

Responses To Questions On The Concept Call, Protecting Srhr In West Nile Region

Clarification on terminologies : Embassy clarifies that Lead Partner/Prime/Lead Applicant/Consortium Lead is the same entity in this call, and refers to the organization applying on behalf of the consortium and with which Embassy will sign the contract.

Request for documents

- Multiannual country strategy of the Embassy. Please check the Netherlands and Uganda website: [The Netherlands and Uganda \(netherlandsandyou.nl\)](http://netherlandsandyou.nl)
Final evaluation report of the ANSWER program. [Final evaluation report is not yet available.](#)

Question regards small grant funding

- If sufficient funds are not made available by the budget legislator, will EMBASSY still award smaller grants? [The approval is subject to the condition that sufficient funds are made available by the budget legislator. If there are changes in the budget, the Embassy will communicate ASAP.](#)

Clarity on deadline submission of concept note

- Apology for the confusion with dates. Deadline for submission of the concept note is 30th May 2024, before 23:30hrs EAT.

Questions on the activity Outline

- Justification for prioritization of the West Nile Region:
 - Why is West Nile, not other refugee hosting regions, particularly targeted? [This new activity will build on the milestones and achievements of the ANSWER program that was located in the West Nile region.](#)
- Target districts:
 - How many districts should be suggested in the concept note? How many will be selected for final program targeting? When will the final decision on districts for programming be made? [In the concept note, the consortium is requested to include 8-10 districts in West Nile Region. Out of these, a final 4-6 districts for activity implementation will be decided upon. This decision will be made during proposal development \(after award of concept\) or during the activity inception phase.](#)
 - Is it acceptable for a consortium to suggest in the concepts, preferred districts for interventions based on the needs and partner presence? Would this factor be considered in the selection of the final districts for interventions? [Yes, the consortium \(as a collective\) can suggest this in the concept note, the districts in the West Nile region in which they currently have programming or where they are planning to set up new programming. The final selection of districts will depend on several factors including presence of existing activities by the consortium members or other development partners and how these contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of this new activity.](#)
 - To facilitate a whole district approach, would this activity prioritize districts with existing SRHR related programs or those without any interventions? [It is possible for the activity to target districts with existing SRHR programs or those without any interventions.](#)

- Targeting and budgeting for refugees :
 - Does this project have a desirable interest for refugee populations? Are refugee populations to be targeted in this activity? **You are welcome to include refugees.**
 - Is there a specific budget allocation for the work with refugees in the West Nile region? **No specific budget allocation is earmarked for the refugee population.**
- Results and targets:
 - Do concepts notes have to indicate targets against some of the illustrative indicators at the concept note phase?
Not all illustrative indicators need targets as reflected in the concept note. But it is required to indicate targets for these specific indicators:
 - # of (adolescents, youth/young adults, women of reproductive age, including PWDs) provided with Sexual and Reproductive services (Maternal Health, Family planning, HPV/Cervical Cancer screening, HPV vaccination for adolescent girls, HIV, Post Abortion Care, Post SGBV care).
 - # of Couple Years of Protection.
 - # of maternal deaths averted.
 - # of unsafe abortions averted.
 - # of unintended pregnancies averted.
 - # of health facilities that adopt and implement youth friendly SRH and HIV/AIDS services.
 - # of (adolescents, youth/young adults, women of reproductive age, men, including PWDs), directly reached with SRHR/SGBV information, education and social norms transformation.
 - # of individuals (including youth, women of reproductive age, PWDs and survivors of teenage pregnancies) economically empowered.
 - Do targets need to be set against the value for money indicators on page 14?
Yes, the concept note should include targets for the value for money indicators on page 14 (also listed above).
 - Are consortium partners allowed to omit or add new results indicators for the long and short outcomes, ensuring alignment with the overall project objectives and goals? **The outcome indicators (short and long-term) are based on the integrated and multisectoral nature of this activity and aligned to the Netherlands results framework for SRHR/Gender Equality. The Embassy is flexible to add indicators that the partner will justify , not flexible on omission of the core NL indicators.**

