

**BALADI Workshops**  
**Questions and Answers**  
(Updated on January 15, 2015)

**Question:** In the Request for Municipal Applications (RFMA), under the list of excluded applications we can find "Large-scale irrigation projects" but in the workshop held in Halba-Akkar, irrigation projects seemed to be identified as illegible projects. Can you please further clarify what is meant by "large-scale", maybe provide a similar explanation to the one provided for "Large-scale infrastructure and construction"?

**Answer:** BALADI program cannot assist in large-scale infrastructure, construction, and/or irrigation projects; large-scale projects of this type are defined as having a value greater than \$200,000. On the other hand, small or medium-scale infrastructure, construction, and/or irrigation projects are eligible under BALADI program; such projects are defined as having a value less than or equal to \$200,000. The list of non-eligible projects is provided in Section 4 of the English version of the Request for Municipal Applications (page 6).

**Question:** How can we contact BALADI Program by phone for information?

**Answer:** BALADI office locations and phone numbers are listed in the 'Contact Us' section on the BALADI website <http://www.baladi-lebanon.org/>. For direct access to the details addresses and contacts for all BALADI Program offices click on the following link: <http://baladi-lebanon.org/en/contact-us/>.

**Question:** Please advise if acceptable to apply for a "Public Garden":

- It is a Green/community Public Garden project
- We already started Phase I out of III (phase II and III are postponed due lack of budget)

**Answer:** The list of non-eligible projects is provided in Section 4 of the English version of the Request for Municipal Applications (page 6); public gardens are not part of the ineligible list. Therefore, a public garden project is eligible for consideration under BALADI subject to the evaluation criteria listed in Section 6 of the English version, and including (among other criteria) that the project adequately responds to socio-economic opportunities, needs, or issues identified by the local community. As stated in Section 3 of the English version of the Request for Municipal Applications, USAID BALADI program's support may reach up to USD 250,000 per application, and therefore this is the maximum that an applicant can request. A local/community cost share of at least 20% per application is required to demonstrate local commitment. The 20% is from the total project cost i.e. if the applicant is requesting \$250K, then the 20% is \$62.5K. Any local community cost share may be in-kind or in-cash.

**Question:** Is it possible to accept "agricultural roads" as a project for a union of municipalities. For us, it is the most important project?

**Answer:** BALADI program has not listed agricultural roads among its non-eligible projects. However, kindly note that an agricultural roads project is categorized as an infrastructure project, and infrastructure projects (including agricultural roads) valued above \$200,000 are not eligible for funding under BALADI program. Section 4 of the English version of the Request for Municipal Applications (page 6) also lists 'New Land Development projects' as ineligible projects. If the purpose of the agricultural roads project is developing new land then it becomes ineligible under BALADI program. Please also note that eligible projects will be evaluated per the technical criteria listed in Section 6 of the RFMA.

**Question:** Can a municipality apply to BALADI program without having any partner?

**Answer:** BALADI program encourages partnerships between CSOs and municipalities and applications are evaluated based on these criteria. It is worth noting that partnerships can be made with CBOs, private sector, clubs, active youth groups, etc. and not only CSOs. However, BALADI will assess the quality of these partnerships depending on the legal status of the partner entities. However, a municipality can submit a project alone, and if it has content and elements to gain points on other criteria (besides the partnership) and if it was selected by the national evaluation committee and USAID, then the BALADI implementing organizations will assist the municipality in implementing the project.

**Question:** We have a detailed feasibility study for the project with some statistics, plans and images. Please advise on where) to insert this study?

**Answer:** Such a feasibility study can be included as a separate supporting document (Annex) that can be attached to the Technical Application. However Applicants should also ensure that:

- Adequate feasibility and sustainability information is provided in the Technical Approach and Methodology, Impact, and Sustainability Section of the technical application (please refer to section 6 of the RFMA document).

- Page limitation for the total annexes is 15 pages as highlighted in section 5 of the RFMA (please refer to point b "administrative compliance matters" in the table in section 5).

