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Issue Date: February 12, 2024
Deadline for Questions: February 23, 2024, 3:00 pm Pretoria Time
Initial Technical Applications Closing Time and Date: March 12, 2024, 3:00 pm Pretoria Time

Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity: 72067424RFA00005 Funding
Opportunity Title: *Bokamoso (Brighter Future) Activity*

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development Mission to Southern Africa seeks applications from qualified entities to implement a five-year activity entitled *Bokamoso (Brighter Future) Activity*, as further described in Section A of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The authority for this NOFO is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. Eligibility for this NOFO is restricted to **local entities in the Southern Africa region** in accordance with PEPFAR FY 2020 Country Operational Plan Guidance and applies to the principal/prime applicant only.

Please be aware that this NOFO follows a Multi-tiered Review process. Applicants should carefully review the application submission and review information in Sections D & E.

USAID intends to make a **single** award to the applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in Section E of this NOFO subject to a risk assessment in accordance with ADS 303.3.9. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to thoroughly read this NOFO to understand the type of activity sought, application submission requirements, and selection process. While an award is anticipated as a result of this NOFO, USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information 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 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 identifiers and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.12. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government nor does it commit the U.S. 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.

Please send any questions to the point of contact identified in Section D.1. 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.

Thank you for your interest in USAID/Lesotho programs.

Sincerely,

Nya Kwai Boayue
Regional Agreement Officer
USAID/Southern Africa

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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.

I. Introduction

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) intends to implement a five-year activity titled *Bokamoso (Brighter Future)*. The Activity will contribute to sustaining the achievements of Lesotho's HIV response by preventing new infections in girls and young women and strengthening the wellbeing of highly vulnerable children and adolescents, especially those living with HIV. The activity will provide evidence-based packages of services to orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) and their families, and to adolescent girls and young women. The activity supports the Government of Lesotho's (GOL) multi-sectoral strategies and priorities for HIV prevention and impact mitigation by addressing the intersectional structural, social and economic factors that strengthen HIV prevention. The activity is designed to support the UNAIDS 95-95-95 goals and 10-10-10 targets by averting new infections among adolescent girls and young women and improving treatment outcomes for children and adolescents living with HIV. The activity also aligns with the PEPFAR 5x3 strategy to achieve health equity for priority populations. This will be a performance-based transition award where responsibility for all or parts of the programming content will be transitioned to a local prime partner by program year three, if the prime recipient is a regional organization not based in Lesotho.

II. Background and country context

Lesotho is a high-altitude, landlocked kingdom with a population of 2.3 million. The country is classified as lower-middle-income, but displays high rates of poverty, income inequality and unemployment. Lesotho's narrow economic base consists of textile manufacturing, agriculture, diamond mining, remittances from Basotho working in South Africa, and regional customs revenue. About three-fourths of the population is engaged in animal herding and subsistence agriculture. While the official employment rates are similar for males and females (22.6%/22.4%), 64% of youth who are not employed or in training are female (World Bank Gender Assessment 2022). Young people in Lesotho suffer disproportionate levels of multidimensional poverty and unemployment. A 2020 survey (VACS 2020) found that among adolescents, two thirds of females and seven out of ten males experienced food insecurity. Only one quarter of young adult females have jobs, and only one third of young males have entered the labor market. Lesotho is very young demographically, with a youth bulge of nearly 40% of the population aged between 15 and 35. 34% of Basotho are children under 15.

Despite significant declines in new HIV infections from around 19,000 in 2010 to 5,000 annually (LEPHIA 2020), children are still at risk and youth are still at high risk of acquiring the virus. An estimated 93,000 children aged 0-17 are orphans due to one or both of their parents who died of AIDS (UNAIDS 2022). Lesotho's most recent VACS survey found that almost half of females and males were orphaned before age 18. Children and youth living with HIV have lower levels of ART coverage. 29% of children living with HIV do not know their HIV status and are therefore not on ART.

Overall, women continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV. More than a third of households have at least one HIV-positive member, and the proportion of households headed by a person living with HIV is higher among female headed households (34,2%) than among male headed households (25%).

AHIV risk factors for youth include early sexual debut, low condom use and lack of awareness of biomedical prevention methods. Other factors driving HIV risk behaviors include economic shocks and associated coping strategies, especially in the form of transactional sex and intergenerational relationships, combined with social norms and traditional roles that discourage women from talking openly with men about contraception (Nyqvist et al. 2018). Among VACS survey respondents, 4.7% of 19–24-year-olds females were engaged in transactional sexual relationships (VACS 2020).

Migration, both domestic and external, is a dominant household livelihood strategy, with 43% of households reporting at least one member living away. Female migration in Lesotho is mostly driven by economic factors. A study by Botea et al (2018) found evidence that women employed in sectors dominated by migrants such as the textile industry in Maseru and Maputsoe have a higher HIV prevalence (55%).

Teenage pregnancy rates have seen an increase from 88.16 per 100,000 to 93 per 100,000 in 2017, with most girls having their first child between ages 18 and 20 (Gender Assessment World Bank 2022). Current unmet demand for family planning is 16% overall but is significantly higher in AGYW ((37.2% 15-17 and 29.7% 18-19). In addition to the unmet need for family planning, a key driver of this trend is the pressure of poverty and food insecurity especially in rural areas, which push many young women into early or forced marriage or intergenerational relationships.

Among other health indicators, maternal mortality at 544 (per 100,000 live births) stands out as the second highest in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) after the Democratic Republic of Congo. Neonatal mortality is the 3rd highest globally while under-5 mortality is the highest in the region.

Lesotho has high levels of Gender based violence (GBV) and Violence against Children. According to the World Population Report, Lesotho has the world's second highest rape rate at 83 per 100,000 citizens, Furthermore, the country has a high prevalence of childhood violence, both sexual and physical. Disclosure and service-seeking among survivors of sexual violence are very low. The study also noted consistent patterns between childhood violence and health conditions. Sexual, physical and emotional violence was associated with mental distress and suicidal ideation among children and adolescents. According to data collated by Women in Law in Southern Africa (WILSA), GBV and VAC increased by as much as 50% during the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies have shown the significant associations of disability with child violence: Girls with a functional disability are almost twice as likely to experience violence than those with no functional disability (32.6% versus 17.4%). Lesotho's National Strategic Development Plan 2018/19-2022/23 notes that women and girls with disabilities are among the most vulnerable to GBV and human trafficking as their conditions make them easy targets.

As per the WHO, Lesotho has the world's highest suicide rate at 87.5 per 100,000 population . Notably, female suicide rates exceed those of all other countries (34.6). Proportionately more youth aged 15-24 commit suicide than in any other country in the Southern African region.

Lesotho provides free primary education, but formal educational attainment is low among adolescents: one third of adolescent girls and half of adolescent boys have not more than primary school education (VACS 2020). Many children enroll for primary school late, and less than 50% of students complete lower secondary school, with a persistent gender gap disadvantaging boys. Primary school enrolment of girls is 91.9% and 90.5% for boys and the gap widens at secondary level with 50% and 32.7% respectively. Boys, especially in rural areas, are often under pressure to leave school in order to support their family's livelihood, primarily as herders or subsistence farmers. A 2018 study of herd boys in five districts reported that 78 percent had dropped out of primary school (UNFPA and Help Lesotho 2018). Dropout rates for girls also increase after primary school, driven by poverty and the costs of schooling.

Overall educational outcomes in Lesotho were poor even before the extended school closures during the COVID-19 epidemic. Lesotho's 2021 National Learning Assessment found that half of children in the sampled grades 4 and 6 lacked the essential reading and numeracy skills expected for the grade (UNICEF Country Office Annual Report 2022).

While girls outperform boys at all levels of education, males predominate in STEM fields, making up approximately 62 percent of those in physical and earth sciences and 87 percent of those in engineering, while women tend to cluster in fields of study that lead to careers that are low paid, such as social and religious studies (63 percent), health care (71 percent), and teaching (69 percent) (figure 3.7) (Bureau of Statistics 2016).

Pregnant girls are often excluded from continuing their education, especially in private church-run schools (UNESCO 2019). The government of Lesotho has sought to address this issue with the enactment of the Free and Compulsory Primary Education Act of 2010, which requires that pregnant girls be readmitted after delivery. However, re-entry is difficult for girls who are mothers due to poverty, stigma and discrimination, and limited support (Gender Links 2020). At tertiary level, some institutions like the National University of Lesotho require pregnant students to leave university residence when seven months pregnant. Teenage and young mothers often lack provision of childcare to support them to continue their education (Mapetla and Ralebitso 2015).

Only 46 per cent of Basotho's children have access to early education that provides opportunities for early learning and healthy development, as well as increases their readiness to start primary school on time and learn. The private sector provides 90 per cent of pre-primary services. Access is inequitable, with greater uptake in urban areas and among families who can afford the fees. In 2019, only 0.4 per cent of the education budget was allocated to coordinate, manage and strengthen early childhood development (ECD) in the country (UNICEF 2020).

Disability is common among adolescents, with 1 out of 7 girls and 1 out of 14 boys displaying a functional disability in one or more areas (VACS 2020). Children living with disabilities still face significant challenges accessing education due to lack of appropriate assistive devices, limited teachers with requisite skills to teach the children and related stigma towards disabilities.

PEPFAR Lesotho supports the government with direct services and technical assistance across the continuum of the HIV response to maximize the quality, coverage, impact and sustainability of the national multisectoral HIV/AIDS response.

PEPFAR made significant contributions to Lesotho's HIV response and to achieve epidemic control. Lesotho's COP 23 strives to increase Health Equity for Priority Populations by focusing on closing treatment gaps for priority populations, including children, adolescents, key populations and men. Comprehensive prevention programming addressing structural barriers for averting new infections will target adolescent girls and young women, adolescent boys and young men and key populations. PEPFAR will also support wrap-around health and social service systems to promote country ownership and sustainability.

USAID/Lesotho implements the OVC and DREAMS programs supporting HIV prevention and impact mitigation for vulnerable children and youth. OVC programming aims to reduce the vulnerability of children and adolescents living with HIV, children of female sex workers, survivors of sexual violence, children orphaned by HIV and children whose HIV-positive caregivers are not virally suppressed. DREAMS provides HIV and violence prevention services to adolescent girls and young women aged 10-24 to ensure they are Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored and Safe.

PEPFAR/Lesotho's OVC and DREAMS program is currently implemented by the Karabo ea Bophela (KB) activity led by Baylor Lesotho and targets OVC in all 10 districts, and DREAMS in the districts of Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek. The *Bokamoso* activity will build on KB achievements and foster strong partnerships for sustained outcomes with communities, private sector and governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

III. Activity description

The Bokamoso activity will support GOL's multi-sector strategies and priorities for HIV mitigation and prevention for children and youth through provision of comprehensive OVC services in all ten (10) districts and DREAMS interventions in four (4) districts (Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek). The Activity will also support programming to foster an enabling environment for AGYW and ABYM that will benefit all youth in Lesotho.

Bokamoso will implement innovative strategies targeting the most vulnerable OVC and AGYW to improve their access to accurate HIV knowledge, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, social protection, violence prevention, and economic and educational opportunities. Sustainability must be mainstreamed in all activity areas to ensure the continuity of key priorities in line with the GOL's existing and planned structures, systems and processes.