Questions on the major features/strategies/approaches of the activity

- The emphasis of this call seems to lie in improving the quality and access to SRHR services, is there room in this project for advocacy efforts on SRHR?
This is a district-focused activity. National level advocacy work is not in the scope of this activity. Integration of advocacy efforts within the social accountability work at the district and lower levels is part of the scope of this activity.
- Innovative financing in this activity : The concept call indicates that Systems strengthening is core in the strategies, but only a limited extent of investments in hardware is allowable, therefore innovative financing mechanisms are recommended, to make available needed finances for the hardware related intervention.”
 - Does EMBASSY have a preferred financing model? **No. Only one judicial agreement with the “Lead” applicant.**
 - What does EMBASSY mean by innovative financing? And for whom is innovative financing directed? **Comprises financial and economic instruments that are common in the business community, but not yet widely applied in or still under development in the context of development cooperation. It is directed to government or non government structures.**
 - Is it expected that as part of innovative finance, additional funds will be mobilized to co-fund this project? **You are welcome to mobilize additional funds.**
 - Are these specifically meant to fund hardware-related interventions? **Not necessarily.**
Is the expectation that this will be through the private sector, mobilizing funds through the government, or both? **You are free to decide which stakeholders you want to include.**
What are EMBASSY’s expectations around innovative financing mechanisms and are there any related illustrative indicators for which the awardee may be responsible? **It is EMBASSY’s expectation that the Consortium partners, with technical leadership of the innovative financing expert consortium member, will set up the appropriate innovative financing mechanism(s) within the activity.**
- The HIV scope seems limited to behavioral and some components of biomedical prevention targeting adolescents and young people. Will this project have any role in addressing HIV care and treatment challenges, especially among adolescents?
HIV prevention (mainly behavioral) is within the scope of this activity. Addressing HIV care and treatment challenges (including among adolescents) not to be tackled in a vertical approach, but as part of the integrated SRHR service delivery and quality improvement.
- What does EMBASSY expects on implementation of the comprehensive sexuality education framework in schools outside of government policy/position?
EMBASSY expects implementation of the framework in an approach that offers young people SRH information/education, that is rights based and meeting the information need of young person.
- Given the centrality of mental health in SRHR, would an integrated model for SRHR and mental health be interesting for this call? **You are welcome integrating this.**

Questions on implementation modalities, management and governance

- Consortium membership type and number:
 - Is there a recommended maximum number of implementing partners in a consortium?
There is not a recommended number. EMBASSY will assess efficiency and effectiveness of the governance of the consortium and implementation of activity.
 - Is private sector considered None -Governmental Organizations by EMBASSY, can private sector actors be included in the consortium membership?
Yes, private sector can be included.
Is joint application from the Netherlands arm and local (Uganda) arm of an international organisation accepted? Yes.
 - Is it a requirement that a consortium will have an organization for each expertise area/component(different partner per criteria) or is it acceptable that an organization with multiple expertise can be responsible for/or deliver on more than one expertise area/components of the program?
The concept note should demonstrate availability of required expertise in the consortium.
 - Can knowledge institutions (national or international), be engaged to provide Technical assistance for strengthening evidence based monitoring, evaluation and learning within this activity?
Yes.
 - Is it correct that knowledge institutions cannot be a consortium partner (as they are not NGOs), but then could be listed as a technical assistance partner.
Knowledge institutions are acceptable to be members of a consortium and as a technical partner.
 - Are UN agencies eligible to apply for this call? Yes, UN agency are not excluded (in whichever role).
 - Are grantees of the strategic partnerships funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs eligible to apply to this call? Yes.

- Subcontracting by consortium members:

On the clause “ In case of subcontracting/granting by the consortium members, for program implementation, this will only be with district based, community based or national organizations”.

 - please clarify if this means that all consortium members can subcontract national organizations including civil society organizations for program implementation.
Embassy clarifies that subcontracting/sub granting refers to engagement by a consortium member (including consortium lead) of another organization (outside consortium), for implementation of interventions including research.
For program implementation, all consortium members (including lead) can only subcontract community based, district based or national organizations. Any deviations from this need to be explained and justified.
 - Does this mean only the prime can be an international NGO?
Embassy clarifies that Lead Partner/Prime/Lead Applicant/Consortium Lead is the same entity in this call, and refers to the organization applying on behalf of

the consortium and with which Embassy will sign the contract. The prime can be an international or National Southern based Organization, and should meet the set Lead Partner Criteria.

