



Request for Applications

TCMR OFF-GRID ENERGY CHALLENGE

RFA No.: 001- 72066018CA00006

Date of issuance: April 11, 2022

Due date for questions: April 22, 2022

Release date for response to all questions: April 29, 2022

Closing date: May 15, 2022

Question & Application Submission Instructions: Questions and Applications (including technical proposal and budget) are due by 23:59hrs EST via email to mcullinen@pactworld.org. Emailed submissions must contain the subject “TCMR OFF-GRID Challenge.”

Estimated award date: July 1, 2022

1. Background

Pact is a leader in building the capacity of non-government organizations, networks and intermediary organizations. Pact's mission is to help build strong communities globally that provide people with an opportunity to earn a dignified living, raise healthy families and participate in democratic life. Pact achieves this by strengthening the organizational and technical capacity of grassroots organizations, coalitions and networks, and by forging linkages between government, business and citizens in order to achieve social, economic, and environmental justices.

In 2018, Pact started the USAID-funded Tanganyika Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation (TCMR) project to build peace between two communities in the DRC that have long been at violent odds, the indigenous Batwa and Bantu. We are increasing cooperation and co-existence by strengthening conflict mitigation mechanisms and resolution processes for peacebuilding and improving livelihoods through social cohesion and collaboration. To reduce conflict over resources, Pact and its partners bring communities together to help them restore peace and thus increase agricultural production and access greater market opportunities.

USAID recently awarded Pact new funding to launch the next phase of the TCMR project, which will help advance sustainable development efforts in the Tanganyika province and build a resilient future for Tanganyika's conflict-affected communities.

2. Purpose Statement

Pact is pleased to announce the release of this request for applications (RFA) for funding provided to support Pact's implementation of the TCMR project. This RFA is issued as a public notice to ensure that all interested, qualified, and eligible private sector companies have a fair opportunity to submit applications for funding.

The purpose of the TCMR Off-Grid Energy Challenge is to enable energy providers to expand distribution of off-grid energy products and offering of energy services to communities within the TCMR target region (see section 3.2) by reducing risk of market entry and development. Pact seeks applicants to provide off-grid electrification in Activity areas, including electrification of public facilities (clinics, schools, water and sanitation) and cell phone recharging stations, solar home systems (Tier 1 and above), , solar rechargeable batteries, water pumps for irrigation, and provision for small businesses.

3. Program Description

The TCMR Off-Grid Energy Challenge will enable the expansion of energy product sales and service offerings in the TCMR target region by providing a grant to Offerors who have proven capabilities related to one of the following use cases:

- 1) Build, own and operate solar installations, providing energy as a service to commercial, institutional and industrial customers;
- 2) Provide engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) services for Productive uses of solar energy; and/or

- 3) Distribute high quality (see [Lighting Global Standards](#) or [IEC TS 62257-9-8](#)) off-grid solar products either on a cash payment or pay as you go basis.

The grant is intended to provide either a CAPEX subsidy as a percentage of the capital expenditures (hard costs) or a result based subsidy related to one of the above use cases (see section 5.3 for further details).

3.1. Illustrative Examples of Program Activities

The Call is divided into 3 components which will be evaluated separately:

Component 1 (Health Clinic Electrification): Design, build, own and operate a rooftop solar plus storage installation as well as a solar water pumping station for 4 health clinics (HC Makumbo – Nyunzu, HC Luba – Manono, HC Mtoa – Kalemie and HC Kawama – Kalemie) and enter into a at least 5 years O&M agreement to sell water to neighboring communities to cover OPEX. Grant funding would cover no more than 100% of the total eligible cost of installation, Offeror would demonstrate his business model, and the project sustainability beyond the 5 years agreement

Component 2 (Productive Use of Solar Energy (PUE)): Provide EPC services for solar irrigation system, solar refrigerators, solar grain mills, or any agricultural, commercial, or industrial activity that uses electricity as a direct input to the production of goods or provision of services. The productive use of electricity (PUE) should increase income and/or productivity for households or micro, small and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs) and offer a multiplier effect to wealth creation. Grant funding would cover up to 40% of the total cost of EPC services upfront, with the customer providing the balance over an agreed upon payment schedule. Offerors must identify targeted customers, provide a signed agreement for the proposed project, design and describe the proposed project, indicate the expected grant as well as the repayment plan, the impact on the business, etc.

Component 3 (Rural Households): Provide at least 800 solar home systems (at least Tier 1) to rural households. Grant funding would cover up to 30% of the total cost of ownership, with the end user paying the balance either upfront, or over an agreed upon pay as you go schedule. The nominal grant amount per system will depend on the hardship and distance between the village residence of the households and urban areas. Offeror must indicate his deployment plan across the TCMR target region, the requested grant per location, , the targeted number of households, and share the description/technical data of the SHS to be sold.

