



Responses to Multi-Year APS Round-01 Questions

1. Given the Ramadan and Eid holidays, would USAID please consider extending the proposal deadline to May 17 to allow applicants to better integrate local voices into its proposal?
2. Page 1, Closing Date: Due to the observance of Eid and country-wide business closure in Somalia from o/a April 7 – 14, would BHA kindly consider an extension of the May 3 closing date.
 - We are not able to provide an extension. Applications are due on May 3, 2024.
3. Can BHA please advise whether there is a recommended ratio of participants between IDPs and host community members (i.e., 90/10, 80/20, etc.)? Similarly, can BHA confirm if there is a preferred ratio for in-camp versus out of camp IDPs?
 - No ratio is required, it is for the applicants to determine the ratio based on their program design.
4. Pg. 43, Section 6. Cost Application Format seems to list “History of Performance” as a Cost Requirement and refers applicants to Base APS section D.7.h. The Base APS states, “Unless otherwise specified in a round, only apparently successful applicants will be required to provide a history of performance.” Can USAID please confirm if applicants and sub-applicants are required to submit History of Performance information at this stage?
 - History of performance is not required as part of the application as per the Base APS.
5. Under Technical Approach, on page 30 of the RFA, Identification of Potential Livelihoods is listed as a separate graduation component, although this is not listed as one of the core elements given on pp 9-10 and other places. Should applicants address the identification of potential livelihoods under the Asset Transfer component, place it under another component, or treat it as a separate element entirely?
 - Identification of potential livelihoods is a key part of the Technical Approach required to deliver a successful graduation program, but is not itself a core component delivered to each participating household. Applicants must describe the approach they will take to identifying viable livelihoods for the target population in their proposals.
6. RFA p15, footnote 8, states: “TDS clients include pregnant and lactating women (up to one year after birth)...” However, the draft PSNP5 design document on p45, states: “NEW – Pregnant and lactating women (PLW) will be exempt from public works and join TDS for the duration of their pregnancy and for two years after the birth of a child i.e. 30 months.” Would USAID please clarify the correct duration of TDS eligibility for lactating women?
 - Neither Round-01 of the MY APS nor the MY APS base has reference to TDS clients or pregnant and lactating women.
7. General. The overall MY APS guidance says that the font used should be Times New Roman, 12pt. However, the USG officially changed its font to Calibri last year (and last year’s RFSAs were

submitted in that font). Please confirm if TNR or Calibri should be used (and font size).

- Based on the MY APS the font should be Times New Roman.

8. We are keenly interested in submitting a proposal for the BHA Multi-Year Annual Program Statement (BHA MYAPS). We understand the latest update for the BHA Multi-Year Annual Program Statement (BHA MYAPS) program announcement was posted on March 19, 2024, and according to your recent Twitter account the deadline for questions is on April 3, 2024. Unfortunately, we are encountering difficulties accessing the full announcement electronically. I am wondering if it might be possible for you to kindly email us a copy of the BHA MYAPS program announcement?

- Please try this link for the Somalia RFSA MY APS Round 1:
<https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/348888>.

For the actual attachment, please click on the “related documents” Tab. If you still encounter error messages, we recommend reaching out to the Grants.gov support center via this link: <https://grants.gov/applicants/encountering-error-messages>

9. RFA P51, Sustainability plan (Annex 11). The RFA indicates that a Theory of Change is not required and the Logframe should extend only to the level of sub Purpose. However, the Annex 11 description indicates that the sustainability plan should be completed at the outcome level. The top of page 52 reads "The sustainability strategy should identify the outcomes to be sustained, critical capacities that are necessary for participants to sustain them, and an implementation plan designed to ensure that households maintain the capacities needed to continue earning a reliable income into the future--and these should be reflected in the theory of change." Further, the template for the sustainability table organizes content first at the level of outcomes.

- As per the [RFSA TOC Guidance](#), outcomes include the goal, purposes, sub-purposes, and intermediate outcomes. In this instance, because we are focusing on the TOC information provided in the program description, applicants should only include the goal, purposes, and sub-purposes as outcomes in Annex 11. BHA added a footnote on page 52 for further clarification.

10. Another point requiring clarification is that one of the bullet points describing the table content indicates that some content should be organized by component of the graduation approach: “Risks or potential obstacles for each component of the graduation approach.” (bottom of pg 52). Can USAID please confirm whether the sustainability plan must be organized and reported at the level of outcomes and, if not, please advise at what level must the plan be organized and reported?