**Question:** Since annexes C3, C4, and C4 are in pdf format, we cannot type the name, title, and organization name where to sign. Can we write them by hand?

**Answer:** You can print the pdf forms, fill the required information by hand, and then scan them.

**Question:** How many applications can a municipality submit for this RFMA?

**Answer:** BALADI RFMA English version, a municipality can be a lead applicant for only one application. However, it can be a partner (not lead) in other applications.

**Question:** If a project requires any funding for equipment are there any stipulations on where the equipment is sourced or what percentage of the project budget it makes up?

**Answer:** “Municipalities and unions of municipalities that benefit from assistance will receive in-kind support to implement their proposed development projects. BALADI Program will be responsible for providing technical expertise, financial management, and procurement oversight to fulfill and implement municipal-community projects.” Hence, all procurement procedures will follow USAID and BALADI Program specific regulation and will be handled directly by BALADI implementation team. As a general rule for sourcing equipment under BALADI program, the program plans on procuring equipment from the local market (locally made items or foreign made items depending on the availability in the local market). As for the percentage of equipment from the total project budget, there is no set percentage. Equipment costs should correspond to the specific proposed project needs. Costs should comply with the criteria included in the Cost Evaluation section of BALADI RFMA “Application Technical and Cost Evaluation”.

**Question:** If an application was submitted by the municipality in partnership with the private sector and some local organization, however the land on which the project will be implemented on is for the private sector, in this case may the land be considered as a part of the 20% of the applicant’s contribution

**Answer:** It is unnecessary that the land offered by the coalition be for the municipality. But it should be mentioned that the applicant (in this case the municipality) has legally a full right to implement the project. It is to be noted that the financial value of the contribution is estimated based on the standards approved by legal experts and jury in the courts. Note that it is supposed that the investment is for a long term (more than 8 years) which is necessary to secure sustainability of the project.

**Question:** Can a project be implemented on a property rented to the municipality?

**Answer:** Yes, a project can be implemented on a rented property by the municipality in condition that the municipality has an investment contract for a long-term project (8 years or more depending on the nature of the project) which is necessary for securing the sustainability of the project.

**Question:** Is the electrical generator a project that may be funded?

**Answer:** Yes, BALADI program can fund the purchase of a generator, but the purchase must be part of a developmental project and meet all technical evaluation criteria and conditions of BALADI program and especially the environmental ones.

**Question:** Can we build a project on a land that refers to the Lebanese Republic or a left land?

**Answer:** According to Section V of the Request for Municipal Application (RFMA) of the program particularly paragraphs “f” and “g” the applicant must provide all relevant administrative and legal documents. The documents should show that necessary administrative procedures relevant to the proposed project have been completed, and that the necessary legal aspects relevant to the proposed project have also been secured. It is preferable that the municipality consult the Lebanese government to get the answer. However, it is noteworthy that the program’s team will study the submitted documents for this purpose to ensure that they meet all the legal requirements.

**Question:** Can a municipality submit a theater project?

**Answer:** A municipality can submit any project that meets with the RFMA requirements mentioned in section 6. If the project’s budget falls within the limit of support and the project’s objectives are consistent with the specified criteria (innovation, community involvement and marginalized groups, sustainability, etc.) then this project may have the approval of the National Evaluation Committee and U.S. Agency for International Development. However, the BALADI program does not support infrastructure projects that its cost exceeds 200,000 \$.

**Question:** Can the construction of agricultural roads be funded by BALADI program?

**Answer:** Agricultural road projects are not mentioned in the list of non-eligible projects under BALADI program.

Please take into consideration the following points:

- ♣ Road projects can be classified within the agricultural infrastructure projects, note that the projects (including farm roads) in excess of \$ 200,000 are not eligible for funding.
- ♣ Large-scale infrastructure and construction (note: The scale of a project is relative. In general, a small scale construction project is around \$100K per construction components; medium scale is \$100K-\$200K, and large scale construction is more than \$200K).
- ♣ Eligible projects will be evaluated according to the technical evaluation criteria listed in BALADI program RFMA

**Question:** Can we calculate the Value Added Tax (VAT) or the taxes on equipment that needs to be imported within the local contribution that the applicant must secure as a contribution to the project?

