected by the applicant.</p>
47	<p>As multiple awards are expected under this APS, can USAID confirm USAID’s expectation of the minimum number of schools/communities that should be reached within a single award?</p>		<p>Applicants are expected to identify their targets.</p>
48	<p>On page 10, USAID notes that the geographic focus breakdown presented are “suggested percentages, and the applicant may suggest adjustments with a detailed explanation for their reasoning.” Can USAID please confirm USAID’s expectation is that each proposed intervention will include all of these provinces (although specific percentages may be proposed)?</p>	10	<p>No, USAID does not necessarily expect that each proposed intervention will include all of the provinces.</p>

49	<p>“Section III - Funding Priorities/Goals/Programmatic Focus Areas” indicates that FLIER will work towards coordinating to the greatest extent possible with all US-funded initiatives in the geographic target areas. Are there US-funded programs currently operative in the target areas that USAID/DRC recommends considering and/or integrating when designing an intervention (in addition to Accelere! and SHLS materials)?</p>		<p>Applicants are encouraged to conduct research to identify such opportunities and may begin such research with https://www.usaid.gov/democratic-republic-con go.</p>
50	<p>USAID recommends identifying innovative ways to integrate the use of the Safe Healing and Learning Spaces Toolkit. To what extent does USAID support additional contextualization of these materials to specific opportunities, challenges, and target audiences in the DRC? To what extent is USAID open to additional evidence-based and complementary SEL supports?</p>		<p>USAID is open to complementary SEL support - since this is somewhat of a new focus - and believes that moderate contextualization of Safe Healing and Learning Spaces Toolkit or similar material could be beneficial.</p>
51	<p>On the cover page of the APS, the deadline for questions indicates it is a “first round.” Can USAID confirm if and when additional rounds of questions will be permitted leading up to the second and third round of Concept Papers?</p>		<p>No additional rounds for 1st concept paper submission.</p>
52	<p>On page 18, the APS states that Implementing Partners must provide the 1:1 leveraging. On page 19 the APS states that cost sharing under this activity is required. Could USAID clarify: a. If cost share is required in addition to the 1:1 leverage? b. If it is required in addition to the leverage, what is the required value of cost share?</p>	18	<p>Cost share of 15% is required. USAID has removed the reference to a 1:1 leverage in Amendment One.</p>

53	On page 19, the APS states that cost sharing under this activity is required, except for new and local partners. In cases where an implementing partner proposes to work through new and local partners, can USAID confirm if the portion of the funds going to new and local partners can be excluded from the 1:1 leveraging requirement?	19	Yes.
54	Will USAID accept leverage from multilateral donors that are funded partly by the US government?		No.
55	On page 16, the APS references the Global Development Alliance APS. Can USAID clarify the purpose of this reference? Is this an addendum to the GDA APS or a stand-alone APS?	16	This reference is in error and is removed with Amendment 01.
56	Can USAID clarify if USAID has an estimated award floor, ceiling, or if there is estimated number of awards USAID is looking to fund under this APS?		It will depend on the quality of the concept papers received.
57	Can USAID confirm that a 1:1 leverage will not apply to the crisis modifier?		No
58	Does USAID prefer partners who have been positioning together to submit 1 concept note together, or individually.		It is up to the partner to submit the best application, as they see it.
59	Can partners be added to teams Co-Creation and or RFA phases? Do the partners need to be pre-qualified through the concept paper phase or can new partners be added at this time?		New partners can be added, if the concept paper passes.
60	Will partnership decisions be solely at the discretion of the applicant? Or does USAID intend to recommend consortia from the pool of concept paper applicants?		Solely at the discretion of the applicant.

61	Should applicants indicate at the concept paper stage an intention to prime an award or be considered for a sub-award?		Yes.
62	What is USAID's estimate amount of funding in these provinces? Is the budget equal for each province?		It depends on the concept papers. There is no set amount per province.
63	In the APS, USAID indicates the geographic focus will include Ituri 25%, South Kivu 25%, Equateur 25%, Tanganyika 25% and 10 schools on the outskirts of Kinshasa. Should applicants expect equal budget share for each of these provinces? Must concepts address all these regions? Or can they focus on a single province?		No. No. Yes.
64	Is the intention that programming in each province will be identical? Or will programming be specific to geographic contexts?		Applicants are to propose what they think is the best approach for the activity.
65	<p>How is USAID planning to distribute these awards?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Must awards address all six principles identified in table 1? ● If not, how will USAID ensure cohesion between the principles? Will all awards receive equal funding? 		<p>Applicants are to address whichever principles/elements with which they feel they are best suited to obtain results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No. ● Please see answers to question 9 and 18. ● No.
66	<p>At what stage in the APS process must applicants prove commitment of their resource partners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If an applicant is successful at the concept paper stage but later identified as a sub-awardee rather than a prime awardee, does the cost share/resource partner 		Formalized commitment is not required at the concept paper phase; however, please review the merit review criteria and note that papers will be evaluated on realism and reasonableness. Cost share will be required of a prime awardee.

