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Annual Program Statement: APS-388-17-000001
Issuance Date: June 4, 2017
Clarification Questions Due: June 11, 2017 4:00 pm Dhaka Time
Concept Note Submission date: June 28, 2017 4:00 pm Dhaka Time

Subject: Annual Program Statement (APS) No. APS-388-17-000001 for Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development in Bangladesh (USAID/Bangladesh) is seeking concept notes from qualified U.S. and non-U.S. organizations for selecting an organization in the award of a Cooperative Agreement in the implementation of the Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care Activity. The authority for this Annual Program Statement (APS) is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Please be aware that this APS contains a two stage process before award (Evaluation Phase 1, and Phase 2, which will consist of co-development of the requirement document). The final award will be given to the applicant selected from the Phase 1 Evaluation, after a Program Description is jointly-developed by the selected applicant and USAID/Bangladesh.

> Phase 1: Applicants will submit a concept note. One applicant will be invited to participate in Phase 2.
>
> Phase 2: The one applicant whose Concept Note best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity and the merit review criteria contained herein will be selected to jointly-develop a program description with USAID/Bangladesh. USAID intends to make an award to the applicant selected from Evaluation Phase 1 subject to successful joint development with USAID/Bangladesh of a Program Description and the availability of funds.

One award is anticipated as a result of this APS. This APS will be open for at least one year, during which it is anticipated that one round of competition will take place. At USAID's discretion, this APS may remain open for an additional year(s)/round(s), should the need arise. Over the course of the APS, USAID anticipates making a single award (five-year cooperative agreement) totaling $49.5 million. The amount of funding available and the number of awards are subject to change. USAID reserves the right to fully or incrementally fund application(s) as well as to partially fund selected application(s).

USAID will accept Concept Papers through this initial announcement and if required, amendments to this APS to call for additional concept notes. An award will be made to the responsible applicant(s) whose application(s) best meets the requirements of this APS and the criteria contained herein. The issuance of this APS does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the United States Government, nor does it commit the United States Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a concept note or application. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Detailed instructions can be found in Section IV of this APS.

While for-profit firms may participate, pursuant to 2 CFR 700.1.(A).(1), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as cooperative agreements. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the assistance program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (2 CFR 230, OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organizations, OMB Circular A-21 for universities, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations), may be paid under the Agreement.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this APS and meet eligibility standards in Section III of this APS. This APS is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. Potential applicants should regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this Annual Program Statement. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the entire APS has been received from the internet in its entirety and USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or the conversion process.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section VII. The deadline for questions is stated on the cover page. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

Thank you for your interest in USAID's programs.

Sincerely,

Abdullah Akbar

Abdullah Akbar
Agreement Officer

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AMTSL	Active Management of the Third Stage of Labor
APS	Annual Program Statement
BENAP	Bangladesh Every Newborn Action Plan
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
CLA	Collaborative Learning and Adaptive Management
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
EmOC	Emergency Obstetric Care
EPCMD	Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
HPNSP	Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Program
ICHW	Integrated Community Health Workers
INCA	Improving Nutrition through Community-based Approaches
IR	Intermediate Result
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MISHD	Marketing Innovations in Sustainable Health Development
MNH	Maternal and Newborn Health
MNCH	Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
MOHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NHSDP	NGO Health Service Delivery Project
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity

QI	Quality Improvement
SCANU	Special Care Newborn Unit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UH&FWC	Union Health and Family Welfare Center
UHC	Universal Health Coverage

SECTION I – Annual Program Statement Description

A. Overview

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bangladesh, Office of Population, Health, Nutrition, and Education is pleased to announce an Annual Program Statement for Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care. Through this APS, USAID is soliciting concept notes that propose innovative approaches, such as eHealth and mHealth, to assist the Government of Bangladesh's (GOB) public health system with its unfinished agenda for Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths (EPCMD). Emphasis will be on newborn care by scaling up proven approaches in the public sector. Awards made through this APS should build on accomplishments to date toward achievement of the following three Intermediate Results (IRs):

IR 1: Improved responsiveness of primary health care providers to deliver patient-centered MNH services that conform to evidence-based guidelines and practices

IR 2: Improved equitable access to MNH services through the introduction of innovative interventions and scale-up of evidence-based practices to ensure population and service coverage

IR 3: Improved governance of quality improvement and assurance for MNH services at the primary care level

Applicants shall submit an eight to ten page concept note that elaborates on their approach to achieving these IRs. Concept notes should identify how proposed activities will be aligned with key national policies and priorities. USAID/Bangladesh will select the top ranked applicant, which will be invited to participate in a co-development process with USAID in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

B. Background

Bangladesh stands as an example of how commitment and action by government, development partners, and other stakeholders can lead to impressive improvements in health status and a more promising future for its population. Between 2011 and 2014, infant mortality declined from 43 per 1,000 live births, to 38. Bangladesh achieved its Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for under-five mortality in 2010, and by 2015, the under-five mortality rate had declined to 46 per 1,000 live births. Improvements in antenatal care were also impressive, with an increase from 54.6 percent of pregnant women attending four antenatal visits in 2011, to 64 percent in 2014. The proportion of births assisted by a skilled health care provider, likewise, increased, from 8 percent in 1997, to 42 percent in 2014.

Nonetheless, challenges remain. The 2010 Bangladesh Maternal Mortality Survey found a 5.6 percent annual rate of reduction in maternal mortality and a rate of 194 deaths per 100,000 live births. It is estimated that the rate has continued to decline, and for 2015 it stood at 176, short of the Bangladesh MDG target of 143. A sector gender assessment (May 2011) identified the high maternal mortality ratio as one of the strongest indicators of gender inequity. Inequalities and challenges for women and girls that impact newborn and maternal mortality have not been adequately identified and addressed. Improvement in this area is especially important given women's essential role in assuring the health and well-being of all family members.

There also have been dramatic improvements in neonatal mortality (NM) over the past decade, with the rate falling from between 32.9 and 38.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2005, to between 19.5 and 27.7 in 2015. Despite this improvement, the decline has not kept pace with that for post-neonatal mortality. In 2014, NM comprised 74 percent of all infant deaths, a substantial increase from 1993-1994, when 60 percent of infant deaths took place during the neonatal period.

Access to proper medical care and hygienic conditions is essential for improving maternal and newborn outcomes. In 2014, only 37 percent of all births took place in a health facility, 22 percent in private facilities, 13 percent in public, and 2 percent in NGO facilities. This was, however, a substantial increase over 2007, when only 8 percent of births were in either public or private facilities. Most of the increase in facility-based births was due to increased use of private sector facilities, which is not an affordable option for the poor, and where 23 percent of all deliveries are by cesarean section. (This high rate of cesareans is an indication that the quality of care provided by the private sector is not well regulated.)

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's (MOHFW) service delivery structure follows the country's administrative pattern, and includes facilities at the national, division, district, upazila (sub-district), union, and ward levels. The health system provides promotive, preventive, and curative services, such as outdoor (outpatient), indoor (inpatient), and emergency care at different levels – primary, secondary and tertiary. Under the National Health Policy 2011, the rural population can access basic primary care services via community health clinics at the village and ward levels.

Maternal and child (including newborn) health services are delivered through the District Health System, which consists of district and teaching (Medical Colleges) hospitals for tertiary and specialty care services, sub-district hospitals, Union Health and Family Welfare Centers (UH&FWC) and Community Clinics. Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care services are available in all medical college, district level and most of the sub-district hospitals. UH&FWC and Community Clinics are small facilities established in remote and hard-to-reach areas that are intended to be a one-stop service center for primary health care focusing on maternal and neonatal health.

Although economic conditions have improved over the past decade, rates of unemployment and underemployment are still high. As of 2010, 31.5 percent of the population lived below the national poverty line (56.8 percent under US$3.10 a day and 18.5 percent under US$1.90 a day). Inequities in access to and utilization of health care services across socioeconomic groups are illustrated by the difference in under-five mortality between the highest and lowest wealth quintiles. The rate among the highest quintile was 30 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014, compared to 53 for those in the lowest quintile.

Wealth inequality is greater in rural than in urban areas – approximately, 24.8 percent of the rural population comprises the lowest wealth quintile, compared to 7.1 percent in urban areas. Findings from the 2014 DHS indicate that rural children have a higher probability of dying at any stage of early childhood than those in urban areas. These inequities are a particularly acute problem since 65.7 percent of the population continues to live in rural areas, despite rapid urbanization.

The GOB has prioritized UHC in its Health Sector Plan for 2017-2021 in order to ensure equity, efficiency, and quality in delivering health services for the population by 2032. However, in many cases, the health system does not provide services that meet national or global standards, nor equitable coverage to enable achievement of GOB goals for MNCH.

The public health system faces a number of challenges as it advances towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for health, and creating and sustaining an enabling environment for UHC of its population (SDG 3.8). Current progress and overarching challenges include the following:

Maternal Health: Bangladesh has made significant progress in reducing maternal mortality, but still, there are unacceptable numbers of deaths due to complications during pregnancy, delivery, and the postpartum period that result in 14 maternal deaths each day. In order for Bangladesh to achieve SDG 3.1, maternal mortality must be reduced from 176 per 100,000 live births, to 59 by 2030. Increasing access to skilled antenatal, delivery, and postnatal care is one of the highest priorities for reducing maternal mortality and morbidity.

The absence of round-the-clock services in district and sub-district-level facilities continues to be a major concern. Both, availability of and access to Basic and Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) are very low at the primary care level, and hence, clients seek care at higher levels for even normal deliveries. Public health facilities at the upazila level and below are not ready to meet the increasing demand for quality maternal and newborn health services. A large number of union level facilities exist (4,461), but a substantial proportion of them (41 percent) are not ready to or are just not providing normal delivery care. Improving the service readiness of facilities and the ability of providers to comply with evidence-based guidelines at the union level is a key to strengthening the provision of life-saving care to mothers and newborns.