**Answer:** The amount of the Value Added Tax (VAT) cannot be considered as a part of the local contribution since it is reimbursed by the Ministry of Finance for NGOs and municipalities. However, the taxes on equipment that needs to be imported (and is not already found on the local market) may be considered as a part of the 20% that the municipality should secure in the project.

**Question:** What are the projects that an applicant may submit?

**Answer:** There is no list of approved projects since each project should stem from the needs of the town or village. Participants are encouraged to submit innovative projects that serve the public interest and increase economic opportunities and create jobs. However, BALADI Program

lists the projects that are excluded and in turn cannot be financed or accepted. All these projects are listed in the RFMA document.

**Question:** Is it possible for a group of municipalities to submit a joint project?

**Answer:** Yes, groups of municipalities can submit a joint application.

**Question:** Is it possible for a municipality to submit a project application while simultaneously participates in submitting a project application with a group of other municipalities?

**Answer:** Yes, but this municipality cannot be the prime applicant in both applications.

**Question:** In case a municipal proposal has been funded by BALADI Program, is it permitted for the same municipality to submit another proposal in the second round/following year?

**Answer:** NO.

**Question:** Can a Non-Governmental Organization submit a project application?

**Answer:** A Non-Governmental Organization may be considered as a lead applicant only in case the village does not have a municipal council. However for villages with municipalities, it is preferred that the municipalities build partnerships with the Non-Governmental Organization, the private sector and the community in proposing a project. In the villages where a municipality is not present, it is possible for the Non-Governmental Organization to be the main applicant and it is an obligatory requirement to have the proposed application approved and signed from the village chief (mokhtar) and the district administrator (Qaemakam).

**Question:** Is the project based on the competitive principle?

**Answer:** Yes, it is based on constructive competition. Each applicant should submit a comprehensive application for having high grades.

**Question:** Can municipalities receive cash support?

**Answer:** No, BALADI Program does not provide cash grants to municipalities and/ or municipal unions. Grants are in kind. In case an applicant specifies a non-governmental organization to implement the project in this case only the grant or part of it (based on the project's need) may be allocated to the non-governmental organization if this NGO is found by the BALADI program to have the capabilities to manage funds.

**Question:** Is it possible to finance projects related to solid waste?

**Answer:** No, BALADI Program cannot finance projects related to solid waste since such projects require complicated and lengthy environmental procedures and permits which are beyond the timeframe and scope of the BALADI program.

**Question:** Is it possible to clarify what are the recurrent costs and give an example?

**Answer:** The recurrent costs are the costs which are repeated in the project such as the operating costs of the project, including staff salaries, or the maintenance fees of an existing project.

**Question:** What is meant by large-scale infrastructure works?

**Answer:** Large-scale infrastructure works are the activities which include – but not limited to - construction work such as roads, water network and are worth more than U.S. \$ 200 thousand.

**Question:** May buying a fire truck (car) be considered as a project in itself?

**Answer:** BALADI Program cannot give an advice about the types of projects. Whereas, the municipality in collaboration with the community may provide a project stemming from the community needs.

**Question:** What ensures the implementation of the submitted project that has been evaluated and selected by the program?

**Answer:** If the project has been assessed and evaluated by the BALADI program, the applicant will be informed and requested to sign an implementation agreement with the program.

**Question:** As mentioned earlier, a Non- Governmental Organization cannot individually apply for a project, and in case a municipality has its own project it is normal to apply its project rather than the NGOs project. May you clarify this point?

**Answer:** One of the evaluation criteria of the submitted projects is the participation and collaboration of the municipality with the community and this would be added value to the project.

