



Regional Office of Acquisition and Assistance

ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS) No: APS-386-16-000001, Amendment#05

May 3, 2019

SUBJECT: Extension of APS closing date, update technical areas

Amendment No. 05 to APS No: APS-386-16-000001 is hereby issued to make the following changes effective the date of this amendment:

- I. The APS Closing Date is extended to June 30, 2020.
- II. The chart describing Concept Paper Selection decisions under Section IV: Application and Submission Information; B. Application Process; Phase I: Concept Paper submission is extended to include the following information:

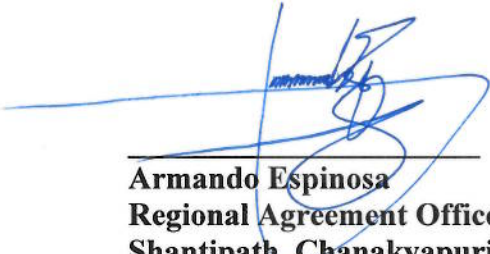
All Concept Papers received:	Will be reviewed by a USAID/India Selection Committee convening on/or about:
After APS Amendment # 5 issuance and on or before June 30, 2019	July 10, 2019
After June 30, 2019 and on or before September 30, 2019	October 18, 2019
After September 30, 2019 and on or before December 30, 2019	January 17, 2020
After December 30, 2019 and on or before March 30, 2020	April 17, 2020
After March 30, 2020 and on or before June 30, 2020	July 17, 2020

- III. The Appendix B 'Program Funding Areas' of the original APS is being replaced in its entirety by Annex A of this amendment.
- IV. Concept notes for new activities under the APS will only be accepted in the following technical areas as defined in Annex A of this amendment. Concept notes will be accepted from either new or existing partners/recipients in the following areas:

1. Urban India Water and Sanitation for Health Alliance
2. Forestry
3. Energy
4. Education
5. Triangular Cooperation
 - a. Regional Energy Cooperation in South Asia
 - b. Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity
 - c. Disaster Risk Reduction

In line with USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment, and Inclusive Development, USAID/India strongly encourages its partners to strengthen all USAID programming by increasing competence in inclusive development and gender, and building stronger networks and systems for learning and partnership opportunities in above sectors.

USAID reserves the right to fund new or existing partnerships outside of these areas. For purposes of this Amendment, “existing partners/recipients” means partners that have an existing funding relationship with USAID/India at the time of submission of the Concept note.



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ANNEX A – PROGRAM FUNDING AREAS

1. Urban India Water and Sanitation for Health Alliance

Minimum award amount: \$2 million

Like many countries, especially in Asia, India is facing a growing urbanization challenge. One of every three people now resides in an urban area, many in informal settlements or slums. Approximately 64 million people live in slums nationwide representing 17 per cent of all urban households. The growing population of cities continues to place enormous pressure on Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) for delivery of basic services such as transportation, water, sanitation, and electricity. ULBs have few resources and limited capacities to meet the challenge.

Not surprisingly, many urban residents, particularly those in slums, lack adequate access to safe water and sanitation services. As many as one-third of slum dwellers don't have access to sanitation facilities as compared to 19% of those living in other parts of the city. Moreover, poor access to water and sanitation services and poor hygiene behaviors have a strong link with poor health. Diarrhea, largely attributable to water-borne disease, is the third leading cause of deaths and accounts for 13% of under-five mortality across India.

Desired Results: The aim of the USAID/India WASH program is to improve health through increased access to safely managed water and sanitation services for the urban poor. The program aims to achieve this goal through:

1. Strengthening national, state, and municipal WASH programs through technical support to the GOI, urban local bodies and empowerment of communities.
2. Increasing innovative approaches of the private sector engagement that improve access to sustainable water and sanitation and increase adoption of healthy hygiene behaviors.
3. Piloting and expanding innovative financing models that address the problem for municipalities, small and medium enterprises, and households for WASH.

Partnership Objectives: Our goal is to help India in its efforts to make India open-defecation-free by October 2, 2019. USAID/India is seeking to scale one to two promising interventions (existing) that increase access to improved WASH services for the urban poor. USAID/India is particularly interested in those ideas that aggregate successful interventions and leverage resources from public and private sector actors (e.g., those engaged in national programs such as the urban Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), Smart Cities Mission, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), or other new GOI urban focused initiatives.) USAID/India is also interested in applications that offer incentives such as seed grants mechanisms, prizes, challenges and innovative financing models for accelerating big, bold ideas targeting improvements in the urban WASH sector.

Background: USAID/India, the GOI and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have entered into collaboration with the Ministry of Urban Development to provide sustainable sanitation solutions in urban areas, eliminating open defecation, and safely containing, treating, and disposing of human waste. USAID/India is providing technical and management support for successful implementation of the urban sanitation program, including setting-up a national Program Management Unit (PMU) within the MoUD. USAID/India has established a knowledge partnership with the MoUD to identify and scale best practices, build technical capacity, and advance public-private partnership focused on sanitation. USAID/India linked to the GOI's "Smart Cities" initiative, and is working in Vishakhapatnam, promoting water and sanitation as an essential element of sustainable and inclusive urban development.