USAID's expectations for technical approaches are laid out below. Programming must be framed within PEPFAR guidance for OVC¹ and for HIV prevention and DREAMS² in the target districts. DREAMS and OVC programming must be delivered in a seamless integrated manner for synergy and efficiency in these target districts. Broader structural interventions to create an enabling environment for AGYW and may also target ABYM must adhere to the DREAMS guidance.

IV. Geographic Focus

In its first year of operation, Bokamoso is expected to work in all ten districts of Lesotho to target households with vulnerable children and in four districts (Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek) to deliver DREAMS services to AGYW. Interventions that seek to strengthen systems may focus on national or district level. For the OVC components, the recipient will be expected to review pediatric and adolescent, demographic and socio-economic data to prioritize community councils with the greatest need and largest number of C/ALHIV. For the DREAMS sites, USAID expects a full footprint of interventions in all community councils. USAID may require the Recipient to shift or expand the geographic focus during the life of the Activity to better coincide with PEPFAR geographic priorities, shifts in the epidemiology and/or gaps in coverage and alignment with Global Fund geographic priorities. In addition, as sustainability programming matures for OVC and DREAMS, geographic shifts must be anticipated to be in line with future GOL structures, processes and systems.

V. Target population

¹ <https://www.state.gov/2023-country-and-regional-operational-plan-guidance-and-technical-considerations/> [LINK to OVC guidance, within COP guidance]

² <https://www.state.gov/pepfar-solutions/resources-and-tools/pepfar-dreams-nextgen-guidance/> [LINK TO DREAMS GUIDANCE]

PEPFAR/Lesotho has identified a number of priority populations based on epidemiological and contextual considerations. The approach should demonstrate how to effectively identify and reach the following priority sub-populations with appropriate intervention packages:

<u>Target group</u>	<u>Vulnerability criteria</u>
Orphans and Vulnerable Children and Adolescents (boys and girls) aged 0-17 and their caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children and adolescents living with HIV ● HIV exposed infants ● Children and adolescents living with a PLHIV caregiver who is not virally suppressed ● Children who have experienced sexual abuse ● Children of female sex workers ● Adolescent girls who are pregnant or who are mothers ● Children in child-headed households ● Children living with disability
Adolescent girls aged 10-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ever had sex ● History of pregnancy, pregnant or breastfeeding ● Experience of sexual violence (lifetime) ● Experience of physical or emotional violence (within the last year) ● History of STI ● Alcohol use ● Out of school ● Orphanhood
Adolescent girls aged 15-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multiple sexual partners (in the last year) ● History of pregnancy, pregnant or breastfeeding ● STI (diagnosed or treated) ● No or irregular condom use ● Transactional sex ● Experience of sexual abuse ● Alcohol misuse ● Out of school ● Orphanhood
Young women aged 20-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multiple sexual partners (in the last year) ● STI (diagnosed or treated) ● No or irregular condom use ● Transactional sex ● Experience of sexual violence ● Alcohol misuse
Adolescent boys and young men, especially sexual partners of AGYW	

These categories are not exhaustive and frequently overlap. Interventions will also involve broader communities and community leaders to create enabling environments for children and youth. In consultation with USAID during annual work planning, the Recipient may define additional factors that identify highly vulnerable children and AGYW.

A cogent approach to transition and sustainability should be included in a manner that minimizes disruption of services for OVC and AGYW.

VI. Intermediate results and illustrative outcomes

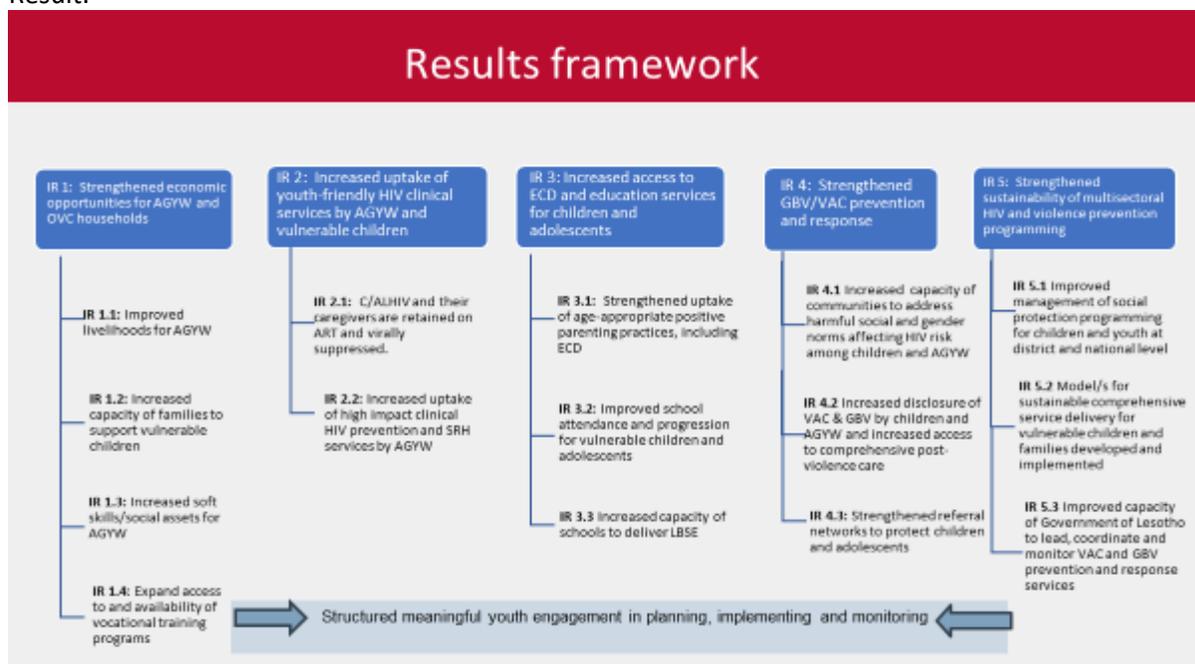
The goal of the activity is to keep AGYW HIV free and improve HIV and broader health outcomes in addition to educational attainment and economic growth in the target populations through direct programming and strategic partnerships.

The activity has five Intermediate Results (IRs)

- IR 1: Strengthened economic opportunities for AGYW and OVC households
- IR 2: Increased uptake of youth-friendly HIV clinical services for AGYW and vulnerable children
- IR 3: Increased access to ECD and education services for children and adolescents
- IR 4: Strengthened GBV/VAC prevention and response
- IR 5: Strengthened sustainability of multi-sectoral youth programming for HIV and violence programming

Youth engagement will be a cross-cutting priority across all five (5) IRs. The recipient should apply Positive Youth Development Approaches as embraced by [USAID's Youth in Development Policy](#), recognizing that youth participation is essential for effective programming.

The diagram below shows the results framework for the activity with subcomponents for each Interim Result.



Technical approach

USAID PEPFAR guidance sets out parameters for DREAMS and OVC programming, summarized below: The **DREAMS program** provides layered HIV and violence prevention services to AGYW aged 10-24, consisting of age-appropriate 'primary packages' that all beneficiaries should receive and 'secondary packages' that should be delivered based on individual needs and vulnerabilities (see Annex 2³ for Lesotho's current DREAMS Layering and Completion table). Program completion is the standard metric for success, defined as individual beneficiaries completing the primary package and all relevant services from the secondary package. DREAMS also provides what PEPFAR calls contextual level interventions which include programming with parents/caregivers and community norms change, targeting community leaders and men. Sexual partners of AGYW are linked to services such as HTS, VMMC and PrEP. - AGYW should be reached with the comprehensive DREAMS package of services through appropriate community and institutional platforms, comprising individual level and group interventions tailored to the needs, vulnerabilities, risks and aspirations of every beneficiary. Engagement with older and out-of-school AGYW should need to be responsive to contextual factors such as high mobility, educational level, poverty levels, and difficulty in participating in activities over an extended period of time.

Under this Activity, a strong focus for the DREAMS program will be strengthening economic opportunities for AGYW and uptake of PrEP and other HIV services.

The **OVC program** ensures the delivery of comprehensive services that mitigate the impact of HIV on children by reducing vulnerability, contributing to prevention goals, and increasing access to and retention in treatment. The implementation of core activities should ensure that children are healthy (improving access to health/HIV services); safe (improving child protection and prevention of GBV); stable (improving household economic security and linkage to social protection); and schooled (improving school retention and progression and early care childhood development). This program component strengthens the HIV care continuum among children, adolescents, and caregivers OVC comprehensive programming leads to household graduation, which is defined and assessed using outcome-oriented graduation benchmarks across all four domains (healthy, safe, stable, and schooled). The OVC program uses a case management approach operationalized during regular home visits with needs assessment, care plan development in collaboration with caregivers, and reliable tracking of services and referral completion.

Each intermediate result should reflect strategies and approaches to transition appropriate PEPFAR supported staff, functions and structures to the host country government in a manner that fosters longevity based on the collaboratively developed sustainability plan. This may include revision of the programming approaches, evaluation of HR needs and functions, and/or inclusion and amalgamation of programming into multisectoral platforms. Given the multisectoral nature of this award, the overall sustainability and transition approach should reflect harnessing learnings from prior work and also include innovative thinking for entrenching positive programming approaches and systems in the country context.

IR 1: Strengthened economic opportunities for AGYW and OVC households

Economic factors and gender inequality in economic potential are recognized as complex drivers of HIV and gender-based violence. Economic empowerment interventions are key to the DREAMS package to ensure that AGYW have decreased reliance on transactional sex, to strengthen their self-efficacy and decision-making power in relationships. Economic stability is also foundational for families and caregivers to ensure their vulnerable children are healthy, stay in school, and are safe from violence.

³ Link the Layering table here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RiS7fdkTDNUATcS3JehKcls6j0Q6uPmyLpNF4ndZNdl/edit?usp=sharing>

The activity will tailor economic strengthening support to the needs of AGYW and families with vulnerable children and to their specific potential for economic growth. This requires partnerships with the private sector, with other initiatives by donors, and with government institutions and initiatives such as the recently launched youth entrepreneurship initiative called Sebatatso. The activity will also seek to provide pivotal technical assistance to revitalize vocational training in select project sites in partnership with other stakeholders.

IR 1.1: Improved livelihoods for AGYW

The Bokamoso scale up targeted comprehensive economic strengthening interventions to equip AGYW with the necessary knowledge and skills that provide pathways to entrepreneurship and wage employment tied to local labor market assessments and using intersectional approaches.

Economic strengthening targeting AGYW may include gender-specific and age-appropriate financial literacy training; conducting market assessments as a basis for the selection of entrepreneurial training in order to develop marketable skills; providing vocational scholarships for AGYW; providing post-training start up support through seed funding, access to finance, internships, and business placements; linkage to wage employment, facilitating access to incubation support for small businesses, savings groups for AGYW who have income streams; and facilitating access to coaching and mentoring opportunities in collaboration with the private sector, other business networks and the development sector through USAID implementing partners and others. Opportunities should expand the range of options available to AGYW and include non-traditional female roles such as in transportation, supply chain, building trades, and other careers.

Economic strengthening interventions should also consider appropriate responses to climate change and to local environmental challenges.

Partnerships and collaborations should be developed that link AGYW to opportunities in established sectors as well as emerging sectors such as horticulture.

IR 1.2: Increased capacity of families to support vulnerable children

Vulnerable children aged 0-17 with known HIV risk factors and their families will be provided with comprehensive family-based OVC services, employing a case management approach with tailored vulnerability assessment and case planning. The activity will use evidence-based strategies to build the social and economic capacity of parents/caregivers to meet their children's health, nutrition, education and protection needs.

