

Annex B

Request for Application (RFA)

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)**for Resilience for Peace**

Issuance Date: June 3, 2021

Closing Date: June 24, 2021(21 days after issuance date)

Closing Time: 11:59pm Abidjan time (GMT)

Subject: Request for Applications (RFA) Number
Resilience for Peace (R4P)

Reference: Issued Under an Equal Access International (EAI) USAID COAG
Number 72062421CA00002

This Request for Applications outlines the information required by the applicant for the development and submission of a proposal for consideration. The potential applicant is expected to review, understand, and conform with specifications contained in this RFA. Failure to do so will be at the applicant's own risk.

All reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the grant program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (2 CFR 200 Subpart E Cost Principles or the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations), may be charged under the grant. Construction is not eligible for reimbursement under this award.

For non-US organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-US Nongovernmental Recipients will apply. For US organizations, 2 CFR 200 and the Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients will apply. (See Standard Provisions in Annex 1).

This RFA is being issued and consists of this cover letter, Schedule A, and Annexes.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of R4P/EAI nor does it commit R4P/EAI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. The application is submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in R4P/EAI activities.

Sincerely,

Leanne Bayer
Chief of Party
Resilience for Peace

SCHEDULE A

SECTION I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION:

The Resilience for Peace (R4P) program is a five-year program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by EAI to strengthen community resilience and learning, particularly for women and youth, to counter and prevent violent extremism in Côte d'Ivoire's northern border areas. Working with partners – National Opinion Research Center (NORC), INDIGO-Côte d'Ivoire and the University of Bouaké – the project will foster a “CVE ecosystem” by reinforcing community resilience structures, creating civic and economic empowerment opportunities for at-risk border communities, through improvements in natural resource management and government-service delivery and responsiveness.

Program Objectives:

- Objective 1: Increase Knowledge, Learning, & Understanding of VE (Violent Extremism) in Border Communities.
- Objective 2: Reduce Socio/politico/economic Marginalization & Inequality in Border Areas
- Objective 3: Increase Positive Narratives to Counter Radicalization and Hate Speech, Particularly for Youth, Women, and Girls in Border Areas

USG Regulation:

For non-US organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-US Nongovernmental Recipients will apply. For US organizations, 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700 and the Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients apply.

SECTION II: AWARD INFORMATION:

EAI encourages interested applicants to read the full revised USAID NOFO (Notice of Funding Opportunity), which is attached. EAI seeks a subpartner to lead implementation of the economic empowerment and livelihoods activities under Objective 2.

EAI intends to grant a subaward to the applicant whose technical and cost proposal best addresses the objectives, and whose approach is informed by the following:

- Conflict sensitivity and do no harm approaches.
- Adaptive management and complexity-aware M&E
- In-depth and recent understanding of the operating environment and context of growing violent extremism,
- Identified linkages and opportunities to incentivize public-private partnerships with regional economic actors and target northern communities,

- Strong existing networks and resources relevant to rapid startup and effective implementation of relevant activities.
- A credible and experienced Key Personnel to lead these activities for the proposed subpartner.

EAI seeks a subpartner to lead and support several components under **Objective 2: Reduce socio-political-economic marginalization and inequality in border areas**, including the following:

- Lead on economic empowerment, sustainable agriculture, and livelihood activities engaging women, youth, and marginalized communities.
- Provide one full time key personnel supporting Objective 2 and other relevant objectives and technical areas. *This person will likely be based with R4P program staff in Korhogo.*
- As it relates to activities under 2.1.1.4, subawardee will co-lead relevant positive youth development and gender activities.
- Support with ensuring effective M&E and storytelling for proposed activities.
- Support with conceptualizing and co-creating publications and thought pieces for broader Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), social cohesion, and peacebuilding community.
- Where appropriate, support in identifying and bringing on board local civil society, municipal government, and media partners.
- Support with capacity building efforts for CSOs and CBOs in target geographic areas and supporting localization of efforts where appropriate.
- Support startup training and capacity building of project team, partners, and stakeholders on subawardee-led project areas.