- Can other consortium members also be international NGOs? Or are you referring to downstream partners only here?
Activity will be implemented by a consortium of Non-Governmental Organizations. National and International organizations can be mixed, as long it is clear what role they play in the consortium.
- Role of Government entities in the activity
 - What is the expected role of government entities (particularly District Local governments and lower Local Governments) in this activity? They are not non-government organizations, but can they be involved in implementation of this activity?
District Local Government and lower local governments entities should be strategic partners and implementers.
- Localization:
 - How much emphasis does EMBASSY place on localization?
Embassy places high importance on localization, which is one of the selection criteria for the concept assessment.
- Participation in more than one consortium
 - Can a partner be included in multiple proposals? For example, as a sub on two proposals. Is it possible to submit several CNs with different partners?
Yes, an organization can be part of more than one consortium in the submission of the concept note. Ultimately only one proposal will be funded.

Questions related to Monitoring, Evaluation , Accountability and learning

- Would embedding of PhD programs within the implementation (i.e. action research and implementation research) be considered a strength in the proposal?
Research and learning are emphasized in the concept note and embedding a PhD programme within the implementation is a possible strategy.
- The call indicates Embassy will directly manage the evaluation (baseline/MTR/end evaluation). Should the concept notes include budget for baseline/MTR/end evaluation?
Embassy acknowledges importance of baseline studies for collection of information for programming (besides zero measurement for indicators). Embassy will take responsibility and budget for conducting zero measurement (baseline measurement) of the outcome and impact indicators, Midterm review and End evaluation.
Concept notes should therefore include budget for baseline related assessments for informing programming e.g stakeholder analysis, power analysis, needs assessment, assessing and establishing local structures etc.
- The call indicates EMBASSY will undertake the baseline assessments and then set the targets collaboratively with the partners. Should the concept note include proposed performance projections or targets?

Yes. The concept note should include targets for the value for money indicators on page 14 (also listed above).

- Is the inclusion of operational research component in the concept mandatory or just something to consider?
It is mandatory to describe the learning component of the activity, operational research is one example.
- Are the results of the SRHR program evaluation by the IOB incorporated in the design of this program and evaluation? (<https://english.iob-evaluatie.nl/results/srhr-policy>) If so, would the participating of knowledge institutions be also considered as a strength for the MEL plans? Knowledge institutions are eligible to participate, including as technical partner.

Questions on the Selection Procedure

- Are co-funding opportunities from international partners appreciated as part of the evaluation criteria?
International partners are welcome to provide co-funding, but there is no specific additional scoring foreseen in the selection criteria.
- Is there a standard template or format for the concept note and budget? For the concept note / budget there is no specific format. The concept note (Max 10pages), should respond to all questions. It should be possible to assess all elements of the threshold and qualitative criteria. For the second phase (full proposal) we may give a template for the budget.
- Will the proposal phase also be a competitive stage?
This will depend on whether more than one concept note will be considered out of the concept note assessment.

Questions on the threshold criteria.

- Criteria .a : additional information required from lead partner.
 - Are there standard templates for presenting this information?
No specific format.
- Criteria .b : The value of the proposal per year is less than 50% of the lead partner's in-country total annual budget. Annual financial statements of 2021, 2022 and 2023 to be submitted."
 - In instances where a certain individual year does not make 50% of the annual proposal budget, is it acceptable if the total sum 3 years' (2021, 2022, 2023) organization budget makes up 50% of the total requested proposal budget?
EMBASSY will assess if a partner is not growing faster than 200%; We take the individual years 2021, 2022 and 2023 to establish this and not based on accumulated amount for three years.
 - What is the minimum proposal budget threshold that can be requested by a partner in instances where the partner's country budget limit does not allow a

partner to request for the Max 20 million Euros? Is there an acceptable budget minimum request?

[There is no minimum budget.](#)

- What are the demerits of requesting a lower budget (eg.50% or 70% of the 20 million Euro available for this programme) even when the partner meets all other threshold criteria, with a good consortium composition and strong technical interventions?