The activity will support families with household economic strengthening to enable them to meet their children's needs for health, nutrition, shelter and education. Interventions will be based on vulnerability assessments and be tailored according to vulnerability levels, and might include provision of financial literacy, savings and lending groups, or other opportunities for increasing income and assets. Linkage to food security interventions, nutrition support, access to birth registration and other national documents or other social protection services may also be required.

IR 1.3: Increased soft skills/social assets for AGYW

Social assets are critical for AGYW's agency to help them to make positive health decisions. Self-efficacy and knowledge can support AGYW to transform their self-image and to make healthy choices to reduce their

HIV risk, to take control of their reproductive health and to engage in conducive interpersonal relationships. Social asset building may include creation of supportive networks ('safe spaces'), the sharing of information and resources on health, HIV, gender-based violence, mental health, and substance abuse.

The DREAMS program recommends social asset building activities using evidence-based curricula, role-modeling and mentorship, and peer to peer engagement in small group meetings and safe spaces where AGYW receive social support, information and services. Through these approaches, AGYW will also be given the opportunity to develop work ethics skills, and other soft skills they need to successfully enter and succeed in the formal or informal labor markets, such as communication skills, problem solving, and customer services skills.

IR 1.4: Expand access to and availability of vocational training programs

Under this IR, Bokamoso will engage the Ministry of Education and Training to revitalize its vocational training schools in the four DREAMS districts, in partnership with other stakeholders engaged in this space. This may include development of curricula for market related vocational skills, and establishment of short-term courses that are accessible for AGYW who do not have the secondary school qualifications required for most formal tertiary education tracks. Bokamoso will also be expected to explore partnerships with the private sector and other entities to strengthen development of market related vocational skills and resource mobilization for vocational training and to provide pathways to wage employment and support for entrepreneurial activities.

Expected outcomes under IR 1 are listed below. These are not exhaustive, and the applicant is expected to define additional outcomes.

- Improved savings, income, and assets among OVC households
- AGYW have increased individual protective assets such as self-esteem, problem solving abilities, confidence and social networks
- Increased awareness of mental health and mental health support needs and services
- Improved financial literacy and money management skills among AGYW and OVC caregivers
- Improved access to vocational training opportunities and marketable skills
- Increased access to wage employment and (self-) employment opportunities among AGYW.

IR 2: Increased uptake of youth-friendly HIV clinical services for AGYW and vulnerable children

Bokamoso's OVC and DREAMS platforms will promote and track uptake of clinical HIV services of AGYW and C/ALHIV and HEI. The OVC program will enhance pediatric HIV case finding, linkage to treatment and viral suppression. DREAMS interventions will be designed to motivate, mobilize, and empower AGYW to seek clinical SRH and HIV services.

IR 2.1: C/ALHIV and their caregivers living with HIV are retained on ART and virally suppressed

Activities under this sub-IR will use the OVC program's family-based approach and linkage with health facilities and community platforms to improve clinical outcomes by identifying C/ALHIV as well as support their overall health, well-being and protection. Bokamoso will support children and caregivers to link to treatment, and ensure that C/ALHIV already on treatment receive comprehensive OVC services. Treatment literacy will be provided during home visits to children and caregivers with whom C/ALHIV live, including grandparents or other relatives. Case managers will support C/ALHIV with disclosure and meeting their psychosocial needs as well as active linkages to other health and social services, including SRH services for

adolescents. The activity will ensure that the child's HIV status is known, including risk assessments and active linkage for HIV testing for at-risk OVC and their biological siblings.

In collaboration with PEPFAR-supported facilities and implementers, the Activity will apply Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between OVC and clinical IPs and use the existing bidirectional referral system with shared confidentiality arrangements in order to increase the enrollment of C/ALHIV and HEI in the OVC comprehensive program and collaborate on case conferencing. Bokamoso will leverage on existing peer support group models for C/ALHIV (such as 'Know Your Child' teen clubs, ariel club, Wise Youth Clubs) and caregiver groups formed by clinical partners and community-based partners for continued care and as platforms for accessing additional OVC services and case management.

Case management will include routine home visits in order to regularly monitor child well-being; for HIB exposed children <5 the activity will provide knowledge and skills-building with OVC parents/caregivers in order to support infant and young child feeding practices for HEI, nutrition assessment and support, growth monitoring, promotion of routine childhood vaccinations and appropriate water and sanitation practices.

Case management will also promote adherence and retention in care among both C/ALHIV and HIV-positive caregivers. The case managers will provide reminders for ART refills and tracking of viral load testing due dates, tracking of missed appointments/defaulters for re-engagement back into care; and will deliver age-appropriate OVC service packages for enrolled C/ALHIV, HEI, and their families to ensure all HEI and C/ALHIV and their families meet the OVC outcome benchmarks by addressing their unique health, nutrition, education, protection, psychosocial, developmental, and economic strengthening needs.

IR 2.2: Increased utilization of high impact clinical HIV and SRH services by AGYW

A core component of the DREAMS package is the provision of accurate information and demand creation for sexual reproductive health services and biomedical HIV prevention options for AGYW and their sexual partners, including PEP, PrEP, condoms, and VMMC. Bokamoso will also promote 'status-neutral' and age-appropriate HIV testing, voluntary informed choice family planning and STI screening services. Demand creation must be responsive to the needs and fears of adolescents and young women and must seek to actively overcome barriers and stigma associated with uptake of SRH and HIV services, especially PrEP. Information and demand creation must embed evidence-based approaches to prevent teenage pregnancy. Bokamoso's community-based mentors of AGYW will provide condoms and HIV-self tests to enrolled program participants, and specific family planning commodities in line with government policy.

The recipient will be expected to collaborate with health facilities, PEPFAR clinical implementers and other stakeholders to advocate for youth friendly and stigma free HIV prevention services and sexual reproductive health services. Bokamoso will provide, track and document successful referrals for HIV and SRH services.

Interventions under this sub-IR will build understanding among AGYW on the biological, behavioral and structural factors that put them at risk of HIV acquisition, STIs, and unwanted pregnancy. Activities will use evidence-based approaches to help AGYW to understand their individual risk, the value of knowing one's HIV status, and the appropriate strategies with which they can protect themselves and their sexual partners. Program participants will receive scientifically accurate information on efficacy and advantages and disadvantages of key biomedical prevention measures such as condoms, and PrEP.

Interpersonal platforms such as structured small group sessions utilizing evidence informed curricula will ensure that adolescents feel they can communicate in a 'safe space' where confidentiality is assured. Individual mentoring plans for AGYW will continue to reinforce knowledge and motivation for mentees to

know their HIV status, to protect themselves from unwanted early pregnancy, and to seek appropriate HIV prevention and SRH services.

Expected outcomes under IR 2 are listed below. These are not exhaustive, and the applicant is expected to define additional outcomes.

- Improved rates of viral suppression among C/ALHIV and HIV-positive caregivers
- Improved wellbeing and health outcomes for unsuppressed C/ALHIV
- Improved retention in care for HEI, C/ALHIV, and HIV positive caregivers
- HIV-free survival of HEI with a documented HIV test result at 24, 48 and 60 months of age
- Increased uptake of comprehensive HIV and SRH services by AGYW (HTS, FP, STI screening, and treatment)
- Decreased teenage pregnancy in DREAMS districts
- Improved knowledge of HIV status in AGYW and OVC
- Adolescent OVC and AGYW have accurate knowledge of SRH, FP and clinical HIV prevention methods.

IR 3: Increased access to ECD and education services for children and adolescents

Global evidence shows that investments in young children's health, nutrition, early learning and stimulation improve learning outcomes for all children. Good ECD practices are especially important for HEI exposed infants and young children growing up with caregivers living with HIV to ensure they meet their developmental milestones. In turn, staying in school is known to be one of the most important protective assets helping AGYW stay HIV negative, which is bolstered by the life skills education and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE).

IR 3.1: Strengthened uptake of age-appropriate positive parenting practices, including ECD

The activity will be expected to strengthen early childhood development for vulnerable children through parenting support, and through engagement and capacity building of community-based early childcare centers. The activity will also seek to integrate ECD information and parenting skills in different health and community platforms.

In PEPFAR programs, ECD interventions have historically been implemented as a component of OVC programs. Yet the DREAMS program also provides a strong platform for messaging on ECD, as many AGYW enrolled in DREAMS have young children. There are many "missed opportunities" to integrate ECD information, knowledge and skills throughout other PEPFAR-funded and USAID-funded activities where clients include pregnant women, mothers, and other caregivers.

The Recipient will engage with clinical partners to identify opportunities and develop approaches for leveraging health facility entry points such as PMTCT, PreP, Care and Treatment and Cervical Cancer for engaging caregivers on ECD. The Activity will also leverage community platforms, such as PLHIV support groups to impart ECD information.

The activity's OVC component is expected to identify and implement evidence-informed approaches to promote caregiver skills for positive parenting tailored to different ages, with a focus on young children to strengthen ECD practices, and on adolescents to strengthen healthy communication caregivers' communication and positive discipline skills. PEPFAR OVC guidance provides resources and examples for evidence-based parenting curricula for caregivers of younger children and for adolescents.

In select sites, Bokamoso will support the quality of care provided in informal community- or home-based day care centers for young children with regard to early childhood stimulation, nutrition, safety and referral to health and social services. The Activity will be expected to implement effective strategies to develop partnerships with local businesses and other organizations to mobilize resources to strengthen ECD in community centers. Parents should be closely engaged in strengthening community-based early childhood care.

IR 3.2: Improved school attendance and progression for vulnerable children and adolescents

This Activity will support school attendance, retention, and progression for school-aged children and adolescents until they complete prescribed learning cycles, with a focus on ensuring transition to and retention in secondary school. The activity will also seek to re-integrate children and adolescents who have dropped out of school into formal or non-formal education, including girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy.

In collaboration with schools and families, Bokamoso will develop practical measures for monitoring and supporting school attendance, performance and progression, as well as early warning systems for school drop-out. The Activity will monitor school attendance and progression for enrolled OVC and AG, and facilitate access to the GoL bursary scheme. Bokamoso may also provide strategies for direct education assistance to most-at risk adolescent OVC and AG comprising financial and academic support (tuition and materials for secondary school, study clubs). The activity may also facilitate access to alternative learning models offered by the MOET such as open and distance learning.

IR 3.3 Increased capacity of schools to deliver LBSE

Lesotho's Ministry of Education has a curriculum for Life Skills Based Sexuality Education (LBSE) which is delivered in all schools starting from Grade 4. As LBSE is currently not a specialization acquired at teacher training colleges, the Ministry also has systems in place for in-service training through Trainers-of-Trainers. Tools for supervision and monitoring of LBSE delivery have been developed.

Challenges faced by schools include turnover of trained LBSE teachers, leaving schools without sufficient teaching staff for the subject, and lack of teaching resources such as IEC materials. School principals and LBSE teachers also report a need for sensitizing parents and caregivers as well as the broader school's teaching staff on the value of comprehensive sexual education.

Under this sub-IR, the Recipients are encouraged to propose modalities of collaborating with schools in the 4 DREAMS sites to strengthen their capacity to deliver and monitor and document the delivery of LBSE. Bokamoso will strengthen schools to provide supportive supervision for LBSE teachers, and to help them deliver content on sexuality that some teachers find sensitive and uncomfortable. Innovative approaches for garnering student feedback on LBSE content and teaching should be included. The activity will employ evidence-based strategies to overcome barriers to school attendance, retention and learning achievement.