References:

USAID Water and Sanitation Page including links to Water and Development Strategy: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/water-and-sanitation>

USAID India WASH Page: <https://www.usaid.gov/india/water-and-sanitation>

2. Forestry/Sustainable Landscapes

Minimum award amount: \$1 million

Forests in India are important for its economic development while providing sustenance and livelihoods to around 300 million people. The Government of India's (GOI) National Forest Policy emphasizes maintaining ecological security and meeting the livelihood requirements of forest-dependent communities as an important objective of forest management. However, the current forest management approaches and forest degradation limit the ability of the forest ecosystems to provide goods and services needed for India's growing population and to support the country's economic growth.

An understanding of the dependencies and flows of ecosystem services is critical to be able to manage forest landscapes to maximize and enhance the delivery of these services to beneficiaries. There is an intrinsic relationship between forests and water, but the role of forests in water provisioning is not sufficiently understood, which limits the ability to most effectively manage forest landscapes. Given the growing and serious issue of water insecurity in India and its documented role in limiting agricultural productivity and electricity generation, as well as access to public services, hydrological services are of particular concern within the spectrum of forest ecosystem services. Also there is a need to adopt technical and governance innovations that improve forest conservation and provide incentives to local communities and strengthen the livelihoods of forest dependent communities.

Desired Results: The goal is improved management of forest landscapes in India for enhanced ecosystem services and increased economic opportunities.

Partnership Objectives: USAID/India is seeking to scale-up innovations in the forestry sectors through the following partnership priority areas. USAID requests concepts to address any or all of the following areas:

- **Strengthen Management of Forest Landscapes.** The focus is the systems and processes for managing forest landscapes, including integration of technology to enable effective decision-making. One focus is on the field application of the National Working Plan Code by state forest department personnel, with an emphasis on enabling wider adoption of the ES approach to forest management. USAID will prioritize interventions that (a) increase the application of management planning processes, (b) improve the collection, processing and application of information in management decisions, and (c) expand use of strengthened monitoring and reporting systems.
- **Lay the Foundation for Factoring Ecosystem Services (ES) into Planning and Management of Forest Landscapes.** The primary ES of interest are hydrological services, biodiversity, and other ES prioritized by the GOI. Interventions will increase actionable knowledge of ES, their value in underpinning economic activity throughout target landscapes and linkages across management units within the landscapes. USAID will prioritize intervention to (a) quantify ES and their flows through target landscapes, (b) conduct valuation of ES to those deriving benefits and incorporating those values into cost-benefit analysis of land use and policy alternatives, (c) incorporate ES and their values into management processes, and (d) developing incentive mechanisms for managing landscapes to provide ecosystem services.
- **Increase Economic Opportunities from Improved Landscape Management.** The objective is to increase reinvestment in natural capital in ways that encourage sustainable management of landscapes and their ecosystems that generate economic benefits for forest-dependent communities and contribute to national economic growth. USAID will prioritize interventions to (a) identify viable economic opportunities among value chains based on forests and other land uses, (b) if the in-depth analysis finds opportunities, then the focus will shift to strengthening enterprises within those value chains, (c) encouraging investment in viable economic opportunities by private and public sectors, and (d) facilitating partnerships that can take the selected value chains to scales sufficient to reduce or reverse landscape degradation.

Successful concept papers will also clearly explain how these approaches will help to strengthen U.S. national security, as well as reduce livelihood related conflicts in forested regions of India.

Background: USAID is currently providing technical assistance to GOI in improving the management of forests and other landscapes in order to strengthen their ecological health and, improve the livelihoods of forest-dependent populations. Recently, USAID has also helped GOI in developing a robust forest carbon monitoring system.

3. Energy

Minimum award amount: \$1 million

India is currently the fourth largest energy consumer in the world with the fastest growing economy in Asia. The country will have the world's largest population of 1.5 billion people by 2030 with a GDP of \$4 trillion. Energy security, trade, and ecosystem management (such as through the types of activities described in the forestry section above) is critical to India's economic growth. A number of activities have the potential to support U.S. goals while achieving economic development and security in India.

India's energy sector is undergoing rapid changes, including rapid deployment of advanced energy technologies (smart grid infrastructure, solar and wind energy, and energy efficiency). Growing India's energy system is limited by the inefficiencies of India's utilities (DISCOMs) and the challenges to absorbing variable and uncertain energy. The GOI seeks to grow its energy sector with the deployment of 160 GW of wind and solar, smart grid infrastructure, and demand side services. India's wind/solar goal is roughly \$310–\$350 billion of investment. India's energy sector provides significant opportunities for investment, entrepreneurship and innovation, including opportunities for US companies¹. Off-grid, market-driven, sustainable energy solutions could enhance universal energy access and provide economic opportunities to the unserved and underserved populations.