[A partner with a lower budget, but a very good proposal containing an acceptable number of results can still apply.](#)

- Is the portfolio of having annual budgets where the grant is not more that 50% fixed or can it be adjusted upwards? Does the denominator include the annual grant amount itself (approx. 5million Euros annually)?

[The 50% is fixed for the denominator.](#)

- The value of the proposal per year is less than 50% of the lead partner's in-country total annual budget", Is it a minimum turnover of 10 million euros that the lead partner should have annually? Is this flexible? [The maximum amount to be committed is € 20.000.000. With a four year planning this is most probably € 4.000.000 per annum. The current minimum turnover therefore should be in the € 2.000.000 range in a year.](#)

- Concerning track record and the organization portfolio- is this limited to the portfolio in Uganda or the overall organization portfolio?

[The portfolio in Uganda.](#)

- The financial statement of 2023 is listed among the requirements but may not be ready by the time of submission. Can these be submitted later?

[May the audit financial statement not yet be available we accept a non-audited statement for 2023.](#)

- Some organizations that don't have available the 2023 financial statement, as per the Uganda regulations. Could organizations submit 2022 -2020 statements instead?

[See answer above.](#)

- Regarding the annual financial statements, are these for in country or overall?

[In country \(Uganda\).](#)

- Regarding the value of the proposal per year, does this imply an approximate annual budget of 5M per year, if total budget in 4 quarters/years? Does this mean that the minimum threshold for lead partner should be double than the annual budget so approx. 10 M euro a year?

[See above, The minimum turnover therefore should be in the € 2.000.000 range in a year.](#)

- While determining the annual 10 million euros turn over, would a lead partner be allowed to include the value of upcoming projects such as this SRHR project if successful? Is the value of this proposal included or excluded?

[EMBASSY is assessing your turnover from the past.](#)

- For international organizations with multi-country presence, and where Uganda is financially consolidated with the international organization, would that organization -wide annual financial statements be acceptable? Can EMBASSY also confirm the in-country total annual budget can be inclusive of regional or multi-country projects?
Uganda-specific statement is leading. Regional, multi-country is not taken into consideration.
- Criteria (d) Concerning experience of Consortium lead
 - Does the embassy expect a lead partner to have experience implementing projects in West Nile or experience in similar geographies is a satisfying complement?
The lead partner (Consortium lead), which can be an international or National Southern based Organization, with strong experience in health systems strengthening, SRHR/GBV programing in Uganda and other African countries, at a comparable scale in terms of finance and number of beneficiaries ; managing multisector partnerships and programs; working with Uganda ministry of health structures at national, district, subcounty and health facility level.
 - If the lead partner is not strong on one of the parameters e.g., health systems strengthening but brings on board a very strong consortium partner in that area of health systems strengthening, would this be sufficient to pass stage one of evaluation?
Health systems strengthening, competence in SRHR/GBV programing and ability to efficiently manage multisector programing and partnership is an essential expertise for the lead organization.
 - Is an organization currently receiving funding from the Embassy for SRHR/SGBV interventions in another region of Uganda eligible to apply as a lead applicant?
Yes. As long as the threshold criteria b) is adhered to (The value of the proposal per year is less than 50% of the lead partner’s in-country total annual budget).
 - The highlighted criteria for the consortia lead includes proven experience with implementation of health systems strengthening, SRHR/GBV programing in Uganda and two other African countries, at a comparable scale in terms of finance and group of beneficiaries; managing multisector partnerships and programs; working with Uganda ministry of health structures at national, district, subcounty and health facility level. kindly clarify whether for consortia, the combination of consortium members should meet these qualitative criteria?
These are specific requirements for the consortium lead/Lead Applicant/Prime.
- Criteria (e) Declaration by the Applicant
 - The TL will be in charge of program operations and supervise ALL program staff (including from other consortium partners)”. Does this mean the prime is expected to set up a project office for this programme? Will this be funded by

EMBASSY? Does the TL need to be at 100% LOE? Is there a page limit for the TL CV?

The TL has to be 100% LOE and fulltime on the activity. TL CV to be 2-3pages max. The Prime/consortium lead/lead applicant is expected to set up an efficient program management unit.