Specifically, the subpartner's scope will focus on the following subobjectives and activities under 2.1.1.4 (pages 21-23 in the revised NOFO):

SO 2.1 Increased Trust between Communities in northern Border Areas

2.1.1.4 Promote Innovative Economic Livelihood Opportunities in Northern Border Areas for Youth and Women:

- 2.1.1.4.1 Innovative economic opportunities in northern border areas
- 2.1.1.4.2. Created innovative public-private partnerships for youth and women working in the region.
- 2.1.1.4.3 Promoted youth women and girls' empowerment economic activities.
- 2.1.1.4.4 Increased literacy for youth and women in border areas
- 2.1.1.4.5 Increased coaching and life skills for youth women and girls' social entrepreneurs

2.1.1.4.1 Innovative economic opportunities in northern border areas: While the specific factors that make Ivorians vulnerable to radicalization by VEOs vary from community to community, a few trends contribute to an emerging overall problem, including the marginalization of communities in northern border areas, and limited economic opportunities.

VEOs have adeptly tapped into these existing frustrations and grievances that make youth and women especially vulnerable to extremist messages. To help Ivorian communities manage, mitigate, and ultimately reduce the conditions and factors that contribute to radicalization towards violent extremism, R4P will increase women and youth access to – and control over – economic resources. R4P will build cross-disciplinary transferable skills and create opportunities for youth and women, increasing their resilience and economic potential.

Please propose innovative conflict sensitive, CVE-relevant, economic empowerment activities in northern border areas.

2.1.1.4.2 Created innovative PPPs for youth and women working in the region: R4P will mobilize resources for youth and women in target areas in the border region. The subawardee will support youth in accessing YEA funds for microprojects across a range of agricultural income generating activities in high potential value chains. R4P will mentor youth to ensure their success with YEA funds, and in doing so, we will begin to restore trust between youth and the State.

Under R4P, we will incentivize private sector support for PPPs and will engage companies and attract micro-finance institutions to support the diversification of agriculture income diversification activities. TBD Subawardee will engage at least five companies.

Please propose specific industries, companies, and concrete strategies for building relevant public-private partnerships to advance the objectives of R4P, with a focus on northern border communities.

2.1.1.4.3 Promoted youth, women, and girl's economic empowerment activities: Women and youth living in the border regions bear the brunt of disruption to livelihoods and markets caused by crises, conflict, and VE activity. Women, in particular, will often end up with greater economic responsibility for their own households and within the community.

Please propose specific activities and strategies for accelerating the economic empowerment of youth, girls, and women.

2.1.1.4.4 Increased literacy for youth and women in border areas: Literacy rates remains low among women and youth in the region. This constrains their ability to access information, business training, and restricts their entrepreneurial opportunities. The Ivorian government has instituted key mechanisms to reduce illiteracy, particularly among women, including the Autonomous Literacy Service (SAA). R4P will augment this national initiative, by launching an accelerated literacy program in the border areas. In close collaboration with the Literacy and Non-Formal Education Unit of the Ministry of Education, we will build upon existing approaches (e.g., boîte à image et jeux de rôles) that have been adapted to the local context. The program will also integrate key counternarratives designed to undermine and disrupt extremist narratives targeted at vulnerable groups.

Please propose specific complementary activities and strategies for operationalizing this sub-objective, including demonstrating your organizations past performance in education and literacy.

2.1.1.4.5 Increased coaching and life skills for youth women social entrepreneurs:

R4P will provide life skills training to young women and youth entrepreneurs. Specific topics include: concentration and self-control, adopting different perspectives, communication skills, networking/making connections, critical thinking, problem-solving, autonomy, and lifelong learning. The curriculum has been tailored to include a module on CVE awareness.

Please propose your approach and strategy for increasing coaching and life skills for youth women social entrepreneurs, including opportunities to link youth to VSLAs, training in developing business plans, and market access to relevant enterprises and internship opportunities.