USAID conducted a facility readiness assessment of 4,461 Union Health and Family Welfare Centers (UH&FWCs) in 2014. Based on assessment findings, the Director General of Family Planning developed a plan for upgrading those centers to provide 24/7 Basic and EmOC services as a means of increasing access for rural women. Through current and previous investments, USAID has upgraded UH&FWCs in selected districts to provide round-the-clock MNH services, expanded MNH services provided by NGO clinics, and supported quality improvements of MNH services in both public and NGO facilities. USAID also supported piloting and the scaling up of high impact interventions to reduce maternal deaths (e.g., Active Management of the Third Stage of Labor (AMTSL) and the use of Misoprostol to prevent postpartum hemorrhage, the partograph during labor and delivery, and magnesium sulphate to prevent eclampsia).

Priorities for maternal health that should be addressed through this APS include the following:

- Readiness of union level facilities to provide MH care within the context of integrated MNCH
- Improved patient satisfaction and provider compliance with evidence-based guidelines for normal delivery and basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric care services
- Improved patient satisfaction and provider compliance with evidence-based guidelines of facility-based newborn care

Neonatal Health: Despite substantial reductions in neonatal mortality, disparities between the richest and the poorest quintiles, urban and rural areas, and across administrative divisions (e.g., Khulna, Sylhet) continue. More than 80 percent of all newborn deaths stem from three largely preventable and treatable conditions: sepsis (24 percent), intrapartum-related complications, including asphyxia (21 percent), and prematurity/low birthweight (11 percent), which are closely tied to the health and nutritional status of the mother during her pregnancy and the quality of care she receives during labor and delivery. An estimated 438,800 babies, 22 percent, are born preterm annually, of which 23,600 die.

More than 80 percent of neonatal deaths occur within 7 days of birth, 50 percent within the first 24 hours. Most occur at home without care from a skilled provider and are often unregistered. In 2014, only 32 percent of mothers and 36 percent of newborns received postnatal care within the first 48 hours of birth, and only 61 percent of care for mothers and 64 percent for neonates was from medically trained providers.

Achieving the SDG target of 12 neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births by 2030 will require accelerating the annual rate of reduction from the current rate of 3.4 percent, to over 4.6 percent. The “Bangladesh Every Newborn Action Plan” (BENAP) 2016-2020 identifies a set of priority interventions for scale up, as well as achievable results and an accountability framework. BENAP objectives include:

1. Strengthened investment in care during labor, birth, and the first day and week of life
2. Improved quality of maternal and newborn care
3. Every woman and newborn reached to reduce inequities
4. The power of parents, families and communities harnessed
5. Every newborn counted (measurement, program monitoring, and accountability)

USAID, together with other stakeholders, supported the MoHFW to launch "A Promise Renewed – Acting on the Call" conference in the summer of 2013. Eleven interventions focusing on maternal, newborn and child health were prioritized and national guidelines were developed.

Bangladesh can boast the following achievements towards these objectives: Establishment of Special Care Newborn Units in 6 medical colleges and 40 district hospitals; Emergency Triage Assessment and Treatment Units rolled out; and training on sick newborn care and Helping Babies Breathe and provision of resuscitation bags and masks to over 28,000 skilled birth attendants. The Concept note of 7.1 percent chlorhexidine for newborn umbilical cord care has been rolled out across all 64 districts, including training of over 85,000 health workers, supervisors, and managers. However, scale up of other interventions has been slower. Kangaroo Mother Care has been established in only 25 secondary and tertiary hospitals nationally. Management of neonatal sepsis using a shorter regimen of antibiotics for babies who may not be referred to hospitals for inpatient care has been launched in only 36 upazilas in three districts.

Priorities for newborn health that will be addressed through this APS include the following:

- Implementation support to the BENAP (2016-2020)
- Effective scale-up of high-impact, evidence-based interventions for newborn care of essential newborn care, equitable access to inpatient sick newborn care, and outpatient care where referral is not possible
- Improved provider compliance with evidence-based guidelines for newborn health care

Governing Quality of Care: Bangladesh has made progress in strengthening the governance of quality at the national, local, and community levels, as part of its movement towards UHC. A national Quality Improvement (QI) Secretariat was established in January 2015 within the Health Economics Unit of the MOHFW to facilitate coordination of QI efforts. Major accomplishments of the Secretariat include identification of key performance indicators for quality of care at the facility level and the approval of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for maternal and newborn health in 2016.

A national level Steering Committee was formed, in addition to 7 divisional and 64 districts level-committees, resulting in a decentralized administrative structure for governing quality of care. However, these committees have not been fully functional across the country. The development of standards, guidelines, protocols, and implementation tools in all service areas is in process. As one of the first wave demonstration countries of the WHO-led Quality, Equity, and Dignity Network, Bangladesh has aligned its quality standards with the global WHO framework for quality improvement in maternal and newborn health. To align with the vision of the global framework, Bangladesh will not only need to strengthen the governance structure of quality, but also the capacity of service providers, supervisors, and managers to implement effective quality improvement interventions and monitor and support adherence to the standard protocols.

Through current investments, USAID is building the technical and managerial capacity of the QI Secretariat, facilitating the establishment and supporting the decentralized QI management structures at divisional, district, and sub-district levels; providing technical assistance for developing and updating national guidelines, protocols, and tools for implementation of the national QI strategy; and supporting the development of a system for establishing and monitoring QI indicators for MNCH. The capacity of the Secretariat has been improved and QI management committees at various administrative levels have been established. Remaining challenges include the following:

● low capacity in sub-national structures to operationalize the QI system and to implement initiatives that are part of the new national strategy

● lack of accountability mechanisms and incentives to ensure continuous process improvement of health care services to meet national standards of care

● lack of an accreditation body for health facilities

● lack of mechanisms at all levels to routinely monitor, measure, and improve the various dimensions of quality, including effectiveness, efficiency, accessibility, acceptability/ patient focus, equity, and safety

● poor management of available information on the quality of services: it is not used, shared, or used for decision making and problem solving in health facilities and at higher levels of the health system

● weak public sector coordination with professional bodies regarding accreditation/ certification, licensing, and registration

● limited capacity of monitoring and governing entities, including the Directorate for Medical Education and Health Manpower Development in the Directorate General for Health Services, resulting in inadequately supervised providers

As the GOB seeks to ensure wider coverage of high quality services, it will need to instill a culture of quality within governance functions of the health system, e.g., in leadership and management, laws and policies, regulations, monitoring and evaluation, and planning. Through this APS, USAID will support the GOB in addressing the challenges identified above. Priorities include the following:

- Develop and implement a national quality improvement framework and plan for MNH

- Strengthen district and sub-district health systems to support facility readiness, provision of quality care, and monitoring and measuring quality

- Develop the capacity of health providers to improve quality in health facilities by analyzing facility data, identifying problems, and working in teams to resolve those problems

- Coordinate with professional bodies to strengthen accreditation/certification, licensing, and registration

- Address behavioral, social, and cultural barriers for MNH at the facility level to close the equity gap

- Support the GOB's participation in the global Quality, Equity Dignity Network to implement and evaluate the provision and experience of quality maternal and newborn care and share lessons through the global learning platform

C. Relationship to USAID Strategic Goals

Ending preventable child and maternal deaths is a USAID agency priority and a major focus of the USAID/Bangladesh health program. Ensuring country ownership at all stages of program development and implementation is a key strategy for facilitating institutionalization and sustainability of successful approaches and interventions. USAID's health programming is grounded in an analysis of: (a) the country's greatest health needs; (b) the GOB's health sector plan; and (c) the most pressing SDGs for 2030, including:

· Reduction in the total fertility rate from 2.3 to 2.0 children per woman
· Reduction in under-five mortality from 46 to 34 per 1000 live births
· Reduction in maternal mortality from 176 to 121 per 100,000 live births.
· Reduction in neonatal mortality from 28 to 12 per 1000 live births
· Increased percentage of public facilities with key service readiness as per the GOB Essential Service Package

USAID/Bangladesh's foreign assistance is programmed under a Country Development and Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). CDCS health priorities of relevance to this APS include increasing quality and ensuring equity of access to health services, towards the goal of universal health coverage.

USAID/ Bangladesh currently funds more than 20 health Activities. In order to maximize and leverage available resources, the Activity awarded through this APS will be expected to collaborate and coordinate with all relevant USAID-funded health Activities, and build upon past achievements. Concept Notes should reflect this, as well as alignment with MOHFW initiatives, activities, and campaigns. (Described below)

Ongoing USAID-funded activities of relevance include the following:

i. USAID-DfID NGO Health Service Delivery Project

The NGO Health Service Delivery Project (NHSDP) serves as the flagship project for the delivery of essential maternal, newborn, child, and family planning services, specifically aimed at improving the health status of the poor and underserved. NHSDP provides services through a nationwide network of 26 NGOs, with a total catchment area of over 22 million. NHSDP supports adolescent friendly services in their clinics and encourages franchise NGOs to consider innovative methods for engaging with adolescents. NHSDP will soon launch a number of NHSDP "women-friendly" pharmacies to offer a safe-space to sell feminine hygiene and other products, and offer health counseling from a provider.

ii. MaMoni Health Systems Strengthening Project

The MaMoni Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) project (2014-2018) provides technical support to the MOHFW to improve utilization of integrated maternal, newborn, and child health, family planning, and nutrition (MNCH/FP/N) services in Bangladesh. The project's objective is to increase availability and quality of high-impact interventions through strengthening district-level local management and health systems. The new HSS for MNCH Activity should consider achievements by the MaMoni HSS Project for its lessons learned on health systems strengthening.

iii. Mayer Hashi-II Project

The Mayer Hashi-II Project provides technical assistance to promote the effective delivery of long-acting reversible contraception and permanent methods in the public sector. Mayer Hashi's objectives are to delay first birth and encourage voluntary use of appropriate FP methods for spacing and limiting. Young married couples are one of the main target audiences for interventions.

iv. Marketing Innovations in Sustainable Health Development Project

The Marketing Innovations in Sustainable Health Development (MISHD) Activity expands access to public health products, including oral contraceptives (OC), condoms, IUDs, and injectable FP methods, through distribution and sales by Community Sales Agents, and in private sector pharmacies and clinics.

v. Advancing Adolescent Health Project

This Activity works in eight districts of Rangpur Division to provide life skills training to adolescents and youth and referrals for health and FP services to adolescent-friendly clinics.

vi. Integrated Community Health Workers (ICHW) Activity

ICHW is a four-year project (March 2016 to March 2020) that supports the government and its key partners in accelerating progress by achieving and sustaining effective coverage of high impact health and nutrition interventions at scale. The Activity works to strengthen national policies, systems and implementation mechanisms related to the community health workers addressing the major barriers like ambiguity in the absence of clear, comprehensive national guidance on the CHW's scope of work.

vii. Social and Behavior Change Communication Activity

The Social and Behavior Change Communication Activity will generate demand for and increase the use of high quality maternal, neonatal, child, and adolescent health, family planning, nutrition, and tuberculosis services, through the use of social and behavior change communications.

viii. Improving Nutrition through Community-based Approaches (INCA)

INCA will focus on improving nutritional practices during the important "first thousand days of life". It builds upon successful earlier community-based nutrition interventions and will be carried out in all seven upazillas of Bhola and four adjacent upazillas of Lakshmipur and Noakhali, which have high stunting prevalence among children. Activity objectives include (1) improved knowledge of communities on proper nutritional requirements during the first thousand days of life and (2) increased access to and use of health and nutrition services at community based health facilities.