- Criteria (f) At least 50% of the activity budget should be implemented directly by the program staff of the applicant.
 - By 'activity budget', does this only mean program activities and not all of the other costs borne by the lead partner (e.g. operations, personnel, indirect cost recovery (ICR), etc.)?
This includes both program and other cost.
 - Is this 50% referring to the total activity budget or the annual activity budget?
This refers to 50% of the total activity budget.
 - What does "applicant" mean? What does the word "applicant mean"? Do you mean lead applicant, or do you mean all applicants together (thus consortium)?
Applicant refers to the consortium lead/ Prime /lead applicant.
 - Does it consider the consortium members directly implementing the 50% or it is only for the lead applicant? The consortium members have been questioning the alignment of this clause with the commitment of supporting empowerment national organizations to deliver this Activity.
This concerns program staff of the lead applicant directly implementing 50% of the activity budget.
 - Do you mean that this needs to be through direct delivery rather than sub-awarding to a national or local implementing partner? Is it possible to provide financial support to other actors within this 50% e.g. small CBOs, government'?
This is for the consortium lead. 50% of the total budget should be directly implemented by the program staff of the consortium.
 - Please clarify if this means that the applicant and its direct consortium partners will implement at least 50% of the activity budget with its staff?
It is about the lead applicant's staff (and not including other consortium partners) involvement of at least 50%.
- Criteria (g) Inclusion of draft MOU
 - Will EMBASSY accept a longer MOU so partners can use their current templates as long as they satisfy the information requirements?
Partners can use their templates, with the information requirements included, but should not be more than 3 pages.
 - Should this be attached as an annex? or is this part of the 10 page concept note?
This should be included as an annex to the concept.
- Criteria (i) Office in Uganda and Registration
 - Do all consortium members need to be registered for at least 3 years in Uganda?
No, only for the pen holder in case of consortium.
 - In the TOR it mentions that Applicants should have an office in Uganda for at least 3 years. Is this mandatory for the entire consortium? No, only for the pen holder incase of consortium.

Questions on the organization and track record check / Experience

- Can EMBASSY please clarify if applicants must include the technical lead resume in the concept note and if it has 3 points in the evaluation criteria or none?
The technical resume to be attached as annex and yes it has 3 points score.
- Should consortium partners name the experienced professionals who will head this activity in their organizations? Should the names of these experienced professions be indicated in the budget only ? Or should more specific information or a CV for 'experienced professionals' for each consortium partner be part of the application?
No needed to include names in the concept or budget. The budgets should however reflect this as one of the program personnel cost, at 100% LOE.

Questions on the Budget

- Is a budget expected to be submitted with this application? An indicative budget (main budget lines, as also specified at page 14 in ToR) should be provided showing consortium lead and partners' budget. Full proposal (phase 2) should contain detailed budget.
- What is the expected budget allocation per key area (Health component, Education, Social Norms, Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms, economic empowerment, disability inclusion), if applicable?
There is no expected budget allocation per key area prescribed. Refer to the TOR for budgeting lines/details.
- Is there a limit on the percentage of costs to be allocated to operations costs (including in-country operation costs and indirect cost recovery (ICR))?
No, but part of the budget assessment; Higher overhead costs than of consortium partners will lead to a lower score for this element.
- Should the budget be submitted at category level according to the categories listed on pg. 14? And should this be broken out by consortium partner, or can it cover the whole project?
An indicative budget (main budget lines) should be provided. Full proposal (phase 2) should contain detailed budget. In the Concept note phase it is not necessary to give a full budget, unless the applicant thinks it is important for the assessment.
- Should program personnel get included in program costs or personnel costs?
An indicative budget (main budget lines) should be provided. Full proposal (phase 2) should contain detailed budget. Personnel costs should be captured under the budget line personnel.
- Do operations personnel get included in operations costs or personnel costs?
See above answer.

Request for linkage with potential partners for collaboration in this activity.

- Some organizations requested to be linked to potential partners with whom they can explore collaboration
The Embassy cannot play this role.

Linkage between this call and the Civil Society Framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- Is there any relationship between this funding and the Strengthening Civil Society framework which is currently being drafted by the Dutch Ministry of foreign affairs. Would applying for this opportunity hinder ability for an organization to apply for the Mofa funding?

Applying for this funding, does not hinder opportunity or ability for an organization to apply for the future expected Civil Society strengthening framework funding.