- Bullet now reads, "Risks or potential obstacles for sustainability of each outcome as defined in the [RFSA TOC Guidance](#)"

11. RFA p27, “Households Reached” – Would USAID please clarify how many households or give a range for the number of households an applicant should ideally target?

- The number of households reached should be based on the program design and the specific contexts in which the activity will take place.

12. Page 20, Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated: Can BHA kindly confirm if it is acceptable for an applicant to target Mogadishu and two of the smaller population

centers?

- Applicants may target two of the smaller geographies. Applicants must select at least two of the target geographies (Mogadishu, Baidoa, Hudur, Afgoye, Jowhar, or Kismayo). Applicants must include Mogadishu or Baidoa as one of their geographic areas. Applicants may include both Mogadishu and Baidoa. Applicants may also include one of the geographies with smaller IDP populations (Kismayo, Hudur, Afgoye, or Jowhar) in conjunction with Mogadishu or Baidoa or both. BHA expects applicants to concentrate activity interventions in a manner that improves efficiency and maximizes impact.
13. Page 25, Context Analysis: Should applicants include as an annex unpublished assessment reports and studies that it has conducted and relies on to support the context analysis?
- Applicants may cite sources used for the context analysis and link where appropriate, but do not need to submit the unpublished assessment reports and studies.
14. Page 26, Activity Specific Targeting and Participant Selection: Can BHA kindly confirm whether all members of a household where at least one household member is a participant, be considered participants? If not, can BHA confirm that only the household members participating in consumption smoothing, access to savings/finance, asset transfer, and training and coaching be considered participants?
- Page 24 of the MY APS Round reads, "The number of unique individuals who will directly participate in the graduation approach during the period of performance (if someone participates in more than one intervention, only count them once)." As such, participants are only those members of the household who actively participate in one of the components of the graduation approach: consumption support, access to savings/finance, asset transfer, coaching, and livelihood training.
15. Page 32, Contextualization Period: BHA states in the bullet Livelihoods to be supported that, "Applicants should describe how they will confirm or refine a short list (usually 6 to 10) enterprise options from which participants will select their preferred, viable income-generating activities." Can BHA confirm whether employment opportunities are considered viable livelihoods to be supported, or should applicants only consider enterprise options?
- Employment opportunities are considered viable livelihoods. Page 32 now reads, "enterprise and/or employment options."
16. Page 50, Risk Assessment and Management Plan: Will BHA fund training such as Hostile Environment Awareness Trainings (HEAT) or similar for Somalia-based staff if this training is required by applicant organizational policy for highly insecure environments?
- All training costs should be incorporated into the applicant's proposed budget.
17. Page 51, Sustainability Plan: Under the description of Annex 11, BHA states that "Applicants should integrate the sustainability strategy within the graduation approach designed for the specific context and geographic area, rather than present a separate, stand-alone strategy." However, BHA then describes what should go into Annex 11. Could BHA please confirm that Annex 11 is not expected to be a separate sustainability strategy from the strategy integrated in the proposed graduation approach?
- Annex 11 is expected to outline the applicant's sustainability strategy. This should outline how the applicant will sustain outcomes as part of the graduation approach. We are confirming it is not a separate sustainability strategy and applicants should not

suggest new interventions outside the graduation approach. This sentence on page 51 was edited in the APS round amendment to clarify: "Applicants should integrate the sustainability strategy within the graduation approach designed for the specific context and geographic area."