Expected outcomes under IR 3 are listed below. These are not exhaustive, and the applicant is expected to define additional outcomes.

- Increased school progression for OVC and AG, with an emphasis on transition to secondary school
- Improved quality of LBSE teaching and learning
- Improved school systems to identify children at risk of dropping out

- Improved quality of ECD care at community day care centers
- Increased access to parenting skills for early childhood care and development for DREAMS program participants who are pregnant or have young children
- Infants and young children, including those who are HIV exposed and HIV positive, reach developmental milestones.

IR 4: Strengthened GBV/VAC prevention and response

The Government of Lesotho has worked to implement strategies to address gender-based violence, with the support of PEPFAR and other donors. The establishment of Child and Gender Protections Units staffed by trained police, and child protection teams at community and district levels are examples. Recently a child helpline was launched funded by USAID. USAID also supports a community cadre of VAC/GBV navigators that assist children and women at risk of violence, and help survivors to access post-GBV health, social and legal services. However, understanding of violence and what constitutes sexual violence, the availability of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), the need for SGBV survivors to seek immediate post-violence care, and the process to go about accessing care is poor amongst local communities in general and amongst girls and young women in particular.

GBV and VAC prevention have received less attention and resources, and a 2018 stakeholder network analysis and a 2022 UN stakeholder meeting recommended the urgent need for GBV prevention interventions that target norms and attitude change. Other gaps include the lack of an integrated data management information system that has the ability to track reported cases and services they received.

Programming under this IR may focus on increasing access to post-violence care and addressing social and gender norms to prevent GBV. The Activity will also engage with line ministries and civil society to strengthen GBV prevention and response mechanisms and be guided by national frameworks such as the Lesotho National Prevention and Response Plan on Violence Against Children and Youth (NPRP).

IR 4.1: Increased capacity of communities to address harmful social and gender norms affecting HIV risk among children and AGYW

The Activity will employ evidence-based approaches to address social norms and values that accept violence in communities in order to transform attitudes and behaviors. The activity will engage community-based leaders (traditional leaders, faith leaders, school leaders, leaders of initiation schools etc) on their role as opinion leaders for creating an enabling environment for adolescent girls and boys and young women to address harmful gender norms, including VAC, GBV, exploitative and transactional sexual relationships and teenage pregnancy. Interventions at community level will also seek to address stigma associated with adolescent girls seeking family planning services, and with AGYW using PrEP. Bokamoso will also promote capacities of selected community members and community-based structures to identify, appropriately intervene, and report on violence against children and women.

Strategic and structured community mobilization will also serve to engage men and boys to raise awareness on the drivers of HIV transmission for AGYW and GBV. Interventions should be strategic, targeted, and structured. Community engagement activities should be done in collaboration with other PEPFAR supported community level engagement.

IR 4.2: Increased disclosure of VAC & GBV by children and AGYW and increased access to comprehensive post-violence care

The activity will support children, their caregivers and AGYW to recognize VAC and GBV, including abuse, neglect and exploitation and where and how to seek support through post-violence services including medical, psychological, police services and legal support. The activity will also implement evidence-informed models to support parenting for positive discipline instead of harsh corporal punishment.

The Activity will support survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and link them to appropriate care. Interventions will highlight the importance of accessing HIV post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and emergency contraception within 72 hours timely after rape or sexual abuse.

IR 4.3: Strengthened referral networks to protect children and adolescents

The Activity will support the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Social Development to define and develop its referral and linkage system and strengthen case management for child protection and GBV. Bokamoso will continue to support GBV/VAC peer navigators and explore sustainability pathways for this important community role.

Programming will also ensure that social workers, peer navigators and project staff who interact with children and AGYW are conversant with best practices of first line response such as LIVES (Listen, Inquire, Validate, Enhance, Safety, Support).

Strategies should be developed to support the mental health of GBV/VAC service providers and first-line responders, including the implementation of activities and establishment of systems and processes to mitigate and respond to vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and burnout.

Expected outcomes under IR 4 are listed below. These are not exhaustive, and the applicant is expected to define additional outcomes.

- Increased reporting of GBV and VAC
- Increased access to clinical, social and legal post-violence care services for OVC and AGYW
- Improved case management for GBV and VAC.

IR.5: Strengthened sustainability of multisectoral youth programming for HIV and violence prevention

The Activity will work at multiple levels of civil society and government structures to strengthen capacity and effectiveness of existing structures and platforms to strengthen the sustainability of multi-sectoral youth programming, especially in the child and youth development domains highlighted in IRs 1 to 4, economic strengthening, utilization of clinical HIV services, early childhood development and education, and GBV/VAC prevention and response. The Activity will closely liaise with and leverage other donors and multilateral organizations focusing on child and youth programming.

IR 5.1 Improved management of social protection programming for children and youth at district and national level

The Activity will provide technical assistance to key national and district structures to strengthen multi-sectoral youth policy and programming platforms. In close collaboration with UNDP and other development partners, activities might include provision of TA of core national and district structures, such as the National Parliament's Social Cluster, for improved management of social protection and youth programming.

IR 5.2 Model/s for sustainable comprehensive service delivery for vulnerable children developed and implemented

Lesotho's PEPFAR supported comprehensive family-based OVC program is well established across the country. Implementation relies on specialized cadres recruited for and funded by USAID such as case managers and social workers collaborating with GOL staff in health facilities and social services. For improved coverage and sustainability of child programming, Bokamoso will engage line ministries and non-governmental child service providers in select districts to map current PEPFAR supported OVC services against government functions, and design and pilot a district led child service delivery model that leverages and optimizes existing government and civil society services, staffing and resources.

IR 5.3: Improved capacity of Government of Lesotho to lead, coordinate and monitor VAC and GBV prevention and response services

The Activity will work with the Government of Lesotho to strengthen existing child protection and VAC/GBV response systems. This may include activities to support or monitor implementation and enforcement of the Counter Domestic Violence Act and technical assistance to support the Coordination objectives of the NPRP. Bokamoso will support the capacity of community and district child protection teams to coordinate the implementation of the NPRP and support the MGSP to collect and analyze data on violence against children and youth and lead monitoring and evaluation of the NPRP.

Expected outcomes under IR 2 are listed below. These are not exhaustive, and the applicant is expected to define additional outcomes.

- Effective VAC/GBV coordination structures in place
- NPRP implementation tracked and monitored
- Districts plans for integrated HIV and violence prevention programs developed with youth participation
- Implementation model for sustainable OVC service delivery developed.

VII. Core programming considerations

The following core programming considerations should be embedded into the technical approach:

Meaningful engagement of youth: The activity should create opportunities and platforms through which AGYW and adolescent OVC can participate in the design, implementation, and monitoring of activities and provide regular and consistent feedback on program activities. The activity should identify new and innovative approaches for engaging with the adolescents and youth, including partnering with youth organizations. The Recipient may include an Emerging Leaders Program as part of project implementation in which youth will be hired and remunerated as emerging leaders into jobs, fellowships and/or internships within the project or directly linked to specific jobs or remunerated internship opportunities outside the project.

Alignment with the Government of Lesotho - USAID recognizes the GOL and its National AIDS Commission as the center of decision-making, leadership, and management of the national HIV response. All USG implementers must support the priorities articulated in GOL strategies. The activity will work closely with relevant GOL ministries, especially the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Social Development, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to develop sustainable approaches and ensure high program coverage and robust program linkages with GOL social and health services.

Sustainability - The Activity will contribute to Lesotho's self-reliance by strengthening the ability of local organizations and community structures to reach and support vulnerable and at-risk populations (OVC and AGYW) and increase the use of services that mitigate the impact of HIV, prevent new HIV infections, and improve HIV clinical outcomes for C/ALHIV. To achieve this the Activity will foster community-led behavioral interventions and encourage sustainable changes in traditional practices and community structures that impact OVC and AGYW. In addition, over the life of the award, programming approaches will ensure that the OVC and DREAMS programs adapt as needed to foster longevity of the programs.

Child Safeguarding - Vulnerable children need to be protected from abuse, violence, neglect, and exploitation which sometimes comes from the people that are supposed to protect them. Families, communities, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, and governments need to work together towards safe-guarding children. Child Safeguarding policies are a first step towards this goal. The implementing organization, including any subgrantee organization must develop child safeguarding policies and train all project staff and community cadre on such policies. Implementing organizations must have systems to ensure that no staff or community cadre are employed that have any history of abusing, neglecting, exploiting or violating children.

Gender Equality - To promote gender equality and mitigate structural and other gender inequalities, it is critical that this Activity articulates gender integration into all planned activities including reproductive health services and preventing and responding to Gender Based Violence and Violence against children. The activity should engage all genders to address norms and behaviors, to increase understanding of women's and girls' legal rights and protection, of women's and girls' access to income and productive resources, including education, and to increase men's involvement in the care of their children.

Inclusivity: This activity should ensure that programming is inclusive, and does not discriminate against, but is welcoming of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer individuals, as well as people with disabilities. The implementer should encourage recruitment of people with disabilities as community cadre and program staff. The activity should ensure program materials and implementation approaches are inclusive and accessible. Interventions must be accessible for children and AGYW with disabilities, and provide referral services for screening and health and social services. Children with disabilities are the target group for the OVC comprehensive program, and C/ALHIV with disability require tailored support to remain virally suppressed.

Innovation: Innovative interventions to reach and serve the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach AGYW, strengthen families, communities, the sub national government, and link community-based, and clinical services needs to be articulated. Innovative, new or advanced interventions or approaches that engage the private sector and youth themselves and that makes use of digital platforms and other technology contributing to the achievement of the objectives and expected results and outcomes are encouraged.

Approaches are informed by evidence, epidemic realities, and contribute to epidemic control: Programming to mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS and other adversities on OVC, AGYW and PLHIV should prioritize interventions that have been proven effective through outcome evaluation and/or research and should comply with relevant PEPFAR guidance. In some cases, PEPFAR may require review and approval of a curriculum before it can be implemented.

Use of systematic methods to identify the most vulnerable AGYW: The Activity will have to describe effective strategies for identifying the most vulnerable AGYW. Criteria and tools for identification need to be developed or adapted from existing evidence-based interventions. Identification strategies will be a vital

step for tailored appropriate programming for different subgroups, age bands and geography. This entails accurate assessment of beneficiary needs and matching beneficiaries with messages and interventions as well as social protection and other services provided by government and other implementers.

Family/Household-Centered Approach: Client focused and family-centered approaches that strengthen the parents and caregivers at the household level are considered fundamental to a quality OVC Activity. Households are composed of people who are in some way affiliated, i.e., individuals who share common space for living, cooking, and caring for children. Supporting vulnerable households and by definition, caregivers, can assure continuity of care and support for vulnerable children. Caregivers should be respected as full participants in any activities that support the care of their children. Interventions designed to strengthen the capacity of families to achieve child wellbeing outcomes will ensure that families and caregivers have access to basic support and are able to access resources to meet important family needs (e.g., education, health costs, food).

Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA): USAID's CLA approach aims to improve our development effectiveness in a more systematic and intentional way by encouraging strategic collaboration, continuous learning, and adaptive management throughout all our activities and programming. Recipients should incorporate these important principles throughout their design, development, and implementation. Integrating CLA into this program will help to ensure that interventions are coordinated with others, grounded in a strong evidence base, and iteratively adapted to remain relevant throughout implementation.