3.2. Geographic area

The project will be implemented in the TCMR target region with the Tanganyika Province in the Kalemie, Manono, Nyunzu, Moba and Kabalo territories as determine in the following mapping of intervention.

| Territory | Sectors | Villages | Latitude | Longitude | Altitude |
|-----------|--------------------|----------|-----------------|---------------|----------|
| Kalemie | Kasanga Mtowa | 5 | -5,072 S | 32,8345 E | 1,500m |
| | Momie (Kalemie) | 5 | -5.9460S | 29,1967 E | 1,500m |
| | Maman Kasanga | 5 | 5 °– 48'7.18" S | 29° 18'31" E | 1,500m |
| | Nyemba | 5 | 5° 57'32" S | 28° 25' 36" E | 1,500m |
| | Tumbwe | 5 | -6,0230 S | 29,1388 E | 1,500m |
| Kabalo | Kasinge | 5 | -6.328929 S | 26,9821 E | 500–700m |
| | Mbuli | 3 | -5,3990 S | 27,5833E | 501–700m |
| | Kabula | 5 | -6,4872 S | 27,0080E | 502–700m |
| Manono | Kabanga | 5 | -7,3051 S | 27,9518 E | 633m |
| | Bakongolo (Manono) | 5 | -7,1879S | 27,4321E | 633m |
| | Kiluba | 5 | -5.8739746 S | 28,7871E | 633m |
| Nyunzu | Malemba (Nyunzu) | 5 | 5° 57' 22" S | 28° 00' 59" E | 734m |
| | Muuya (Nyunzu) | 5 | 5° 57' 22" S | 28° 00' 59" E | 734m |
| | Ngombe (Nyunzu) | 5 | 5° 57' 22" S | 28° 00' 59" E | 734m |
| | Lwizi (Nyunzu) | 5 | 5° 57' 22" S | 28° 00' 59" E | 734m |
| Moba | Kansabala | 5 | -7.1750S | 29,6472 E | 1,135m |
| | Kabwela | 5 | -7.7390S | 29,4136 E | 1,135m |
| | Manda (Moba) | 5 | -7.0427487' S | 29,7738 E | 1,135m |
| Total | | 88 | | | |

3.3. Intended impact

Overall, the intended impact is to improve access to energy, and the means to use energy productively. Specifically, the Awardee is expected to achieve one or more of the following intended outcomes:

- 1) # households with improved access to energy
- 2) # people with improved ability to use energy productively
- 3) # of healthcare facilities electrified
- 4) # of schools electrified

- 5) # of phone charging stations electrified
- 6) # of commercial and industrial businesses electrified
- 7) # of drinking water and sanitation stations electrified

The scale of intended impact will be a key determinant in selecting an awardee for the TCMR Off-Grid Energy Challenge (see section 6 below). Offerors will be evaluated based on their ability to maximize impact through cost share, partnerships, and efficiency.

3.5. Expected role of sub-awardee in the program

The Awardee will be expected to work in partnership with Pact to select specific sites from the list of sectors in section 3.2 above. The Awardee is expected to conduct due diligence and customer acquisition in order to identify specific projects and/or customers. The Awardee is expected to negotiate commercial terms directly with the customer and to secure any additional financing needed to complete the project(s) independently.

4. Application Submission

4.1. Grantee eligibility

This competition is open to any private entity that is either a non-profit, not-for-profit, or for-profit entity that is not established in the United States. To be minimally eligible for funding, applicants must provide full, accurate, and complete information and comply with the following conditions. Organizations must:

- Be legally registered or otherwise authorized to conduct business in their country or countries of operation.
- Have a DUNS/UEI¹ number (a nine-digit identification number required for all procurement-related activities). A DUNS/UEI number is not required for application, but will be required for receipt of award.
- Be able to complete implementation within the stated timeframe of July 15, 2022 to June 30, 2023.
- Have previous experience of not less than 3 years working on off-grid energy challenge in the DRC. Working in the Tanganyika Province is an asset.
- Justify financial and technical capacity to execute the proposed project,
- Explain their plan to ensure a sustainable operation of systems provided under the proposed project.

4.2. Funding

Pact anticipates these awards will be cost-reimbursable, fixed amount award, or in-kind grants. Grant type will be based on the program description and the results of the partner's pre-award risk assessment, which Pact will conduct prior to issuance of the award.

Subject to the availability of funds, Pact and ANSER intend to award between \$30,000-\$50,000 for component 1, up to \$50,000 up for component 3, up to \$30,000 for component 2 in total

¹ You can obtain a DUNS/UEI number by applying at <https://www.registrarcorp.com>

funding over 12 months. Pact and ANSER anticipate awarding 1 grant awards to successful Offeror for component 1, 1-2 awardees for component 3 and 1-2 awardees for component 2. Pact and ANSER reserve the right to award any or none of the applications submitted.