Subject to the availability of funds, EAI expects to award one subaward grant with a funding ceiling of \$1,950,000 for a period of performance is 4.5 years. R4P/EAI reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

SECTION III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

The applicant / application must meet the following requirements.

- Be officially registered and working in compliance with all applicable civil and fiscal regulations, including, but not limited to pertinent local laws and status. In lieu of official registration, a grantee may show proof of effort to secure registration, exemption from registration, or show cause why such registration is either not optional or practicable.
- Meet the projects objectives and principles.
- Contain expected outcomes and results consistent with and linked to the projects objectives.
- Applicant is not a debarred organization.

Types of Grantees Eligible:

- U.S Non-Governmental Organizations (U.S. NGOs)
- Non-US Nongovernment Organizations (Non-US NGOs)
- International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs)

Please note that USAID has established a mandatory minimum recipient cost share of US \$975,000 (5% of total) for the award. EAI requires that the subawardee contribute toward the cost share at the same level (5% of their total subaward, or maximum \$97,500). Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level. This may include contribution of staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be

used for the program, provided by the recipient. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306.

Key Personnel (KP): Economic Livelihoods and Opportunities Conflict Expert

This KP should have a minimum level of education, preferably a graduate degree in the technical discipline for the position concerned (i.e., natural resource management and conflict mitigation, livelihood, or economic opportunities in a CVE setting...) These individuals will be experts in their own rights with considerable experience implementing these technical disciplines in conflict settings and preferably in settings working on CVE. Strong Africa experience is a plus.

Please propose two qualified candidates that are available, if selected, for this KP position. This position should be fully funded in your proposal budget.

Section IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

Any questions concerning this RFA should be submitted in writing not later than five days prior to the closing date shown above to R4P@equalaccess.org. Responses to questions will be made available the same way the RFA was communicated. Applicants should retain for their records one copy of all enclosures which accompany their application.

The application must be received at R4P/EAI's office at the location indicated below no later than the closing date listed on the front page of this RFA. Pre-award costs are not allowable and will not be reimbursed. An application and modifications thereof shall be submitted in electronic format to the following address: R4P@equalaccess.org

Application must be submitted in electronic form. The complete application packet must be submitted in the required format with the required attachments.

- Application:
 - a. DUNS number
 - b. Organizational background
 - c. Technical Application (no more than five pages)
 - d. Beneficiaries, outcomes and expected impact.
 - e. Communication Plan
 - f. Monitoring
 - g. Budget
 - h. Budget narrative
 - i. Work-plan
 - j. Statement of liability (should be part of the application form)
 - k. Other material
- Due Diligence Questionnaire
- Required Certification as per ADS 303.3.8

Restrictions:

- Grant funds provided under the terms of this RFA shall not be used to finance any of the following commodities as per ADS 312 Eligibility of Commodities:

- ✓ **Ineligible Commodities:** Military equipment, surveillance equipment, commodities or equipment for the support of police or other law enforcement activities, abortion equipment and services, luxury goods, gambling equipment, weather modification equipment.
- ✓ **Restricted commodities include** Agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, contraceptives and condoms, pesticides, used equipment, fertilizer.
- ✓ **Others:** Purchases of goods or services restricted or prohibited under the prevailing USAID source and nationality and other regulations found under ADS 310 or from countries and suppliers as may be identified by USAID's consolidated list of debarred, suspended or ineligible subcontractors at SAM.gov
- Any purchases or activities deemed unnecessary to successfully complete the activity, including any grantee headquarters expenses that are not directly linked to the implementation of the proposed project.
- Previous obligations and/or bad debts.
- Fines and /or penalties.
- Other costs unallowable under USAID and/or federal regulations such as referenced 2 CFR 200 Subpart E Cost Principles and FAR 31.2 Cost Principles for Commercial Organizations.

Late Application

Late applications are marked as "late" and are ineligible for review or award; however, EAI reserves the right to accept and include late applications in the review and award process when it is considered within the best interest of EAI to do so and if applications that were received on time have not been opened and reviewed. Applications that are submitted late or incomplete run the risk of **not** being considered for review.