D. Relationship to Government of Bangladesh Sector Development Program, 2017-2021

The GOB's development objective for the 4th Fourth Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Program (HPNSP), 2017-2021, is to have focused improvements in increasing access to quality health care and improving equity, along with efficiency, by gradually achieving UHC. The GOB considers the 4th HPNSP as the first of three 5-year programs that will contribute to the movement toward UHC. The 4th HPNSP builds on previous achievements to further ensure equity, quality, and efficiency, with the aim of eventual UHC and achievement of the health related SDGs by pursuing eight strategic objectives. The strategy for implementation of the HNPSP objectives is elaborated in 29 Operational Plans (currently under development).

USAID's investments in MNCH respond directly to the objectives and strategic priorities of the HNPSP. As such, Concept Notes submitted through this APS should identify how proposed activities will be aligned with GOB priorities.

E. Guiding Principles

Concept Notes should incorporate the following Guiding Principles:

Country Ownership

The Activities funded through this APS should engage the MoHFW and other USAID-funded projects to promote local ownership in order to ensure institutionalization of interventions for maximum impact. For example, the current USAID-funded health systems strengthening project successfully engaged Union Parishad members to promote ownership by the local government. As a result, health centers received monetary and other support from the local governments. Local government representatives were also enabled to supervise health sector activities in their constituencies. Activities funded through this APS will be instrumental in supporting the sustainability of quality services in the public sector at national and local levels.

Build on Achievements to Date for Scale-up

Concept notes must demonstrate how they will build upon and scale up the many advances and achievements of previous USAID Activities, as well as those funded by other donors and the GOB. This should include incorporation of lessons learned into proposed strategies and interventions.

Collaborative Learning and Adaptive Management

Collaborative learning and adapting (CLA) is a central principle of USAID's strategy for ensuring maximum impact of its activities. Applicants will not submit a full Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan at the Concept Note stage but should describe how MEL will inform their technical approach, as well as their commitment to an ongoing process of CLA as an integral part of Activity management.

Geographic Coverage and Target Population

Concept Notes should prioritize poor-performing districts. The final selection of districts will be agreed during the co-development process based on the following criteria:

- Areas with greatest need – highest maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity and total number of population affected

- Populations difficult to reach (both geographically and programmatically)
- Districts where there is no other investments (by other donors)
- Locations with positive influencers in terms of health systems support (e.g. long lasting USAID support that serves as the learning laboratory, possibilities of collaboration with USAID funded other projects, established public-private partnership, existence or possibilities of financial coverage, tested science-technology-innovation models, etc.)

Geospatial analysis using a GIS tool can be useful to perform the area selection process.

Gender

In Bangladesh, cultural, social and religious sensitivities around gender play a significant role in health and family planning behaviors, and can either hinder or promote access to health information and service utilization. Gender inequality continues to have a negative impact on a range of health issues, and directly relates to early marriage and childbearing for girls. Gender-related power imbalances contribute to excess female mortality across their lifecycle: at birth, during infancy, early childhood, and throughout reproductive years. Furthermore, a recent study shows that 80.2 percent of currently married women experience violence and it is one of the major reasons for maternal mortality. USAID/Bangladesh programs are aligned and integrated with the USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (March 2012). https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GenderEqualityPolicy_0.pdf

The policy aims to:
• Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over, and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities and services economic, social, political, and cultural.
• Reduce gender based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities.
• Increase capability of women and girls to know their rights, determine their life outcomes, and have influence on decision making in households, communities, and societies.

In order to ensure USAID's commitment to reducing gender based violence, it also has developed guidance which explains how to integrate gender-based violence (GBV) activities into the health sector during project design, implementation, and evaluation.
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GBVGuide08_english.pdf

Activities funded through this APS must be directly informed by USAID's gender policy, guidance on GBV and Government of Bangladesh gender Equity Strategy 2014. It must demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of gender dynamic that affects maternal and newborn care and how gender gaps can best be addressed. The Concept Notes submitted to USAID/Bangladesh should include approaches to reducing gender gaps, reducing GBV and mitigating its harmful effects, fostering girls' and women's empowerment, and developing constructive engagement of boys and men in the Bangladesh context to support health care seeking and adoption of healthy behaviors in their families. The successful applicant will be required to develop gender-specific indicators in its Performance Monitoring Plan, including tools and processes for monitoring and data collection.

Geographic Information System

The use of geographic information systems (GIS) technology and geographic data is increasingly important to USAID's effort to geographically target aid investments and effectively report on the scope and impact of the Mission's investments. Furthermore, collecting and analyzing geographic data with GIS technology is integral to achieving the objectives set forth in the USAID Policy Framework, as well as increasing overall aid effectiveness and meeting USAID's aid transparency and open data goals.

The applicant must apply geospatial methods using GIS technology to support USAID's effort to incorporate geographic data and analysis into the Agency's overall development planning, design, and monitoring and evaluation, when appropriate. The geographic data collection, analysis, and submission methods should be included in the section on monitoring and evaluation. There is a clear guideline in ADS additional help, 201.3.5.7 Monitoring Indicators (ADS Chapter 201 Program Cycle Operational Policy) (G) Geography and it is recommended that indicator data be disaggregated by a geographical level that is feasible and useful for management purposes. In the context of solicitation language, geographic data can be divided into three types:

1. Program/Activity Location Data: Implementing Partner's (IP) must provide the Mission geographic location data detailed enough to allow the Mission to locate and view, at an appropriate scale, on a map. These data are important for reporting and analysis purposes. Geographic analysis is vital to strategic planning, program/activity design, and MEL.

2. Thematic Data: These geographic data are usually acquired by the IP and are used during activity implementation. Thematic Data can refer to data such as demographic and health indicators, land use/land cover, hydrology and transportation infrastructure. Thematic Data are useful for the Mission's own strategic planning and program/activity design purposes, and therefore, must be submitted to the Mission.

3. Program/Activity Specific Data: These data are created during an activity, such as the output data from an analysis conducted while implementing an activity, which is useful to the Mission's own strategic planning and design purposes. For example, activity specific data refers to data such as the output of an analysis on accessibility to health facilities. Activity specific data may be useful to the Mission's own strategic planning and program/activity design purposes and therefore must be submitted to the Mission.

Concepts Notes must acknowledge and only briefly describe how the proposed activities will use, integrate, and report on the GIS data. This should include information on the process that will be used to collect GIS data.

SECTION II – FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

1. ESTIMATE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED

Subject to funding availability, USAID intends to provide up to $49,500,000 in total funding over a five year period. The ceiling for this program is $49,500,000. Actual funding amounts are subject to joint-development and negotiation of a budget and availability of funds.

USAID anticipates the award of one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this APS. Please note that there are two phases to the award process and the final award(s) will be determined after a Program Description is jointly developed between the selected organization and USAID. USAID is not responsible for any costs incurred prior to awarding an agreement. USAID reserves the right to fund any one or none of the concept notes/applications submitted.

2. ANTICIPATED START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE FOR FEDERAL AWARDS

The period of performance anticipated herein is five (5) years. The estimated start date of the award is the first quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2018.

3. SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

USAID plans to negotiate and award a Cooperative Agreement as USAID desires to be substantially involved in the implementation of the selected program that is consistent with USAID policy contained in Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 303 concerning non-governmental assistance activities. This substantial involvement will be through the Agreement Officer, except to the extent that the Agreement Officer delegates authority to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) in writing. The intended purpose of the substantial involvement during the award is to assist the recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the agreement.

In addition to the requirements in 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 and other applicable regulations or provisions, USAID/Bangladesh will be substantially involved during the implementation of this Cooperative Agreement in the following ways through the AOR or the Agreement Officer as per ADS 303.3.11:

i. Approval of recipient's Implementation Plans:

- Approval of annual work plans

ii. Approval of Key Personnel and any change in Key Personnel

iii. Agency and Recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation:

- Concurrence on the substantive provisions of sub-awards. Note that 2 CFR 200.308 requires Agreement Officer's prior approval for the sub-award, transfer, or contracting out of any work under an award.
- Approval of Monitoring and Evaluation Plans
- Agency monitoring to permit specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects

4. PURPOSE OF THE AWARD

The principal purpose of the relationship with the recipient under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care activity which is authorized by Federal statute.

The recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the activity objectives highlighted in SECTION I-III, as well as efficient and effective administration of the award through sound management practices. The recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. The recipient has the primary responsibility for employing its own unique combination of staff, facilities, and experience, as well as necessary organizational and management techniques in order to assure proper and efficient administration of the resulting award.

5. OVERALL PROCESS

There will be a Merit Review (of the Concept Note) phase, followed by a Program Description Joint Development phase.

Phase 1 is a written concept note, not to exceed 10 pages. No budget or cost application will be accepted at this stage. All concept notes must be in English. More information regarding the Concept Note format and submission follows in **Section IV and V**. Concept Notes will be evaluated, only one applicant will be invited to participate in the co-development process.

