

Virtual IP Meeting: Feb 16, 2022

Questions from Implementing Partners

Acquisition & Assistance:

1. Q: Will USAID push back dates for upcoming solicitations pending the resolution of the current crisis? When might we expect an update to the USAID business forecast?

R: While the current situation may be temporarily impacting some of our administrative timelines for new procurements, we do not anticipate suspending upcoming solicitations at this time. New procurements will continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. We anticipate that USAID's Business Forecast will be updated no later than Friday, February 25th.

2. Q: Future of our projects

R: USAID does not currently have plans to issue stop-work orders (acquisition) or letters of suspension (assistance). USAID programs should continue to operate to the maximum extent practicable, however, considering the safety of personnel and beneficiaries as paramount.

3. Q: Project implementation and priorities. Is there any plan to review our activities in Ukraine and adjust our work plans?

R: [Note: responded to during the meeting.] USAID is looking at ways to tweak/adjust our development programming to respond to the current situation. At this time there is no overarching plan to make adjustments to all active work plans. Any programmatic adjustments will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, as well as if/when an adjustment is proposed by the IP to the CO/AO and COR/AOR.

4. Q: Impact of this situation on project implementations and meeting of targets. With the current security situation, this is likely to negatively impact effective delivery of the projects. If the situation adversely affects the effective activity implementations and by extension meeting of agreed deliverables/targets, can IPs request and get approvals to reschedule activity implementations or even project Time extensions as the situations may dictate?

R: Performance is expected to continue consistent with the terms and conditions of the award. We ask that all partners in Ukraine engage in their own contingency planning for their staff and their activities. Should activity work plans be disrupted you must work

with your COR/AOR and CO/AO on those specific issues. Note that the RCO Letter Guidance issued 25 January provides authorization for “Extension of Financial, Performance, and Other Reporting.” Please work with your COR/AOR and CO/AO should you anticipate any delays to required deliverables.

5. Q: Key Personnel Approvals - With the current security situation in Ukraine and the advisory for US Nationals and TCNs evacuation from Ukraine, do we require the AO/CO approvals for these nationals now given that they will be out of Ukraine and by extension out of the project /program area for unspecified duration given that we do not know how long this situation will last or do we monitor first and if we determine they will be out for more than 3 months, then we reach out to the AO/CO for approvals?

R: The evacuation authorization will be reviewed every 30 days and extended or resolved, depending on the situation at that time. Please notify the COR/AOR and CO/AO if the current situation and government advisories have impacted the terms and conditions of an award, including those related to Key Personnel. Nominations for Key Personnel still need to be approved in accordance with the terms and conditions of your award. Specifically, Key personnel are those considered to be essential to the work being performed under your award, therefore are expected to continue performing in their role. Key personnel and changes to key personnel are subject to approval by the USAID prior to their employment under your award. Any changes in the approved Key Personnel require written USAID approval.

6. Q: Various IPs are looking at options available for extending benefits and possible supplementary payments to Ukrainian staff. Can USAID provide guidance, if any related to required approvals and options. Allowability of local staff expenses for their safety preparedness/relocation.

R: USAID is conducting consultations and researching the allowability and appropriateness of authorization of specific relocation allowances and payments to IP local staff. The Mission anticipates making a final determination in the coming days and IPs will be notified once a determination has been made.

7. Q: Advance salaries can't be done according to UA law. Can I ask you to restate how salary advances may be characterized under Ukraine law? As "loans..."

R: If salary advance/"repayable financial assistance" options are included in the employment agreements or company policy, implementing partners are authorized and encouraged to make these payments in advance, in accordance with current local Ukrainian labor laws. Such support must be within the current ceiling of your award and

is subject to the availability of funds obligated to your award. IPs must seek the advice from local legal counsel in order to formalize salary advances.

8. Q: What was USAID's current position on approval of emergency stipends for local staff? Can you explain why the emergency stipend for local staff has not been authorized? Can you provide a justification for the decision not to authorize material assistance for security/relocation of local staff at this time?

R: To date, USAID/Ukraine has provided authorization of evacuation costs for US Citizens and TCN personnel and their dependents. With respect to the evacuation of local personnel or the relocation of program activities and personnel, USAID is closely monitoring the situation and conducting consultations, but at this time has not authorized such costs.

9. Q: We appreciate the work our AOR is doing to help us modify subawards to Ukrainian partners so they can pivot as needed (sorry, used pivot) but it is going to take time to get through all of the modifications, which are all similar. Is it possible to issue blanket guidance/allowability for us to support local subgrantees to cover security, look at relocating people and operations potentially both within and outside of Ukraine. They need to make decisions quickly if it comes to that and we won't have time to get through all the needed paperwork. Is this something you could consider for at least your DRG partners who are working with media, civil society and human rights groups - all potentially highly vulnerable and at high risk.