A Non-Governmental Organization may be considered as an applicant only in case where the village does not have a municipal council. However, it is desirable that the Non-Governmental Organization shares the private sector and the community in drafting the proposal. In the villages where there is no municipalities it is possible for the Non-Governmental Organization to be the main applicant in this case it is an obligatory requirement to have the proposed application approved and signed from the mayor and certified by the district administrator (Qaemakam).

**Question:** Is it possible for a Non-Governmental Organization to partner with a municipality outside its geographical scope?

**Answer:** Yes

**Question:** What is the deadline for announcing the results?

**Answer:** Around two months

**Question:** Are high-cost proposed projects more preferable than small-cost proposed projects?

**Answer:** There are no grades (hence no scoring) based on the project cost or budget.

**Question:** Are alliances (partnerships) necessary?

**Answer:** Yes, there is a grade on partnerships and alliances in the evaluation criteria.

**Question:** If an existing stadium project is proposed, can we get fund for it?

**Answer:** You can build on previous successes or prior developed projects whereas recurrent and repeated projects are excluded.

**Question:** Is it allowable to apply for funding a well?

**Answer:** All projects related to wells are excluded from BALADI Program.

**Question:** What do you mean by the 20% contribution of municipalities of the cost of the project?

**Answer:** The local community (municipal and / or NGOs and / or private sector ...) should submit a contribution at least 20% (in kind or in cash contribution) of the value of the project.

**Question:** How is a municipality's past performance evaluated?

**Answer:** It is recommended that the applicant has successful experience in grants management and / or projects implementation and the past performance constitutes 10 out of 100 points. In case the applicant did not implemented previous projects and therefore does not have any past performance history, this is not a negative aspect and the applicant will not be penalized. The applicant will receive a neutral grade, and hence the application is technically evaluated per the remaining 90 points criteria (and the obtained grade is then converted from a scale of 90 points to the equivalent grade on a scale of 100 points).

**Question:** What is meant by the sustainability of the project?

**Answer:** All proposed projects should ensure that the project continues; this is through inclusion of a sound management plan and provision of human and financial resources for sustaining the project.

**Question:** If a group of municipalities submit a common proposal, does the allocated amount of grant increase?

**Answer:** No. BALADI Program contribution remains the same: maximum \$ 200,000 per project.

**Question:** Does the project have to be productive?

**Answer:** Not necessarily, but the project should be sustainable and continue.

**Question:** Can we have examples of successful projects that have been previously funded?

**Answer:** BALADI Program has been recently launched. There are no examples of previously funded projects; however, a list of all the annually funded projects will be available on BALADI website starting next year.

**Question:** Is there a determined allocation of budget within a region?

**Answer:** There are no criteria for geographical distribution within a region; evaluation of applications is based on technical evaluation criteria as defined in the RFMA.

**Question:** Does a central project submitted by a union of municipalities have priority in scores?

**Answer:** Alliances among municipalities are encouraged as part of the technical evaluation criteria; however there are other technical criteria as listed in the RFMA which formulate the final grade of a project application.

**Question:** In case municipalities do not possess the capabilities to implement a scientific methodology or do not possess the capabilities or technical offices, does this affect the success of its project/application?

**Answer:** In case municipalities do not have the resources to prepare projects and project applications, they can network and build partnership with the existing human capabilities and resources in their local community or with the private sector for the planning and writing an application.

**Question:** Why doesn't the BALADI program help municipalities in writing the project application?

**Answer:** BALADI program gives equal opportunity to all municipalities in the competitive process. BALADI program encourages municipalities and communities to formulate their projects on their own based on community needs. Municipalities can also cooperate with other local parties for assisting them in drafting their project application.

**Question:** Is it possible to know the projects that will be funded?

**Answer:** Yes, the selection results will be announced on BALADI Program website; there will be a special page on the website that provides information about the projects that are funded.