In **Phase 2,** the best technically acceptable concept note from phase 1 will be invited to participate in joint development of the Program Description. After the first phase has concluded, the apparently successful applicant will be required to jointly develop a Program Description with USAID/Bangladesh and a full cost application. This organization will be expected to work collaboratively with USAID/Bangladesh to create the Program Description and associated budget, which will be used to inform the resulting Cooperative Agreement. USAID anticipates awarding a Cooperative Agreement to implement the jointly developed Program Description.

Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred for the preparation of concept notes. However, USAID will bear the cost for arranging joint development of the program description and budget. USAID will not reimburse any cost incurred by the applicant (travel, lodging etc.) prior to the award.

<u>The proposed Chief of Party must be present for the co-development workshop.</u> The presence of other key personnel is strongly encouraged.

[End of Section II]

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICANTS

Applicants must be non-governmental U.S. and non U.S. entities, otherwise there is no restriction. Entities such as non-profit organizations, profit making concerns, Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Public International Organizations (PIOs), faith-based and community organizations, educational institutions, etc., are eligible to submit concept notes.

While for-profit firms may participate, pursuant to 2 CFR 700.13 (A)(1), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments, such as cooperative agreements. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the assistance program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (2 CFR 200, OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organizations, OMB Circular A-21 for universities, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations), may be paid under the Cooperative Agreement.

2. OTHER INFORMATION

a) Cost Sharing

Cost share is required to be at least 10 percent of the total estimated amount. If the applicant proposes a cost share of less than 10 percent, it will be removed from further consideration. 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 OMB Circular A-110 and 2 CFR 230). It should be noted that there is no separate/additional evaluation criteria category for cost-share because cost-share is included within cost-effectiveness.

b) Number of Concept Notes

Applicants will submit a Concept Note, not to exceed ten pages. No annexes should be included. Concept notes will not be reviewed beyond the 10-page limit. Detail instructions can be found in Section IV.

c) Potential New Implementing Partners

In support of the Agency's interest in fostering a larger assistance base and expanding the number and sustainability of development partners, USAID/Bangladesh encourages concept notes from potential new implementing partners. However, resultant awards to these organizations may be significantly delayed if USAID must undertake necessary pre-award reviews of these organizations to determine their "risk assessment" (see below). Non-U.S. Organization Pre-award Survey Guidelines and Support is available in the following link: http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303sam.pdf.

d) Pre-award Risk Assessment

In order for an award to be made, the AO must make a positive "risk assessment," as discussed in ADS 303.3.9. This means that the applicant must possess, or have the ability to obtain, the necessary management and technical competence to conduct the proposed program. The applicant must agree to practice mutually agreed-upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided or funded by USAID.

In the absence of a positive risk assessment, an award can ordinarily not be made. However, in rare cases, an award can be made with "Specific Conditions" (e.g., additional non-standard award requirements designed to minimize the risk presented to USAID of making an award to an NGO for which a positive risk assessment cannot be made), but only where it appears likely that the applicant can correct the deficiency in a reasonable period.

[End of Section III]

SECTION IV – CONCEPT NOTE SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. POINTS OF CONTACT

Abdullah Akbar
Agreement Officer
USAID/Bangladesh
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
E-mail: abakbar@usaid.gov

Tariq Bin Azam
Sr. Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
USAID/Bangladesh
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
E-mail: tazam@usaid.gov

Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this APS must request it in writing by the due date and time specified on the cover page of this APS in order to allow a reply to reach all prospective applicants before the submission of their concept notes. Oral explanations or instructions given before award will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this APS will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this APS if that information is necessary in submitting concept notes or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicants.

There will be two phases to the procurement process. Phase 1 is submission and review of a written concept note. All concept notes must be submitted in English. In Phase 2 the selected applicant will be required to jointly-develop a program description and full cost application with USAID/Bangladesh.

2. CONTENT AND FORMAT OF CONCEPT NOTE SUBMISSION

The concept note should be specific, complete and presented concisely. The concept note should demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this activity. The applicant should take into account the requirements of the activity and evaluation criteria found in this APS.

Applicants will submit a Concept Note, not to exceed eight to ten pages. No annexes should be included. The concept notes will not be reviewed beyond the 10-page limit.

Concept notes must be organized following the format below:

- Summary: 1 page
- General Technical Approach: 4-6 pages
- Key Personnel and Management Plan: 2 pages

- Organizational Capacity: 1 page

a) Summary (1 page)

Not to exceed one page, the summary must:

- Contain brief descriptions of the general approach, including innovations, and approaches to build sustainability;
- Identify major sub-partners, including their names, type of relationship (e.g., subcontract or strategic/technical collaborator);
- Identify the main authors of the concept note and responsible representative(s) from headquarters, regional, and/or in-country office(s).

b) General Technical Approach (4-6 pages):

Since the apparently successful applicant will co-develop the final program description with USAID, it is not necessary to present a full technical application addressing every aspect of the priority areas listed under the Activity Objective. The technical approach in the concept note will be used to demonstrate an understanding of the country context and guiding principles. As such, the applicant will present only a technical and management approach at an appropriate level of depth for addressing the requirements of the Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care Activity. Any concept note that does not comply with the page limit, contain the required sections, or address all three activity objectives and the guiding principles identified in Section I will not be considered.

The applicant must present a logical and evidence-based technical approach demonstrating a clear understanding of effective approaches for scaling-up evidence-based, high impact maternal and newborn health interventions. The applicant must present a logical methodology for how to adaptively manage these interventions, specifying data requirements, milestones and a suite of alternatives based on intervention outcomes.

c) Key Personnel and Management Plan (2 pages):

The applicant must provide a description of their proposed team for the positions, as stated below, to accomplish all of the work objectives within the Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care Activity. The applicant must propose individuals for key personnel positions that are highly qualified and able to fulfill the responsibilities as described below. The staffing plan should clearly show the extent to which the proposed management approach and staffing plan demonstrates the clear potential to facilitate the achievement of the Activity's scope and objectives. The applicant must include a short qualification information for all key personnel. Letters of commitment and/or recommendations are not required for key personnel.

i. Key Personnel

The project will have staff with the necessary expertise to support the program objectives highlighted in Section A. A total of up to five (5) key personnel are envisioned: Chief of Party (COP); Senior Clinical Advisor; Senior Leadership and Management Advisor; Senior Communications and Advocacy Advisor; and Financial Management/Administration Director. As discussed herein, the Deputy COP will be a joint title held by one of the key personnel below.

The applicant will identify key personnel by name and position. Each key personnel position requires USAID approval, as noted in the substantial involvement provision. All key personnel should be full-time positions, with residency in Bangladesh. The proposal of Bangladeshi citizens are encouraged. Essential attributes for all key personnel include demonstrated strong management, interpersonal, communication and facilitation skills, and the ability to work closely as a team and to network with a wide range of stakeholders.

a. **Chief of Party:** The COP will have overall responsibility for coordination of all project activities and staff. S/he will have principal responsibility for representation of the project to USAID. The COP should share the USG vision for health systems strengthening in Bangladesh, and effectively manage available financial and human resources to make that vision a reality. Required attributes: a senior manager with an advanced degree in public health, the social sciences or a related area; state-of-the-art understanding of health systems strengthening; in-depth knowledge of the Bangladesh context, including gender issues and their effects on the health sector; at least 10 years' experience leading, managing and implementing substantial HSS efforts; and experience interacting and negotiating with government counterparts and other international and local organizations working in the health sector at the highest levels.

b. **Senior Clinical, Quality Assurance, and Accreditation Advisor:** The Senior Clinical Advisor will ensure technical excellence related to the training, quality assurance around clinical interventions and service delivery, and accreditation of health facilities and professionals. Required attributes include: A minimum of 10 years in health service delivery projects in developing countries, including a minimum of 5 years at a senior/managerial level in large service delivery projects in resource-poor environments highly desired. Desired Attributes: Understanding of the Bangladesh service delivery structure desirable, Experience as a health service provider, preferably in Maternal and Newborn Health; Experience developing and implementing quality assurance programs; and Experience working with health professional associations and accreditation bodies. A clinical degree required; MPH highly desirable. Strong written and spoken English is required; Bangla preferred.

c. **Senior Maternal and Newborn Technical Advisor:** The Senior Maternal and Newborn Technical Advisor will be responsible for ensuring the overall technical excellence of organizational, personnel, and systemic management and leadership capacity building approaches, as well as the coherence and consistency of these different activities. The Advisor must have in depth and broad knowledge of evidence-based and promising models and internationally-recognized best practices in maternal and newborn health. Required attributes include: an advanced degree in public health, medicine, the social sciences or a related area with specific training in leadership and management and a minimum of 5 years' experience working in a developing country health system setting, as well as a gender perspective.

d. **<u>Director of Administration and Finance:</u>** The Director of Admin/Finance is expected to develop the project financial plan, to include monitoring and reporting systems that meet USG requirements, and manage contracting activities. Required attributes: Master's Degree or higher in Business Administration, Finance, Accounting or other relevant field; eight years' experience in administrative and financial management of large international projects including experience in management of USG projects; demonstrated experience and skills in developing and managing large budgets; proficient in relevant computer applications and databases; and strong analytical, oral and written communication skills.

e. **<u>Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor:</u>** The Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor will be responsible for leading development of the activity's monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan; monitoring and reporting on progress toward achievement of objectives and targets; and developing innovative approaches for data collected by the activity to be used for continuous learning and adaptive management of the activity. The Advisor will be expected to have substantial experience in the above areas and a demonstrated track record of working with local counterparts to promote the use of program and other relevant data for decision-making.

The section on key personnel capability will include:

- § Brief statements of major duties for each of the key personnel;
- § Experience, academic background and resumes for each of the key personnel
- § Estimated amount of time each will devote to the project, and other senior program staff

Applicants are invited to propose and justify an alternative configuration of key personnel, if they believe that a different structure is more conducive to achieving the specified strategic and program objectives.

ii. **Management Plan:**

USAID prefers collaborative concept notes structured as a prime and sub-recipient relationship with project staff clearly defined within one single management structure. Consortiums without a clear hierarchy and delineation of authority among members are discouraged. The applicant must describe the relationship between prime and sub-recipients, clearly defining the value each partner brings. Concept notes will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed management approach and staffing plan demonstrates the clear potential to facilitate the achievement of the Activity's scope and objectives including a sound, realistic management structure and staffing plan.

d) Organizational Capacity (1 page):

Organizational Capacity information will be evaluated based on:

a) The extent to which the applicant and its sub-partners demonstrate sufficient technical capacity relative to the Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care Activity.

b) The extent to which the applicant and its sub-partners demonstrate sufficient financial and administrative capacity to implement the Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care Activity.