	requirement still apply?		
67	In the intro letter, page 1, USAID states that it is interested in providing financial or non-financial support to partners to realize concepts and ideas that hold promise in the focus areas. What does USAID mean by non-financial support in that statement?		Disregard “non-financial support.” This is a typographical error.
68	On Pg. 13, applicants are encouraged to allocate between two to four percent of the total amount for developing literacy skills in promoting indigenous knowledge in local/minority languages that are used outside of schools in many FLIER communities. Can these materials be used to target 4-5 years olds in order to prepare them for entering Grade 1?	13	FLIER targets 6-9 year olds with a focus on the primary education system as defined by the DRC, and does not include pre-primary.
69	On page 14 of the APS, USAID references as part of the New Partnership Initiative, that it will “Monitor and evaluate the applicant’s capacity and strategy to attract and partner with new and underutilized organizations that enable local engagement such as local entities, locally established partners, as well as new and underutilized locally based small businesses to deliver on the objectives of the FLIER APS. This could be achieved through sub-awards or sub-contracts to new partners and prime organization operating in a limited or expanded mentorship role.” [emphasis added]. However, on page 18, Section C.1., USAID outlines that “implementing partners” must provide 1:1		See Amendment 1, reference to leverage was removed.

	<p>leverage. Does USAID require that all implementing partners must provide 1:1 leverage, or is there an opportunity for implementing partners to not provide leverage, but offer sub-awards or sub-contracts to new partners, as done in other NPI opportunities?</p>		
70	<p>On page 14, USAID indicates it is “specifically inviting existing partners who have had success with their interventions” Can USAID please define what is meant by “existing partners,” and how it understand “success with their interventions”?</p>		<p>The meaning of this sentence was intended to be on “partners who have had success with their interventions,” with partners referring to implementing partners worldwide. It was not intended to be interpretable as existing USAID education partners only.</p> <p>Success with interventions means interventions that are roundly applauded - and demonstrably so - by both the implementing partner and the USAID AOR/COR as successful.</p>
71	<p>Should proposed concept notes cover all the geographic and cultural groups named in the APS, or can they be limited to one or more?</p>		<p>They can be more limited.</p>
72	<p>Given the current economic crisis, would USAID be willing to reconsider the required leverage amounts, allowing time for private sector to rebuild their businesses.</p>		<p>See Amendment 1, the leverage requirement was removed.</p>
73	<p>Would USAID please provide the quarterly and annual reports from Accelere?</p>		<p>Many are available on the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC), and USAID will again remind the contractor to update the DEC in a timely fashion.</p>
74	<p>On page 14, the APS notes that applicants should include a crisis modifier of \$4 million if budget exceeds \$10 million.</p> <p>a. Please clarify if this</p>		<p>a. Yes b. No. c. See Amendment 1, the leverage requirement was removed.</p>

	<p>amount (crisis modifier) is inclusive of any/all associated indirect costs.</p> <p>b. Should the amount be greater if budget exceeds \$20 or \$30 million? If so, please provide the amount(s).</p> <p>c. Please confirm that the leverage requirement is not inclusive of this amount.</p>		
75	<p>Questions re: Budget Summary Format:</p> <p>a. Where in the summary budget should the applicant include the \$4 million crisis modifier? Under ODCs or as a separate line?</p> <p>b. Where should the leverage be included? Should an additional row be added to the bottom and labeled Leverage?</p>		<p>a) separate line (we should add this to the budget summary if we need to amend APS) and</p> <p>b) See Amendment 1, leverage references were removed.</p>
76	<p>Please confirm that there will be another Q&A opportunity after specific instructions are provided to the applicants that make it to the next phase.</p>		<p>Questions and Answers will be a part of the RFA process for those applicants that pass the concept paper phase.</p>
77	<p>APS Page 25, D. Summary Budget.</p> <p>“- The applicants are requested to submit a summary budget only at the concept stage covering all proposed interventions (See Annex 1 – summary budget form)”</p> <p>Is it correct that only the tab titled “Summary Budget” must be completed for the concept paper?</p>	25	<p>Yes, that is correct.</p>

78	APS Page 24, B. Interventions Proposed. Is it correct that for each of the six Core Principles and Elements, all six questions should be answered in the narrative?	24	No. Applicants aren't required to address each principle and element.
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