Disability Inclusion (including Mental Health): The activity should include targeted approaches to ensure interventions are accessible for people with disabilities, and make efforts to collaborate with local Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs), advocates, partners and community actors to ensure barriers to accessing health and social services provided under the activity are removed. The activity should also strive to recruit and train staff with disabilities. Disabilities may include: vision Impairment, deaf or hard of hearing, mental health conditions, intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, autism spectrum disorder, physical disability.

[END OF SECTION A]

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SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this NOFO. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide \$60,000,000 in total USAID funding over a five-year period.

USAID reserves the right to fund interventions incrementally over the duration of the award, if necessary, depending on the availability of funds, the level of performance against approved indicators, and their continued relevance to USAID programs.

B.2 Expected Performance Indicators, Targets, Baseline Data, and Data Collection

Performance indicators for this activity will be developed jointly by USAID/Lesotho and the Recipient and will be incorporated into the Cooperative Agreement.

B.3 Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The anticipated period of performance is five years. The estimated start is [●].

B.4 Title to Property

Property title under the resultant agreement shall vest with the Recipient in accordance with the requirements of Mandatory Standard Provision for Non-U.S. Organizations, Title to And Use Of Property (December 2014).

B.5 Substantial Involvement

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.24 “Cooperative Agreement” and the USAID Automated Directive Services (ADS) 300.3.11 “Cooperative Agreements and Substantial Involvement”, USAID/Lesotho anticipates having Substantial Involvement throughout the implementation of the *Bokamoso* (Brighter Future) Activity.

USAID will designate an Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) for this Cooperative Agreement. The role of the AOR is to assist in the programmatic monitoring and administration of the award. The Agreement Officer (AO) may delegate the approval listed in the items below to the AOR, except for authority to change the Program Description, the period of performance, the approved budget, and key personnel that require AO’s approval.

USAID’s substantial involvement under the award is expected to be as follows:

- Approval of Annual Implementation Plans (i.e work plans);
- Approval of Specified Key Personnel;
- Approval of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL Plan).

B.6 Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for the procurement of commodities and services under this program is **935** (any area or country including the recipient country but excluding any country that is a prohibited source) for

the procurement of commodities and services as per ADS 310.3.1.1.

B.7 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 *Bokamoso (Brighter Future) Activity* which is authorized by Federal statute. The Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through its Program Description 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]

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SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 Eligible Applicants

Eligibility for this NOFO is restricted to local entities in the Southern Africa region⁴ in accordance with PEPFAR FY 2020 Country Operational Plan Guidance and applies to the principal/prime applicant only. Only local organizations as defined below are eligible to apply.

NOTE: The term "the country" in the table below does not mean a single country, but any of the countries listed in footnote 4.

Entity other than a sole proprietorship (such as, a corporation or not-for-profit) must meet all three areas of eligibility:		
1	either	must be incorporated or legally organized under the laws of, and have its principal place of business in the country served by the PEPFAR program with which the entity is involved;
	or	must exist in the region where the entity's funded PEPFAR programs are implemented
2	either	must be at 75% beneficially owned at the time of application by individuals who are citizens or lawfully admitted permanent residents of that same country
	or	at least 75% of the entity's staff (senior, mid-level, support) at the time of application must be citizens or lawfully admitted permanent residents of that same country
3		where an entity has a Board of Directors, at least 51% of the members of the Board must also be citizens or lawfully admitted permanent residents of such country

Limitation on Subawards to Non-Local Entities (July 2014):

- (a) By submission of an application and execution of the award, the applicant/recipient agrees that at least fifty (50) percent of the cost of award performance incurred for personnel must be expended for employees of the prime/local entity.
- (b) By submission of an application and execution of the award, the Applicant/Recipient represents that it is an individual, a corporation, a nonprofit organization, or another body of persons that:
 - (1) Is legally organized under the laws of;
 - (2) Has as its principal place of business or operations in;
 - (3) Is majority owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of; and
 - (4) Is managed by a governing body the majority of who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the country in which this award will be primarily performed.

⁴ Angola, Botswana, Bouvet Island, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mayotte, Mozambique, Namibia, Reunion, Saint Helena, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (as per 2020 State Department/ForeignAssistance.gov Sub Regional Groupings).

(c) For purposes of this provision, “majority owned” and “managed by” include, without limitation, beneficiary interests and the power, either directly or indirectly, whether exercised or exercisable, to control the election, appointment, or tenure of the organization's managers or a majority of the organization's governing body by any means.

C.2 Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required under this activity. Cost-share means that portion of Activity costs not borne by the U.S. Government. Cost-sharing includes cash and in-kind (this includes things such as volunteer time; valuation of donated supplies, equipment, and other property; and use of unrecovered indirect costs contributions), and is subject to 2 CFR 200.306 for U.S. organizations which, *inter alia*, requires that cost-sharing be verifiable from the Recipient’s records. Cost-share is normally associated with contributions from the same prime and sub-recipient sources that also receive USAID funds under an award. Failure to meet a cost-sharing requirement can result in reducing the amount of USAID funding for the following funding period, require the recipient to refund the difference to USAID when this award expires or is terminated, or reduce the amount of cost share required under the award.

C.3 Profit/Fee

While for-profit firms may participate, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400(g), it is USAID policy not to award Fee/Profit to prime recipients and subrecipients under assistance instruments. However, while Fee/Profit is not allowed for sub-awards, the prohibition does not apply when the recipient acquires goods and services in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317-326, “Procurement Standards.” Foregone profit does not qualify as cost-share.

C.4 Other

Each applicant is limited to one application submission under this NOFO as the prime applicant. There is no limitation on being included as a potential sub-awardee in multiple applications submitted by other prime applicants. The use of exclusive teaming arrangements is discouraged.

Risk Assessment

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.206 USAID is required to evaluate risk posed by the applicant prior to awarding a federal grant. Risk assessment will be conducted in accordance with ADS 303.3.9. The Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA) will be requested to submit additional evidence they deem necessary for the AO to make a positive risk assessment determination. The information submitted should substantiate that the applicant:

- i. Has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources, as required during the performance of the award.
- ii. Has the ability to meet the award terms and conditions, considering all existing prospective recipient commitments, both non-governmental and governmental.
- iii. Has a satisfactory record of performance. Generally, relevant unsatisfactory performance in the past is enough to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance or the Applicant has taken adequate corrective measures to assure that it will be able to perform its functions satisfactorily.
- iv. Has a satisfactory record of business integrity.
- v. Is otherwise qualified to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.

[END OF SECTION C]

SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 Agency Point of Contact

Name: Ms. Galina Ponkratova
Title: Sr. Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
Email: gponkratova@usaid.gov

Name: Ms. Hanifa Noor
Title: Sr. Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
Email: hnoor@usaid.gov

The above contact information is for informational purposes only. This NOFO itself and any subsequent amendments can be found at www.grants.gov. All applications must be submitted according to the instructions contained in this NOFO.

In order to maintain a fair and transparent funding opportunity USAID maintains strict guidelines on who within USAID may be contacted regarding questions about the opportunity. Applicants may only contact USAID via the email address provided in this NOFO.

D.2 Agreement Officer

Name: Mr. Nya Kwai Boayue
Title: Regional Agreement Officer
Email: nboayue@usaid.gov

D.3 Questions and Answers to this NOFO

1. Questions or clarifications in response to this NOFO must be submitted via email to gponkratova@usaid.gov with a copy to hnoor@usaid.gov and nboayue@usaid.gov.
2. Prospective applicants must submit questions by the time and date indicated on the Cover Page of the NOFO. No questions will be accepted after the date and time specified in the cover letter. No phone calls will be accepted.
3. Prospective applicants must submit all questions by email using the following format for the subject line: "Questions: RFA 72067424RFA00005 – *Bokamoso* Activity - [Name of Organization]."
4. 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 on www.grants.gov, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant. Please check www.grants.gov for any amendments.

D.4 Overall Submission Process

Phase 1: Initial Technical Application. Applicants are invited to submit an Initial Technical Application not to exceed (NTE) the page limit and submission instructions set forth in Section D.5. Initial Technical Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the Merit Review criteria set forth in Section E.2.

After USAID review, applicants will be notified in writing whether their application will receive further consideration. Applicants not advancing to Phase 2 will be provided a short debrief highlighting the main reasons their application was not selected. USAID anticipates inviting no more than three (3) applicants for participation in Phase 2. Applicants selected to participate in Phase 2 will be sent a letter highlighting aspects of their Initial Technical Application that USAID would like to discuss in more detail during Phase 2.

Phase 2: Co-Creation and Discussions. Selected applicants may be given the opportunity to orally present their Initial Technical Application addressing the areas highlighted by USAID. USAID technical staff may also engage in collaborative discussions, over no more than a 2-week period, to better understand the Applicant's technical approach. These discussions may take place over email, video conference, or in person in order to minimize the costs to potential applicants.

Phase 2 may involve some or all of the following activities: Oral presentation on the initial technical applications, meeting(s) with USAID staff and other stakeholders, or written responses to submitted questions.

During this stage, USAID may also explain the requirements of a full application. At the end of this stage, USAID will determine which application it has the highest degree of confidence in. That applicant will be invited to submit a full technical and cost application. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via a letter from the AO. Please note that this letter may come after the award of the cooperative agreement.

Phase 3: Full Technical and Cost Application. One applicant will be selected from Phase 2 as the Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA) and invited to submit a full technical and cost application. This applicant will receive a detailed letter outlining the requirements of the full technical and cost application. The format and requirements for the cost and technical application will be provided by the Agreement Officer in writing. This stage may involve a collaborative co-design of the activity and/or engagement with USAID.

NOTE: USAID reserves the right to bypass Phase 2 and invite selected applicant(s) to submit a full application after Phase 1.

D. 5 Phase 1: Initial Technical Applications

D.5.1 General Content and Form of Initial Technical Application

1. Initial Technical Applications submitted in response to this NOFO are due to USAID by the closing date and time indicated on the cover page, or as amended.
2. All correspondence must reference the NOFO number 72067424RFA00005.
3. The Initial Technical Application must be page numbered and contain a table of contents.
4. The Initial Technical Application must be signed by an authorized official.
5. Initial Technical Applications submitted in response to this solicitation will be received by email submission only. Hard copies will not be accepted.

Submission of Initial Technical Applications

6. All initial technical applications must be submitted electronically to gponkratova@usaid.gov with a copy to hnoor@usaid.gov and nboayue@usaid.gov. This will be the only acceptable method of receipt.
7. Late submissions may be considered at the discretion of the AO. Applicants submitting an Initial Technical Application must retain proof of timely delivery in the form of system generated documentation of delivery receipt date and time/confirmation from the receiving office.

8. Initial Technical Applications must be submitted by email using the following format for the subject line: "Initial Technical Application: RFA 72067424RFA00005 - *Bokamoso* Activity - [Name of Organization]." If multiple emails are required to send a corrected submission, the subject line must also indicate if it is a correction.
9. After submitting an Initial Technical Application electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm the attachments were successfully sent.
10. USAID's preference is that components of the Initial Technical Application be submitted as a single consolidated document.
11. Applicants are reminded that email is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, Applicants are requested to send the Initial Technical Application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this NOFO, USAID's mail server will be referenced to identify the timestamp of receipt of submissions.
12. You will receive an email from USAID confirming receipt of submission via e-mail.