Please note that past performance is not an element of the merit review criterion. Past performance will be reviewed as part of the pre-award risk assessment.

Cover page, table of contents, list of acronyms, and executive summary are excluded from the 8-10 page limitation. Elaborate art work, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted. Unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective concept note in response to this APS are not desired and may be construed as an indication of the prospective recipient's lack of cost consciousness.

Upon consideration of award or during the negotiations leading to an award, the applicant may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make an affirmative determination of responsibility.

Applicants should not submit the information below with their concept notes. The information in this section is provided so that applicants may become familiar with additional documentation that may be requested by the Agreement Officer:

The information submitted should substantiate:

1. Bylaws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable.
2. Whether the organizational travel, procurement, financial management, accounting manual and personnel policies and procedures, especially regarding salary, promotion, leave, differentials, etc., submitted under this section have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the Federal Government, and if so, provide the name, address, and phone number of the cognizant reviewing official.

Do not submit any documents unless specifically requested to do so in this APS or by the Agreement Officer.

3. DUN AND BRADSTREET UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM).

All applicants submitting Concept Notes in Phase I (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) are required to:

i. Be registered in SAM before the joint development stage;
ii. Provide a valid DUNS number with the PD; and

iii. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The Federal awarding agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

4. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

Concept Notes are due to USAID/Bangladesh at the time stated in the cover page of this APS. Per ADS 303.3.6.6 “Late or Incomplete Submission” USAID will determine whether an application that is not received by the Agreement Officer by the time and date indicated will be late. Because making an award is critical to USG foreign policy goals, time is important and late concept notes may not, at the sole discretion of the Agreement Officer, be considered.

Questions for clarification should be submitted to USAID/Bangladesh by the date stated in the cover page.

5. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

There are no funding restrictions applicable to this APS at this time. USAID policy is not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost principle under 2 CFR 200 of the Uniform Administrative Requirements may be paid under the anticipated award.

6. PRE-AWARD CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES, AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF RECIPIENTS

In addition to the certifications that are included in the SF-424, the apparently successful applicant must provide a signed copy of Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements which can be found in the USAID ADS 303.3.8. Do not submit the Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements unless requested to do so.

7. OTHER SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are required to submit their concept notes electronically via e-mail to the given address specified below and under “SECTION IV – CONCEPT PAPER AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION”. All concept notes received by the submission deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the concept note format. No addition or modifications will be accepted after the submission date.

a) Submission of Electronic Concept notes

Concept notes will be submitted with the name and address of the applicant and the APS number (referenced above) inscribed thereon, to Abdullah Akbar and Tariq Bin Azam, via e-mail to abakbar@usaid.gov and tazam@usaid.gov respectively.

For electronic submissions, your organization must ensure that the concept notes are received at USAID/Bangladesh in its entirety. No addition or modifications will be accepted after the submission date. E-mail attachments should be formatted in Microsoft Word and/or Microsoft Excel format **with 5 MB limit per e-mail**. Please convert your documents into one of these formats before sending them to USAID/Bangladesh, or provide scanned copies of pages in .pdf format (Adobe PDF) if they include signatures or forms.**.**

In addition to the aforementioned guidelines, the applicant is requested to take note of the following:

After you have sent your concept notes electronically, please immediately check your own email to confirm that the attachments you intended to send were indeed sent. If you discover an error in your transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the filename that it is the "corrected" submission. Please do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if this is the case, please note that in the “corrected” email.

USAID/Bangladesh will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic concept notes if no instructions are provided or are unclear.

b) Receipt of Concept Notes

Concept notes must be received by the date and time specified in this section of the APS. Concept notes which are submitted late or are incomplete run the risk of not being considered in the review process. Late Concept notes will be considered for award if, in the sole discretion of the Agreement Officer, it is determined that it is in the U.S. Government's interest and if the evaluation process has not yet commenced.

Applicants must ensure that concept notes sent electronically are received at USAID/Bangladesh in their entirety. Applicants shall confirm with Abdullah Akbar and Tariq Bin Azam that their electronic submissions via e-mail were successfully received at USAID/Bangladesh by the required due date.

c) Questions & Answers

Any questions regarding this APS should be submitted in writing to Mr. Abdullah Akbar, Agreement Officer, and Mr. Tariq Bin Azam, Sr. A&A Specialist via e-mail to the addresses specified in the relevant sections of this APS.

Questions regarding this APS should be submitted by the specified time and due date in order for USAID to provide you with sufficient time to address the questions in our response which will then be incorporated in an amendment to this solicitation. All amendments to this APS will be published on www.grants.gov. Verbal explanations or instructions given about this APS will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this APS will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this APS, if that information is necessary in submitting concept notes or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

[End of Section IV]

SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

I. PHASE 1: CONCEPT NOTE MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

The factors below reflect the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants must note that these factors serve as the standard against which all concept notes will be reviewed, and serve to identify the significant matters, which applicants must address in their concept notes. Each concept note will be reviewed and scored by the Merit Review Committee in accordance with the factors and sub-factors in the following order of decreasing importance:

1. General Technical Approach: 60 points

Elements that will be considered during evaluation of the general technical approach include:

- Demonstration of a technical and operational understanding of the key issues identified in the Annual Program Statement Description and how the activity will collaborate with key stakeholders in addressing these issues
- Demonstrated knowledge of implementation approaches and challenges in Bangladesh
- Description of a clear and specific approach for implementing the proposed activities under each of the project components and for measuring targeted results. The approach should be innovative, flexible, ambitious yet feasible, as well as provide a sound rationale for relative priorities of proposed interventions
- Description of how the activity will coordinate and integrate activities among various tasks in a manner that will maximize health impact and achievement of project objectives
- Identification of gender-sensitive interventions within the project components. These interventions should derive from a project-specific gender analysis and subsequent gender mainstreaming plan.
- A clear and specific approach for performance-based monitoring that will provide a quantitative and qualitative understanding of implementation progress and facilitate project adjustments as needed
- Demonstration of a clear plan for effectively and rapidly launching project activities and ensuring their sustainability
- Extent of synergetic linkages with other assistance activities that are discussed in the Annual Program Statement Description and other relevant activities
- Description of how the approach used will result in long-term country capacity improvements

2. Key Personnel and Management Plan: 30 points

a) Key Personnel (20 points)

The extent to which the proposed key personnel individually and combined possess the relevant qualifications, experience, and skills required to achieve the Activity's scope and objectives. Experience working in Bangladesh is preferred. Key personnel will be evaluated with respect to relevant and demonstrated qualifications, technical and program management experience, skills applicable for completing the tasks mentioned in the Annual Program Statement Description of the APS. . USAID/Bangladesh will encourage and reward staffing plans which demonstrate an understanding of the importance of personnel's ability to build cooperative relationships, and long-term commitment to work in Bangladesh, with special consideration given to staffing plans that propose resident Bangladeshi experience to control costs. Special emphasis must be put on experience and performance of key personnel in managing complex environmental programs; their experience in building and effectively supervising a diverse team of employees; demonstrated effective interpersonal skills, creative problem-solving and ethical management; and prior experience in working with USG or other donors international development programs/projects.

b) Management Plan (10 points)

The extent to which the proposed management plan demonstrates the clear potential to facilitate the achievement of the Activity's scope and objectives including a sound, realistic management structure and staffing plan; the complementarity of skills of all long-term technical and key personnel, home office, and sub-partner technical personnel; and a sound approach to engaging partnerships.

3. Organizational Capacity: 10 points

Organizational Capacity information will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant and its sub-partners demonstrate sufficient technical capacity relative to the Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care Activity. Also, the extent to which the applicant and its sub-partners demonstrate sufficient financial and administrative capacity to implement the Strengthening Public Sector Maternal and Newborn Care Activity, will also be evaluated.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

As budget details depend on the specifics outlined in the program description, a full budget will be jointly-developed with the applicant and USAID, after the program description is finalized. The total estimated amount for this activity is not to exceed $49,500,000.

1. COST SHARING

Cost share is required to be **at least 10 percent** of the total estimated amount. If the applicant proposes a cost share of less than 10 percent, it will be removed from further consideration. 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 OMB Circular A-110 and 2 CFR 230). It should be noted that there is no separate/additional evaluation criteria category for cost-share because cost-share is included within cost-effectiveness.

OTHER AREAS of review and discussion will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to the concept note/application. The following topics only require discussion and agreement prior to award:

- Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. In accordance with ADS 303.3.6.2.f and 2 CFR 700.16, the apparently successful applicant must submit a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan for evaluation and approval by the Agreement Officer before an award under this solicitation will be made. "Marking Plan" and "Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards" are contained in 2 CFR 700.16. Please note that in contrast to "exceptions" to marking requirements, waivers based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by Mission Directors or other USAID Principal Officers, see 2 CFR 700.16(j). USAID approved Branding Strategy and Marking Plan is required for award execution. Additional guidance can be found at the following hyperlinks: USAID Branding (http://www.usaid.gov/branding/). The applicant is required to submit a Branding Strategy and Marking plan according to the requirements mentioned above.

- For a non-U.S. organization, the successful applicant(s) will be subject to a responsibility determination assessment (Pre Award survey) by the AO per ADS 303.3.9.1

- Final program and budget plans

- Payment terms

- Procedures concerning administrative reporting and logistical requirements for program including training components

- Other award terms including audit, special provisions and/or specific conditions

[End of Section V]

SECTION VI – FEDERAL AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The Notice of Award (ADS 303) signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorizing document that will be provided to the successful applicant to inform the applicant of its selection to be further considered to negotiate a cooperative agreement. USAID will provide this Notice electronically to the person designated to receive this information in the application.

Notification will also be made electronically to unsuccessful applicants pursuant to ADS 303. USAID will follow the procedures included in ADS 303 to receive and accept requests for debriefings from unsuccessful applicants.

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

2. Administration and National Policy Requirements

For US organizations, 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700, OMB Circulars, and USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental recipients will be applicable. For non-U.S. organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental recipients and the applicable cost principles (OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organizations and OMB Circular A-21 for universities) will apply. The OMB circulars are available in the following link: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html. For both U.S. and non U.S. for-profit organizations Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 will be applicable. While 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 do not apply directly to non-U.S. applicants, the Agreement Officer will use the standards of 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 in the administration of the award. Further information including the referenced documents may be obtained via our agency website http://www.usaid.gov directly or via links in USAID Automated Directive System (ADS) Chapter 303: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf. Copies may also be obtained from the listed agency points of contact for this NFO.

No deviations are anticipated to the standard provisions for the cooperative agreement under by this NOFO. All applicable standard provisions shall be incorporated into the resultant award. The standard provisions for U.S., Non-US Nongovernmental and Public International Organizations may be accessed at the following location:

- Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental recipients can be accessed through following URL: http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa
- Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental recipients can be accessed through the following URL: http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab

3. Program Income:

Any program income generated under the award will be treated in accordance with Program Income from USAID's Standard Provisions and 2 CFR 200.307.

4. Reporting Requirements

Reports and related requirements will be included in the Cooperative Agreement issued as a result of this NOFO. Requirements for periodic performance reports are contained below and supplemented by 2 CFR 200.328. Copies of all required financial reports will be submitted to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and Agreement Officer (AO) at USAID/Bangladesh. Applicants are reminded to budget prudent and adequate resources for completing the required reporting. All reports shall be in the English language, unless otherwise specified by the AOR. Electronic submissions are preferred. The recipient will provide the following reports to the USAID AOR and the AO, as specified below, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.328 and 2 CFR 200.327 and the Substantial Involvement provisions as mentioned in the B.3 of this NOFO.

A. Financial Reporting

Financial reporting requirements will be in accordance with 2 CFR 200.327.
The recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) on a quarterly basis via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (http://www.dpm.psc.gov). The recipient must submit a copy of the Federal Financial Report (FFR) at the same time to the Agreement Officer and the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR).

B. Performance Monitoring and Reporting

The recipient will submit reports to the USAID AOR as described below.

i) Annual Work Plan

The recipient must submit a draft Annual Work Plan (AWP) within Ninety Days (90) calendar days of the effective date of the Cooperative Agreement, or at the time interval agreed upon by both parties during joint-development. The recipient must prepare the AWP based on the illustrative M&E Plan and Mobilization Plan submitted before the award. The recipient will work with the AOR throughout the

AWP development process prior to submittal to ensure the AWP appropriately reflects activity objectives and the program description. The AWP must detail the work to be accomplished during the upcoming year. Annual work plans for subsequent years is due to the AOR 45 days before the end of the preceding award year. AWPs should include all sections described in the initial implementation plan above. In addition, the subsequent annual implementation plans shall review the activities of the year that is ending, the activities that were implemented, the results achieved, and any problems that existed and how they were resolved. These subsequent annual plans should propose program adjustments to reflect any lessons learned. As with the initial implementation plan, the AOR will review the plan and provide comments and recommendations for changes no later than 15 days after receipt of the draft. You must incorporate AOR comments and recommendations into the final version of the Implementation Plan and submit it for AOR written approval within 15 days. In addition, all substantial changes in AWP require prior written approval of the AOR.

ii) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan

The concept note must contain a brief summary of the methodology and approach which may be utilized for this activity and 1-2 examples of past approaches utilized. The full MEL Plan will be jointly-developed during the co-development workshop.

The full MEL will be developed in accordance with ADS 203 and USAID Evaluation Policy and underpin a coherent monitoring and evaluation system that will objectively assess the overall progress and impact of project as outlined in the program description. The MEL Plan shall be reviewed annually to confirm compliance with USAID requirements. It shall also be tied to the annual work plan and will outline the processes that will be used to harmonize instruments and schedules to support USAID data reporting needs.

Monitoring and evaluation data shall be used to inform management decisions, resource allocation and to assess where changes to the project may be required to help better ensure that the desired impact will be achieved. Performance reports submitted by the recipient must be focused on reporting progress against the approved MEL Plan.

(a) The MEL Plan will include a Results Framework that is aligned with the approved USAID/Bangladesh CDCS with a clear indication of the project's contribution to DO3 (Health) and other relevant DOs. The MEL Plan will also include the development hypothesis and critical assumptions; baseline values and targets to show progress over time; a Performance Data Table summarizing the key performance monitoring information; Performance Indicator Reference Sheets for each indicator that include, detailed description of performance indicators to be tracked, source, method and schedule of data collection, known data limitations and planned actions to address the limitations. Baselines must be established within three months of award. The MEL Plan will include a Performance Management Task Schedule that includes any special studies, assessments and surveys that will be conducted as part of monitoring and evaluation of the project. Surveys must meet rigorous scientific standards in all aspects of sampling, instrumental design and field implementation.

(b) The MEL Plan will include measurable indicators pertinent to activity-level management, monitoring and reporting. Illustrative indicators are provided as part of the program description. Relevant CDCS indicators should be taken into account as appropriate. The performance indicators should include a list of both output-level and outcome-level indicators as appropriate across the hierarchy of results in the project's Results Framework. In addition to these custom indicators, appropriate standard indicators from the U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework should be identified, tracked and reported on. Whenever applicable, data must be gender disaggregated and gender impacts included in the overall analysis of the project results. USAID performance indicators are subject to change and/or modification. The MEL Plan will be reviewed on at least an annual basis during project implementation.

(c) The recipient will report on the performance indicators in coordination with USAID's reporting schedules and feed into USAID/Bangladesh's Mission PMP. Periodic Data Quality Assessments (DQAs) will be conducted to ensure that the performance indicators meet USAID's data quality standards on Validity, Precision, Reliability, Integrity, and Timeliness. An initial DQA will be conducted within the first six months of the project's MEL Plan approval. As necessary, the recipient will provide assistance to selected sub-national government counterparts to develop systems to track and report measures.

(d) The recipient may consult with the USAID AOR and other USAID officials in the development of the MEL plan.

(e) USAID will review the draft MEL plan and provide comments/suggestions within 10 working days of receipt. The recipient shall then submit two copies of the final MEL plan to the USAID AOR for approval not later than 10 working days from receipt of USAID's comments/ suggestions.

The recipient will finalize the MEL Plan in consultation with USAID/Bangladesh and its counterparts through participatory "kick-off" meetings with key implementing partners and other stakeholders.

The recipient must provide ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of implementation of the activity and shall develop an information and reporting system tied to the AWP to measure progress towards attaining milestones (results) as well as to collect information on agreed-upon indicators. Indicators and targets for each result should illustrate how the project is achieving its targets for each tasks and interventions. Measurement of achievements under the award should directly relate to the technical leadership and support provided under this project, including the identification, development and application of best practices. The recipient should also demonstrate how the project will leverage and synergize results through USAID programs. It is equally important that similar interventions by other donors are cited with particular emphasis on aid effectiveness.

The recipient must use effective and efficient mechanisms to monitor progress, and determine success of the activities and performances. USAID expects the recipient to be innovative and creative in their efforts to capture, document, and report all the outcomes of USAID assistance.

It is expected that the recipient will assign a high priority to continuous performance monitoring and evaluation of its operations and assistance, not only for the purpose of effective internal self-monitoring and planning, but also to ensure that the recipient can demonstrate results under the objectives of this project. The recipient will be expected to conduct systematic collection and analysis of evaluation data that will improve project effectiveness and planning of activities. The recipient will also be required to report annually (typically in October), to USAID/Bangladesh, on its performance to facilitate the missions requirements in accordance with the USAID Performance Plan Report.

As necessary, the recipient will provide assistance to selected sub-national government counterparts to develop systems to track and report measures. The plan will also lay out additional actions the recipient would carry out to ensure satisfactory monitoring of the project, including mid-term evaluations to ensure overall program effectiveness.

USAID/Bangladesh is committed to strategically allocating resources through geographically targeting aid investments, evaluating overall aid effectiveness, and upholding the Agency's open data and transparency goals. Utilizing GIS and acquiring the appropriate geographic data is essential to effectively achieving these goals.

The recipient must submit the following information as part of the full MEL Plan developed through the co-development process:

When appropriate, applicants must apply geospatial methods using GIS to support USAID/Bangladesh's effort to incorporate geographic data and analysis into the Agency's overall development planning, design, and MEL. Geographic data collection, analysis and submission methods must be included in the annual work plan and MEL Plan. In a separate section the type of data to be collected must be discussed in detail, this includes all metadata.

All geo-data will be submitted to the AOR and will be reviewed in consultation with the Mission GIS Specialist or other technically qualified USAID staff to ensure that it meets the geographic data reporting requirements.

Per acquisition and assistance requirements, the following GIS data reporting requirements shall be included in all MEL and Work Plans submitted by awardees.

I. As part of its quarterly and annual reports, or as agreed upon with the C/AOR, the IP shall submit geographically referenced data either by electronic media such as CD, DVD, or external hard drive, or digitally.

II. Program/Activity Location Data will be provided as point/line or polygon data with latitude and longitude coordinates in Decimal Degree (DD.MMMM) as derived from GPS units or through a digital map interface, such as Google Earth/Maps or a geographic resolution determined in consultation with the Mission. As agreed upon with the C/AOR, additional attribute data such as, program/activity name, implementing partner name, program/activity start and end dates, program/activity description, beneficiaries, etc. will be submitted along with Program/Activity Location Data for corresponding reporting and portfolio management needs.

III. Thematic Data, Program/Activity Specific Data, and any other geographic data created or purchased under this award with U.S. Government funds will be provided. IPs should contact C/AOR prior to purchasing any remote sensing, such as satellite imagery.

IV. All Geographic Data must be submitted in industry standard formats such as ESRI Shapefile or ESRI Feature Class and include metadata. Metadata are a summary document providing content, quality, type, creation, and spatial information about a data set. It represents who, what, when, where, why and how of the resource. It can be stored in any format such as a text file, Extensible Markup Language (XML), or database record. Metadata records include core library catalog elements such as Title, Abstract, and Publication Data; geographic elements such as Geographic Extent and Projection Information; and database elements such as Attribute Label Definitions and Attribute Domain Values. The suggested metadata format is the XML schema, ISO 19139, which was developed to provide a consistent manner for presenting the ISO 19115 standard.

V. All Geographic Data must be projected to the Geographic Coordinate System World Geodetic System 1984 (GCS WGS 1984). All data must use the World Geodetic System 1984 (WGS 1984) datum.

VI. The selection of appropriate subnational administrative boundary datasets must be done in consultation with the Mission GIS Specialist.

VII. All Geographic Data will conform to the following:

i. OMB Circular A-16 and A-130, Executive Order 12906;
ii. Automated Directives System (ADS) 507 (Freedom of Information Act);
iii. ADS 551 (Data Administration); ADS 557 (Public Information); and ADS 545 (Information System Security); and ADS 579 (USAID Development Data)

VIII. In consultation with the Mission's GIS Specialist and/or as directed by USAID/Bangladesh or USAID/Washington, the AOR will manage this geographic data for use in project management, communications, reporting and evaluation.

IX. In the case of proprietary or contractual restrictions preventing submission/publication of geographic data, the IP shall provide justification to the AOR.

iii) Performance Monitoring Report

a. Quarterly Performance Reports

The recipient must submit a Performance Monitoring Report on progress toward agreed performance targets every three (3) months, based on a MEL Plan to be finalized after the award. Quarterly Performance Reports shall be submitted 30 calendar days after the end of the quarter pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328.

The quarterly reports shall contain the information as required in 2 CFR 200.328. The scope and format of the quarterly progress reports will be finalized in consultation with the AOR, but the report should not exceed 1000 words. The quarterly report should seek to be brief yet precise description of the activities, with emphasis on issues that have arisen, impacts made, constraints encountered, and suggestions for additional actions that might be taken. The recipient is not required to follow the MEL Plan for the first quarter of the award. One original and two copies of the report shall be submitted to the AOR.

b. Annual Progress Report

The annual progress report shall be a review of the previous year's accomplishments relative to the MEL Plan, including challenges and success stories. Problems or issues encountered and how they were resolved shall be presented in the report. The report shall be submitted 30 calendar days after the end of fourth quarter, or the end of the USG fiscal year (September 30), pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328. It shall be submitted in lieu of the fourth quarterly progress report. The scope and format of the annual progress report will be finalized in consultation with the AOR. One original and two copies of the report shall be submitted to the AOR.

The annual report shall include a discussion, supported with quantitative and qualitative evidence, (which evidence shall remain auditable under the terms of the agreement and USAID program implementation procedures), of progress against indicators and/or impacts achieved to date. This shall include clear identification of which impacts achieved were within the manageable interests of the recipient and which were likely catalyzed by recipient-supported initiatives, leading to substantial, sustained achievement of results. This discussion will be instrumental in helping the Mission to complete mandatory reporting to Washington such as the Performance Plan Report and the Operational Plan.

c. Final Report

The recipient must submit the Final Report within 90 calendar days after the expiration of the award. One original and two copies of the report shall be submitted to the AOR. The final performance report should contain the following information:

- Describe accomplishments in accordance with the specific paragraphs of the project description.
- A comparison of actual activities and results with the plan established for the life of the project (presented in narrative and table format).
- Describe reasons why targets were not achieved or surpassed and why activities were delayed or not carried out, if appropriate.

● Success stories, including examples of synergy and collaboration with partners.
● A summary of progress made in achieving indicator targets during the program (based on valid data collection and analysis and credible baseline).
● Other pertinent information, including recommendations with in depth analysis and lessons learned related to the overall program results.

d. Security Conditions and Security Plan:

1. Security Conditions:

The applicant must be aware of security conditions in Bangladesh, and by entering into an agreement, assumes full responsibility for the safety of its employees. Prior to commencing work, the applicant shall ensure that it has adequate procedures in place to advise its employees of situations or changed conditions that could adversely affect their security. In order to keep abreast of security conditions in Bangladesh, the Applicant will seek information from all available sources, including the "USAID/EXO/Partner Security Liaison Unit" (PSLU), for all areas in which its employees work or travel. The Applicant acknowledges that security conditions are subject to change at any moment, that USAID cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information that it may provide to the Recipient and that USAID assumes no responsibility for the reliability of such information. The Applicant has sole responsibility for approving all travel plans for its employees and/or their dependents traveling to post if allowed by the Applicant's personnel internal policies. The Applicant will also be responsible for immediately notifying USAID Bangladesh and the U.S. Embassy American Citizen Services section in the event a U.S. citizen employee does not return from travel as expected or does not report to work. In the event that USAID requests the Applicant to do so, the Applicant's Chief of Party (COP) shall assume responsibility for contacting all of its employees. The Applicant shall provide to the USAID Bangladesh EXO/PSLU the name, current address, and current home and/or cellular telephone number of the COP and of an alternate designated employee. The Applicant will be responsible for ensuring that the information on file in the USAID Bangladesh EXO/PSLU is up-to-date so that in an emergency, the COP or alternate representative can be reached immediately and he/she can rapidly contact all other affected employees.

2. Security Plan:

The Recipient will provide USAID/Bangladesh a security plan as part of the Cooperative Agreement. The security plan will be based on a credible threat analysis and risk assessment. The recipient must submit an acceptable plan within 30 (thirty) days of the effective date of the Cooperative Agreement. The plan will include:

· Procedures for reporting and addressing security threats.
· Procedures for reporting any deaths related to the project.
· Procedures for reporting and addressing any persons missing or kidnapping incidents.
· Name and contact information of security contact person for the head office and regional office(s).
· An internal "cascade" list for communicating with staff, which should be updated/maintained by the Recipient. The Recipient shall provide the name, address and telephone numbers of the COP and their

designee to USAID as principal contacts in case of security situations/emergencies. The Recipient will be responsible for passing information to their staff.

Please contact the EXO/ PSLU for advice and guidance in drafting the security plan.

3. Life Support and Security Service:

The Applicant is responsible for maintaining the security of its personnel, materials and equipment. All employees of the Applicant must meet the requirements of their work-site, which may include, but not limited to background checks, security/restricted area clearances, drug-free workplace, safety training and/or any other company safety and security requirements.

Security Plan and Budget will be discussed and finalized during the budget development phase. The Security Plan and budget shall delineate and justify for reasonableness all costs and provide a coherent, overall integrated security plan that demonstrates that the Applicant has undertaken a thoughtful review of their security needs and includes analysis of the various elements of a security system.

Also the security plan will be based on a credible threat analysis and risk assessment. The security costs will be included in a separate budget line item under "Other Direct Costs" within the approved Total Estimated Award Amount.

Security Plan and associated costs will be developed during Phase 2 of the joint-development phase of the cost application.

The following Standard Provisions which are indicated below in full text should be specially noted by the prospective applicants.

A. ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS SYSTEM

1. Definitions:

a. "Cash Payment System" means a payment system that generates any transfer of funds through a transaction originated by cash, check, or similar paper instrument. This includes electronic payments to a financial institution or clearing house that subsequently issues cash, check, or similar paper instrument to the designated payee.

b. "Electronic Payment System" means a payment system that generates any transfer of funds, other than a transaction originated by cash, check, or similar paper instrument, that is initiated through an electronic terminal, telephone, mobile phone, computer, or magnetic tape, for the purpose of ordering, instructing or authorizing a financial institution to debit or credit an account. The term includes debit cards, wire transfers, transfers made at automatic teller machines, and point-of-sale terminals.

2. The grantee agrees to use an electronic payment system for any payments under this award to beneficiaries, subgrantees, or contractors.

3. Exceptions. grantees are allowed the following exceptions, provided the grantee documents its files with the appropriate justification:

   a. Cash payments made while establishing electronic payment systems, provided that this exception is not used for more than six months from the effective date of this award.

   b. Cash payments made to payees where the grantee does not expect to make payments to the same payee on a regular, recurring basis, and payment through an electronic payment system is not reasonably available.

   c. Cash payments to vendors below $3000, when payment through an electronic payment system is not reasonably available.

   d. The grantee has received a written exception from the Agreement Officer that a specific payment or all cash payments are authorized based on the grantee's written justification, which provides a basis and cost analysis for the requested exception.

4. More information about how to establish, implement, and manage electronic payment methods is available to grantees at http://solutionscenter.nethope.org/programs/c2e-toolkit.

B. PROHIBITION ON REQUIRING CERTAIN INTERNAL CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS OR STATEMENTS (MAY 2017)

(a) Definitions.

"Contract" has the meaning given in 2 CFR Part 200."Contractor" means an entity that receives a contract as defined in 2 CFR Part 200.

"Internal confidentiality agreement or statement" means a confidentiality agreement or any other written statement that the recipient requires any of its employees or subrecipients to sign regarding nondisclosure of recipient information, except that it does not include confidentiality agreements arising out of civil litigation or confidentiality agreements that recipient employees or subrecipients sign at the behest of a Federal agency.

“Subaward” has the meaning given in 2 CFR Part 200.

“Subrecipient” has the meaning given in 2 CFR Part 200.

(b) The recipient must not require its employees, subrecipients, or contractors to sign or comply with internal confidentiality agreements or statements that prohibit or otherwise restrict employees, subrecipients, or contractors from lawfully reporting waste, fraud, or abuse related to the performance of a Federal award to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information (for example, the Agency Office of the Inspector General).

(c) The recipient must notify current employees and subrecipients that prohibitions and restrictions of any preexisting internal confidentiality agreements or statements covered by this provision, to the extent that such prohibitions and restrictions are inconsistent with the prohibitions of this provision, are no longer in effect.

(d) The prohibition in paragraph (b) of this provision does not contravene the requirements applicable to Standard Form 312 (Classified Information Nondisclosure Agreement), Form 4414 (Sensitive Compartmented Information Nondisclosure Agreement), or any other form issued by a Federal department or agency governing the nondisclosure of classified information.

(e) In accordance with section 743 of Division E, Title VII, of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, (Pub. L. 113-235), and its successor provisions in subsequent appropriations acts (and as extended in continuing resolutions) use of funds appropriated (or otherwise made available) is prohibited, if the Government determines that the recipient is not in compliance with the requirements of this provision.

(f) The recipient must include the substance of this provision, including this paragraph (f), in subawards and contracts under such awards.

C. MARKING AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS UNDER USAID-FUNDED ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2014)

a. The USAID Identity is the official marking for USAID, comprised of the USAID logo and brandmark with the tagline “from the American people,” unless amended by USAID to include additional or substitute use of a logo or seal and tagline representing a presidential initiative or other high level interagency initiative. The USAID Identity (including any required presidential initiative or related identity) is on the USAID Web site at www.usaid.gov/branding. Recipients must use the USAID Identity, of a size and prominence equivalent to or greater than any other identity or logo displayed, to mark the following:

(1) Programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities partially or fully funded by USAID;

(2) Program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other physical sites;

(3) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audio-visual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;

(4) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs; and

(5) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.

b. The recipient must implement the requirements of this provision following the approved Marking Plan in the award.

c. The AO may require a pre-production review of program materials and “public communications” (documents and messages intended for external distribution, including but not limited to correspondence; publications; studies; reports; audio visual productions; applications; forms; press; and promotional materials) used in connection with USAID-funded programs, projects or activities, for compliance with an approved Marking Plan.

d. The recipient is encouraged to give public notice of the receipt of this award and announce progress and accomplishments. The recipient must provide copies of notices or announcements to the Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) and to USAID's Office of Legislative and Public Affairs in advance of release, as practicable. Press releases or other public notices must include a statement substantially as follows: ”The U.S. Agency for International Development administers the U.S. foreign assistance program providing economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 80 countries worldwide.”

e. Any "public communication" in which the content has not been approved by USAID must contain the following disclaimer: "This study/report/audio/visual/other information/media product (specify) is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of [insert recipient name] and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government."

f. The recipient must provide the USAID AOR with two copies of all program and communications materials produced under this award.

g. The recipient may request an exception from USAID marking requirements when USAID marking requirements would:

(1) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials;

(2) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent;

(3) Undercut host-country government "ownership" of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications;

(4) Impair the functionality of an item;

(5) Incur substantial costs or be impractical;

(6) Offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate; or

(7) Conflict with international law.

h. The recipient may submit a waiver request of the marking requirements of this provision or the Marking Plan, through the AOR, when USAID-required marking would pose compelling political, safety, or security concerns, or have an adverse impact in the cooperating country. (1) Approved waivers "flow down" to subawards and contracts unless specified otherwise. The waiver may also include the removal of USAID markings already affixed, if circumstances warrant. (2) USAID determinations regarding waiver requests are subject to appeal by the recipient, by submitting a written request to reconsider the determination to the cognizant Assistant Administrator.

i. The recipient must include the following marking provision in any subawards entered into under this award: “As a condition of receipt of this subaward, marking with the USAID Identity of a size and prominence equivalent to or greater than the recipient’s, subrecipient’s, other donor’s, or third party’s is required. In the event the recipient chooses not to require marking with its own identity or logo by the subrecipient, USAID may, at its discretion, require marking by the subrecipient with the USAID Identity.”

D. TRAINING RESULTS AND INFORMATION NETWORK (TRAINET)

Exchange Visitors and Training

The grantee will conform to USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 252 – Visa Compliance for Exchange Visitors and ADS 253 – Participant Training for Capacity Development, as well as USAID/Bangladesh-specific requirements for processing of J-1 Exchange Visitors.

The grantee will enter applicable information into TraiNet for any participant Training, third-country training and in-country training that is funded through this award.

Information and assistance on ADS 253 requirements is currently available from the following USAID/Bangladesh personnel:

Muhammed Moinuddin: mmoinuddin@usaid.gov

E. NON-FEDERAL AUDITS

In accordance with 22 C.F.R. Part 226.26, grantees and subgrantees are subject to the audit requirements contained in the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. 7501–7507) and revised OMB Circular A–133, “Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations”. grantees and subgrantees must use an independent, non-Federal auditor or audit organization which meets the general standards specified in generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) to fulfill these requirements.

F. LENDING LIMITATIONS

Without the prior written consent of USAID no assistance will be provided to 1) any government official or employee; 2) nor to any prospective client involved in activities relating to surveillance, abortion, luxury goods, gambling, weather modification, the police or the military.

G. SALARY SUPPLEMENT

No payment shall be made to or on behalf of any employee of any government without the advance written approval of the Agreement Officer. Any payments by the grantee to employees at any level of the Government of Bangladesh shall be subject to the USAID policy on salary supplements (Department of State Cable no. 119780 dated April 15, 1988 or as amended).

H. TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (April 2016)

a. The recipient, subawardee, or contractor, at any tier, or their employees, labor recruiters, brokers or other agents, must not engage in:

(1) Trafficking in persons (as defined in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime) during the period of this award;

(2) Procurement of a commercial sex act during the period of this award;

(3) Use of forced labor in the performance of this award;

(4) Acts that directly support or advance trafficking in persons, including the following acts:

i. Destroying, concealing, confiscating, or otherwise denying an employee access to that employee's identity or immigration documents;

ii. Failing to provide return transportation or pay for return transportation costs to an employee from a country outside the United States to the country from which the employee was recruited upon the end of employment if requested by the employee, unless:

a) exempted from the requirement to provide or pay for such return transportation by USAID under this award; or

b) the employee is a victim of human trafficking seeking victim services or legal redress in the country of employment or a witness in a human trafficking enforcement action;

iii. Soliciting a person for the purpose of employment, or offering employment, by means of materially false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises regarding that employment;

iv. Charging employees recruitment fees; or

v. Providing or arranging housing that fails to meet the host country housing and safety standards.

b. In the event of a violation of section (a) of this provision, USAID is authorized to terminate this award, without penalty, and is also authorized to pursue any other remedial actions authorized as stated in section 1704(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Pub. L. 112-239, enacted January 2, 2013).

c. If the estimated value of services required to be performed under the award outside the United States exceeds $500,000, the recipient must submit to the Agreement Officer, the annual "Certification regarding Trafficking in Persons, Implementing Title XVII of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013" as required prior to this award, and must implement a compliance plan to prevent the activities described above in section (a) of this provision. The recipient must provide a copy of the compliance plan to the Agreement Officer upon request and must post the useful and relevant contents of the plan or related materials on its website (if one is maintained) and at the workplace.

d. The recipient's compliance plan must be appropriate to the size and complexity of the award and to the nature and scope of the activities, including the number of non-United States citizens expected to be employed. The plan must include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) An awareness program to inform employees about the trafficking related prohibitions included in this provision, the activities prohibited and the action that will be taken against the employee for violations.

(2) A reporting process for employees to report, without fear of retaliation, activity inconsistent with the policy prohibiting trafficking, including a means to make available to all employees the Global Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-844-888-FREE and its e-mail address at help@befree.org.

(3) A recruitment and wage plan that only permits the use of recruitment companies with trained employees, prohibits charging of recruitment fees to the employee, and ensures that wages meet applicable host-country legal requirements or explains any variance.

(4) A housing plan, if the recipient or any subawardee intends to provide or arrange housing. The housing plan is required to meet any host-country housing and safety standards.

(5) Procedures for the recipient to prevent any agents or subawardee at any tier and at any dollar value from engaging in trafficking in persons activities described in section a of this provision. The recipient must also have procedures to monitor, detect, and terminate any agents or subawardee or subawardee employees that have engaged in such activities.

e. If the Recipient receives any credible information regarding a violation listed in section a(1)-(4) of this provision, the recipient must immediately notify the cognizant Agreement Officer and the USAID Office of the Inspector General; and must fully cooperate with any Federal agencies responsible for audits, investigations, or corrective actions relating to trafficking in persons.

f. The Agreement Officer may direct the Recipient to take specific steps to abate an alleged violation or enforce the requirements of a compliance plan.

g. For purposes of this provision, "employee" means an individual who is engagedin the performance of this award as a direct employee, consultant, or volunteer of the recipient or any subrecipient.

h. The recipient must include in all subawards and contracts a provision prohibiting the conduct described in section a(1)-(4) by the subrecipient, contractor, or any of their employees, or any agents.

The recipient must also include a provision authorizing the recipient to terminate the award as described in section b of this provision.

[END OF PROVISION]

[End of Section VI]

SECTION VII – FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

The Agreement Officer for this Award is:

Abdullah Akbar
Agreement Officer
USAID/Bangladesh
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
abakbar@usaid.gov

The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist for this Award is:

Tariq Bin Azam
Sr. Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
USAID/Bangladesh
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
tazam@usaid.gov

[End of Section VII]

SECTION VIII – OTHER INFORMATION

1. FUNDING APPLICANTS

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, USAID reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. In addition, final award of any resultant Cooperative Agreement(s) will not be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award. All application preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's own expense.

2. AWARD

The Government will award one Cooperative Agreement resulting from this NOFO to the responsible applicant whose application best meet the requirements of this NOFO (see also Section V of this NOFO). The Government may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept other than the lowest cost application, (c) accept more than one application, (d) accept alternate applications, and (e) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

3. AUTHORITY TO OBLIGATE THE GOVERNMENT

The Agreement Officer is the only individual authorized to commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Cooperative Agreement may be incurred before receipt of a fully executed Cooperative Agreement, without the consent and approval of the Agreement Officer.

4. EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS

USAID/Bangladesh will conduct mid-term and final external evaluations to assess and substantiate performance and overall achievements of the project. The external evaluations may be funded directly by USAID and will not be included in the funding of the resulting award.

5. WEB LINKS

1. Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators: http://www.state.gov/f/indicators/
Bangladesh Country Development Cooperation Strategy FY2011- FY2016:
http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Bangladesh_CDCS.pdf

2. USAID Evaluation Policy: https://www.usaid.gov/evaluation/policy

3. Mandatory Standard Provisions for U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients
http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/303maa.pdf

4. Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients:
http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf

[End of Section VIII]
[End of Notice of Annual Program Statement]