**Question:** If a coalition of more than one municipality is established, is it possible to increase the ceiling amount of the grant?

**Answer:** No, the maximum contribution of BALADI Program for each project is \$200,000 regardless of the number of municipalities within the coalition or union.

**Question:** What is the impact of politics and political actions on the project?



**Answer:** BALADI Program does not deal with politics; and projects that support the political parties or political party activities are excluded from funding. A political party cannot be a partner in a project.

**Question:** In case a municipality exists but is inactive, can an NGO in the village submit an application instead of the municipality?

**Answer:** No, in villages where municipal councils exist, NGOs cannot submit an application instead of the municipality; however, the NGO can be a partner in the project.

**Question:** Why did BALADI Program excluded academic research from funding?

**Answer:** BALADI Program aims to implement projects that have tangible results on the village level, such as improving municipal services, living conditions, or job creation. Academic research does not produce this type of direct result.

**Question:** Who are the members of the National Committee?

**Answer:** The National Committee is composed of a representative from USAID and BALADI program implementing NGOs consortium.

**Question:** Is it possible to fund part of a project?

**Answer:** In case a project has been divided into parts or phases, the part funded by BALADI Program should have impact during the project implementation period.

**Question:** How does an applicant know if a submitted project has been selected or not?

**Answer:** Results will be announced on BALADI Program website and a response letter will be sent to the applicant.

**Question:** How can the private sector be involved in this program?

**Answer:** Partnering with the private sector may be on several levels (during planning, implementing, managing, or other). It should be noted that this partnership should aim at creating job opportunities, accelerating the economic cycle, attracting people to the village, or other results at the level of many beneficiaries or groups of beneficiaries.

**Question:** Are there any projects that are favored by the National Committee?

**Answer:** No, the submitted project should be based on local community needs and not imposed on the village.

**Question:** It was stated that direct financial support will not be given to the municipality. If a municipality wants to prepare a study as part of the submitted project and requires covering the

fees of this study, what happens in this case?

**Answer:** The project application first has to be evaluated by the BALADI program after it is submitted by the applicant. If the project is selected by the BALADI program and contains a study as part of the action plan, then the program offers this study (in kind) from competent parties. The municipality through its partnership with the local community and the private sector can also secure these studies as part of the required contribution from the municipality.

**Question:** Is it possible to consider religious entities as partners in the projects?

**Answer:** Yes if they contribute aspects to the proposed project, and if the project is not of religious content or aim, and if it benefits any person regardless of religion or confession.

**Question:** Can a foreign institution be a partner in the project?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question:** In case a municipality's project is selected, is it allowable to transfer the project management to a private entity?

**Answer:** Yes, if it is mentioned in the section related to the project management and found to be sound during evaluation.

**Question:** Is it possible to buy land with the budget requested from BALADI program for the project?

**Answer:** No, it is preferable that the land be a part of the local community or municipal contribution.

**Question:** Is it possible for a municipality to submit more than one project this year?

**Answer:** No

**Question:** In case a municipality has a land in certain place, can this land be considered as part of the municipal contribution even if the project does not intend to use it/ does not intend to build on it?

**Answer:** No. The contribution must be directly related to the implementation, creation, sustainability or management of the project. The land may be considered as a part of the contribution only in case it has direct relation to implementation, creation, sustainability or management of the project.

**Question:** What is new in BALADI that differentiate it from other similar programs that target municipalities?

**Answer:** The focus of the BALADI program is to encourage linkages between municipalities, and the various community actors including Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), private sector, and diaspora to advance innovative and sustainable development projects. It also focuses on depth versus breadth. BALADI encourages competition among different communities, which gives equal opportunities to all participants indifferent of the size or geographical area of the

village.

**Question:** Can “employees” salaries be included in the budget? And does BALADI cover the fees of a project study and rent?