18. Page 52, Sustainability Plan: Under Annex 11 BHA notes that, "Community visioning and engagement should be incorporated to ensure that community members are not only active stakeholders in the design, implementation and monitoring, and adaptation of the graduation approach, but also in contributing to the sustainability of the program's impacts." Can BHA kindly clarify how it will be possible for the involved community members to NOT be participants if the program facilitates this Community Visioning process? Could BHA please provide a definition of "participant" that would not include those engaging in Community Visioning, but participating in the graduation approach (as applicable)? Will Community Visioning be included as part of the Contextualization Period, or throughout the program life?
 - During the contextualization period and throughout implementation community participation to validate or refine activity design is critical. Participants will be defined by targeting criteria.
19. Pages 29 – 31, Contextualization Period: BHA does not reference the need for a GESI Analysis as part of this RFSA except for Annex 3, Gender Analysis Summary, which provides a summary about how the applicant plans to conduct the Gender Analysis if awarded. Could BHA please clarify whether a GESI Analysis should be included as part of the Contextualization period in compliance with ADS 205?
 - Applicants are not required to have conducted a gender analysis as part of their application. An awardee is required to conduct a program specific gender analysis during the first year of implementation. Applicants are not prohibited from using prior gender analysis and/or evidence-based literature to support their application in terms of the requirements around gender, youth, and social inclusion in the technical narrative.
20. Page 42, Cost Application Format: The sample budget template provided includes the prime and subrecipient budget in one file. Will BHA accept individual Excel files for each of the proposed partners and prime so the 10MB size limit is not exceeded?
21. Page 42 – 43, Cost Application Format: Excluding the Excel files, can BHA confirm that applicants may submit a consolidated PDF of all cost sections, including the budget narrative?
 - Page 42 gives reference to Base APS, Sec. D.7.d.1 -D.7.d.8. Per the Base APS, the Budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and the Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:
 - Summary Budget, inclusive of all program costs (federal and non-federal), broken out by major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the entire period of performance.
 - Detailed Budget, including a breakdown by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
 - Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation

period of performance.

- In terms of budget narrative, the sample template includes narrative for prime, sub-awardees and sub-contractors in one document. Other cost documents i.e., NICRA letter, SF424, required certifications should be submitted as separate documents.

22. I am reaching out on behalf of our consulting team, expressing our keen interest in your recent notification regarding Round 01 for the Somalia Resilience Food Security Activity. Our team comprises dedicated Somali consultants with extensive experience and activity in the Southwest region, Banadir (Mogadishu) area, and Hirshabele region. We have carefully reviewed the details provided in the notification, particularly noting USAID's intention to award up to two (2) grants in this Round. While we acknowledge the presence of well-established international entities that may possess greater resources and capacity to address your requirements more comprehensively, we believe our strength lies in being a robust supporting local team for a cooperative partner interested in responding to your request for proposals effectively. To facilitate our collaboration efforts, we kindly request a list of companies that have shown interest in responding to this solicitation. This information will enable us to engage with them directly, exploring potential partnerships that align with the objectives of the USAID Round 01 initiative. Your assistance in providing this list would be greatly appreciated.

- Unfortunately, because this is a competitive procurement process, we are not able to provide a list of potential applicants. We held a public briefing with interested parties which was recorded and posted on grants.gov. You may use this recording to hear who else participated in that call. We recommend researching current USAID programs and contacting current organizations implementing programs in Somalia similar to the RFSa. Some of this information can be found at <https://www.usaid.gov/somalia/our-work>. The Somalia NGO Consortium may be another resource for coordinating with other potential applicants <http://somalangoconsortium.org/>. Finally, visiting sites where NGO positions are posted can give you an idea of who is planning to apply to the RFSa. These sites may include, but are not limited to www.impactpool.org; www.devex.com; <https://somalijobs.com>

23. RFA p12: For sub-purpose 2.1 psychosocial capacities and well-being increased, how is this being measured?

- Psychosocial well-being is typically measured according to a number of constructs and related indicators. Mental health is measured using a scale from the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression (CES-D). Life satisfaction is typically measured using the World Values Survey questions on happiness and life satisfaction, the MacArthur Scale, and responses to questions about how the respondent is feeling. Other indicators used to measure psychosocial well-being are Cohen's 4-item stress scale, Rosenberg's self-esteem scale, and measures of cortisol levels obtained through saliva samples. Specific questionnaires must be adapted to the social, cultural, and religious norms in Somalia. Applicants should consult the papers cited throughout the MY APS Round for information about the specific indicators used in relevant studies.

24. General. It is mathematically impossible to reach 80% of HH food MEB for target regions and also stay within the \$2000 range per HH given as an example within the RFA. It is also impossible to guarantee adequate safety net coverage from other programs to meet this 80% threshold, especially because many emergency programs target new arrivals, many are only for one year or

less, many are only rolled out after a crisis hits, and other programs offering MPCTs may be quite similar to the RFSA, which would result in duplication of efforts if the same HHs are targeted. Therefore, based on the 80% minimum requirement, the RFSA will very likely have to increase its costs to more than \$2000/HH. Please confirm that this is acceptable based on the nuances of the Somali context.