Grants to awardees will be disbursed on an agreed schedule to be included in the grant agreement, in line with the component and the project sustainability. Nevertheless, 15% of the agreed cumulative grant will be retained and disbursed only after verification of six months of functioning equipment.

4.3. Application submission deadline

Applications must be submitted by May 15, 2022 at 23:59hrs EST.

4.4. Late submissions, modifications, and withdrawals of application

At Pact's discretion, any application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt may be considered ineligible for consideration. Applications may be withdrawn by written notice via email or in person by an organization or the authorized representative.

4.5. Conflict of interest clause

Applicants must provide disclosure of any past, present, or future relationships with any parties associated with the issuance, review or management of this solicitation and anticipated award. Failure to provide full and open disclosure may result in Pact having to re-evaluate selection of a potential applicant.

4.6. Submission method for questions

Submit questions electronically to Matthew Cullinen (mcullinen@pactworld.org), with copies to Guy Kilumba (gkilumba@pactworld.org) and Teddy Mafuta (tmafuta@pactworld.org).

The deadline for questions is April 22, 2022, 23.59hrs EST

The email subject line should read "Questions - TCMR OFF-GRID Challenge Program, Component XX."

All questions and answers will be shared with all interested applicants.

4.7. Submission method for final application

Submit applications electronically to Matthew Cullinen (mcullinen@pactworld.org), with copies to: Guy Kilumba (gkilumba@pactworld.org) and Teddy Mafuta (tmafuta@pactworld.org).

The email subject line should read "Application - TCMR OFF-GRID Challenge." Technical applications and attachments must be submitted in PDF format. Budgets must be submitted in Microsoft Excel format.

5. Application Format

5.1. Overall requirements

Applicants will develop their applications based on their understanding of needs, their prior institutional experience, and their determination of the approaches that would be feasible and successful. In all cases, applicants shall clearly explain the rationale for the proposed approaches

chosen. To facilitate the competitive review of the applications, Pact only will consider applications conforming to the following.

- The application narrative should be clear, concise, and properly organized.
- The document should be in 12p Times New Roman font, single spaced, with 1 inch/2.5 cm margins.
- Applications should not exceed 14 pages in length; page maximums for specific parts are provided in sections 5.2 and 5.3.
- Applications should be written in English or French.
- Paper copies of the applications will not be accepted.
- Please note that technical and cost applications should be separate files.

All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the application format. Applications should take into account the evaluation criteria.

5.2. Technical application

Limit of fourteen (14) pages, including:

Sub-Awardee Risk and Responsibility Assessment Cover Page (one page)

I. Technical Approach and Feasibility of Program Design (five pages)

- The applicant's technical approach should include:
 - A description of the activities to be undertaken, organized by thematic area
 - Anticipated results
- The application should discuss the applicant's approach for engaging with local actors, building partnerships with key stakeholders, and creating linkages with other relevant development activities/programs.

II. Management and Staffing Plan (one page)

- The management and staffing plan should show the roles and responsibilities of key staff who will participate in the program.
- Applicants should provide the CV of the Program Manager.

III. Past Performance (one page)

- Describe the organization's previous experience with off-grid energy projects.
- Demonstrate experience in building the capacity of local organizations, local government institutions, research, networks, and initiatives.

IV. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (one page)

- Describe how the project will collect data and ensure data quality of the relevant indicators from Section 3.5 of this RFA.
- The applicant should provide additional indicators and targets.

5.3. Cost application

Limit of two (2) pages. Please use the templates in attachment 2 and 3 for a detailed and summary budget and cost share plan. The summary budget should include all costs anticipated within the following line items:

- **Salaries/fringe benefits:** all costs associated with employees working under the proposed project, including the level of effort expected from each salaried employee and the costs of fringe benefits
- **Travel and per diem:** travel, lodging, and per diem for staff need to implement the project
- **Equipment rental:** equipment that must be rented (i.e., vehicles) to enable program implementation
- **Equipment cost including installation cost and business plan**
- **Workshops/training/events:** workshops, development of information materials, studies, information dissemination, etc.; other direct costs associated with implementing activities under the project
- **Operating/administrative costs:** rent, communications, electricity, telephone, audit, and office supplies; TCMR will not fund office start-up costs or proposal development costs.
- **Cost Share or Matching:** Grantees will be required to contribute resources from their own, private or local sources for the implementation of this project. Cost sharing refers to the resources a recipient contributes to the total cost of an agreement. Cost-sharing may be cash or in-kind contributions but, by definition, may not include USG funds or USG-funded in-kind contributions. Cost-sharing must be used for the accomplishment of program objectives and must consist of allowable costs under the applicable USG cost principles (see 2 CFR 200.306 for more). The proposed cost share must be included in the budget. The cost share is required to be at least (50%) of the total estimated amount.