**Answer:** Long term recurring salaries of personnel are best to be covered under the local cost share or from the income generated from a project in order to ensure sustainability of a project. BALADI can cover the expenses of non-recurring consultancies or staff working on specific project not employees of the municipalities. As for the project study, BALADI does not cover the fees of the project study if these are related to the proposal writing as these should be done before the grant award so that the municipality can base its project on it. BALADI also excludes rent from its allowable cost as it defies the concept of sustainability.

**Question:** If the total project cost is \$200,000 is the \$50,000 cost-share added to the total cost or deducted?

**Answer:** BALADI grants can reach up to \$200,000 excluding cost-share. The cost-share will be added to this amount.

**Question:** What is the extent of the sustainability or who will sustain the projects?

**Answer:** It is the municipality and its partners’ responsibility to ensure the sustainability of the project. BALADI does not support projects that do not have a clear and feasible sustainability plan. The municipality should prove in its proposal that it is able to secure the needed resources from other sources. It’s also worth noting that projects might be self-sustained such as income and profit-generating projects.

**Question:** Does the program support the establishment of a municipal building? A sports field? An elderly home care?

**Answer:** BALADI supports any type of projects that meets the set criteria. If the project’s budget falls within the limit of the allowable cost support and the project’s objectives are in line with the previously defined criteria (innovation, community participation, sustainability, inclusiveness of the marginalized, etc.), then the project can be eligible for support provision that the national evaluation committee and USAID approve it. However, BALADI doesn’t support large-scale infrastructure projects (above \$200,000).

**Question:** Are the evaluation criteria the same in all the regions?

**Answer:** Yes, the same criteria apply to all regions and applicants to ensure transparency and a fair competition.

**Question:** Is a municipality allowed to submit more than one project?

**Answer:** A municipality can only lead one project per round. However, a lead municipality can

participate in other projects with other municipalities or benefit from projects led by a cluster or a union of municipalities.

**Question:** Is it possible for the same organization to partner with more than one municipality in more than one region for more than one project across Lebanon?

**Answer:** If the organization has the sufficient capacity and capabilities to partner in different projects then there is no problem with that.

**Question:** If a project aims at women empowerment through building women's capacity in handicrafts, can BALADI help in marketing these handicrafts or other products for example?

**Answer:** It is the municipality's and its partners' responsibility to ensure a complete plan from production to marketing. If the project is selected by BALADI, then BALADI can support the marketing plan provided by the applicant. A marketing plan in that case is part of the project sustainability plan as selling the product can generate income.

**Question:** If a municipality doesn't have partners (in cases where no CSOs exist in the village), is it eligible to submit a project alone?

**Answer:** BALADI encourages partnerships between CSOs and municipalities and applications are evaluated based on these criteria. It is worth noting that partnerships can be made with CBOs, private sector, clubs, active youth groups, etc. and not only CSOs. However, BALADI will assess the quality of these partnerships depending on the legal status of the partner entities. However, a municipality can submit a project alone, and if it has content and elements to gain points on other criteria (besides the partnership) and if it was selected by the national evaluation committee and USAID, then the BALADI implementing organizations will assist the municipality in implementing the project.

**Question:** What is the role that CSOs can play in the BALADI program?

**Answer:** The BALADI program targets municipalities that succeed in building sustainable partnerships with civil society organizations to address community needs and jointly design community projects. Although an NGO cannot apply to BALADI without being part of an alliance that is led by a municipality (unless the village has no municipality), its role is essential in these partnerships as it can support municipalities in the design and implementation of the projects.

**Question:** The program is very complicated and I don't think that any municipality has the capacity to submit such applications.

**Answer:** The program is not as complicated as it seems. BALADI encourages building partnerships between municipalities and CSOs. Municipalities can therefore leverage the available capacities, resources and skills of the local CSOs and private sector to help them develop good applications. In addition, the applications provided by the program are well prepared to enable municipalities to easily follow questions and fill up the forms.

**Question:** How would the cost-share be?

**Answer:** The cost-share can be in-kind or cash. The minimum 20% required in cost-share can be provided by either the municipality or its partners including CSOs, private sector and Diaspora.