D.5.2 Preparation of the Initial Technical Application

1. Initial Technical Applications should not exceed thirteen (13) pages excluding specific parts of the overall document as listed below. Content above 13 pages will not be reviewed.
2. Text must be written in English and typed on standard 8 ½" x 11" page size, single-spaced, one inch margins, size 11 Calibri font, and left justification, with each page numbered consecutively. Smaller font, but not smaller than 10, can be used in tables and graphs. Except for the first page, each page must include a header that contains the RFA number, activity name, and organization name.
3. Submitted via Microsoft Word and PDF formats and must be searchable and editable.
4. Applicants must submit Initial Technical Applications that respond to the objective outlined in Section A. "Program Description" and address Merit Review Criteria listed in Section E.2 of the NOFO.
5. The Initial Technical Application must be organized in the following manner:
 - (a) Cover Page
 - (b) Table of Contents
 - (c) Acronym List
 - (d) Executive Summary
 - (e) Institutional Capability
 - (f) Technical Approach

D.5.3 Content Details

1. **Cover Page** (one page) (not included in 13-page limit) should include the following:
 - Activity Title: *Bokamoso (Brighter Future) Activity*
 - Notice of Funding Opportunity number: 72067424RFA00005
 - Date of Submission
 - Name and address of the applicant organization
 - Type of organization (e.g., for-profit, non-profit, university, etc.)

- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI - formerly known as DUNS) number for prime applicant
- Name and Title of Authorized Representative with their telephone number and email address
- Name and Title of an alternate contact person with their telephone number and email address
- Name(s) of any proposed sub-recipients or partnerships (identify if any of the organizations are local organizations, per USAID's definition of 'local entity' under ADS 303.)

2. Table of contents (not included in 13-page limit)

- Include major sections and page numbering (i.e., Pg. 1 of 1)

3. Acronym List (one page) (not included in 13-page limit)

4. Executive Summary (NTE 1 page)

- The executive summary must summarize the key elements of the Applicant's organizational capabilities and technical approach. The summary should highlight key points of the application. No information should be presented in the summary that is not in the body of the application.

5. Institutional Capability (NTE 5 pages)

In this section the Application should:

- Describe the primary Applicant's organizational knowledge and capacity, including relevant experience working with the proposed target populations of vulnerable children and adolescents and AGYW in Lesotho.
- Include a description of the organization's operational systems that would enable successful implementation. Please include any examples in which the Applicant demonstrates the successful implementation of programs similar in magnitude, complexity, objectives, and context.
- Describe the organizational knowledge and capacity of the primary applicant or/and proposed sub-awardee/s in supporting working with the Government of Lesotho.
- Describe the organizational knowledge and capacity of the primary applicant or/and proposed sub-awardee/s in engagement with the private sector and leveraging private and public sector economic strengthening expertise in support of economic strengthening for vulnerable populations.
- If the Applicant is proposing sub-awards for implementers or specialist technical partners, describe experience in administering and accounting for sub-awards, experience in building capacity of sub grantees, amounts awarded and systems in place to monitor and track sub awards. If partners/sub-awards are proposed, describe their organizational history and experience and provide letters of support, indicating they have been consulted and have agreed to participate in the proposed activities. Letters of support by proposed subgrantees do not count toward the 5-page limit and if included, should be placed in the Appendices.

6. Technical Approach (NTE 7 pages)

This section should address the following:

- Include a problem statement with a brief analysis of the intended program participants and the stakeholders how you plan to engage program participants and communities in detailed program design and regular client feedback.
- Describe the proposed approaches, including any innovative methods, techniques, or tools relevant to your program. Describe how the proposed activities are likely to achieve the desired outputs, outcomes and results and how the strategies will respond to the core programming considerations (Section VII of the Program Description).

- Describe how you will work with line ministries and other stakeholders to promote sustainability of multisectoral HIV programming for children and youth, including capacity building of local structures for the transition of core approaches or activities.
- Describe how you will develop partnerships with other initiatives led by other donors or government and with the private sector to create economic opportunities for AGYW.
- Describe how collaboration and referrals to clinical services will be operationalized.

D.6 Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

After an ASA has been identified, only the ASA will be requested to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the AO and incorporated into any resulting award.

Branding Strategy and Marking Plan Pre-Award Term

1. Branding Strategy – Assistance (June 2012)

- a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Branding Strategy," describing how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens.
- b. The request for a Branding Strategy, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.
- c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.
- d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.
- e. The Branding Strategy must include, at a minimum, all of the following:
 - (1) All estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth.
 - (2) The intended name of the program, project, or activity.
 - (i) USAID requires the applicant to use the "USAID Identity," comprised of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "from the American people" as found on the USAID Web site at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding> , unless Section VI of the Request for Application (RFA) or Annual Program Statement (APS) states that the USAID Administrator has approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.
 - (ii) USAID prefers local language translations of the phrase "made possible by (or with) the generous support of the American People" next to the USAID Identity when acknowledging

contributions.

- (iii) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.
 - (iv) If branding in the above manner is inappropriate or not possible, the applicant must explain how USAID's involvement will be showcased during publicity for the program or project.
 - (v) USAID prefers to fund projects that do not have a separate logo or identity that competes with the USAID Identity. If there is a plan to develop a separate logo to consistently identify this program, the applicant must attach a copy of the proposed logos. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.
- (3) The intended primary and secondary audiences for this project or program, including direct beneficiaries and any special target segments.
- (4) Planned communication or program materials used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries.
- (i) Describe the main program message.
 - (ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcements, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.
 - (iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this program or project to host country citizens, such as media releases, press conferences, public events, and so forth. Applicants must incorporate the USAID Identity and the message, "USAID is from the American People."
 - (iv) Provide any additional ideas to increase awareness that the American people support this project or program.
- (5) Information on any direct involvement from host-country government or ministry, including any planned acknowledgement of the host-country government.
- (6) Any other groups whose logo or identity the applicant will use on program materials and related materials. Indicate if they are a donor or why they will be visibly acknowledged, and if they will receive the same prominence as USAID.
- f. The Agreement Officer will review the Branding Strategy to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.
- g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Branding Strategy will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement.

2. Marking Plan – Assistance (June 2012)

- a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Marking Plan," detailing the public communications, commodities, and program materials, and other items that will visibly bear the "USAID Identity," which comprises of the USAID logo and brand mark, with the tagline "from the American people." The USAID Identity is the official marking for the Agency, and is found on the USAID Web site at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding>. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.
- b. The request for a Marking Plan, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the

applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

- c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.
- d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.
- e. The Marking Plan must include all of the following:
 - (1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the applicant plans to produce and which will bear the USAID Identity as part of the award, including:
 - (i) Program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other sites physical in nature;
 - (ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audiovisual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;
 - (iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs;
 - (iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.
 - (v) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.
 - (2) A table on the program deliverables with the following details:
 - (i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the USAID Identity;
 - (ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;
 - (iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;
 - (iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity ,
 - (v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.
 - (3) Any requests for an exemption from USAID marking requirements, and an explanation of why the exemption would apply. The applicant may request an exemption if USAID marking requirements would:
 - (i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for

- which an exemption is sought.
- (ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent. The applicant must explain why each particular deliverable must be seen as credible.
 - (iii) Undercut host-country government “ownership” of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each particular item or product is better positioned as a host-country government item or product.
 - (iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or commodity would impair its functionality.
 - (v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost beneficial or practical.
 - (vi) Offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate. The applicant must identify the relevant norm, and explain why marking would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.
 - (vii) Conflict with international law. The applicant must identify the applicable international law violated by the marking.
- f. The Agreement Officer will consider the Marking Plan's adequacy and reasonableness and will approve or disapprove any exemption requests. The Marking Plan will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.
- g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Marking Plan, including any approved exemptions, will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement, and will apply for the term of the award unless provided otherwise.

D.7 Funding Restrictions

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.331 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will be limited to necessary renovations that directly support activity objectives. Construction activities are not approved unless explicitly stated in the award.

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.6 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

D.8 Conscience Clause Implementation (Assistance)– Pre-Award Term (February 2012)

- (a) An organization, including a faith-based organization, that is otherwise eligible to receive funds under this agreement for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, or care—
 - 1) Shall not be required, as a condition of receiving such assistance—
 - (i) to endorse or utilize a multisectoral or comprehensive approach to combating HIV/AIDS; or

(ii) to endorse, utilize, make a referral to, become integrated with, or otherwise participate in any program or activity to which the organization has a religious or moral objection; and

2) Shall not be discriminated against in the solicitation or issuance of grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements for refusing to meet any requirement described in paragraph (a)(1) above.

- (b) An applicant who believes that this solicitation contains provisions or requirements that would require it to endorse or use an approach or participate in an activity to which it has a religious or moral objection must so notify the cognizant Agreement Officer in accordance with the Mandatory Standard Provision titled "Notices" as soon as possible, and in any event not later than 15 calendar days before the deadline for submission of applications under this solicitation. The applicant must advise which activity(ies) it could not implement and the nature of the religious or moral objection.
- (c) In responding to the solicitation, an applicant with a religious or moral objection may compete for any funding opportunity as a prime partner, or as a leader or member of a consortium that comes together to compete for an award. Alternatively, such an applicant may limit its application to those activities it can undertake and must indicate in its submission the activity(ies) it has excluded based on religious or moral objection. The offeror's proposal will be evaluated based on the activities for which a proposal is submitted, and will not be evaluated favorably or unfavorably due to the absence of a proposal addressing the activity(ies) to which it objected and which it thus omitted. In addition to the notification in paragraph (b) above, the applicant must meet the submission date provided for in the solicitation.

D.9 Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term (August 2018)

1. 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.

2. Organizational Conflict of Interest

Applicants 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.

D.10 Unique Entity Identifier and SAM Requirements

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (formerly a 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 UEI number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients;
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 (www.beta.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 or 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.

UEI number: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM registration: <http://www.beta.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 www.beta.sam.gov, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

[END OF SECTION D]

SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 Criteria

The Merit Review Criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their initial technical application, and (b) set the standard against which all Initial Technical Applications will be evaluated.

Technical and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Initial Technical Application and during the Co-Creation and Discussion Phase. The Merit Review Committee (MRC) will review initial technical applications and revisions during the Co-Creation and Discussion phase based upon the Merit Review Criteria set forth below.

E.2 Merit Review and Selection Process

E.2.1 Merit Review Methodology

An MRC composed of USAID technical staff will review the initial technical applications in accordance with the methods described below.

E.2.2 Phase 1: Initial Technical Application Review Criteria

Initial technical applications will be evaluated based on USAID's level of confidence in the proposed application. USAID's review will consider the following aspects in determining its level of confidence. The initial technical application will receive an overall confidence rating.

Institutional Capacity

- The extent to which the Applicant possesses the current organizational knowledge, capability, relevant experience and operational systems necessary to implement the desired interventions, including capability and experience to manage subgrantees/multi-partner consortiums if subgrantees are proposed.
- The extent to which the Applicant proposes strong consortium partners, if any, with the technical capability, experience and operational systems, with clearly defined roles for each partner/subgrantee.
- The extent to which the Applicant (if not a local Lesotho based organization) possesses the capability and relevant experience to build the capacity of local organizations to implement community-based programs and comply with USG rules and regulations.

Technical Approach

- The extent to which the Applicant describes sound and feasible strategies and approaches.
- The extent to which the approaches propose promising and innovative approaches for economic strengthening for AGYW and caregivers of OVC.
- The extent to which the Initial Technical Application demonstrates sustainable and measurable programming approaches.

The table below shows the confidence ratings that will be assessed for each application.