6. Evaluation of Applications

6.1. Review process

The TCMR OFF-GRID Challenge will establish a technical review committee that includes representatives from PACT, USAID, ANSER and external staff. All technical reviewers will be subjected to a screening process to eliminate any conflict of interest. Evaluation will be based on the criteria set forth in sections 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4. The process will be completed within approximately 45–60 business days. The review panel, using the criteria detailed below, will rate applications and make funding recommendations to the program's grants management unit.

Pact reserves the right to make any number of awards or none at all. Pact is not responsible for any costs associated with the development of applications.

To facilitate the review of applications, Offerors must organize the narrative sections of their applications with the same headings and in the same order as the selection criteria.

6.2. Evaluation criteria for the application

In evaluating the applications, Pact will examine overall merit and feasibility, as well as the specific criteria relevant to each component, as elaborated in the table below. Applicants should note that these criteria both serve as the standard against which all applicants will be evaluated and serve to identify the significant matters that applicants should address in their applications. Pact will instruct the technical review committee to evaluate all applications according to the criteria as established and weighted in the following table.

| Evaluation Criteria | Points |
|---|---------------|
| I. Technical Approach and Feasibility of Program Design The review team considers a strong technical design to be one that is informed by local circumstances and needs. It should demonstrate coordination with other efforts or ongoing processes, including the efforts of other peace actors and/or programs. Proposals must be in line with the technical areas outlined in section 3. | 30 |
| II. Management and Staffing Plan The review team will evaluate the extent to which the management and staffing plans demonstrate the applicant’s ability to effectively implement proposed activities responsive to this RFA. Reviewers will assess whether the organization has proposed sufficient level of effort to achieve stated results and their strategy to ensure sustainable operation of the proposed project (components 1 and 2). | 20 |
| III. Past Performance Reviewers will evaluate whether the organization has managed successful projects of similar size and scope in the geographic areas specified. | 20 |
| IV. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Reviewers will assess how the applicant intends to collect data, ensure data quality, and measure progress using the relevant indicators in section 3.5 and any additional custom indicators proposed by the applicant. Reviewers also will assess the feasibility of proposed indicator targets and consider the extent to which the application includes a plan to use the data for reflection and learning. | 10 |
| V. Cost Evaluation The cost application will be evaluated for reasonableness, allocability, allowability, cost effectiveness, realism, and financial feasibility. Pact reserves the right to determine the resulting level of funding for the grants being selected for this RFA, regardless of what the applicant specifies in the cost application. | 20 |
| Total | 100 |

6.3. Supporting documentation for Pre-Award Assessment/site visits

After the application evaluation process, any selected firm will be required to complete a Financial Pre-Award Assessment in order for Pact to determine if the organization has the capacity to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed grant. As part of the Pre-Award Assessment process, Applicants may be asked to submit additional documentation to illustrate that the organization has the capability to implement the grant. Site visits may be conducted by Pact staff to evaluate the organization in these areas.

7. Terms and Conditions

7.1. Standard provisions

The Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations as applicable will apply to these grants. Applicants can find the provisions at <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>. Printed versions of these provisions are available upon request.

7.2. Permission for use and disclosure

By submitting an application under this RFA, the applicant consents to the disclosure of the documents submitted by the applicant to the reviewers involved in the selection process. Please note that all reviewers are bound by non-disclosure agreements.

7.3. Disclaimers

- Pact may cancel the solicitation and not award any funds.
- Pact may reject any or all applications received.
- Issuance of solicitation does not constitute award commitment by Pact.
- Pact reserves the right to disqualify any application based on applicant's failure to follow solicitation instructions.
- Pact will not compensate applicants for their response to the solicitation.
- Pact reserves the right to issue an award based on initial evaluation of applications without further discussion.
- Pact may choose to award only part of the activities in the solicitation or to issue multiple awards based on the solicitation activities.
- Pact reserves the right to waive minor application deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition.
- Pact may contact applicants to confirm contact person, address, and that the application was submitted for this solicitation.
- Pact may contact listed past performance references without notice to the applicant. Pact also reserves the right to contact other past performance information sources that the applicant did not list in the application.
- By submitting an application, the applicants confirm they understand the terms and conditions.

8. Attachments

The following documents are considered part of this RFA:

- A. Sub-awardee Risk and Responsibility Assessment cover page
- B. Budget template
- C. Cost share plan template, if applicable.