R: At this time USAID is not providing blanket authorization for relocation costs for subawards. Performance is expected to continue consistent with the terms and conditions of the award. Should there be disruptions to performance, the RCO Letter Guidance states "USAID authorizes implementing partners to continue paying staff salaries and provide necessary support to staff, in accordance with this letter and the terms and conditions of their awards." While this guidance is directed at prime awards, it can be used by implementing partners to make their determination on allowability of costs incurred and other programmatic authorities therein for their subwardees and grantees. The consideration of approval of subaward or grant costs must be consistent with the terms and conditions of the respective subaward or grant and company policy of the Prime Awardee and within the total cost of the subaward or grant.

Agency & Security Status Updates:

10. Q: Update on security situation? We would appreciate more details about the security situation in Ukraine to be able to adjust our activities and support our grantees?

R: The United States Government and NATO are routinely providing updates of the security situation in Ukraine through a variety of methods such as public briefings, remarks to the UN Security Council, and official statements to the press. Please refer to these official intelligence disclosures for the most current assessments of the situation.

11. Q: Questions about International Travel. What is the US Government reading regarding international air travel?

R: [Note: responded to during the meeting.] As of February 12, 2022, the U.S. Department of State has categorized the Travel Advisory Level for Ukraine as Level 4: Do Not Travel. The notice advises U.S. Citizens:

Do not travel to Ukraine due to the increased threats of Russian military action and COVID-19; those in Ukraine should depart immediately via commercial or private means. If remaining in Ukraine, exercise increased caution due to crime, civil unrest, and potential combat operations should Russia take military action. Some areas have increased risk. Read the entire Travel Advisory.

Regarding international flights, please refer to air carrier internet pages for information on routes, times, and costs. The current risks in the region and unpredictable security situation may change access to air travel at any time. The Embassy continually updates stakeholders through updated security alerts.

12. Q: Does USAID have any recommendations regarding internal travel - including to and from Kyiv - for IP staff working on projects?

R: Organizations operating under USAID mechanisms should follow and implement their security plan. If IPs are traveling into the eastern oblasts, please ensure that your COR/AOR is informed of your travel plans. Any further guidance regarding regional travel for U.S. citizens will be issued in the U.S. Department of State's Travel Advisory.

13. Q: Our understanding is that USAID will assess the situation in increments of 30 days. Can USAID please confirm if it plans on sharing information/updates with IPs at the upcoming 30 day mark?

R: The Chief of Mission must re-evaluate conditions and request continuation or termination of evacuation status from the Under Secretary of Management prior to the end of the current Ordered Departure (approved through February 21, 2022). Extensions

of departure status are in 30-day increments. However, USAID has and will continue to assess and share information and updates expeditiously with Implementing Partners, including additional Town Halls and outreach approaches, throughout this situation.

14. Q: Safety and Security measures taken for USAID implementers.

R: The USAID/Office of Security (SEC), Partner Liaison Security Office (PLSO) Support team has volunteered to review implementing partner security plans. Please submit your security plan to your A&A Specialist (with your COR/AOR and CO/AO copied) who will forward the plans to the SEC.

15. Q: If Ukraine becomes a rapidly closing political space, is USAID planning to remove or protect local partner data that sits across all of its public facing systems including but not limited to the DEC, similar to what was done by USAID in Afghanistan?

R: USAID is aware of the potentially sensitive nature of data that is up on multiple public-facing sites, like the Development Experience Clearinghouse, usaspending.gov, and others. In an effort to protect this information sites and documents with sensitive information that could be used to identify specific individuals (staff, partners, beneficiaries) are being temporarily removed/archived until such time as the security situation stabilizes. This is being done out of an abundance of caution to protect those affiliated with USAID and our IPs. Information is not being deleted and will be put back up when deemed safe to do so.

16. Q: What's the plan if this is going to be the new normal, meaning Russian troops are going to remain in place for the nearest future? What is the worst scenario you can predict? What might happen to respond to the situation?

R: [Note: responded to during the meeting.] At this time we are operating under current conditions and will make any corresponding adjustments to our posture and, if necessary, to our development programming if and when the circumstances change. Any adjustments made to USAID programming will be communicated between the CO/AO, COR/AOR, and Implementing Partners. The safety of personnel and beneficiaries remains paramount and will be reflected as we respond to this fluid situation.

17. Q: How long are you going to stay in Lviv and when are you going to get back to Kyiv?

R: [Note: responded to during the meeting.] The decision to temporarily relocate our Embassy operations in Ukraine from our Embassy in Kyiv to Lviv was determined by the U.S. Secretary of State in consultation with the National Security Council as a precaution

due to the accelerated buildup of Russian forces. The safety and security situation will continue to be monitored and we will return our staff to the Embassy in Kyiv as soon as conditions permit.

18. Q: In his speech yesterday, President Biden referred to 150,000 Russian troops being deployed in the region. This is significantly higher than the 100,000 being reported in the press or the 130,000 reported by the GoU. What are the current USG estimates?

R: [Note: responded to during the meeting.] Official remarks made by President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken are based on the United States' most current estimated Russian troop deployments and will be continuously adjusted and communicated to the public.