High Confidence	USAID has high confidence that applicant has the institutional capacity and proposes sound technical approach to successfully perform the proposed activity
Some Confidence	USAID has some confidence that applicant has the institutional capacity and proposes sound technical approach to successfully perform the proposed activity
Low Confidence	USAID has low confidence that applicant has the institutional capacity and proposes sound technical approach to successfully perform the proposed activity

E.2.3 Phase 2: Co-Creation and Discussion

If conducted, applications for the Bokamoso Activity will be assessed using the same merit review criteria from Phase 1 for Institutional Capacity and Technical Approach. Confidence ratings will be reviewed in light of initial submissions and information provided during Phase 2 discussions and/or presentations. Comparative analysis will be performed to determine which application offers the best chance of success. Applications will receive a confidence rating for Institutional Capacity, Technical Approach, and an overall confidence rating.

E.2.4 Phase 3: Full Application

The Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA) will be invited to submit a full Cost and Technical Application. Detailed instructions will be provided to that Applicant by the Agreement Officer.

E.2.5 Business Review

The Agency will evaluate the Cost Application of only the ASA 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 implement the activity 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.

If cost share is proposed, it 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 200.206). 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 200.208).

[END OF SECTION E]

SECTION F--FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.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.

The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

The Cooperative Agreement signed by the AO is the authorizing document, which shall be transmitted to the authorized agent of the successful organization(s), electronically.

F.2 Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The Agreement Officer will use applicable policies and standard provisions in the administration of the resulting award. No deviations are currently contemplated to the standard provisions for the Cooperative Agreement resulting from this NOFO.

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations: ADS 303, 2 CFR 200 Subpart E — Cost Principles, and the following Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations will apply. (Note: the full text of these provisions may be found at: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/303maa.pdf>.)

F.3 Reporting Requirements

Program Reports shall be in accordance with applicable USAID Standard Provisions. All written documentation must be submitted in professional-level English. The reports listed below are the initial reports that USAID anticipates requiring from the successful recipient. Based on the evolving nature of the agreement, USAID may provide modified reporting requirements.

Note: USAID's fiscal year starts on October 1 and ends on September 30. Four fiscal quarterly periods begin on October 1, January 1, April 1, and July 1.

F.3.1 Financial Reporting

F.3.1.1 Quarterly Financial Reports

The Recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) (available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html> and at https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms) on a quarterly basis no later than thirty days after the end of each reporting period.

Quarterly financial reports should contain, at a minimum:

- Total funds awarded to date by USAID into the agreement;
- Total funds previously reported as expended by Recipient main line items;

- Total funds expended in the current quarter by the Recipient by the main line items;
- Total unliquidated obligations by main line items; and,
- Unobligated balance of USAID funds.

The following reporting period end dates shall be used for quarterly reports (March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31). The Recipient must submit SF-425 via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The Recipient must submit an electronic copy of the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) at the same time to the Office of Financial Management (email: invoice@usaid.gov), the Agreement Officer, and the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR).

F.3.1.2 Final Financial Report

The final financial report is due no later than 90 days after the estimated completion date of this Agreement. The Recipient must submit an electronic version of the final Federal Financial Form (SF-425) to the same addresses as identified above.

F.3.1.3 Annual Program Expenditure Reporting

In 2018, the USG introduced a new annual reporting requirement of expenditures of PEPFAR programs at the end of each fiscal year. The Expenditure Reporting (ER) will be an ongoing PEPFAR activity and is being institutionalized as part of routine PEPFAR reporting. All PEPFAR implementing partners are required to adhere to this reporting requirement. The goal of this interagency exercise is to better understand the costs USG incurs to provide a broad range of HIV services and support and subsequently use this information to improve program planning. Recipients of PEPFAR funding are required to capture PEPFAR Program Expenditures in an Excel form which will be uploaded and submitted using the Data for Accountability, Transparency and Impact (DATIM). The AOR is a point of contact for this annual reporting requirement of expenditures of PEPFAR programs.

F.3.1.4 Foreign Tax Reports

Reporting of foreign taxes under this agreement shall follow the standard provision entitled "Reporting Host Government Taxes (December 2014)" of this award document.

Host government taxes are not allowable where the Agreement Officer provides the necessary means to the recipient to obtain an exemption or refund of such taxes, and the recipient fails to take reasonable steps to obtain such exemption or refund. Otherwise, taxes are allowable in accordance with the Standard Provision, "Applicability of 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 (December 2014)", and must be reported as required in this provision.

The Recipient must include this reporting requirement in all applicable sub-agreements, including subawards and contracts.

F.3.2 Performance Planning and Reporting

Program planning reports are critical to USAID/Lesotho's ability to be substantially involved in this program. Overall performance of this award should be measured against the OVC and DREAMS specific PEPFAR indicators, standardized USAID customs indicators as well as additional custom indicators that the

successful applicant will be expected to develop to measure service delivery and linkages, as well as to measure progress in promoting sustainability of DREAMS and OVC programming.

The Recipient will submit reports to the USAID AOR as described below:

F.3.2.1 Annual Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan will be finalized in consultation with USAID during the first 45 days following the awarding of the agreement.

The Recipient will submit Annual Implementation Plan to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) for approval. The Annual Implementation Plan is intended to express the recipient and USAID's plan to implement the program. The Annual Implementation Plan authorizes specific Activities to implement the Program Description. The Implementation Plan must include:

- during the implementation plan inception phase, USAID reserves the right to ask the Applicant to propose new key personnel.
- for the first year, a plan for the inception period that includes key decisions that will be made and a plan for engaging the GOR, USAID, and any other partners in the decision-making process;
- the interventions planned to be conducted;
- the site(s), target areas and provinces where they will be conducted;
- benchmarks/milestones/baselines and annual performance targets;
- the outputs/outcomes which the Recipient expects to achieve; and
- the inputs planned to be provided by the Recipient, during the implementation plan period.

Subsequent 12-month implementation plans through the end of the agreement will be prepared on a 12-month basis (October 1 – September 30) and submitted to the AOR not later than March 31 of each year. USAID will have 15 days to provide comments. The annual implementation plan will not be considered complete until it has been accepted in writing by the AOR.

In accordance with collaborating, learning and adapting (CLA) principles, the AOR and Recipient should plan for a period of "pause and reflect" around the annual implementation planning process. The AOR and Recipient should consider learning from the previous year of implementation and opportunities for improvement in the coming year. Additionally, the Recipient must consider opportunities to co-create the implementation plan with stakeholders, including Government of Lesotho, private sector representatives, etc. The Recipient will also consider any ongoing or new climate change risks during the annual implementation planning process and opportunities to address them through delivery of training or other interventions.

If revisions to the annual implementation plan are necessary or desirable, The Recipient must report any significant implementation plan changes or revisions to the USAID AOR, and must obtain the USAID AOR's approval prior to implementing or undertaking such changes or revisions.

Implementation plans and changes/revisions thereto must be within the scope of the Program Description of the Cooperative Agreement. Implementation plans and changes/revisions thereto must describe Activities to be conducted during the period at a greater level of detail than the Program Description, but must not serve to change the Program Description in any way. Therefore, all implementation plans and changes/revisions thereto must cross-reference the applicable section(s) in the Program Description. The Program Description must take precedence over the implementation plans and

any changes/revisions thereto. Any changes to the Program Description must be approved by the Agreement Officer by means of a modification to this Cooperative Agreement. Implementation plans should not be submitted to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).

F.3.2.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan

The MEL Plan will establish how the Recipient and USAID will monitor progress, evaluate performance and impact, and how the Activity intends to learn from the implementation and use the lessons learned to adapt its programming. It will include the goal, objectives, a comprehensive set of indicators responsive to the results framework, including PEPFAR and customs indicators, and expected results of the Activity. The MEL Plan must cover the full period of this Award and will contain a section on "Monitoring," a section on "Evaluation" and a section on "Learning."

The *Monitoring* section will specify indicators, targets, and monitoring methodologies that allow the Recipient and USAID/Lesotho to track the progress of Activity interventions towards achieving the expected results and targets related to Activity objectives.

The *Evaluation* section will describe how Activities will be assessed at the performance and/or impact level, and include a schedule and tools for periodic evaluation/re-evaluation and revision of the approach if and as necessary.

The *Learning* section will describe how knowledge and learning will be gained from implementation, evaluation findings, and monitoring data, to adjust interventions and approaches, as needed. This section will also include review of the information coming out in the ADS 201.3.4.10.A. requires a Beneficiary Feedback Plan as part of the Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP) to (1) request regular feedback directly from beneficiaries to validate the quality and relevance of Activities and (2) respond to that feedback.

The MEL plan must cover the full period of this Cooperative Agreement. The AOR will have authority to determine the appropriate format of the MEL Plan.

The MEL Plan will be completed on the following schedule:

- The Recipient must submit the initial draft of the MEL Plan to the AOR not later than 60 days after the effective date of the Award;
- USAID will provide comments on the MEL Plan not later than 75 days after the effective date of the Award; and
- The Recipient must submit the final MEL Plan to the AOR for USAID approval by not later than 90 days after the effective date of the Award.

For subsequent years, the annual updates to the MEL Plan will be completed on the following schedule:

- The Recipient must submit the updated MEL Plan with results achieved and targets to the AOR not later than August 16 of the corresponding year;
- USAID will provide comments on the updated MEL Plan not later than September 1 of the corresponding year; and
- The Recipient must submit the final updated MEL Plan to the AOR for USAID approval by not later than September 15 of the corresponding year.

If revisions to the MEL plan are necessary or desirable, the Recipient must report any significant MEL plan

changes or revisions to the USAID AOR, and must obtain the USAID AOR's approval prior to implementing or undertaking such changes or revisions. MEL plans should not be submitted to USAID's DEC. The Recipient shall participate and collaborate with USAID-funded external evaluations.

F.3.3 Performance Monitoring Reporting

Performance Monitoring Reporting is intended to ensure that USAID has sufficient information to effectively monitor the Recipient's performance under this program. This includes any information regarding any development that may have a significant impact on performance, including, but not limited to, obstacles faced, relevant contextual changes, or assumptions violated.

F.3.3.1 Notification

As specified in 2 CFR 200.329(e), the Recipient must promptly notify the AOR and AO in the case of: (1) developments which have a significant impact on the Activities supported by this Award; or (2) problems, delays, or adverse conditions which materially impair the ability to meet the objectives of this Cooperative Agreement. This notification must include a statement of the action taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the problem.

F.3.3.2 Quarterly Activity Performance Reports

The Recipient will submit a Quarterly Activity Performance Report on progress towards agreed performance targets for Quarters 1, 2 and 3. Each report will be submitted 30 calendar days after the end of each quarter. Quarter 4 of Activity performance will be included in the Annual Activity Performance Report. The quarterly reporting cycle will align with USAID's fiscal year as follows:

Quarter 1: October-December,
Quarter 2: January-March,
Quarter 3: April-June,
Quarter 4: July-September.

The Quarterly Activity Performance Report should provide a brief and precise description of the intervention, progress on Activity implementation during the reporting period, constraints encountered and adaptations, and suggestions for additional actions to be taken. The expected scope and format of the quarterly report will be established by the AOR in consultation with the Recipient. The Quarterly Activity Performance Report will be submitted electronically to the AOR. Upon AOR approval, the Recipient will upload the report to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) (<http://dec.usaid.gov>).

F.3.3.3 Annual Activity Performance Reports

The Recipient will submit an Annual Activity Performance Report, describing cumulatively the performance of the Activity in the reporting fiscal year, by October 30th of each year. The expected scope and format will be established by the AOR in consultation with the Recipient. At a minimum, the report will address:

- Progress on Activity implementation during that reporting period, outlining achievements for each result area presented in the approved annual implementation plan;
- Progress made in the areas of monitoring, evaluation, and learning;
- The Activity will report on PEPFAR indicators, which can be found in PEPFAR's Monitoring

Evaluation and Reporting (MER) Indicators Reference Guide at www.pepfar.gov. Targets will be set for each MER indicator for which services are delivered based on potential areas over the period of the project. The Recipient should recognize that agreed annual adjustments will be made for all MER data reported in DATIM. Relevant MER indicators may include:

- PP_PREV
- OVC_SERV
- HTS_SELF
- OVC_HIVSTAT

USAID also requires the use of standardized custom indicators, descriptions for which can be found here: <http://ovcsupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/USAID-PEPFAR-Central-Custom-Indicators-Reference-Guide-IRS.pdf>. Examples of custom indicators which are relevant for this Activity are:

- OVC_OFFER
- OVC_ENROLL
- OVC_VL_ELIGIBLE
- OVC_VLR
- OVC_VLS
- GEND_GBV
- GEND_GBV_OTHER
- GEND_LINK_COMM
- GEND_NORM

- Progress regarding the following cross-cutting themes:
 - Gender
 - Inclusion of children with disabilities
 - Private sector engagement
 - ICT
 - Sustainability
- An overview of major challenges, adaptations and lessons learned during the reporting period. An overview of the collaborating, learning, and adapting strategy with an overview of information sharing with other partners during the reporting period and any problems encountered, agreements reached and/or actions taken to ensure effective coordination between partners;
- Other pertinent information as specified by the AOR in writing. The AOR will communicate any other pertinent information required in the report in writing to the Project Manager not later than 15 days prior to the end of the reporting period. Any requests for other pertinent information specified by the AOR for a specific annual report automatically are required for all subsequent reports unless specifically indicated in writing by the AOR that the pertinent information is no longer required in the annual reports.
- Annexes to include the following:
 - Indicator results metrics for all indicators included in the MEL Plan;
 - Success stories during the reporting period (if any);
 - Environmental compliance reporting monitoring (if applicable);
 - List of reports/studies/documents submitted to the DEC, including links; and
 - GIS data (where appropriate).

Within thirty (30) calendar days of obtaining the Agreement Officer Representative's approval, the Recipient must upload the report to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC)

(<http://dec.usaid.gov>).

F.3.3.4 Indicator Results Data Reporting

In addition to the Quarterly and Annual Activity Performance Reports, the Recipient must report indicator results data to USAID in accordance with the assigned indicators' reporting frequencies (quarterly, semi-annual, and annual) as established in the MEL Plan.

The reporting of indicator results data allows USAID to aggregate data, assess the overall performance of Activities, and generate reports for its internal and external stakeholders, including but not limited to USAID Washington, Congress, and the Government of Lesotho.

F.3.3.5 Demobilization Plan

120 days prior to the completion date of this agreement, the Recipient must submit a demobilization plan for AOR approval. The demobilization plan must include a) draft property disposition plan, b) plan for the phase-out of operations, c) delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the agreement, and d) timetable for completing all required actions in the demobilization plan, including the submission date of the final property disposition plan to the Agreement Officer.

F.3.3.6 Final Performance Report

The Recipient must submit a draft of the Final Performance Report to the AOR no later than 90 days following the estimated completion date of the Cooperative Agreement. This Final Performance Report will include the following information:

- I. Overall Activity accomplishments, presented in quantitative terms and described in a narrative that relates interventions, products, and results to the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan;
- II. Discussion of why unexpected progress, positive or negative, was made toward the planned results. If the performance monitoring system (indicators) indicates that expected results were not achieved, the partner must seek to determine and explain the reason;
- III. Analysis of lessons learned, summary of responses to problems encountered during project implementation;
- IV. A bibliography of all products, tools, reports, and studies produced through the project; and
- V. Other pertinent information communicated by the AOR in writing within 15 days of the end of the agreement.

In accordance with the Standard Provision set forth in Attachment C of this agreement entitled "Submissions to the Development Experience Clearinghouse and Publications (June 2012)", within thirty (30) calendar days of obtaining the Agreement Officer Representative's approval, the Recipient must submit one electronic (preferred) copy of the Final Performance Report to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) (<http://dec.usaid.gov>).

F.3.3.7 Other Reporting

During the life of the award, the Recipient may be required to prepare and submit other special reports concerning specific interventions and/or analyses as directed by the AOR or other USAID Officials. These requests will be in writing and will specify the due date.

F.4. Program Income

If it is expected that program income might be generated under this program, then program income earned under the resulting award must be added to the program and used to further eligible program objectives as agreed upon by USAID. Recipient should describe how program income might be generated under the proposed interventions and how it envisions program income being utilized to successfully accomplish program objectives. Program Income, if any, will be accounted for in accordance with 2 CFR 200.307 for U.S. organizations or the Standard Provision entitled Program Income for non-U.S. organizations.

F.5. Environmental Compliance

F.5.1 General

- The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) 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 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ADS/200/>), 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 environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of cooperative agreement.
- In addition, the recipient 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.
- No Activity funded under this Cooperative 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.")

F.5.2 Compliance with the IEE

An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) has been approved for the USAID Lesotho Bokamoso (BK) Project. The IEE covers Activities expected to be implemented under this Award. USAID has determined that a Categorical Exclusion; Negative Determination applies to the proposed interventions. This indicates that if these interventions are implemented subject to the specified conditions, they are expected to have no significant adverse effect on the environment. The Recipient shall be responsible for implementing all IEE conditions pertaining to interventions to be funded under this award.

F.5.3 Implementation Plans

- As part of its initial Implementation Plan, and all Annual Implementation Plans thereafter, the recipient, in collaboration with the USAID AOR and Mission Environmental Officer (MEO) or BEO, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned interventions under this Cooperative Agreement to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental

- documentation.
- If the recipient plans any new interventions outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for review and approval of MEO or BEO. No such new intervention shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.
 - Any ongoing interventions 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.

F.5.4 Mitigation Measures and Monitoring

The environmental determinations in this IEE are contingent upon full implementation of the following general implementation and monitoring requirements, as well as ADS 204 and other relevant requirements.

Changes to scope or addition to awards, per 22 CFR 216.3(a)(9), require a determination be made as to whether such change may have an environmental impact not previously assessed. Per ADS 204, it is the responsibility of the USAID AOR to keep the MEO/REA and BEO informed of any new information or changes in the activity(ies) subject to this IEE that might require revision of this environmental analysis and environmental determination.

During Post-Award:

Post-Award Briefings: The AOR and/or the cognizant environmental officer(s) (e.g., MEO, REA, BEO) will provide post-award briefings for the implementing partner on environmental compliance responsibilities.

Work Plans and Budgeting: The AOR will ensure activities remain within the scope accessed in this the IEE and the implementing partner integrates environmental compliance requirements through work plans and budgets to comply with specified requirements, including EMMP implementation and monitoring (if required by the IEE)

Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan: The AOR, in consultation with the MEO and/or REA, will ensure the implementing partner develops, obtains approval for, and implements EMMPs that are responsive to the stipulated environmental compliance requirements.

Records Management: The AOR will maintain environmental compliance documents in the official project/activity file and upload records to the designated USAID environmental compliance database system.

Host Country Environmental Compliance: The AOR will ensure the implementing partner complies with applicable and appropriate Government of Lesotho country environmental requirements unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. However, in the case of a conflict between the host country and USAID requirements, the more stringent shall govern.

USAID Monitoring Oversight: The AOR or designee, with the support of the cognizant environmental officer(s) (e.g., MEO, REA, BEO), will ensure monitoring of compliance with established requirements (e.g., by desktop reviews, site visits, etc.).

Environmental Compliance Reporting: The AOR, in consultation with the MEO and/or REA, will ensure the implementing partner includes environmental compliance in regular project/activity reports, using indicators as appropriate; develops and submits the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Reports (EMMRs); and completes and submits a Record of Compliance (RoC) describing their implementation of EMMP requirements in conjunction with the final EMMP or at the close of sub activities (as applicable).

Corrective Action: When noncompliance or unforeseen impacts are identified, implementing partners notify the AOR, place a hold on activities, take corrective action, and report on the effectiveness of corrective

actions. The AOR initiates the corrective action process and ensures the IP completes and documents their activities.

F.6 Climate Risk Management

The design team, in consultation with the CIL, considered the potential effect of climate risks/stressors on the sustainability of the activity (changing precipitation patterns, rising temperature, floods, droughts, fires, landslides, etc.) in addition to the impact of activities on the climate (increased greenhouse gas emissions, land use changes, etc.).

In Lesotho, climate change is predicted to further the trends of marked temperature rise and increased rainfall variability, and more frequent extreme weather events. Impacts are expected on food and water security, human settlements, infrastructure, and ecosystems. Health systems and outcomes will also be affected, as climate change trends could aggravate heat stress, increase the range of vector-borne diseases including dengue fever and yellow fever, and exacerbate air pollution, which could impact communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, TB, and other respiratory diseases. These are compounded by poor living conditions.

[END OF SECTION F]

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SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

G.1 NOFO Points of Contact

(1) See Section D.1 for Point of Contact (POC) for questions while this NOFO is open.

(2) For technical assistance related to Grants.gov, Applicants may contact Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov.

G.2 Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID's acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information:

<https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistance-ombudsman>

The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@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 or used – 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.”

Web links

- Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators: <https://www.state.gov/f/indicators/>
- Grants.gov: www.grants.gov
- SF-424 series: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>
- Salary Supplements for Host Government Employees:
<https://www.usaid.gov/document/policy-guidance-criteria-payment-salary-supplements-host-government-employees>
- USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy of March 2012: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgiclfindmkaj/https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/GenderEqualityPolicy_2.pdf

[END OF SECTION H]

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 – LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABYM	Adolescent Boys and Young Men
ADS	Automated Directives System
AGYW	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
AO	Agreement Officer
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
ART	Antiretroviral therapy
C/ALHIV	Children and adolescents living with HIV
CLA	Collaborating, learning and adapting
COP	Country Operational Plan
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
DATIM	Data for Accountability, Transparency and Impact
DREAMS	Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GOL	Government of Lesotho
HEI	HIV exposed infant
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resources
HTS	HIV testing
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IR	Interim result
LBSE	Life Skills Based Sexuality Education
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOGYSO	Ministry of Gender, Youth and Social Development and Social Protection
MRC	Merit Review Committee
NTE	Not to exceed
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity
NPRP	National Prevention and Response Plan on Violence against Children and Youth
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEP	Pre-exposure Prophylaxis
PEPFAR	U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission
PrEP	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
SAM	System for Award Management
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VACS	Violence Against Children Survey
VMMC	Voluntary Male Medical Circumcision
WHO	World Health Organization

ANNEX 2 – Lesotho’s current DREAMS Layering and Completion table

Lesotho’s current DREAMS Layering and Completion table will be attached to the NOFO 72067424RFA00005 as a separate file.

ANNEX 3 - STANDARD PROVISIONS

The award will include the latest Mandatory Standard Provisions and the Required as Applicable Standard Provisions for the Non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations in full text.

Note: the full text of these provisions may be found at: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/303maa.pdf>

[END OF NOFO 72067424RFA00005]