**Question:** The application is very complex and includes a lot of requirements especially when it comes to integrating all the cross-cutting themes. What are exactly the projects that are eligible for funding?

**Answer:** The cross-cutting themes mentioned should not be all included in one project. However, if these themes are included, the proposal has a higher chance of winning. The most important thing is to work closely with the communities to determine their priorities and encourage their participation in local development.

**Question:** Is the presentation included in the handout package or on the website?

**Answer:** No, however, all information mentioned in this presentation is available in the RFMA and can be found on the BALADI website.

**Question:** Is it possible for a municipality to submit a proposal at each BALADI yearly round?

**Answer:** A municipality has the chance to submit an application at each BALADI request for municipal application round that occurs yearly till the end of the BALADI program.

**Question:** If 10 municipalities partner for the same project does this affect the budget?

**Answer:** BALADI grants can reach a maximum of \$200,000 per project regardless of the number of partners.

**Question:** Is it possible for a municipality to be part of an alliance led by an NGO?

**Answer:** A BALADI project should be always led by a municipality (except in villages that have no municipalities). However, a municipality is encouraged to form partnerships with local NGOs to identify community needs and design the project accordingly.

**Question:** What does rural tourism mean?

**Answer:** Rural tourism is related to tourism in rural areas and it allows the creation of an alternative source of income for villages.

**Question:** How many projects will be awarded per region?

**Answer:** There is no quota for projects per region. BALADI's total grant amount is \$12 million for municipal projects, and the number of projects awarded will consequently vary according to the winning projects' budgets.

**Question:** Can the same project be split between two proposals and submitted separately by two municipalities to secure higher funding?

**Answer:** A project cannot be split between two municipalities. The project activities should be consistent with its objectives and therefore these activities cannot be split. For infrastructure projects, applicants should remember that large scale infrastructure projects (above \$200,000) are ineligible for funding under BALADI.

**Question:** How can the municipality secure the cost-share?

**Answer:** It's the municipality and its partners' responsibility to secure the cost-share thus there is high need to build strong partnerships and seek funding from the private sector and Diaspora. It's also worth noting that the cost-share can be in-kind or cash.

**Question:** Is it necessary to partner with NGOs or can partners be individuals or private institutions?

**Answer:** A municipality is encouraged to partner with at least one NGO for better chances of winning. However, it is also advisable to partner with individuals, Diaspora, and private sector institutions to bring additional value to the project.

**Question:** Is it possible for the municipality to assign employees for the project?

**Answer:** BALADI accepts labor as an allowable cost if they are needed to implement the project (such as experts for example). Municipal employees are not eligible for BALADI funds; however, they can be provided as the municipality cost share.

**Question:** If a municipality doesn't have past experience in leading such projects but its partners do have past experience, does this make them eligible for funding?

**Answer:** BALADI encourages municipalities who do not have past performance to partner with NGOs and the private sector and leverage their skills and capacity and put them in the service of the projects. Having a good history in managing grants and projects is a plus for municipalities. If the municipal partners have a history in managing funds and are capable in implementing the

proposed project, then they could be considered eligible to receive funding from BALADI. If a municipality does not have past experience in projects, then this is not a negative aspect and can receive a neutral grade on past experience.

**Question:** If the project's value is \$400,000 is it eligible for funding under BALADI if the municipality secures half of its value?

**Answer:** Yes, BALADI encourages a 1:1 ratio cost-share although the minimum required cost-share is 20% of the project's amount.

**Question:** Is the competition nationwide?

**Answer:** BALADI's evaluation process is conducted nationwide. All projects in all regions will be evaluated based on the same criteria and by the same evaluation committee.

**Question:** The union of municipalities includes a number of municipalities, does this count as a partnership?

**Answer:** The union of municipalities is regarded as a single entity. Therefore, it is required that the union forms additional partnerships with CSOs in order to be an eligible BALADI candidate.