SECTION V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION:

Within 7 working days of the deadline for submitting applications, a technical review committee will convene. Throughout the evaluation process, R4P shall take steps to ensure that members of the committee do not have any conflicts of interest or the appearance of such with regard to the organizations whose applicants are under review. An individual shall be considered to have the appearance of a conflict of interest "if that person, or that person's spouse, partner, child, close friend or relative works for or is negotiating to work for or has a financial interest (including being an unpaid member of a Board of Directors) in any organization that submitted an application currently under the panel's review." Members of the committee shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from parties to the awards.

Note: Under unusual circumstances the technical review committee may be delayed.

Verification of the application submission requirements will be conducted by the field grants manager. Awards will be made within 30 working days after the technical evaluation committee completes its review.

The application will be evaluated according to the evaluation criteria set below. To the extent necessary (if an award is not made based on initial applications), negotiations may be

conducted with each applicant whose application, after discussion and negotiation, has a reasonable chance of being selected for the award.

Evaluation Criteria:

a. Technical Merit (40 points)

- ✓ Relevance to program goals
- ✓ Sustainability of project results
- ✓ Anticipated impact on the beneficiaries
- ✓ Alignment with do no harm and conflict sensitivity

b. Flexibility and Adaptability in Implementation (10 points)

- ✓ Strategy and vision that allows adaptation
- ✓ Complexity-aware programming and M&E

c. Past Performance / Organizational Capacity (20 points)

- ✓ Past performance in similar projects
- ✓ Relevant staff skills to the proposed project
- ✓ Experience in geographical region
- ✓ Written accounting and procurement procedures
- ✓ Capacity to adhere to USAID financial guidelines

d. Management Approach (10 points)

- ✓ Clear organizational linkages and levels of efforts for staff
- ✓ Feasibility of start-up and mobilization

e. Feasibility and Cost Effectiveness (20 points)

- ✓ Are costs reasonable, allowable, and allocable?
- ✓ Is the proposal cost effective?
- ✓ Does the proposal have the required percentage of cost share/leveraging if required?

Section VI: AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

The recommendation or selection of an application in accordance with established procedures does not guarantee an award. All applicants must demonstrate that they possess, or have the ability to obtain, the necessary management competence to practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided.

A successful applicant can expect to receive an Award Letter, signed by the program. The award letter will be addressed to the organizations point of contact as stated in the application. Applicants that were not successful can expect a letter explaining the reason for their unsuccessful application.

Following the Award Letter, final negotiations will take place before the signing of a grant agreement.

Reporting Procedures:

A description of reporting requirements will be included in the Grant Agreement. The types of reporting required, along with the schedule of reporting, will depend on the grant type and

project duration. Reporting forms will be provided to grant recipients. Types of reporting will include the following:

- Program report to be submitted during project implementation according to a schedule described in the grant agreement. This report will include a description of progress made during the period, problems in project implementation; actions taken to overcome them; and activities planned for the next period.
- Final program report will describe how the project objectives and goals were reached, results of the project, and problems and solutions during implementation.
- Financial reports will be submitted according to a schedule described in the grant agreements. Types of financial reports, as well as the schedule of reporting, will depend on the type of grant, length of project, and amount of funding. In addition, the grantee is required to submit a detailed Final Financial Report.

Issuance of the final installment of grant funds is contingent upon R4P receipt and acceptance of Final Financial and Final Program Reports.

SECTION VII - OTHER INFORMATION

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of EAI, nor does it commit R4P/EAI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.

EAI reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Further, EAI reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this RFA.

Annex 1: Mandatory Standard Provisions

Mandatory Standard Provisions for US Nongovernmental Organizations:

<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303maa.pdf>

or

Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-US Nongovernmental Recipients:

<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf>

or

Standard Provisions for Fixed Amounts Award for Nongovernmental organizations

<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf>