



ISSUANCE DATE: January 27, 2023
PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE: January 06, 2023
DEADLINE FOR QUESTIONS: January 20, 2023, 1400 hrs., IST
CLOSING DATE & TIME: March 02, 2023, 0800 hrs., IST

Subject: NOFO# 72038623RFA00001, Amendment#1

Program Title: Innovations for Reducing Plastics for a Cleaner Environment in India (inREPLACE) Activity.

Federal Assistance Listing Number: 98.001

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The purpose of this amendment #1 one is to provide answers to questions that are provided in the attachment and make changes accordingly to the NOFO as highlighted herein.

The United States Agency for International Development through its Mission in India (USAID/India) is seeking Concept Papers for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified entities to implement the **Innovations for Reducing Plastics for a Cleaner Environment in India (inREPLACE) Activity**. Eligibility for this award is restricted to all United States, local Indian, and International **non-governmental** organizations. USAID encourages the participation, to the maximum extent possible, of all local and international organizations.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to **read this NOFO thoroughly** to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID anticipates making a single award as a result of this NOFO to the applicant who best satisfies the NOFO requirements. To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NOFO. This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov, and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the NOFO has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on

www.grants.gov or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at support@grants.gov for technical assistance.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D by the deadline shown above. Responses to questions received by the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to www.grants.gov.

USAID/India **may not** award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with **all** applicable Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.5.(c). The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to commence the process as early as possible.

Please note: USAID email server cannot handle more than 25 MBs of attachments per email. The applicant must divide the submission into more than one email, if necessary, but please number the emails in the subject line (i.e. Email 1 of 3). In the event of technical difficulties, please contact USAID at the email address indiarco@usaid.gov.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of USAID, nor does it commit the USAID to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or an application. Further, USAID reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Hodge-Snead
Agreement Officer

ATTACHMENT:
Questions and Answers

SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.1 Authorizing Legislation

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID’s supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

A.2 PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

A.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the activity is to reduce plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, through improvements in solid waste management and advancing a plastics circular economy in selected regions of India. Through the activity, USAID/India will partner with the Government of India (GOI) to address the plastic pollution challenge by (1) improving plastic and solid waste management planning, infrastructure, and services; and (2) addressing the life cycle impacts of plastics and other materials by promoting a circular economy.

A.2.2 Problem Statement

Background

Plastic pollution from mismanaged municipal solid waste (MSW)¹ has reached a crisis level in India and around the world, filling open dumps, being openly burned, clogging city drains, entering canals, streams, and rivers, and eventually leaking into the ocean. Each year, roughly 11 million metric tons (Mt) of plastic waste enters the ocean globally, presenting an immediate threat to marine wildlife and ecosystems, major industries such as fishing and tourism, and the livelihoods of millions of people.² Plastics also contribute to the climate crisis throughout their life cycle, with greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions occurring in fossil fuel extraction, refining and manufacturing processes, to end of life practices of plastic waste. By 2050, the global plastics sector could account for 15% of the global annual carbon budget.³

Reducing future plastic pollution into the marine environment requires significant changes to solid waste management (SWM) on land, particularly in lower income countries where 93% of waste is openly dumped⁴—including generating less waste, improving waste collection, segregation, and recycling, and ensuring safe disposal of remaining waste. Improving the entire

¹ Note: Municipal solid waste (MSW), also referred to as trash or garbage, consists of everyday items people use and throw away, such as packaging made of plastic, paper or styrofoam, aluminum cans, plastic or glass bottles, food scraps, etc. This waste can come from people's homes, schools, and businesses and from any geographies (including urban, rural, peri-urban etc.).

² Borelle, S. et al. (2020). “[Predicted growth in plastic waste exceeds efforts to mitigate plastic pollution](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aba3656).” *Science*. 369, 1515–1518. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aba3656>.

³ Center for International Environmental Law (2019). “[Plastic & Climate - The Hidden Costs of a Plastic Planet](#).”

⁴ Kaza, S. et al. (2018). “[What a Waste 2.0—A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050](#).” Washington, DC: The World Bank.

waste stream can also reduce methane emissions and provide co-benefits to mitigating climate change, a key priority for both the United States and Indian governments.⁵

Indian context

India produces anywhere from 55-277 million Mt of MSW a year.⁶ With rapid urbanization, the World Bank projects that MSW in India will increase to approximately 390 million Mt in 2030 and over 540 million Mt in 2050⁷. India generates between 3.4-14.4 million Mt of plastic waste a year.⁸ There is wide variation in the percentage of plastic waste across the country, with some cities reporting up to a quarter of MSW as plastic waste,⁹ but per capita plastic waste generation has nevertheless nearly doubled between 2016-2020.¹⁰ The plastics industry is also growing rapidly, and India's packaging sector is considered to be the fifth largest in the world,¹¹ with much of this comprising single-use plastics (SUP) and multi-layered plastic (MLP) packaging.

Increasing plastics usage across sectors poses a cross-sectoral challenge. One example is the growing interest and application of “plasticulture,” or the use of plastics in agriculture, in India. Approaches such as plastic mulching, plant protection nets, and lining of canals, ponds and reservoirs with plastic film can help increase crop yields and reduce water use, but plastic film residue, also known as white pollution, can decrease soil porosity and air circulation, release dangerous toxins into soil and environment, and enter our food chain.^{12 13}

The COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated the plastic pollution crisis, especially in populous emerging economies like India. One study early in the pandemic estimated that more than 381 million face masks were being used daily in India, generating 6,500 tons of medical plastic waste every day.¹⁴ Furthermore, waste from hospitals or clinical settings, much of which comprises SUP, are typically not classified as hazardous and end up being handled by the regular SWM system.¹⁵ Therefore, improving the medical waste stream as part of overall SWM in India will also be critical to reducing plastic pollution.

In this complex environment, the country's SWM systems in cities, towns, and rural areas face an immense challenge in keeping up with the increase in plastic production across sectors, changes

⁵ [USAID India Climate Change Fact Sheet](#) ; [USAID Climate Strategy \(2022-2030\)](#).

⁶ Central Pollution Control Board, “[Annual Report 2019-20 on Implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016](#)”; Singh, S (2020). “[Solid Waste Management in Urban India: Imperatives for Improvement](#),” ORF Occasional Paper No. 283, Observer Research Foundation; World Bank (2021), [India: Sustainable Solid Waste Management in Mountain Areas](#).

⁷ Kaza, S. et al. (2018). “[What a Waste 2.0—A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050](#).” Washington, DC: The World Bank.

⁸ Central Pollution Control Board, [Annual Report 2019-20 on Implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016](#); Lebreton, L. & Andrady, A. (2019). “[Future scenarios of global plastic waste generation and disposal](#),” *Palgrave Commun* 5, 6. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-018-0212-7>.

⁹ Ahluwalia IJ & Patel U. (2018). “[Solid Waste Management in India: An Assessment of Resource Recovery and Environmental Impact](#),” Working Paper No. 356. ICRIER; Centre for Science and Environment (2020). “[Managing Plastic waste in India: Challenges and Agenda](#).”

¹⁰ Central Pollution Control Board, “[Annual Report 2019-20 on Implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016](#).”

¹¹ British Plastics Federation (2011). “[The Plastics Industry in India: An Overview](#).”

¹² Singh, RK (2018). “[Status of Plasticulture Technologies in India](#),” Training on “Protected Agriculture Technology in Asian Countries” January 22 - 29, 2018 (China).

¹³ DowntoEarth (2016). “[Microplastics on agricultural lands may threaten farm productivity: study](#).”

¹⁴ Sarawut S (2020). “[Face mask and medical waste disposal during the novel COVID-19 pandemic in Asia](#),” *Case Studies in Chemical and Environmental Engineering*, 2: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.csee.2020.100052> .

¹⁵ Patil, P et al. (2021) “[The Impact of COVID-19 on Plastic Waste Management in South Asia: Challenges and Policy Recommendations](#),” *Plastics x COVID-19 in South Asia* Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group.

in consumption patterns, and subsequent plastic waste. In the absence of sanitary landfills, the majority of MSW in India is ultimately disposed of through open burning or at dump sites/poorly managed landfills. As in other parts of the world, much of this unmanaged waste, including plastic, finds its way into rivers and the marine environment.¹⁶ Transformation to a circular economy is essential to tackling the plastic pollution crisis and ensuring that plastics and other waste materials remain in the system for as long as possible through recycling and reuse. A circular economy can be achieved through innovations in packaging design, SWM and recycling systems, socially inclusive policies, and sustained behavior change of individuals, communities, and public and private institutions.

While the efficacy of SWM services varies greatly across the country, the majority of cities and towns require improvements in waste collection rates and waste segregation practices (segregation at source and/or through material recovery facilities (MRFs); solutions for the high fraction of non-recyclable materials in the waste stream (e.g. MLP); and an increase in the number of operational treatment facilities (e.g. for recycling) and safely disposing of remaining waste.

Although some estimates suggest high rates of plastic recycling, particularly polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles, much of the dry waste in the waste stream consists of problem plastics such as MLP and flexible packaging that are considered non-recyclable. These “problem plastics” are typically sent to waste-to-energy plants or to cement plants, where they can replace coal as refuse-derived fuel (RDF), provided that they are captured and segregated within the waste stream. Addressing this significant portion of plastic waste will require large-scale investments in packaging design, reuse/refillable business models, recycling innovations, and developing alternative materials to plastic that all support a circular economy.

Local governments, which are responsible for the management of solid waste (e.g., Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in cities), will require technical and capacity building assistance to improve solid waste and plastic waste management. Professionalizing ULB services has been cited as a key need, in particular to incentivize private partnerships to improve SWM. Local governments will also require technical support in implementing ambitious national policies and regulations to improve SWM and to reduce SUP.

The country’s informal waste sector, which is integral to SWM and plastics recycling, will also need to be integrated with formal waste services. The fragmented recycling industry in particular depends heavily on informal rag pickers and itinerant waste collectors, who channel plastic waste collected at the doorstep or from streets and waste dumps to small dealers and aggregators, who then transport the waste to medium/large dealers and finally to recycling units. The estimated 3-4 million people who work in the informal waste sector are most often women, migrants and/or belong to scheduled castes. They are not protected by national occupational health and safety laws, nor are they eligible for social protection benefits. Women in particular face economic disadvantages and particular health exposures to toxic chemicals and hazardous waste due to the nature of their work at the lower rungs of waste management.

¹⁶ Singh, S (2020). “[Solid Waste Management in Urban India: Imperatives for Improvement](#),” ORF Occasional Paper No. 283, Observer Research Foundation.

The Government of India (GOI) has made reduction of plastic pollution a national priority through enactment of various policy measures such as:

- Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules (2011, 2016, 2018, 2021, 2022)¹⁷
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) regulations (first introduced in PWM Rules 2016, policy released in 2021)¹⁸
- Goal of “Garbage Free Cities” under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) 2.0¹⁹
- Prime Minister Modi’s single-use plastic ban (July 2022).²⁰
- Launch of the “Lifestyle For Environment” (LiFE) movement that includes promoting climate-friendly approaches for waste management.²¹

This national momentum aligns with the commencement of global negotiations following the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5)’s March 2022 resolution to End Plastic Pollution²², to which India is a signatory.

USAID is keen to engage with GOI to accelerate progress towards significantly reducing plastic pollution. USAID recently launched its new flagship Save our Seas Initiative²³ to combat ocean plastic pollution, which builds on successes and lessons from USAID’s six years of experience in improving SWM systems and strengthening policies and practices for the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle), including the [Municipal Waste Recycling Program](#)²⁴ (2016 - 2021), [Clean Cities, Blue Ocean](#)²⁵ (2019 - 2024), and a blended finance partnership with the impact investor [Circulate Capital](#)²⁶ (2019 - present). USAID promotes a local systems approach to address land-based sources of ocean plastic pollution through its five Building Blocks:

- Promoting data-driven policies and institutional environments that enable a circular economy.
- Increasing infrastructure investment and improving solid waste services.
- Developing markets for locally viable innovations and technologies.
- Encouraging widespread and sustained behavior change by increasing recycling and reducing demand for SUP.
- Fostering an inclusive and equitable system that integrates all members along the SWM value chain.

India is key to tackling the global challenge of plastic pollution, and USAID intends to leverage its long-standing presence in the country to deliver high-quality technical assistance to mitigate the amount of plastic leaking into the environment, with potential widespread impacts on climate change, biodiversity, food security, human health, women's empowerment, and livelihoods.

¹⁷ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. (2022). <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1799170>

¹⁸ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. (2022). <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1799170>

¹⁹ Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (2021). <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1784877>

²⁰ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. (2022). <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1799170>

²¹ NITI Aayog (2022). “Lifestyle for Environment.” <https://www.niti.gov.in/life>

²² United Nations Environment Assembly (2022). “[End plastic pollution: Towards an international legally binding instrument.](#)” United Nations Environment Programme.

²³ USAID (2022). “Save our Seas Initiative Launch Event.” <https://www.usaid.gov/save-our-seas>

²⁴ USAID Municipal Waste Recycling Program: <https://urban-links.org/project/municipal-waste-recycling-program-mwrp/>

²⁵ USAID Clean Cities, Blue Ocean: <https://urban-links.org/project/ccbo/>

²⁶ USAID - Circulate Capital Partnership: <https://urban-links.org/project/circulate-capital/>

A.2.3 Theory of Change

The theory of change for the Activity is that:

IF solid waste management planning, infrastructure, and services are improved;

AND IF the life cycle impacts of plastics and other materials are addressed by promoting a circular economy

THEN plastic pollution will be reduced, including in the marine environment.

A.2.4 Objectives and Key Results

This activity aims to reduce plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, through improvements in SWM and by advancing a plastics circular economy. There are two equally important objectives for this activity:

1. Improve SWM planning, infrastructure, and services; and
2. Address lifecycle impacts of plastics and other materials by promoting a circular economy.

Together, the aim is to better manage plastic waste already produced and reduce future SUP. Each component of this Activity will integrate cross-cutting elements of private sector engagement and communication for social and behavioral change.

This Activity is designed to support GOI's commitment to improving SWM and reducing plastic pollution in the environment. The Activity purpose aligns directly with the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) Development Objective 2 to enhance India's efforts to reduce pollution and address pollution health impacts. It also indirectly advances environmental and social safeguard standards under CDCS Intermediate Result 3.3 "Regional natural resource management improved." Collaboration with a wide range of local actors such as civil society, private sector, informal sector, and national and local governments is expected to further environmental and social security and sustainability in India.

Objective 1: Improve solid waste management planning, infrastructure, and services.

Sustained improvements to the SWM system require adequate planning (e.g. SWM and PWM plans, implementation and enforcement of policies such as EPR and plastic bans); operational infrastructure (e.g. trucks capable of managing segregated waste, material recovery facilities (MRFs), recycling facilities); and efficient services (e.g. for collection, transport, segregation, treatment, and disposal). A combination of approaches will be necessary, including capacity building, public and private sector financial investments, and promotion of sustained behavior change at the government, community, and individual level. Interventions that integrate local government, the private sector, the informal sector, and communities into relevant activities are most likely to be successful.

The results and illustrative interventions under this objective are provided below:

Result 1.1: SWM improved through increased efficiencies in service delivery (e.g. collection, transport, and segregation).

In India, ULBs are responsible for SWM. While some provide this service directly, a large number of ULBs adopt different forms of public private partnerships (PPPs) for collection, sorting, transport, treatment, and safe disposal of solid waste. Illustrative activities could include working closely with ULBs, private sector partners including funders, the informal sector, and communities to improve efficiencies at all levels of SWM, such as source segregation at home, routing of trucks, installation of MRFs, and enhancing the recovery and management of plastic waste. Individuals, families, and communities, with an inclusive approach for both men and women, will also need to be incentivized to adapt their waste management practices in order for an enhanced SWM to work effectively.

Result 1.2: Engagement with local governments fostered to improve SWM and implement plastic waste reduction policies.

In order to improve services and infrastructure, SWM departments in many local government bodies will require additional institutional capacity and financial resources to professionalize services. Activities could include training local government staff on the design of service contracts or standard operating procedures that can incentivize the private sector to partner with ULBs; designing integrated fiscal products and financial instruments that help produce the funds, public subsidies, or cross-subsidies that are needed to support effective SWM; improving management information systems (MIS) and helping to provide digital solutions for effective plastic waste management; improving the status of waste collectors; and encouraging women's participation in the formal sector. Local governments will also require technical and management support to implement and enforce national/local policies and regulations such as SUP bans and EPR. At a minimum, activities would include supporting ULBs in the development and implementation of action plans as per Solid Waste Management Rules and Plastic Waste Management Rules, and implementation of EPR Guidelines on plastic packaging through innovative business models. Further illustrative activities could include development of MIS that better track plastic waste, provide data to local governments for decision making, and effectively link producer responsibility organizations (PROs), recyclers and manufacturers.

Result 1.3: Informal waste collectors, particularly women, empowered and integrated into the overall SWM system.

A city's ability to create a circular economy around SWM requires both increased resource efficiency and material recovery, and the inclusive integration of informal waste collectors (IWC), including scheduled caste workers, migrants, at-risk youth, and women. Informal sector workers are the foundation of the waste management pyramid. While the Plastic Waste Management Rules recognize integration of IWCs, challenges exist in realizing this rule and providing IWCs the rights, services, and dignity to which they are entitled. Activities that explicitly include marginalized populations as active participants in the design of the approach, implementation, and evaluation are most likely to be successful. Illustrative activities could include improving safe working conditions (including safety protections for women, from

personal protective equipment (PPE) to physical safety from gender-based violence); ensuring that IWCs are able to obtain government IDs; improving livelihoods and access to information on other benefits and rights; supporting women-owned/led businesses; and reducing social stigma for IWCs through creative behavior change campaigns. There is also an opportunity to scale or replicate existing successful models of waste picker associations to improve SWM with a foundation of equity and empowerment for women, scheduled caste populations, migrants, and other marginalized groups. Incentivizing greater participation of women is essential at all levels of SWM in both the private and public sector and may be achieved through activities such as improving access to better equipment and vehicles for female IWCs, and encouraging minimum employment quota requirements.

Objective 2: Address lifecycle impacts of plastics and other materials by promoting a circular economy.

Innovations are needed to promote a circular economy for plastics and other materials to reduce the amount of residual waste destined for disposal. This will require improvements in the recyclability of packaging, an effective recycling system, and overall reduction in SUP. USAID/India intends for this objective to leverage India's robust research and development (R&D) sector and incentivize private and public financing and investment in locally-developed innovations and technologies on alternatives to banned SUP items and effective plastic waste management, as well as novel approaches to encourage sustained behavior change.

The results and illustrative interventions under this objective are provided below:

Result 2.1: Packaging design improved for recyclability and/or to ensure long-lasting use.

Activities to achieve this result could include supporting technologies and innovative business models that can transform plastic packaging design, including reducing the amount of plastic material in products, increasing the percentage of post-consumer recycled content in packaging, and/or developing mono-material recyclable sachets for common products. Collaboration between the research and private sector is likely to be essential to achieving design transformations and ensuring long-lasting use of products, with an emphasis on locally developed and led innovations. Packaging design will also need to be informed by and integrated with downstream elements of the recycling chain, i.e. consumer research across socio-economic strata; capabilities of the recycling sector, particularly incorporating the perspectives of IWCs; better labeling and instructions for consumers and recyclers; data and material needs of manufacturers seeking to use secondary plastic, etc.

Result 2.2: Recycling and reuse of single-use and other “problem plastics” enhanced.

Improvements in recyclable packaging will only make a difference if there is a well-functioning recycling system at the downstream end of the plastic value chain, including appropriate recycling infrastructure; clear definitions, standards, and labels on the recyclability of packaging; education for recyclers and waste workers to identify differences in materials; and incentives for collecting lower-value plastic waste. Furthermore, an effective circular economy requires manufacturers to have confidence in the continued availability of secondary material, which requires well-managed collection and recycling systems that can track

recyclable waste and recycled material. This could include a range of innovative activities such as the development and scale-up of recycling technologies that make recycling plastics more cost-effective, better data systems for tracking recyclable and recycled plastic, business models to make collection and reprocessing of various plastic products commercially viable, enabling women recyclers in particular to secure financing, and conducting evidence-based social behavior change initiatives. It will be essential to include the voices of IWCs—particularly women, scheduled caste people, youth, and migrants—from the beginning to ensure that they are empowered within new systems and have access to market information to increase their income and opportunities.

Result 2.3: Plastic alternatives increased through investments in innovations.

In July 2022, Prime Minister Modi’s ban on SUP went into effect. National efforts such as these require a widely available ecosystem of alternative packaging and products, from simple alternatives such as cloth or jute carry bags, to widespread refill options for household products and consumables, to innovative biodegradable, food-grade packaging options not made of petrochemical-based polymers (e.g. kelp, bamboo, mushrooms, etc.). True reduction in plastic use also needs sustained, long-term behavior change on the part of individual consumers, businesses, and larger institutions. Both R&D on plastic alternatives and related behavior change programs will be most effective when they incorporate the needs and perspectives of different demographic groups to ensure ease of adoption by businesses, acceptance by consumers, and a clear understanding of the different recycling and disposal considerations for various plastic alternatives (e.g. bioplastics vs. biodegradable materials vs. compostable materials). Activities could include “grand challenge”-type financing for scalable innovations that enable access to a wider range of plastic alternatives in the market; testable, evidence-based behavior change approaches to incentivize and promote alternatives to banned SUP items; and incorporation of IWCs into this new value chain or facilitating alternative opportunities to make up for lost wages, e.g. through “green jobs.”

Cross-Cutting Elements:

In addition to the Objectives and Results above, USAID/India seeks activities that recognize the importance of integrating the following cross-cutting themes into both objectives:

- **Private sector engagement:** Solutions to solid waste and plastic waste management require private sector participation in financing and investment, R&D, and showcasing promising solutions that can be scaled-up. There are several opportunities for integrating the private sector into both objectives, some of which have been described above.
- **Social and behavioral change:** Long-lasting improvements to SWM practices and transitioning to a circular economy by reducing plastic waste both require a contextual understanding of awareness, attitudes, incentives, and priorities of different stakeholder groups involved in the entire value chain. Integrated programs grounded in social research are more likely to effectively remove barriers to sustained change.

A.2.5 Proposed Geographic Focus Areas

In their response to the solicitation, offerors will propose where their interventions will be implemented and provide the justification for the selection based on the greatest potential to reduce plastic pollution entering waterways and the marine environment. The final selection of geographic locations will be at the co-design stage (Phase 3), in consultation with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

A.2.6 Link to Agency Priorities

The Activity is aligned with USAID/India's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (2020-24) and other USAID priorities such as the Climate Strategy, Indo-Pacific Strategy, Private Sector Engagement Strategy, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, USAID's policy for Sustainable Service Delivery in an Increasingly Urbanized World, and USAID priorities on inclusive development and working with under-represented communities.

A.2.7 Guiding Principles

Sustainability: A key component of the activity focuses on the sustainability of the interventions. USAID defines sustainability as how the activity will be supported and can continue without donor funding.

Coordination: USAID/India and the applicant will finalize the teaming arrangement/consortium framework (if applicable) through the co-development process. The Activity will engage with relevant host government ministries. The activity will coordinate with current USAID-funded activities and leverage the work of other relevant actors and stakeholders to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts.

Gender and Social Inclusion: USAID's gender and social analysis for this activity shows that plastic pollution has particular gendered and social justice challenges that disproportionately affects people in vulnerable conditions. For example, women face economic disadvantages and particular health exposures to toxic chemicals and hazardous waste due to the nature of their work at the lower rungs of waste management. They also face sexual harassment and violence. Men are also at risk of different physical health exposures due to gender-segregated tasks in waste management. Both women and men face similar social stigma of being a waste sector worker. In terms of social inclusion, "ragpicking" and waste collection has been a hereditary occupation of those belonging to scheduled castes or migrants; this perpetuation of the caste system puts informal waste collectors (IWCs) in a situation where they are unable to extricate themselves from this profession.

Hence, this activity will work to understand and expose gender-differentiated practices and impacts along the SWM chain and mainstream gender into solutions. Considerations will not solely be given to women's issues; instead, an outlook will be adopted that will yield advantages for whole communities and benefit both sexes in all their diversity. Intersectionality will be an important concept of this activity, keeping in mind the effects of multiple forms of discrimination that intersect in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups in plastic waste management, like migrants, youth, and scheduled caste populations in India. This activity will maximize the impacts of the interventions by equally focusing on and viewing these marginalized individuals as valuable participants in plastic waste management, whose knowledge, leadership

and decision making can have transformative effects on local communities and national policies. Please see Annex 1 for detailed information on gender and social inclusion.

[END OF SECTION A]

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SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

B.1 ESTIMATED FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED

USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide \$30,000,000 in total USAID funding over a five-year period. USAID reserves the right to change funding amounts and terms of the resulting Cooperative Agreement as a result of availability of funds and U.S. Government requirements.

B.2 EXPECTED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, TARGETS, BASELINE DATA AND DATA COLLECTION

USAID/India intends for the activity to be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, to (a) ensure the intended results and impact are being generated, and (b) inform the activity management if, and when, course corrections may be necessary – an important consideration, given that this is a new activity and partnership. The recipient should also conduct several periodic analyses to better understand certain aspects and issues within the award’s domain.

Performance monitoring and evaluation will be included by the Applicant while designing their technical approach. USAID may conduct additional monitoring and evaluation through external contract(s). A detailed Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) design will be developed upon completion of the design and will include appropriate Standard Foreign Assistance Indicators (F indicators).

USAID/India recognizes that development efforts yield positive change more quickly if they are coordinated and collaborative, test promising new approaches in a continuous search for improvement, and build on what works, while eliminating what does not. The recipient must therefore implement a Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation (CLA) approach to continuously assess the activity’s causal pathways, target outcomes, and adjust the interventions and approach as necessary to yield the most effective course of action. The CLA Plan must clearly relate to the Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan.

Anticipated Results and Indicators

The activity will contribute to improving plastic and SWM planning, infrastructure, and services, and addressing the life cycle impacts of plastics and other materials by promoting a circular economy in order to reduce plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

The Concept Paper shall propose intermediate results that will help inform its content areas and initiatives. Applicants are expected to propose activities that are appropriate and relevant to the situation. Potential indicators are outlined below, but the final list of indicators will be developed during co-creation:

- Amount of municipal solid waste (in Metric Tons) diverted from the environment

supported by USG assistance – disaggregated by waste type: plastic, organic, residual.

- Number of policy instruments that promote reduction of plastic pollution and sustainable management of municipal solid waste supported by USG assistance.
- Amount of investment mobilized (in USD) for 3R/SWM infrastructure and operations.
- Percentage of annual plastic and packaging waste recycled with USG assistance.
- Number of innovations developed or supported to promote a circular economy.
- Number of technology demonstration projects initiated with USG assistance.
- Number of institutions with increased capacity to assess or address 3R/SWM issues supported by USG assistance.
- Proportion of population in assisted areas with access to solid waste collection and/or recycling programs.
- Number of informal waste collectors, including women and other marginalized groups, integrated into the formal system with USG assistance.
- Number of individuals trained in 3R/SWM practices.
- % of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment).
- Number of individuals trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment outcomes through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations.

An Annual Pause and Reflect session will be held to inform annual reporting and the following year work plans. These Pause and Reflect sessions serve to review what types of interventions may be necessary to adjust course. A mid-term and final evaluation will be conducted by a third party as per USAID guidelines. The mid-term evaluation will be undertaken in year two of the project implementation to assess the activity Theory of Change (TOC), risks and assumptions, and review the progress towards expected results and make mid-course corrections, if needed. The evaluation will measure processes, early progress on getting results, modification in the project implementation, if any.

B.3 START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance anticipated herein is five (5) years. The estimated start date of the award is **June 30, 2023**.

B.4 SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

In accordance with ADS 303.3.11, USAID will remain substantially involved over the life of the Cooperative Agreement to assist the Recipient in achieving the expected outcomes and results of the program. Some examples of potential areas of substantial involvement during performance

include the following:

- Approval of recipient's implementation plans during performance;
- Approval of key recipient personnel; and
- Joint participation will be necessary to ensure achievement of key objectives during the performance of the activity.

NOTE: This Substantial Involvement section is subject to change following the Co-Creation Workshop and submission of the Final Application of Phase 3.

B.5 AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE

The authorized geographic code for the procurement of services and commodities is 937. Code 937 is defined as the United States, the recipient country (India), and developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source. There are currently no prohibited source countries, but the list is updated regularly and can be found here:

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/310mac.pdf>.

B.6. NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USAID AND THE RECIPIENT

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of Innovations for Reducing Plastics for a Cleaner Environment in India (inREPLACE) Activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of 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.

[END OF SECTION B]

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SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligibility for this NOFO is unrestricted, open to all eligible and qualified U.S., local, and international **non-governmental** organizations. An organization may submit only one (1) application under this notice of funding opportunity. However, organizations participating as a member of a consortium may elect to participate in another consortium under a different Concept Paper.

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400(g), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as Cooperative Agreements. While for-profit organizations may participate, pursuant to 2 CFR 700.13(a)(1), Prohibition against Profit, no profit will be paid to any for-profit entity receiving or administering Federal financial assistance as a recipient or subrecipient.

USAID welcomes organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID to submit their applications.

C.2 LEVERAGE

Leverage is resources that a non-traditional USAID partner brings to a public-private partnership, i.e. the portion not being borne by USAID. These non-traditional resource partners are typically NOT receiving USAID or U.S. Government funds. Leverage is defined as anything of value that is measured, financial contributions, third party contributions, donated services, property, or intellectual property. USAID/India requires the applicant to leverage resources from either the private and/or public resources. The resources leveraged from both the sectors will enable the activity to engage in interventions that are of shared interest and will enable the interventions to be continued after the Activity ends. **At a minimum, the applicant is required to leverage 50% of the award amount from other sources, external to the United States Government.**

C.3. OTHER

C.3.1. SAM REGISTRATION

Applicants must have successfully registered in SAM (System for Award Management) prior to submitting a full application. Applicants must also provide a valid UEI number in the SF424 form to be submitted along with a full application. For those who have previously registered in SAM, they must renew and maintain an active SAM registration during the time they have concept notes or applications under consideration by a Federal awarding agency or during active Federal award. SAM registration is not required in the Phase 1 or Phase 2; however, applicants are advised to start the process now.

C.3.2. PRE-AWARD RISK ASSESSMENT

The Apparently Successful Applicant (ASA) will be responsible for ensuring achievement of the objectives described in the NOFO. Thus, an ASA must be a responsible entity. Prior to making an award under this NOFO, USAID may perform a pre-award survey for organizations that are new to working with USAID or for organizations with outstanding audit findings. Accounting systems, audit issues and management capability questions may be reviewed as part of this process. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, USAID may determine to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.207). If notified by USAID that a pre-award survey is necessary, applicants must prepare in advance to provide the required information and documents. A pre-award survey does not commit USAID to make an award to any organization.

The Agreement Officer (AO) will decide on whether to subject the ASA to a pre-award survey, and based on the results, will make a determination if the prospective recipient is a responsible entity, whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting, and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. The Agreement Officer reserves the right to perform a pre-award survey for any entity.

[END OF SECTION C]

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SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT

Name: Cheryl Hodge-Snead
Title: Agreement Officer
Email: indiarco@usaid.gov

D.2 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AND PRE-APPLICATION MEETING

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted indiarco@usaid.gov, with a copy to vvats@usaid.gov and desharma@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Unless otherwise notified by an amendment to the NOFO, no questions will be accepted after the due date. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

Applicants must not submit questions to any other USAID staff. All the submission of questions application files submitted must be compatible with Microsoft (MS) Office in a MS Windows environment and/or Adobe Acrobat (.pdf). The subject of each e-mail must read as follows: NOFO #72038623RFA00001 - inREPLACE Activity.

D.3 GENERAL CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION

USAID is committed to localization in pursuit of local partners for sustainable solutions. Therefore, local consortiums are encouraged to ensure that the awardee (should an award be made) have all of the professional skills, services, and knowledge to achieve the objectives of this NOFO.

Applicants are to review, understand and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Applicants must ensure all necessary documents are complete and received at USAID on time. Failure to do so will result in the submission being considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed. All submissions received by the stated deadlines in the NOFO and determined responsive will be reviewed in accordance with the review criteria contained in Section E of this NOFO.

Each applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. Applications for each phase must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided under Section D. Any erasures or other changes to the application must be initiated by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent on behalf of the applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria. USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted

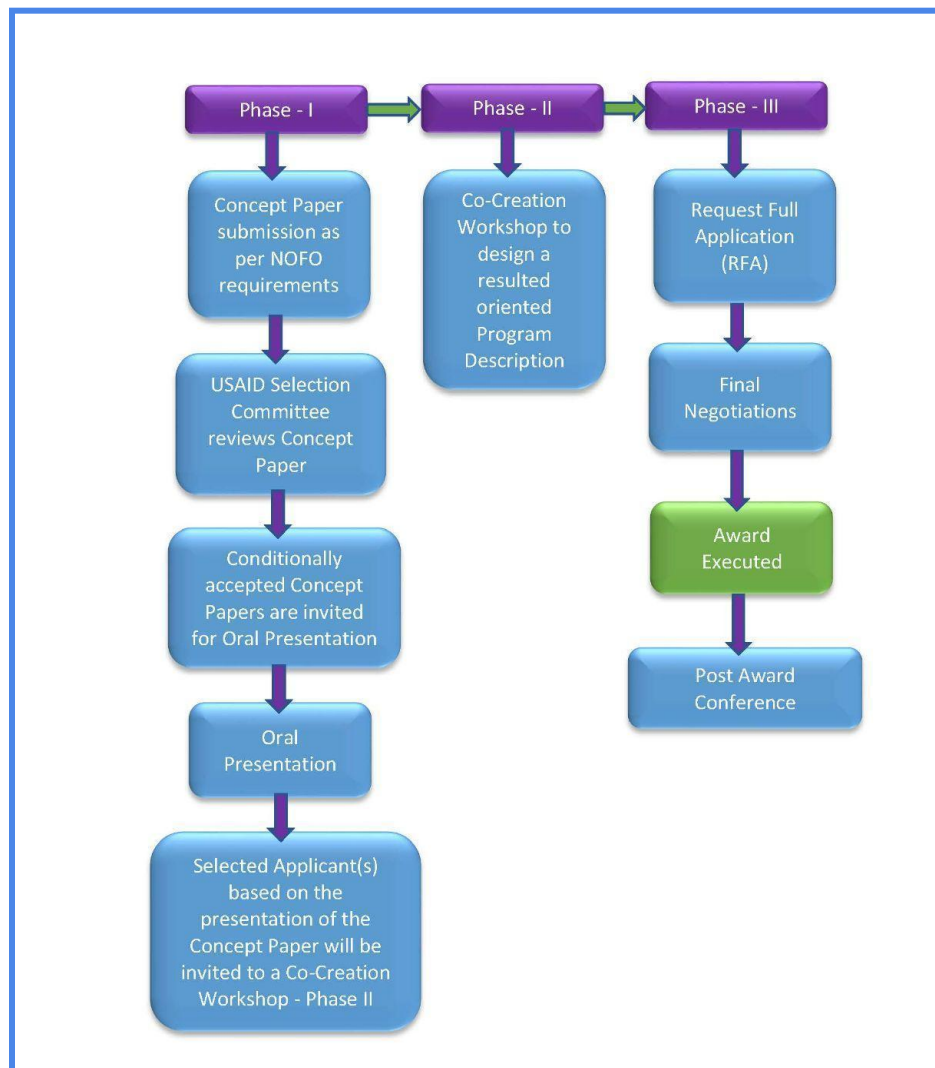
in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.

Submissions must be in electronic format. Applicants' authorized representatives are to sign their names (manually or digitally) on the cover pages of their submissions, as well as in required certifications. For a submission to be considered timely, the electronic transmission must be submitted by email to indiarco@usaid.gov with a copy to vvats@usaid.gov and desharma@usaid.gov and received by USAID/India no later than the date and time indicated on the coversheet of the NOFO. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions.

Applicants not selected for the consecutive phase will be notified at the end of each phase. Depending on the number of applicants, the AO may or may not respond to requests for additional information from unsuccessful applicants.

D.3.1 OVERALL SELECTION PROCESS

Under this NOFO, there will be a three-phase process that is described below:



Phase I - Concept Paper and Oral Presentation:

Conditional Acceptance of Concept Paper: Applicants are to first submit a concept paper for an initial review. All concept papers received in response to this NOFO will be evaluated by a USAID Merit Review Committee (MRC) for responsiveness to the merit review/evaluation criteria outlined in Section E. After all concept papers are evaluated, only applicants whose concept paper is **conditionally accepted (based on the Merit Review Criteria)** will be invited to present their concept paper. This process is to identify concept papers that align with the intended objectives of the NOFO. **The process ends for all applicants whose concept paper was not conditionally accepted and no further consideration will be given to the applicant(s).**

Oral Presentation: Applicants whose Concept Paper was conditionally accepted (**based on the Merit Review Criteria in Section E**) will be invited to present their concept orally. The Oral Presentation will provide USAID an opportunity to better understand the concept and its approach to the solution, as well as to pose clarifying questions. The date of presentation is estimated to be approximately two weeks after invite/notification that the applicant's Concept Papers was conditionally accepted. The Oral Presentation will be held in-person in New Delhi India. An invitation with the venue, date, and time will be sent to those applicants whose concept paper was conditionally accepted. The Applicant's Concept Paper author/s and lead Technical Representatives must be part of the presentation team. USAID may encourage organizations to examine the complementary nature of their concepts to improve their overall approach and consider collaborating. After the presentations, USAID will use the Merit Review Criteria to determine the Applicant's concept paper that is acceptable (**See Section E**) to move to Phase 2, the Co-Creation Workshop.

Approximately two weeks after the oral presentations are completed, only the applicant whose Oral Presentation of Concept Paper presentation is successful will be invited to a Co-Creation Workshop - Phase II.

NOTE: USAID reserves the right to consider co-creating with all applicant(s) whose concept papers were conditionally accepted up until the award is made. For example, should a viable solution not materialize with the applicant whose concept paper was accepted, USAID will commence co-creation with the next viable applicant. USAID will provide a written summary feedback to applicant(s) who will remain in the conditionally acceptable category to those applicant/s who were invited for an oral presentation. Those applicant(s) whose concept paper was not accepted will have the opportunity to request additional information. **The process ends for applicants who were notified that their concept paper was not accepted. No further consideration will be given to the applicant(s).**

USAID reserves the right to accept a concept paper that fully meets the requirements of the NOFO, not hold oral presentations, and proceed directly to **Phase II** - Co-creation.

Phase II - Co-Creation Workshop: Approximately two weeks after oral presentations, a one-week co-creation workshop (in-person) will be hosted by USAID. The applicant whose concept paper was accepted will be invited to submit a draft Program Description and participate

in a co-creation workshop. Specific details will be included in the invitational letter. The purpose of the co-creation workshop is to design a mutually sustainable Program Description using a participatory process that assumes some degree of shared power and decision making. Participants in this co-creation workshop will include the applicant, USAID, and potentially other stakeholders such as representatives from MoEFCC. The participants of the workshop will work together to design a Program Description that incorporates mutually beneficial outcomes. The outcome of the co-creation workshop is to have one (single or combined) concept that would move forward to submit a full application.

Phase III - Full Application (RFA): At the end of the co-creation workshop, the applicant will be requested to submit a full application including the technical and detailed cost application. The full application will elaborate the project's theory of change and proposed key results and indicators. The full application also requires the applicant to complete specific USG forms and to provide additional information that USAID/India will need to move forward with an appropriate implementing instrument. The full application will be reviewed for its technical merit against the full application merit review/evaluation criteria by the Merit Review Committee. USAID will continue to work with the applicant(s) to strengthen the Full Application, if additional information is required, prior to making an award.

NOTE: No funding will be made to any applicant prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. The Applicants are responsible for all costs incurred prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement, including costs incurred during all the phases - concept paper preparation, oral presentation, co-creation and pre-award. Please note that USAID reserves the right to make no award under this NOFO at any stage of the process.

D.4. APPLICATION FORMATS:

Each applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. This subsection addresses content requirements applying to this NOFO. Please see subsections D.5 and D.6, below, for information on the content specific to the application.

Concept papers must be submitted by email to indiarco@usaid.gov, with a copy to vvats@usaid.gov and desharma@usaid.gov no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Email submissions must include the NOFO number and applicant's name in the subject line heading.

After sending the concept paper electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

Applicants are reminded that email is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this NOFO, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

There may be a problem with the receipt of *.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/India cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server.

The Application must comply with the following:

- USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.
- Written in English.
- Use standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant's name.
- A 10-point font can be used for graphs, charts, and tables.
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats.
- Applicants must review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Failure to do so may be considered as being non-responsive and may be evaluated accordingly. Applicants should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for their records.

DO NOT SUBMIT: Promotional literature and materials regarding the applicant or other unsolicited material.

D.4.1. PHASE 1: Concept Paper Format

The concept paper is to be specific, complete, and presented concisely. The concept must demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The concept is to consider the requirements of the program and merit review criteria found in this NOFO.

Applicants should also ensure that their concept paper contains the following aspects:

- List of Acronyms (*does not count towards page limitation*)
- Table of Contents (*does not count towards page limitation*)

The Concept Paper can be no more than a maximum of **Ten (10) pages**, where the applicant provides an overview of its idea. **Please see Concept Paper Instructions below.** Applicants must submit a Concept Paper by the deadline specified in this NOFO. USAID will review Concept Papers against merit review criteria detailed in Section E of this NOFO.

Concept Paper must include a cover page containing the following information:

A. Concept Paper Cover Page (*does not count towards page limitation*):

The concept paper must include a cover page containing the following information:

- Proposed Activity Name/Title;
- Period of Performance (i.e., start date and end date);
- Total Amount of Funding Requested from USAID;
- Total amount leveraged, including from what source(s);
- Applicant Organization Name;

- Applicant Contact Person (name, phone, e-mail);
- Full Address for Applicant Organization;
- Type of Organization [please include certification of incorporation as an Annex] (e.g., US, non-US, multilateral, private, for-profit, nonprofit, etc.) date of incorporation;
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number;
- (if Applicable) Name(s) of Partner(s) Organization(s)

Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria.

B. Include major sections and page numbering to easily cross-reference and identify the information below.

C. Concept Technical Approach: (up to 6 pages)

The Technical Approach should lay the groundwork for an integrated set of interventions. Applicants must clearly articulate how their proposed activities will achieve the objectives and result areas presented in Section A, focusing on what is technically and politically feasible within the five years of the Activity. Applicants should not repeat what is already described in Section A, but rather clearly describe why their approach is the most effective way to address the overall intent of the NOFO to reduce plastic pollution in India.

The Applicant is strongly encouraged to propose additional intermediate results, outcomes and innovative solutions that will contribute to fulfillment of the Activity's objectives and goal. The applicant is also encouraged to highlight the linkages between the Activity's two objectives as well as cross-cutting elements by proposing integrated interventions.

Concept papers must address the following:

- An understanding of the plastic pollution challenge in India, including its sources, impacts, and the connection between plastic pollution, solid waste management, and circular economy principles.
- An understanding of Government of India priorities with regard to plastic pollution and solid waste management; key stakeholders active in this sector; cross-sectoral linkages; and challenges and opportunities for reducing plastic pollution in India.
- A strong technical approach to achieving the objectives and results and the proposed strategies/interventions. This should include an initial theory of change.
- A description of where interventions will be implemented and analysis/justification of the geographic focus based on the greatest potential to reduce plastic pollution entering waterways and the marine environment.
- An approach to work collaboratively with national and local government, while engaging a wide range of stakeholders from the private sector, NGOs, informal sector, and communities.
- A plan for meaningful integration of gender and social inclusion considerations into each objective and result area as relevant. e.g. incentivizing greater participation of women at all levels of the SWM.
- A plan for leveraging funds and private sector engagement in helping achieve the

objectives of the activity.

- A plan for integrating evidence-based social and behavior change approaches into the technical approach that is not limited to awareness-raising activities, but rather work towards achieving sustained changes in individual behavior and/or social norms.
- A plan for long-term sustainability going beyond the end of USAID funding.
- A list of tentative indicators and specific targets (a maximum of 5) that would be crucial for achieving the project objectives.
- A discussion (with specific examples) of how they will implement Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) approaches throughout implementation.
- A proposed timeline, i.e. duration or time needed to complete the proposed interventions. This duration should not exceed 5 years. **The timeline should be provided in the Annex.**

D. Organizational Structure and Management Plan: (up to 2 pages)

Applicant is to provide a description of your organization structure and the management approach for this activity that shows the relationship within the team and between partner organizations (as applicable). The proposed Management plan must convincingly demonstrate the applicant's or proposed consortium's ability to successfully implement the Activity.

The applicant should describe how the proposed concept will partner with and leverage experience(s) from local Indian organizations. The applicant must articulate the skills and capacity of each member of the consortium, and describe the division of roles and responsibilities between the consortium members implementing the activity, including staffing roles for any proposed sub-awardees with defined lines of management, supervisory authority, and technical responsibility. Additionally, the applicant should identify three to five key personnel positions that would be critical to accomplishing the outcomes outlined in the Concept Technical Approach and describe the qualifications for each role and why the role is critical to successful implementation of the project.

Finally, the applicant should succinctly outline an inclusive leadership approach that will create a shared common vision and purpose that builds trust and recognizes the value and contribution of all consortium members.

E. Institutional Capacity and History of Performance (up to 2 pages)

The applicant must demonstrate that it has the institutional capacity – on its own or combined with partner organizations – to plan, implement, and monitor the proposed Activity.

The applicant must also provide past performance/**history of performance** information that demonstrates experience managing similar work of comparable subject area, size, scale, duration, nature, and complexity required to successfully, efficiently, and effectively achieve the objectives outlined in the Section A. The applicant must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants,

or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed 5 awards within the 5 past years, and include the following:

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;
- A brief description of the activity;
- Period of Performance;
- Award Amount;

Name of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information including telephone number, and e-mail address for each proposed individual.

Past performance information/**History of performance** for **the applicant and** each partner organization should be provided as an Annex, no longer than one page per organization. The applicant is strongly encouraged to provide specific examples of significant impact of their past projects and how cooperation in prior partnerships/consortia contributed to that impact. The ability of each consortium member to work with each other, focused on a common purpose, will also be evaluated.

F. Name and Signature of authorized individual (*does not count towards page limitation*):

Any erasures or other changes to the concept paper must be initialed by the person signing. A concept paper signed by an agent on behalf of the applicant must be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

Annex:

- Organizational Structure/Management plan (general eg Organizational Chart not to exceed 1 page)
- History of performance (1 page per sub-awardee/partner)
- Other charts, graphs, tables, data or information considered essential to the application (not to exceed two pages)

No other documents/annexures are being requested currently; USAID will inform the applicants about additional documentation required in subsequent phases, if needed.

G. ORAL PRESENTATION INSTRUCTIONS:

The oral presentation is a requirement for applicants whose concept papers were conditionally accepted (based on the Merit Review Criteria). The agenda, format, technical requirements, and venue information will be made available to applicants who reach Phase 2 as part of the invitation letter. USAID will also provide the initial discussion items based on the review of Concept Papers.

The applicant's concept paper author(s) and lead technical backstops must be part of the

presentation team. Selected applicants are highly encouraged to also include participants from proposed consortium members (if applicable). Selected applicants are limited to five participants and must be present for the presentation on the date and time specified in the invitation.

Applicants will share brief oral presentations with USAID. Each closed-door oral presentation will be evaluated and scored by the Selection Committee in accordance with the merit review criteria set forth under Section E.2.1 of this NOFO.

In the presentation, the applicant should summarize their concept paper while also addressing the questions raised by USAID on the concept paper submitted in Phase 1. During the oral presentation, the applicant should also explain how data collection, analysis and reporting of performance data will be managed under the project; and how monitoring and evaluation data will be shared and used to inform program learning and adaptive management. In addition, in accordance with the Guiding Principle on Learning and Adapting, the applicant should explain how it will utilize an adaptive learning approach to ensure lessons gleaned from performance and context monitoring are incorporated into the activity. The MEL approach should describe how routine assessments and internal evaluations will be used to inform programmatic decision-making. The presentation should also give an expanded list of indicators and targets (in addition to the five provided in the Phase 1 concept paper) which are significant in achieving the activity results. The applicants selected for oral presentation are required to present their detailed leverage plan.

D.5 REQUIREMENTS FOR A FULL APPLICATION (For Information Purpose Only)

NOTE: ONLY THOSE APPLICANT(S) WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL AT PHASE 3 WILL BE REQUESTED TO SUBMIT A FULL APPLICATION. NO FULL APPLICATION IS REQUIRED AT THIS TIME.

Please note additional requirements below that must be met prior to award and as part of the Full Application evaluation stage:

(a) Business (cost) Application Format

NO Business (Cost) Application is required at Phase 1 or 2. The following information is provided for **information purposes only** for the applicant(s) that will be required to submit a full application after successful co-creation at Phase 3.

(b) Certifications and Assurances

As part of Phase 4 (Full Application stage), the Applicant must complete the following documents, upon request by the AO:

- (1) “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient” ADS 303mav document found at <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mav.pdf>
- (2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

- (3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

(c) Approval of Subawards

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.332(b)
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation.

(d) Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and SAM Requirements

Applicants must obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and register in the System for Award Management (SAM) (<https://sam.gov/>) in order to be eligible to receive federal assistance, such as grants and cooperative agreements. Unless an exemption applies (see ADS 303maz), applicants must be registered in SAM prior to submitting an application for award for USAID's consideration.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (earlier known as DUNS number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. If requested to submit information as part of Phase 3, the applicant(s) (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from 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)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid UEI number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients (if any).
2. Be registered in SAM prior to the issuance of an award. (www.sam.gov).
3. 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 registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are

encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Step 1: Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID (UEI)

<https://sam.gov/content/home>

Step 2: SAM registration: <http://www.sam.gov>

Applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on www.sam.gov, navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

(e) Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

(f) Funding Restrictions

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipient(s) under this award. See 2 CFR 200.331 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction **may** be authorized under this award **if it is determined necessary to achieve the objectives of the NOFO. Construction will only be a portion of all award activities and the estimated cost of construction cannot exceed \$500,000 at a single project site.**

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer. Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.6 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

(g) Consortium arrangements

If the Applicant has established a consortium or another legal relationship among its partners, the Cost/Business application must include a copy of the legal relationship between the parties. The agreement should include a full discussion of the relationship between the Applicant and Sub-Applicant(s) including identification of the Applicant with whom USAID will work with for purposes of Agreement administration, identity of the Applicant which will have accounting responsibility, how Agreement effort will be allocated and the express agreement of the principals thereto to be held jointly and severally liable for the acts or omissions of the other.

(h) Negotiation

Upon consideration of award or during the negotiations leading to an award, Applicants 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 applications! The information in this section is provided so that Applicant may

become familiar with additional documentation that may be requested by the Agreement Officer:

- Bylaws, constitution, and articles of incorporation, if applicable.
- 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. The Applicant should provide copies of the same.

(i) Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term (August 2018)

(a) Personal Conflict of Interest

- 1) An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.
- 2) The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

(b) Organizational Conflict of Interest

The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.

[END OF SECTION D]

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SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.1 CRITERIA

All applications will be reviewed in accordance with the review criteria set forth below. The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated.

Merit Review Factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Technical Application Format.

E.2 REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

PHASE 1: CONCEPT PAPER

Concept Paper: The concept paper will be reviewed by a Merit Review Committee according to the criteria described below. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the applicant incorporates interventions that will build upon and expand USAID's and GOI's efforts to reduce plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, through improvements in SWM and advancing a plastics circular economy in selected regions of India. A concept paper is determined to be acceptable if it proposes a sound approach and USAID has **Strong Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirement and will be successful in performing with **no** government intervention based on the criteria below, which are listed in descending order of importance.

The Agreement Officer makes the final determination and is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either an Agreement signed by the Agreement Officer or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

NOTE: USAID reserves the right to consider co-creating with all applicant(s) whose concept papers were conditionally accepted up until the award is made. For example, should a viable solution not materialize with the applicant whose concept paper was accepted, USAID will commence co-creation with the next viable applicant. USAID will provide a written summary feedback to applicant(s) who will remain in the conditionally acceptable category to those applicant/s who were invited for an oral presentation. Those applicant(s) whose concept paper was not accepted will have the opportunity to request additional information. **The process ends for applicants who were notified that their concept paper was not accepted. No further consideration will be given to the applicant(s).**

PHASE 2: ORAL PRESENTATION

Presentations of Concept Papers: Oral presentations of conditionally accepted concept papers will be reviewed by a Merit Review Committee according to the criteria described below. The outcomes of the presentation will be used to determine which concept paper moves forward to the

Co-Creation stage. After the presentations, USAID will use the Merit Review Criteria to assign a final rating to applicants. An oral presentation of the concept paper is determined to be **Acceptable** if the applicant proposes a sound approach and USAID has **Strong Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirements and will be successful in performing with **no** government intervention.

For the selected applicant(s), USAID will provide written summary feedback. Those applicant(s) who were invited for an oral presentation but whose concept paper was not moved forward to co-creation will have the opportunity to request additional information following a notification that their concept was not accepted to proceed to Phase 3.

NOTE: After concept paper/s have been **accepted**, detailed activity design discussions between USAID and the applicant will begin and continue throughout the remainder of the process.

NOTE: USAID reserves the right to accept a concept paper that fully meets the requirements of the NOFO, not hold oral presentations, and proceed directly to **Phase 2 - Co-creation**.

USAID will not be responsible for costs associated with presentations.

PHASE 3: CO-CREATION WORKSHOP

USAID/India will host a one-week, in-person co-creation workshop. The applicant will be sent an invitation letter notifying the applicant of the date, time, and venue for the workshop. Specific details will be included in the invitational letter. Participants will include the applicant, USAID, and potentially other stakeholders such as MoEFCC. The applicant is required to include their personnel who will be actually implementing the proposed activity.

No funding will be made available prior to the award of the Cooperative Agreement. Applicants, including the organization selected to collaboratively develop the Program Description, are responsible for all costs related to the oral presentation phase and the co-creation workshop. Once the award is signed, the implementing partner may start incurring costs. Applicants not selected for the consecutive phase will be notified at the end of each phase. Unsuccessful applicants may request additional information following such notification.

USAID reserves the right to make no award under this NOFO at any stage of the process.

PHASE 4: REQUEST FOR FULL APPLICATION

At the end of the Co-Creation, applicant(s) will be requested to submit a full application that incorporates the feedback from USAID and the MoEFCC during the co-creation workshop. The Full Application should include, at a minimum, expanded information on the applicant's Technical Approach, Organizational Management and Staffing, and Institutional Capability and Past Performance. In addition, the Full Application will expand on the Theory of Change and articulate the applicant's strategies for implementing a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning methodology, including an emphasis on adaptive learning and management. The applicant must also demonstrate how it will apply learning and adaptive management techniques to inform program management and key decisions. USAID will provide additional information about the full application.

E.2.1 MERIT REVIEW

Phase 1

A. Concept Paper

USAID will conduct a merit review of all concept papers received that comply with the instructions in this NOFO. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria in descending order of importance. The Technical Approach is the most important factor, followed by Organizational Structure and Management, and Institutional Capacity and Past Performance.

Merit Review Criteria	Definition
Technical Approach	Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which they demonstrate the following: a. A strong technical understanding of the connection between plastic pollution, SWM, and circular economy principles in the Indian context. b. An ability to articulate an innovative and feasible technical approach that recognizes the equal importance of both objectives set forth in Section A, that can align with GOI priorities in this sector, and that can achieve sustained results. c. A rationale for how their approach will achieve desired Activity objectives and results, including a theory of change, indicators and proposed targets. d. A clear approach for working with a wide range of stakeholders, including central and local governments, the private sector, the informal sector, and other relevant stakeholders to align priorities and achieve common objectives. e. A sufficient justification for the proposed geographies in which they would implement interventions, based on the potential to reduce plastic pollution entering waterways and the marine environment, GOI and USAID priorities, and the applicant's ability to implement activities in those regions. f. Meaningful understanding and integration of gender and social inclusion into each objective and result area of the Activity, as relevant and feasible. g. Integration of evidence-based social and behavior change approaches to achieve relevant objectives and results that go beyond awareness-raising activities. h. Their ability to leverage funds and engage with the private sector to help achieve the goal of the Activity.

Organizational Structure and Management	Applicants will be evaluated on the following: - Extent to which they demonstrate a well-articulated management plan and staffing plan that details the team’s managerial and technical ability to effectively collaborate, manage and implement the proposed activity adaptively and successfully. - Clarity on roles and responsibilities, added value, and skills and capacity of each consortium member and Key Personnel.
Institutional Capacity and History of Performance	Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which they convincingly demonstrate the following: - Institutional capacity and relevant technical and management experience, based on past performance, to successfully plan, implement, and monitor complex activities that require coordination with the central government, local governments, and various other stakeholders. - Institutional ability to manage sub-awards and coordinate with sub-awardees to implement the proposed interventions adaptively and successfully.

USAID reserves the right to pose clarifying questions and conduct discussions with any applicant but may not opt to do so if it believes it has sufficient information in the concept paper itself. Posing clarifying questions and conducting discussions with one applicant does not obligate USAID to do so with all applicants.

USAID anticipates two (2) possible results from the Concept Paper merit review process:

- **CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE:** Concept paper is evaluated and based on the merit review criteria the applicant is found to propose a good approach and USAID has **Strong Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirement, and will be successful in performing with **no** government intervention. Applicant(s) whose concept paper is conditionally accepted are required to attend an oral presentation to present their concept paper to receive further consideration.
- **UNACCEPTABLE:** Concept Paper is **UNACCEPTABLE** when evaluated against the merit review criteria and is found to propose an unsound approach and USAID has **Low Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirements. The applicant(s) will be unsuccessful in implementing the program. If **UNACCEPTABLE**, USAID declines the concept paper. Due to the number of concept papers received, USAID is not able to provide details on why the concept paper was not selected.

B. Oral presentations:

The applicant will be evaluated based on how effectively they respond to the questions and clarifications raised by USAID on the technical approach; organizational management and staffing; institutional capacity and past performance; extent to which the MEL plan is aligned with the activity theory of change; how information and knowledge from learning and strategic collaboration will be utilized to inform programmatic adaptations and decision-making; and the level of ambition in establishing realistic and achievable indicators and targets to achieve the project objectives and results.

After the oral presentation, USAID will determine whether or not the presented concepts address the strategic objectives outlined in Section A of the NOFO. Only concepts that are acceptable will move forward to the Co-Creation Workshop.

1. **ACCEPTABLE** - Concept paper is **ACCEPTABLE** when the applicant proposes and has presented a sound approach and USAID has **Strong Confidence** that the applicant understands the requirements and will be successful in performing with **no** government intervention. Applicants can only be rated as **ACCEPTABLE** after the applicant(s) has orally presented a concept.

[END OF SECTION E]

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SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1 Federal Award Notices

Notice of award signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorized document, which will be transmitted to the successful Applicant following the selection. This will be sent to the authorized agent of the successful Applicant electronically. The notice may be determined by the Agreement Officer, identify clarifying questions and request for a revised application by a specified date prior to finalization of the Cooperative Agreement. USAID reserves the right to award without requesting clarification or additional detail on the application. Once all outstanding issues have been resolved, the Agreement Officer will send the draft Cooperative Agreement to the Apparent recipient for review, comments and or acceptance to be followed by full execution of the Cooperative Agreement.

Award of the agreement contemplated under this NOFO cannot be made until funds are 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 of the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds.

Applicants are advised that costs incurred prior to receipt of either a fully executed Agreement (in electronic or print form) or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer are not allowable and therefore are ineligible for reimbursement under the Agreement.

The Agreement Officer will also provide written notification electronically to the unsuccessful Applicants' Points of Contact. Requests for additional information from unsuccessful Applicants will not be considered.

F.2 Administrative & National Policy Requirements

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations.

For U.S. Non-governmental organizations

- 2 CFR 700
(<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=531ffcc47b660d86ca8bbc5a64eed128&mc=tr ue&node=pt2.1.700&rgn=div5>)
- 2 CFR 200
(https://ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl)
- ADS 303maa, Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental Organizations
(<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf>)

See Section H for a list of the Standard Provisions that will be applicable to any awards resulting from this NOFO.

USAID/India Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA) will administer this award. The Agreement Officer (AO) will designate an Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) to review, concur and/or approve on items outlined in Substantial Involvement (Section B.4 of this NOFO).

F.3 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Recipient will adhere to all reporting requirements listed below; further, US Non-governmental organizations need to be in compliance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 (specifically 2 CFR 200.327-329).

The Recipient will submit all reports by the due date for approval from the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR). The Recipient will consult with the AOR on the format and content prior to submission. In addition to the reports below, the AOR may request additional information to contribute to the internal USAID project reviews.

F.3.1. Performance Reporting

Reports and Deliverables	Due Dates
Activity Start-up Plan	Within 30 calendar days after the award. The plan should outline the Recipients plan for staffing, start-up workshop and work plan and MEL plan preparation.
Start-up workshop	Within 45 calendar days after award to inform activity theory of change, work plan and MEL plan.
Annual Work Plan	A draft first year work plan – 60 calendar days after award (note: first year work plan should go from activity start date through the end of the next fiscal year so may be longer or shorter than 12 months depending on the date of the award). Subsequent annual work plans – October 1st of each calendar year.
Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan	30 calendar days after finalization of the first year work plan.
Quarterly Performance Report	15 calendar days after the end of the quarter.
Gender and Social Inclusion Plan	60 calendar days from the date of the award.

Annual Pause and Reflect Sessions	Planned and facilitated to help prepare work plan and annual performance report.
Annual Performance Report	October 15th of each year
Final Report	30 calendar days prior to the end of the contract

- Start-up Workshop** - Within forty-five days post-award the Recipient will hold a workshop that includes USAID staff and relevant partners to guide development of the first year work plan, activity theory of change and anticipated outcomes, and MEL plan. The workshop will also serve to define requirements and format for deliverables and reporting. The objective of the workshop is to provide a dedicated forum for the activity consortium, USAID staff and other relevant partners to collaborate to refine the submitted technical approach, theory of change and anticipated outcomes, and MEL Plan. The cost of this 3-5 day workshop should be included in the applicant's cost proposal.
- Annual Work Plan** - The annual work plan details how the Recipient will use the work plan year effectively to achieve the activity's objective. The work plan serves as a guide to program implementation and, once approved, represents an agreement as to the objectives and timing of specific tasks and interventions. The work plan is intended to be an annual roadmap for USAID and the Recipient. It should be closely aligned to the theory of change agreed upon during the start-up workshop, and clearly explain how the actions and outputs will lead to the expected outcomes identified in the theory of change. More details on the format of the implementation plan will be provided after the award.
- Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MEL)** - The applicant must prepare a clear Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) methodology for this activity that facilitates adaptive learning and management. The MEL plan must provide an overview of the project's objectives, theory of change and strategic approaches; indicate the custom and standard indicators that will be used to monitor progress towards achieving the stated objectives; and define the processes to monitor, analyze and evaluate progress. The plan should outline opportunities for learning and adaptive management throughout all stages of the project and include in its learning agenda evaluations or studies to assess and inform the roll out of interventions. More details on the format of the MEL plan will be provided after the award.
- Quarterly Performance Reports** - The Recipient will submit brief quarterly performance reports to reflect progress, the activities of the preceding three months and lessons learned. The report must describe the tasks completed in the last three months relative to what was anticipated in the approved work plan, and will assess the overall activity impact to date relative to the performance indicator targets and results defined in the activity theory of change. More details on the format of the quarterly performance reports will be provided after the award.
- Gender Considerations** - To the greatest extent possible, the Recipient should seek to include both men and women in all aspects of this program including participation and

leadership in e.g., meetings, training, etc. The Recipient must collect, analyze and submit to USAID sex-disaggregated data and proposed actions that will address any identified gender-related issues.

In order to ensure that USAID assistance makes the maximum optimal contribution to gender equality, performance management systems and evaluations must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data when the technical analyses supporting the Agreement demonstrates that:

- o The different roles and status of women and men affect the activities to be undertaken, and
 - o The anticipated results of the work would affect women and men differently.
- **Annual Pause and Reflect Sessions (APR)** - Annual pause and reflect (APR) sessions should precede and inform the development of the annual work plan and annual performance report. These will form the basis for a management review conducted by USAID and program staff to assess: program directions, priorities, achievements, and prior year implementation results; management and implementation impediments; and recommendations for adaptive management actions. The format, participation and final output of the APR will be defined through consultation with the AOR and can entail a series of internal meetings, a multi-day workshop, or a brief report to summarize learning and major conclusions about the effectiveness of the actions and strategic approaches to achieve the activity purpose. The APR may be used to suggest refinements or updates to the activity theory of change, MEL plan, and subsequent annual work plans.
- **Annual Performance Report** - Annual performance reports will summarize actions, progress and results during the year in relation to the approved work plan and the activity theory of change it supports. The report should include lessons learned, proposed adaptive management shifts, and proposed updates to the theory of change. The annual performance report will be used by USAID to assess the status of activity implementation. Each annual performance report will include an assessment as to whether the activity strategic approaches and actions are leading to the activity purpose. The annual performance report will cover all of the items included in the bi-annual performance report, with a focus on the Activity results over the entire year. More details on the format of the annual performance report will be provided after the award.
- **Close-out Plan** - No later than six (6) months prior to the completion date of the agreement, the Recipient will submit a close-out plan for the Agreement Officer (AO) approval. The close-out plan shall include:
 - o Draft property disposition plan
 - o Plan for the phase-out of in-country operations
 - o Delivery schedule for all reports or other deliverables required under the agreement
 - o Timetable for completing all required actions in the close-out plan, including submission date of the final property disposition plan to the AO.

- **Final Report** - The Final Report must discuss all strategic approaches and results from the start of the award through its completion. More details on the format of the final report will be provided after the award.

(b) Financial Reporting:

(1) Quarterly Financial Report

The Recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) quarterly, no later than 30 days after the end of the quarter, 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 SF-425 at the same time to the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) and the Controller.

Electronic copies of SF-425 and instructions for using it can be found at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standard_forms/ff_report.pdf
<http://www.forms.gov/bgfPortal/docDetails.do?dId=15149>
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/standard_forms/ffr_instructions.pdf

(2) Final Financial Report

Within 90 days following the estimated completion date of this award, the Recipient must submit to the: (a) USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMP-LOC Unit; (b) Agreement Officer (manila-roaa-admin@usaid.gov); (c) Controller (aidmnlfsc@usaid.gov); and (c) Agreement Officer Representative (AOR), the final Federal Financial Form (SF-425).

(3) Foreign Tax Reports

Reporting of foreign taxes under this agreement shall follow the standard provision entitled “Reporting Host Government Taxes (December 2014)” of this award document.

Host government taxes are not allowable where the Agreement Officer provides the necessary means to the recipient to obtain an exemption or refund of such taxes, and the recipient fails to take reasonable steps to obtain such exemption or refund. Otherwise, taxes are allowable in accordance with the Standard Provision, “Applicability of 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 (December 2014),” and must be reported as required in this provision.

The Recipient must include this reporting requirement in all applicable sub-agreements, including subawards and contracts.

F.4 Program Income

If the successful applicant is a non-profit organization, any program income generated under the award will be added to USAID funding (and any cost-sharing that may be provided, if applicable), and used for program purposes. However, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.307 Program Income, if the successful Applicant is a for-profit or commercial organization, any program income generated under the award will be deducted from the U.S. Government share of this award to determine the amount of USAID funding.

Program income will be subject to 2 CFR 200.307 for U.S. NGOs or the standard provision entitled Program Income for non-U.S. NGOs. If the successful Applicant is/are a PIO, any program income generated under the award will be added to USAID funding (and any non-USAID funding that may be provided) and used for program purposes.

F.5 Environmental Compliance

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities.

1a) Respondent environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

1b) In addition, the recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

1c) No activity funded under this award will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a environmental compliance document (Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA)) that will be duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as "approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.")

An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) will be prepared and approved during the co-creation and finalization of various components for this activity. Prior to award, USAID will get the IEE approved by BEO and also make it publicly available in the USAID's environmental compliance database. The IEE will cover activities expected to be implemented under this award. The recipient shall be responsible for implementing all IEE conditions pertaining to activities to be funded after the award.

2a) As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the recipient, in collaboration with the USAID Cognizant Technical Officer and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this award to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

2b) If the recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it shall prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities shall be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

2c) Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation shall be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

3) If the approved Regulation 216 documentation is (1) an IEE that contains one or more Negative Determinations with conditions and/or (2) an Environmental Assessment (EA), the recipient shall:

3a) Unless the approved Regulation 216 documentation contains a complete environmental mitigation and monitoring plan (EMMP) or a project mitigation and monitoring (M&M) plan, the recipient shall prepare an EMMP or M&M Plan describing how the recipient will, in specific terms, implement all IEE and/or EA conditions that apply to proposed project activities within the scope of the award. The EMMP or M&M Plan shall include monitoring the implementation of the conditions and their effectiveness.

3b) Integrate a completed EMMP or M&M Plan into the initial work plan.

3c) Integrate an EMMP or M&M Plan into subsequent Annual Work Plans, making any necessary adjustments to activity implementation in order to minimize adverse impacts to the environment.

4a) Cost and technical applications must reflect environmental compliance costs and approaches.

4b) Recipient will be expected to comply with all conditions specified in the approved IEE and/or EA.

4c) If an IEE, as developed, includes a Positive Determination for one or more activities, the recipient will be required to develop and submit an EA addressing these activities.

5a) USAID anticipates that environmental compliance and achieving optimal development outcomes for the proposed activities will require environmental management expertise. Respondents to the NOFO should therefore include as part of their application their approach to achieving environmental compliance and management, to include:

5b) The respondent's approach to implementing an IEE or EA.

5c) The respondent's approach to providing necessary environmental management expertise, including examples of past experiences of environmental management of similar activities.

5d) The respondent's illustrative budget for implementing the environmental compliance activities. For the purposes of this solicitation, applicants should reflect illustrative costs for environmental compliance implementation and monitoring in their cost proposal.

F.6 Branding & Marking

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funded under a USAID

grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub-award, must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID identity. See Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended and 2 CFR 700.16.

Under the regulation, USAID requires the submission of a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan by the Apparently Successful Applicant, as defined in the regulation. A Branding Implementation Strategy and Marking Plan must be in accordance with USAID Branding and Marking Plan as required per ADS 320 at the following link:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/320.pdf>

The Branding and Marking Plan may include a request for a waiver or exceptions to marking requirements established in 2 CFR 700.16. The Agreement Officer is responsible for evaluating and approving the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (including any request for exceptions and waiver) of the ASA, consistent with the provisions "Branding Strategy", "Marking Plan", and "Marking of USAID-funded Assistance Awards" contained in AAPD 05-11 and in 2 CFR 700.16. Please note that in contrast to "exception" to marking requirements, waivers based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by the Mission Director or other USAID Principal Officers, see 1 CFR 700.16(j).

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SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

G.1 AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT (POC) FOR QUESTIONS

Agency Point of Contact:

Name: Vandana Shali Vats

Title: Administrative Contracting/Agreement Officer

Above is the Point of contact (POC) for questions while the funding opportunity is open.

All prospective Applicants must send their questions in writing by the due date and time specified on the cover page of this NOFO, so that a reply can reach all prospective Applicants before the submission of their Initial Concept Note. Oral explanations or instructions given before the award will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment of this NOFO if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if a lack of the information would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicants.

Any questions concerning this NOFO must be submitted in writing to indiarco@usaid.gov with a copy to vvats@usaid.gov and desharma@usaid.gov. In the subject line please indicate "Questions

Regarding the NOFO#72038623RFA00001”. Applicants will retain for their records one copy of all enclosures which accompany their application.

G.2 Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID’s acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistanceombudsman>.

The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov.

[END OF SECTION G]

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SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

Applications with Proprietary Data

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose, should mark the cover page with the following:

“This application includes data that must not be disclosed, duplicated or used – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, an award is made as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government will have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting award. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government’s right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers}.”

Additionally, the applicant must mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following:

“Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application.”

Additional information available to Applicants includes:

1. ADS 201.3.15.3; USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy
http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pdact200.pdf
2. USAID India’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy
<https://www.usaid.gov/india/cdcs>
3. USAID’s Climate Change and Development Strategy 2012-2018 (2012).
(<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/strategy>)
 - a. USAID’s Adaptation to Climate Variability and Change: A Guidance Manual for Development Planning (2007). Basic introduction to how to think about integrating climate change into development programs, using a six-step process to engage stakeholders and analyze vulnerabilities and adaptation options.
(<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/adaptation/resources>).
4. USAID’s Global Climate Change Initiative. (<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/us-gcci>).
5. USAID’s Building Blocks of a Circular Economy: USAID’S Local Systems Approach to Reducing Ocean Plastic Pollution

<https://urban-links.org/resource/the-building-blocks-of-a-circular-economy-usaids-local-systems-approach-to-reducing-ocean-plastic-pollution/>

6. USAID Standard Provisions:

(i) ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations.
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mab.pdf>

(ii) ADS 303mab, Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental Organizations.
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303maa.pdf>

7. Certifications, Assurances, Other Statement of the Recipient

(1) “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient”
ADS 303mav document found at
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mav.pdf>

(2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

(3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. **Annex 1:** Preliminary Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis.

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ANNEX 1 - Preliminary Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis

I. BACKGROUND

The goal of USAID's [Gender Equality and Female Empowerment 2020 policy](#) is to improve the lives of citizens around the world by advancing equality between females and males and to empower women and girls to participate fully in and benefit from the development of their societies. The policy has the primary objective of improving access to resources, opportunities, and information (economic, social, political, and cultural); reducing gender based violence (GBV), promoting female leadership and empowerment, securing private-property rights and land tenure for women, and enhancing education opportunities and skills building for better workforce development. USAID's programs seek to address the needs of and benefit all people inclusive of ethnicity, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, lack of income, disability, and other factors. Pursuant to ADS 205.3.1 and in alignment with the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, Operating Units (OU) are responsible for conducting gender at the design stage of a new activity and for ensuring that the Policy is implemented throughout each stage of the Program Cycle.

Through its new plastic pollution Activity, Innovations for Reducing Plastics for a Cleaner Environment in India (inREPLACE), USAID/India aims to support Government of India (GOI) efforts to reduce plastic pollution by a) improving solid waste management (SWM) planning, infrastructure, and services, and b) addressing the life cycle impacts of plastics and other materials by promoting a circular economy.

Improper management of solid waste is one of the core reasons for plastic pollution in the environment, whether on land or in waterways and ultimately the ocean. While plastic pollution is a universal challenge, there are particular gendered and social justice aspects to this problem, as it disproportionately affects people in vulnerable conditions and can aggravate existing environmental injustices²⁷. For example, women face economic disadvantages and particular health exposures to toxic chemicals and hazardous waste due to the nature of their work at the lower rungs of waste management (e.g. waste collection and sorting). Like other sanitation workers, they also risk sexual harassment and violence²⁸. Men are exposed to different health risks due to gender-segregated tasks in waste management. In terms of social inclusion, "ragpicking" and waste collection has been a hereditary occupation of those belonging to scheduled castes or migrants; this perpetuation of the caste system puts informal waste collectors (IWCs) in a situation where they are unable to extricate themselves from this profession.

Therefore, it is essential to ensure the unique needs of and linkages between gender, social inclusion, and poverty, across the entire SWM system, are considered in developing new activities to reduce plastic pollution. Inclusive and equitable service delivery in SWM requires the full and equal participation of women and other groups including migrants, those belonging to scheduled castes, children/youth, and the disabled. To this end, USAID's five Building Blocks for addressing ocean plastic pollution each acknowledge the role of gender and social inclusion: data-driven policies, improved solid waste services and investment, locally appropriate

²⁷ [UNEP \(2021\)](#)

²⁸ [Kulkarni, et al. \(2017\)](#)

innovations and technologies, sustained behavior change, and inclusive and equitable service delivery.

This Activity will work to understand and expose gender-differentiated practices and impacts along the SWM chain and mainstream gender needs and priorities into approaches and solutions. In addition to prioritizing needs and opportunities for women ; the Mission will adopt an outlook that yields advantages for whole communities and which benefit both sexes. Intersectionality will be an important concept of this activity, keeping in mind the multiple forms of discrimination that intersect in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups in plastic waste management, like migrants, youth, and scheduled caste populations in India.

The Activity design team recognizes that for the Activity to be effective and inclusive, they must work towards closing the following gender and social inclusion gaps in SWM:

- Gendered norms and cultural prejudices that place women and scheduled caste people in the lower end of the waste sorting/recycling value chain, i.e. occupational segregation
- Inequitable access to markets and entrepreneurship opportunities for women
- Lesser/disadvantaged roles and minimized voices in decision-making for women and marginalized communities
- Inadequate health, safety, and social safety net protections
- Increased risk of gender-based violence
- Lack of gender-inclusive design of technologies and innovations, and lack of diverse consultation on design solutions
- Limited gender-inclusive waste management policies
- Lack of evidence-based research and gender-disaggregated data in SWM sector
- Gender differences in consumer behavior and unpaid labor related to plastics use and disposal
- Limited budget for processing or resource recovery and disposal, which disproportionately affects the income of women and scheduled caste populations

It is important to note that a gender and social inclusion analysis considers the different threats, impacts, and opportunities with respect to each sex (males, females and third gender) and marginalized populations (which include people with disabilities, religious minorities, Schedule Castes (SC)²⁹, Scheduled Tribes (ST), other backward castes (OBC)), at-risk youth, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex persons (LGBTQI+). As such, this analysis considers gender and social inclusion issues throughout the various stages of the Program Cycle – from activity design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and learning and adapting.

II. EXISTING GENDER ASSESSMENTS and other USAID Resources

In 2019, a [Mission-wide gender analysis](#) was conducted while formulating the USAID/India Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) 2020-2025.

In December 2020, the Mission developed a [Project Appraisal Document \(PAD\)-level gender analysis for Country Development Cooperation Strategy \(2020-2025\) Development Objective](#)

²⁹ <https://in.one.un.org/task-teams/scheduled-castes-and-scheduled-tribes/>

[\(DO\) 3](#) which aimed to promote sustainable economic growth and regional development. At the time, the Mission envisioned this Activity falling under this DO.

In June 2021, the Mission finalized a social inclusion assessment to ascertain the most distinctive characteristics and determinants of exclusion (discrimination, bias, stigmatization) affecting a selected set of marginalized groups. The assessment highlighted how the marginalization of these groups impacts their well-being and development, and how such exclusion constrains marginalized persons and groups from effectively contributing to India's growth and development.

This gender analysis also referenced the USAID/Washington gender analysis on [Municipal Waste Management and Recycling](#) for South America and some Southeast Asian countries in addition to USAID's factsheet on [Women's Economic Empowerment and Equality on Solid Waste Management and Recycling](#).

III. MAIN FINDINGS BY DOMAIN

A. Indian Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices

The Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MOEFCC) released its first law on plastic waste management in 2011. A subsequent set of rules was released in 2016, with amendments in 2018, 2021, and most recently on February 16, 2022. The latest amendment puts forward even more ambitious recycling and reuse targets under an "Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)" mechanism, in which producers are responsible for the products they manufacture.³⁰ The amendment sets up a market mechanism through the sale and purchase of "producer responsibility certificates." However, the system of certification is tied to a formal recycling portal, where only registered recyclers are allowed to issue and receive certificates. As a result, women and other marginalized groups are at risk of being excluded.

Thus, though the initial 2016 law acknowledges the informal sector by charging urban local bodies (ULBs) to engage with civil society or groups working with waste pickers, the 2022 amendment will require dedicated engagement with IWCs, many of whom are women, to ensure that they are not left behind.³¹ For example, as written, the draft EPR regulation indicates that "entities involved in waste collection will hand over waste for treatment and recycling or for identified end uses" (clause 14.3). Further, clause 6 seeks to formalize the process, meaning that those not formally registered through the centralized portal may effectively be penalized for engaging in the recycling economy.³²

The ban on single-use plastics (SUP) announced by the Prime Minister and the EPR mechanism will ideally result in a dramatic reduction of plastic waste. However, care must be taken to ensure that IWCs, who are often not affiliated with collectives, have some level of bargaining and/or decision-making power, and do not suffer from a reduction in earnings from waste collection. Secondary effects could impact women who often carry the larger time-burden of managing their

³⁰ [MOEFCC \(2022\)](#)

³¹ [The Wire \(2022\)](#)

³² [Citizen Matters \(2021\)](#)

household shopping and waste as they seek alternatives to plastics resulting from the SUP ban. It will also impact small-scale enterprises that rely on SUP, such as food vendors. Thus there is further need to define or codify the contribution and role of the informal sector in plastic waste management and ensure that the breadth of affected stakeholders are consulted in this process. Secondly, it is critical to ensure that the informal sector, particularly women, are involved in discussions to identify and scale feasible alternatives for their livelihoods.

Aside from MOEFCC, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) oversees the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) to ensure hygiene, waste management, and sanitation across the nation, which acknowledges the importance of involving the informal sector in order to achieve its targets. In 2016, MoHUA released a manual on “An Inclusive Swachh Bharat through the Integration of the Informal Recycling Sector”. The manual lays out the importance of inclusive SWM given the integral role of the informal sector and provides a step by step guide.³³ Additionally, in 2021, NITI Aayog (India’s Policy Commission) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) released a “Handbook on Plastic Waste Management” that includes a section on suggested frameworks and success stories to promote inclusion of waste workers with a special focus on empowering women rag pickers, their safety, and health concerns.³⁴

In an effort to promote livelihood opportunities for women, SBM-Urban 2.0 has also focused on convergence with other Missions such as the National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) to provide a dignified source of livelihood to women working in the area of sanitation and SWM. Because women play a critical role in the informal sector in the entire sanitation and waste management value chain, SBM-U 2.0 actively promotes informal sector integration into the formal sanitation and waste management value chain through Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY)-NULM. The MoHUA framework and models converge under DAY-NULM and SBM-U 2.0 to promote livelihood options to women’s self-help groups, IWCs, and marginalized communities. These livelihood opportunities exist across sanitation and waste management value chains: collection and transportation of waste, processing and converting municipal solid waste to wealth (value added by-products), operation and maintenance of sanitation facilities, and resource centers.³⁵

The “Gender Responsive Guidelines under SBM (Urban): Issues, Solutions and Case Studies” state that when women and third gender persons are involved in planning and decision-making of sanitation and SWM, their concerns and needs should be voiced to ensure more suitable design, delivery, and services. Nevertheless, it is unclear to what extent this occurs in practice.

Lastly, “rag-pickers” play an important, but usually unrecognized role in the SWM system in India. These workers are not protected by national occupational health and safety laws, and the workers are not eligible for social protection benefits. This is because their profession remains unrecognized under the law in India.³⁶ Furthermore, people working in the waste sector are not likely to be aware of laws/policies that are meant to help them; a guiding principle of USAID’s gender policy is also equal access to information.

³³ [Swachh Bharat Mission \(2016\)](#)

³⁴ [Niti Aayog - UNDP \(2021\)](#)

³⁵ [MoHUA \(n.d.\)](#)

³⁶ [Down to Earth 2018](#)

B. Cultural Norms and Beliefs, Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

Like any other sector, there are stark differences in the roles and responsibilities of men and women in the SWM sector, as well. These roles and responsibilities are closely tied to cultural and social norms, hence these two domains have been combined. Plastic pollution and exposure to plastics within the home, workplace and general environment have a differential impact on women's and men's health due to gender roles at home and work; and women's physiology (higher body fat content) makes them more vulnerable to chemical exposure than men³⁷. Women are often employed in the lower-paid and less-skilled positions in production plants and therefore are more likely to be exposed to working with toxic chemicals in the plastics industry. Compared to men, women are mainly engaged in picking, sorting, and washing waste from dumpsites, while men work at machines and transportation. In general, both women and men face similar challenges, such as health issues and the social stigma of being a waste sector worker, but women are further burdened by domestic responsibilities and concerns around their physical safety.

Sociocultural norms in India consider handling untreated waste materials demeaning, and both male and female waste workers experience disrespect and scorn. Unskilled persons, migrants and the poorest of the poor, and quite often women and children, predominantly work as IWCs, as they are unable to find any other employment. The added aspect of the caste system relegates the lowest of castes to waste collection, thereby deepening the related social stigma.

Migration is also a common characteristic across the informal sector. Most IWCs are individuals that have moved to cities from other parts of the country. Given that there is a low barrier to entry, the occupation of collecting recyclables provides an easy and immediate source of income for newly migrated individuals (mostly youth). Also, most informal settlers establish settlements around dumpsites where they are less likely to be evacuated, etc.

A socioeconomic study of gender in waste management in Pune conducted by Ocean Conservancy revealed that 90% of IWCs are women, 25% are widowed, 30% are from women-headed households and 8% are sole earners. Invariably, all of them were from non-dominant castes and had not chosen the job out of their own volition³⁸.

Much of female participation in the waste sector is limited to informal work or unregulated employment. Women often work as recycling collectors (with a bag-on-shoulder) either individually, with children, or alongside male family members. Collection for recycling does allow for equal opportunity. While this is not necessarily a steady source of income, it offers IWCs a chance to sell recyclables to junk shops for a livelihood. More women tend to participate in this task because it allows them to bring young children along (who sometimes join in the collection and sorting, but are then subject to physical safety risks at waste sites) and flexibility in the hours of operation and attendance.

Collection of general or mixed waste is a municipal function either conducted by the municipality or by private contractors appointed by the municipality. This formal waste collection process is dominated by men with more access to equipment (cycle or cart). An increasing number of

³⁷ [World Economic Forum \(2021\)](#)

³⁸ [Ocean Conservancy \(2019\)](#)

women are being employed in an organized manner to provide the benefits of formal employment to women, such as “Pourakarmikas,” formal waste collectors and street sweepers in Bengaluru.³⁹ Nevertheless, female participation in the formal waste sector continues to be abysmally low.⁴⁰

Women also work at junk shops and as scrap buyers either as proprietors or as members of a family-owned business. The nature of participation at processing and recycling factories is also unregulated and women are engaged primarily as daily wage workers.

Women also participate actively in the conversion of post-consumer recyclables to feedstock for recycling. In the case of the former, they are often employed by processing companies to sort, clean, separate and sift through recyclable material through the various stages of processing. Sorting of materials into clean, uncontaminated streams requires an understanding of the value of each of the materials and fine motor skills. While men are tasked with the more physical activities of loading and unloading, the women perform the more repetitive and time-consuming tasks of sorting and separating⁴¹.

Women are highly represented in organizations that upcycle/downcycle recyclables into other household products, arts and crafts. While this form of processing plastic waste does provide some financial empowerment and creative opportunities for women, it is not scalable given the relatively low demand for products resulting from such efforts and limited support from NGOs. Also, to the extent that some of these toys and crafts are not properly disposed of, they continue to pose a threat to the environment.

Few women own and operate businesses at the end of the waste value chain. While women participate in the earlier stages of the value chain, they are noticeably absent from the ownership or management of later-stage businesses such as aggregators, material processing company owners, landfill operators, etc., which are generally seen as labor intensive and male-oriented. When women are employed by processing companies, it is typically to perform repetitive and time-intensive tasks such as peeling labels, cleaning, sorting, segregating and picking through processed material for impurities, etc. They are also engaged in administrative tasks of accounting and recording the transactions related to the various materials traded.

Indian women spend more time doing unpaid care work at home than men. On an average, they spend 9.8 times more time than men on unpaid domestic chores and 4.5 hours a day caring for children, elders and the sick⁴². Hence, the women of the households are primarily, if not solely, responsible for managing household waste - whether this is mixed or segregated. Therefore, most often we see differences between men and women regarding consumer behavior related to plastics and plastic waste disposal. Women often have significantly more favorable attitudes regarding environmental and ethical practices and are more willing to use their consumer power to influence companies and governments to make positive changes. Solutions and behavioral change campaigns must take into account the needs of and impact on women, particularly considering that the burden of change, such as extra time needed, will largely be borne by women.

³⁹ [Ocean Conservancy \(2019\)](#)

⁴⁰ [Breakthrough \(2020\)](#)

⁴¹ [Ocean Conservancy \(2019\)](#)

⁴² <https://niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/coop/22.pdf>

C. Access to and Control over Assets and Resources + Patterns of Power and Decision-making

Gender-differentiated access to and control over assets and resources often correlate with decision making power, hence these two domains have been combined. IWCs in general do not have widespread access to the resources that would enable job security, livelihood security, or healthy and safe living environments. Informal workers typically live in informal settlements with highly insecure land tenure and few reliable public services such as water and sanitation. The variable nature of their jobs results in unreliable income; one study found that 70% of workers had a monthly household income <Rs. 10,000⁴³.

Access to knowledge about the importance of identity documents and available social safety nets are an additional challenge to acquiring the few available public services. The UNDP study reported that while 90% of IWCs had an Aadhar card, only 50% owned a beneficiary document such as a ration card and 4% had a health card. Health insurance coverage was also less than 5%.⁴⁴ Given the disproportionate occupational health risks that rag-pickers, especially women, are exposed to in their daily work without any access to benefits, access to public health services is essential⁴⁵.

With regard to resources for engaging in SWM activities, one study found that women were less likely to have appropriate equipment for collecting higher-value plastic waste, which results in lower earnings than men. The same study found that although women were more willing to use PPE when collecting and sorting waste, they were less likely to have access to PPE, placing them at higher risk of injury or contracting diseases⁴⁶.

The power differential between men and women is explicit in the different roles they tend to play in waste management as well, with women more widely active in waste picking and salvaging, and men more often initiating, operating, and managing waste sector micro-enterprises. Where women are involved in family-owned and operated businesses, they often do not have the decision-making authority. Men also tend to have a wider range of business contacts than women, which provides them more access to personal credit and market opportunities than women, whether at the micro or macro-level, allowing women fewer opportunities for entrepreneurship.

Gender differentials also impact market research and product design. With women vastly under-represented in science, engineering, technology and mathematics (STEM) fields, they are less present in technical roles in the plastics industry as well. One implication of this absence is that market research on product design and innovations may not take into account the needs of women in household or municipal waste management.

With women more likely to work in the informal sector, they are also less likely to be involved in formal decision-making or policy around SWM. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for increased access to resources and decision making via women's self-help groups (SHGs) and collectives such as Swachh Cooperative in Pune.

⁴³ [UNDP India \(2021\)](#).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ [Khambekar et al. \(2020\)](#).

⁴⁶ [Ocean Conservancy \(2019\)](#)

D. Gender-based violence / safe environment

There is very little documentation on gender-based violence in SWM in India, but most women cite lack of safety as one of the big challenges that they face when working in this sector. Being a largely unregulated sector and often having to work in alleyways and poorly maintained areas of the city, women are exposed to crime and harassment. Also, much of the waste is dumped at night or in the early hours when it is still dark adding an additional element of being both unsafe and challenging for women to leave young children unattended.

Well-documented research from other sectors, including sanitation, strongly suggest that women who clean public areas (e.g., streets, bus stations) can be subject to insults and harassment, and those who work in remote sites (e.g., waste dumps, factory sites) may experience assault. When women who earn their own income with garbage collection assert themselves within the family (e.g., spending their money as they choose), they may experience domestic abuse or social conflict. Women earn less than men and often experience exploitation by employers, contractors, waste dealers, and intermediaries.

II. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

USAID commissioned a broad assessment of the plastic pollution context in India, which included 40 interviews around the country, as well as two focus group discussions with groups of waste pickers in Pune and Nasik, located 200 km from each other.

The assessment highlighted the importance of IWCs in the fragmented recycling sector, as well as the overall lack of social inclusivity in SWM, which limits the full potential of millions of IWCs. Researchers noted that although legislation promotes inclusion of the informal sector, most municipalities do not have the capacity and the means to make this happen in reality. Furthermore, in this deeply entrepreneurial and decentralized sector, IWCs are mostly unregistered and are difficult to organize on a required scale. Researchers noted that the informal sector is resistant to structural change; there is a strong preference for the freedoms associated with its highly entrepreneurial structure. There are good practices and recommendations in legislation, but there is no uniform approach and supporting framework for the integration of the informal sector.

The focus group discussions on gender and social inclusion revealed differences in the conditions, attitudes, and perceptions of women waste collectors towards their profession and future life. IWCs in Pune, who are members of the Swachh Cooperative, said that they feel a part of the formal system, they feel recognized by the general public and this has enhanced their social status. For example, one woman told us, “We used to collect waste from the roadside and no one looked at us with respect. We were treated as thieves, but Swachh has changed the way we are treated.”

On the other hand, IWCs in Nasik said they feel neglected by the local government and do not feel they are treated with dignity. The implemented door-to-door collection system affected their lives negatively as they need to travel longer distances to obtain the same amount of recyclables. In these two cities, it is mostly women who are involved in waste picking activities, while men often have opportunities to find other jobs, such as driving the waste collection vehicles. Women

who were interviewed said they have limited opportunities for finding alternative jobs. One woman in Nasik said, "We are collecting waste because we never learnt to do anything else, but I want my children to get a respectable job. We are looked down by citizens and are not supported by the municipality."

These discussions revealed the multiple forms of discrimination that intersect in the experiences of IWCs, but also the positive impact felt when IWCs feel empowered through initiatives such as the Swach Cooperative.

III. ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY TECHNICAL COMPONENT

Activity Goal: Reduce plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, through improvements in solid waste management and advancing a plastics circular economy.

Table 1: Technical Components/Activities and Identified Potential Gender and Social Inclusion Challenges

Components and Activities	Potential Gender and Social Inclusion Issues and Relevance to the Activity	Recommendations, Specific Actions, General Considerations
Objective 1: Improve solid waste management planning, infrastructure, and services.		
IR1.1 SWM improved through increased efficiencies in service delivery (e.g. collection, transport, and segregation).	- Women have less access to equipment, vehicles and waste than men; thus, women are less able to access, collect and transport larger volumes and higher value recyclables. - Changes to SWM services may affect the time burden placed on consumers/households, the responsibility of which falls disproportionately on women.	- Promote an inclusive approach for both men and women in SWM by demystifying SWM and recycling as “masculine work” at all levels of the value chain; support awareness-raising and capacity-building interventions for key value-chain stakeholders as well as government and technical institutions to increase women’s participation in the formal waste sector. - Increase access to trainings for women in the formal SWM sector and provide recommendations for gender parity. - Improve access to equipment/vehicles that allows women to collect higher-value recyclables. - To improve SWM service efficiency, design SBC programs that take into account the needs of different demographic groups, including women who are largely responsible for household waste management (e.g. by increasing convenience), informal workers making a living from recycling and waste collection, and abilities of various socio-demographic groups to practice pro-environmental behavior.
IR1.2 Institutional capacity of local governments strengthened to manage	- Women are largely excluded from the formal SWM sector, including in local government.	- The Activity should ensure that women’s issues are integrated to the greatest extent possible in the formulation and conduct of local government policy for SWM; this should include building the

Components and Activities	Potential Gender and Social Inclusion Issues and Relevance to the Activity	Recommendations, Specific Actions, General Considerations
SWM services and implement plastic waste reduction policies.		capacity of local government to integrate women into the formal sector. - Activity should constantly reach out to partners in government, civil society, the private sector, academia, and community-based organizations to incorporate gender-friendly requirements in laws, policies, regulations, and standards and to establish enforcement mechanisms. - Include women in planning at all levels including in project-planning and evaluation activities. - Consult with IWCs regarding the impact of policies and regulations. - Include the important role of “rag-pickers” in any action plans or SWM plans to get them the recognition, and social and health protection benefits.
IR1.3 Informal sector workers, particularly women, are empowered and integrated into the overall SWM system.	- Women are more likely to occupy lower-wage jobs in the informal sector. “Men’s work” is typically associated with heavy-lifting and thus higher wages. - IWCs do not have sufficient access to pertinent information regarding health risks, services, and social safety nets, laws, policies and regulations, applicability and associated consequences if violated because of various systematic barriers.	- Improve access to information for IWCs on potential social benefits and safety nets. - Promote and support scale-up of successful models within India of IWC collectives (particularly for women). - Improve safety protections for women, from PPE to physical safety from gender-based violence. The Activity should understand, consider and incorporate activities that strengthen GBV awareness prevention and reporting throughout the value chain, drawing on best practices and approaches developed by USAID or other donors. - Reduce social stigma on IWCs through social campaigns.

Components and Activities	Potential Gender and Social Inclusion Issues and Relevance to the Activity	Recommendations, Specific Actions, General Considerations
	- Women IWCs can face gender-based violence while at work.	
Objective 2: Address lifecycle impacts of plastics and other materials by promoting a circular economy.		
IR2.1 Packaging design improved for recyclability and/or to ensure long-lasting use.	- Men tend to have a larger range of business contacts than women which provide them access to personal credit and market opportunities for entrepreneurship (applies to all IRs). - Changes in packaging design and consequences on recyclability may not be obvious to consumers or waste collectors along the entire value chain.	- Innovations in packaging design should be informed by gender-related considerations (e.g. how will women in charge of household waste management use/reuse packaging, addressing barriers to access to and use of alternatives, and systematically consulting with women IWCs in the design process) (applies to IR 2.3 as well).
IR2.2 Recycling and reuse of single-use and other “problem plastics” enhanced.	- Lower-value plastics are not prioritized for collection and segregation by IWCs.	- Women typically resort to collecting lower-value recyclables due to challenges mentioned under Objective 1, and as such, should be prioritized in recycling for SUP and other problem plastics so they can be at the forefront of innovations. - Overall, efforts should increase women’s access to, understanding of, and application of market information to increase their income and opportunities, whether as informal female collectors or as entrepreneurs. - Activity should enable women SWM entrepreneurs to secure the financing they need and facilitate access to microfinance for women-owned SWM enterprises.

Components and Activities	Potential Gender and Social Inclusion Issues and Relevance to the Activity	Recommendations, Specific Actions, General Considerations
		- Women are already involved in upcycling projects, and women entrepreneurs should be supported and women-led businesses scaled-up. - Voices of the informal sector at large should be included to ensure that their concerns and priorities are appropriately addressed and that they are empowered in the new systems.
IR2.3 Plastic alternatives increased through investments in innovations.	- Reduction in plastics may affect earning potential for IWCs and recyclers. - While women are often more likely to have favorable attitudes towards environmental and ethical practices, they will also have an unbalanced time burden on identifying plastic alternatives for the household and for waste management.	- R&D on plastic alternatives and related-SBC programs should all incorporate research that takes into account the needs of different demographic groups, especially women largely responsible for household waste management, as well as businesses that would need to be incentivized to adopt alternatives. - Increased participation of women entrepreneurs should be supported. - Initiatives to incorporate informal waste workers into this new component value chain should be prioritized to make up for lost wages.

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ANNEX 2 - STANDARD PROVISIONS

(Note: the full text of these provisions may be found at: <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303maa>, <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>, and <https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mat>). The actual Standard Provisions included in the award will be dependent on the organization that is selected (or the type of award, in the case of a fixed amount award). The award will include the latest Mandatory Provisions for either U.S. or non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations, as appropriate. The award will also contain the following “required as applicable” Standard Provisions:

Please note that the resulting award will include all standard provisions (both mandatory and required as applicable) in full text.

REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PREDETERMINED (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA2. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATES - PROVISIONAL (Nonprofit) (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA3. NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE - PROVISIONAL (Profit) (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA5. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
		RAA9. TITLE TO AND CARE OF PROPERTY (COOPERATING COUNTRY TITLE) (NOVEMBER 1985)
		RAA10. COST SHARING (MATCHING) (FEBRUARY 2012)
		RAA11. PROHIBITION OF ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS (JUNE 1999)
		RAA12. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
		RAA13. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA14. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA17. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA18. USAID DISABILITY POLICY - ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2004)
		RAA19. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
		RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)

		RAA23. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA24. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA25. PATENT REPORTING PROCEDURES (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA26. ACCESS TO USAID FACILITIES AND USAID'S INFORMATION SYSTEMS (AUGUST 2013)
		RAA27. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA28. AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA30. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

REQUIRED AS APPLICABLE STANDARD PROVISIONS FOR NON-U.S. NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Required	Not Required	Standard Provision
TBD		RAA1. ADVANCE PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA2. REIMBURSEMENT PAYMENT AND REFUNDS (DECEMBER 2014)
TBD		RAA3. INDIRECT COSTS – NEGOTIATED INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT (NICRA) (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA4. INDIRECT COSTS – CHARGED AS A FIXED AMOUNT (NONPROFIT) (JUNE 2012)
		RAA5. INDIRECT COSTS – DE MINIMIS RATE (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA6. UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA7. REPORTING SUBAWARDS AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION (NOVEMBER 2020)
		RAA8. SUBAWARDS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA9. TRAVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA10. OCEAN SHIPMENT OF GOODS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA11. REPORTING HOST GOVERNMENT TAXES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA12. PATENT RIGHTS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA13. EXCHANGE VISITORS AND PARTICIPANT TRAINING (JUNE 2012)
		RAA14. INVESTMENT PROMOTION (NOVEMBER 2003)
		RAA 15. COST SHARE (JUNE 2012)
		RAA16. PROGRAM INCOME (AUGUST 2020)
		RAA17. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)
		RAA18. STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED IN USAID ASSISTANCE AWARDS INVOLVING CONSTRUCTION (SEPTEMBER 2004)
		RAA19. PROTECTION OF HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA20. STATEMENT FOR IMPLEMENTERS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ON LACK OF SUPPORT FOR PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)

		RAA21. ELIGIBILITY OF SUBRECIPIENTS OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS (JUNE 2012)
		RAA22. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF ANTI-TRAFFICKING FUNDS TO PROMOTE, SUPPORT, OR ADVOCATE FOR THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION (JUNE 2012)
		RAA23. VOLUNTARY POPULATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES – SUPPLEMENTAL REQUIREMENTS (JANUARY 2009)
		RAA24. CONSCIENCE CLAUSE IMPLEMENTATION (ASSISTANCE) (FEBRUARY 2012)
		RAA25. CONDOMS (ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA26. PROHIBITION ON THE PROMOTION OR ADVOCACY OF THE LEGALIZATION OR PRACTICE OF PROSTITUTION OR SEX TRAFFICKING(ASSISTANCE) (SEPTEMBER 2014)
		RAA27. LIMITATION ON SUBAWARDS TO NON-LOCAL ENTITIES (JULY 2014)
		RAA28. CONTRACT PROVISION FOR DBA INSURANCE UNDER RECIPIENT PROCUREMENTS (DECEMBER 2014)
		RAA29. CONTRACT AWARD TERM AND CONDITION FOR RECIPIENT INTEGRITY AND PERFORMANCE MATTERS (April 2016)
		RAA31. NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY (NOVEMBER 2020)

ANNEX 3 - ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GHG	Greenhouse Gasses
GOI	Government of India
IWC	Informal Waste Collector
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex persons
MIS	Management Information Systems
Mt	Metric Tons
MLP	Multi-layered Plastic
MoEFCC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
MoHUA	Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
MRF	Material Recovery Facility
MSW	Municipal Solid Waste
NULM	National Urban Livelihood Mission
OBC	Other Backward Castes
PET	Polyethylene terephthalate
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PRO	Producer Responsibility Organization
PWM	Plastic Waste Management
RDF	Refuse-derived Fuel
R&D	Research and Development
STEM	Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics
SHGs	Self-help Groups
SC	Schedule Castes
ST	Scheduled Tribes
SWM	Solid Waste Management
SUP	Single-use Plastics
ULB	Urban Local Body
UNEA	UN Environment Assembly

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