**Question:** Is it possible for a municipality to submit a project of a value less than \$200,000?

**Answer:** Yes, the maximum amount that BALADI can offer is \$200,000 and projects of less value are also encouraged.

**Question:** Can a region or district receive funding for several projects?

**Answer:** The evaluation process set by the program is based on technical criteria that will evaluate applications on a national level. Geographic locations of projects are not part of the evaluation criteria; and thus, it is possible to have more than one project per district.

**Question:** The community cost share of 20% can be in-cash or in-kind. What is meant by an "in-kind" contribution?

**Answer:** In-kind contributions include non-monetary resources that applicants, or their partners, put at the disposition of the project at the technical, logistical and human levels.

**Question:** Can a NGO or an organization partner with more than one municipality?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question:** Should conflict between the municipality and the implementing partner arise during the implementation period, how will this affect the project? Would it be possible to continue the implementation?

**Answer:** The partnership between the municipality and partners is governed by the partnership agreement that will be signed by related parties, which defines the roles and responsibilities of each party. In case any of the agreement clauses were breached, both parties should negotiate to reach consensus. Otherwise, the breaching party will be debarred and the project will continue.

**Question:** What is the process for the selection of projects?

**Answer:** Project applications are evaluated according to the technical evaluation criteria set by the program. Applications with the highest evaluation scores will be selected as per evaluation criteria and funds availability.

**Question:** Can two Municipal Unions jointly submit one application?

**Answer:** Yes, as long as one of them is the lead applicant.

**Question:** Isn't the period for submitting applications too short?

**Answer:** No, given that the typical primary responsibility of municipalities is to regularly conduct needs assessment at the local level. Note that the BALADI program will open a 45-day window for submission of applications.

**Question:** If a municipal union submits an application, can a municipality belonging to this union submit a separate individual application?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question:** Is an implementing partner necessary? Can a municipality submit an application without a partner?

**Answer:** Collaboration and building alliances with the local community and its entities is a must in order to define the needs of the community and design the project. As for the management and implementation of the project, partnerships are encouraged but not mandatory. Partnerships are the result of the managerial and technical requirements of the projects.

**Question:** What is the proportion of partnership between municipalities and their partners? Who leads the project?

**Answer:** The municipality should lead the project and should define the partnership based on the needs and requirements of the project. So it is not possible to define the proportion of partnership in advance.

**Question:** Are waste-management projects eligible for funding?

**Answer:** No.



**Question:** Can a municipality put at the disposal of the project property owned by the state (The Lebanese Government)?

**Answer:** Yes, however pre-approval is required from the Ministry of Finance (or other government agency as per Lebanese legal requirements) as an official representation for lands and properties owned by the Lebanese Government.

**Question:** Is it possible to partner with any of the implementing partners of Baladi Program?

**Answer:** No. the implementing partners cannot be partners with municipalities.

**Question:** Can private or public schools be partners?

**Answer:** Yes (however pre-approval from its authority must be provided)

**Question:** What is the mechanism for project implementation and financial funding for a winning project?

**Answer:** The project implementation and financial funding will be done in partnership and collaboration with the Baladi team that will provide technical guidance and financial management of the project, and monitor the procurement process.

**Question:** Do you support touristic projects?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question:** Why were irrigation projects excluded knowing that our agricultural regions are in dire need of such projects?

**Answer:** Small and medium-scale irrigation projects are not excluded.

**Question:** Who are the entities that could collaborate with the municipality?

**Answer:** The private sector, civil society organizations, cooperatives, and all entities representing the local community.

**Question:** Do you fund a project to build a sports playground on a private property?

**Answer:** Such a project can be funded in case the owner of the property signs a long-term investment agreement with the municipality. However, it is preferable to execute projects on public properties.

**Question:** Do you fund the purchase of snow trucks?

**Answer:** Yes, it is possible to fund such a project. However, the snow truck should be part of a development project that reflects the needs of the local community.