- While BHA believes it is possible to reach this goal, the ranges provided in the graduation approach section are illustrative and based on averages from past graduation programs. These are not strict parameters and applicants must budget for an activity that meets the needs of extremely poor populations in the specific contexts. Applicants will be expected to deliver a quality program to the maximum number of households possible, given technical specifications of the graduation approach. Applicants should attempt to layer consumption support with existing programs, but are not expected to rely entirely on existing programs for the delivery of consumption support. Amounts can be adjusted over time based on changing amounts in other programs.

25. Page 47, M&E Staffing: BHA references the “full M&E Plan submission post-award”. Can BHA kindly confirm when the full M&E Plan will be due post-award?

- The revised M&E plan will be submitted post award after consultations and approval from the AOR, Activity Manager(s), and TPQ M&E Adviser.

26. Page 47, M&E Budget: BHA states that, "BHA expects applicants will allocate 3-5 percent of the total activity budget for program monitoring and the midterm evaluation." Yet, the third sentence of the same paragraph states, "Applicants are not expected to budget for the performance evaluation (including baseline, midline, and endline data collection)." Could BHA please clarify if applicants should budget for a midterm evaluation.

- Revised Text: Applicants are not expected to budget for the performance evaluation (including baseline and endline data collection) as it will be conducted by an external evaluation team contracted by BHA. However, the M&E budget should demonstrate the applicant's commitment to collaborating with the external evaluation team. The applicant should budget for a potential joint mid-term evaluation with BHA (note: midterm evaluations typically cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000).

This footnote was also added on page 47, "If the joint mid-term evaluation is later determined to not be beneficial given the eventual evaluation design, the funds will be reallocated to other M&E functions based on conversations between the recipient(s) and BHA."

27. If an agricultural livelihood is an option for participants, and they choose to use the asset transfer funds to purchase agricultural goods (e.g. seeds, livestock, etc.) that are USAID restricted goods, is the implementing organization required to ensure that these goods meet USAID requirements? What documentation, if any, would be required?

- BHA expects partners to budget transfers without inclusion of restricted goods in the package and to message what asset transfers are to be used for. After distribution, we ask partners to monitor outcomes rather than exact expenditures—recognizing that once resources have entered a household budget, attribution and recall are not very reliable for determining exactly how BHA's contribution was spent.

If the partner identifies that procurement of restricted goods happens frequently over

the course of monitoring, BHA would expect partners to take steps to determine why and whether steps to mitigate the behavior are necessary; we do not want to knowingly program in a way that contradicts the spirit of the regulations that apply for direct procurement even if the regulations do not legally apply to cash. For example, if the partner finds that people are spending money intended for agricultural livelihoods on pharmaceuticals instead, potentially referrals to other health programming in the area might be appropriate so that people's health needs are met and they can still afford the original intended purpose of the transfer; vouchers would also be a potential mitigation measure since the partner could then work with suppliers to ensure that appropriate quality standards are adhered to.

28. Can BHA please clarify which types of expenses should be allocated to Title II and which to CDF? As it appears, the guidance can be understood to mean that all activities would be allocable to either funding source.
- The HCA will be submitted by apparently successful applicants prior to award.
29. RFA p42: Can BHA clarify and provide concrete examples of what costs can and must be classified under the CDF funding stream? In the case of cash transfers and based on what is mentioned in the Functional Policy “applicants may allocate CDF to pay for the same types of costs as Title II programs”, can BHA please confirm if the applicant can use CDF to cover outstanding cash transfer costs that exceed the Title II assigned amount of \$17.5M?
- Applicants may allocate CDF to pay for the same types of costs as Title II programs. However, the costs for each activity must come from the same source of funding. For example, Title II-funded cash transfer programs must use Title II to pay for costs associated with implementing the program and may not use CDF to "cover outstanding cash transfer costs." Similarly, CDF-funded cash transfer programs must cover associated costs with CDF. This footnote was added on page 42.
30. Can BHA please clarify which types of expenses should be allocated to Title II and which to CDF? As it appears, the guidance can be understood to mean that all activities would be allocable to either funding source.
- As per the [BHA Functional Policy 20-01](#), applicants may allocate CDF to pay for the same types of costs as Title II programs.

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