Desired Results: The goal of this solicitation is to support interventions that scale-up the deployment of affordable, advanced and reliable energy technologies in the Indian energy system. Interventions should support India's economic development and energy security in India while acting on opportunities that are mutually beneficial to the Indian and US economies and national security, and that promote aid effectiveness.

Partnership Objectives: USAID/India is seeking to scale-up innovations in the advanced energy sectors through the following partnership priority areas. USAID requests concepts to address any or all of the following areas:

- **Electricity distribution sector innovation:** USAID/India will prioritize concepts that support better performance of distribution utilities (DISCOMs) in order to create an enabling environment for advanced energy solutions. Concepts may describe solutions that target utility management and operations. Solutions for efficient and economical operations may include, for example, smart grid investment models, data analytics and smart grid applications, aggregate technical & commercial (AT&C) losses baselining, short-term, mid-term and long-term

¹ The U.S. currently exports about \$5.45 billion of technology and services to India every year, and U.S. power generation equipment exports reached nearly \$150 million in 2015 and the U.S. Department of Commerce rated India as the second most promising market worldwide for U.S. solar energy exports.

planning strategies. Solutions for more effective management may include (but not be limited to) public-private partnership restructuring, capacity building for DISCOM staff, logical HR approaches to increase gender diversity, and staff incentive programs for loss reduction. Interventions should engage central and state level governmental actors, DISCOMs, as well as private sector actors.

- **Large-scale adoption of renewable/variable energy (RE):** Strengthening India's electrical system to absorb significant increases in power generation from RE. USAID/India will prioritize concepts that enable more economical deployment of RE and inform market friendly RE policies and regulations. Concepts that demonstrate how to engage utilities in economical strategies for RE adoption – procurement efficiencies, long-term planning, both for utility-scale and distributed energy are welcome. Concepts may describe strategies on how to enable adoption of RE without exacerbating the tariff cross-subsidy challenges. Approaches for motivating large consumers to adopt RE (onsite or offsite) will also be considered. In addition, concept notes may aim to develop business models and implementation strategies to enable scale up solar strategies for agricultural irrigation that simultaneously reduce the utility losses and reduce water consumption. Interventions should engage central and state level governmental actors, DISCOMs, as well as private sector actors.
- **Air pollution and health:** As the home of 14 of the world's 15 most air-polluted cities in the world, air pollution is a significant and growing concern in India and across the region. The link between energy and air pollution is strong, as roughly 65-73% of PM2.5 emitted by anthropogenic processes (65% and 73%, if you exclude or include open burning, respectively)². Social movements and community level engagement have been successful tools for catalyzing improved environmental conditions, such as in the wake of the Bhopal disaster. They can be important tools for creating citizen demand and citizen-informed solutions for air pollution. Actions that link disparate sectors, especially the health sector with the environmental sector may be more effective, given the gravitas of the medical community and health research scientists. USAID welcomes concept notes that can strengthen community organizations and social movements through improved skill sets, technical and financial resources, access to convening platforms across civil society organizations, and access to decision makers. Interventions might include low-cost monitoring systems and other approaches that help identify contributing factors, approaches that reduce air pollution, and approaches that improve awareness of health impacts.
- **Off-grid energy access:** India has made significant progress in expanding the electricity grid to all the villages and set up the supply chain for LPG distribution for cooking in rural areas. However, a large percentage of the population is still unable to access these solutions. Several entrepreneurs have developed technical solutions and business models to serve these populations through off-grid

² GBD MAPS Working Group. 2018. Burden of Disease Attributable to Major Air Pollution Sources in India. Special Report 21. Boston, MA: Health Effects Institute.

sustainable energy solutions. USAID welcomes concept notes that can significantly scale the deployment of off-grid solutions while improving the improving economic opportunities through market-based, commercial solutions..

Background: USAID has successful ongoing and recently completed initiatives in the areas of deployment of renewable energy (including renewable integration) and energy efficiency through enabling policies and regulations, institutional and human capacity building, innovative financing, and demonstration projects. These are implemented in partnership with national, state and local governments. In addition USAID has established partnerships with leading institutions to design and pilot new and innovative approaches to air pollution mitigation and energy access.

4. Education

Minimum award amount: \$700,000

India has made tremendous gains in increasing access to primary education. At the time of independence, only 17 percent of primary school age children were in school. India's National Policy on Education (1986) and the Right to Education Act (2009) were key national policies that spurred the expansion of the education system. According to the 2018 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), over 97 percent of 6 to 14 year olds were enrolled in school. With these impressive gains in access, the focus now shifts to the much more difficult tasks of ensuring both quality education and student retention, so that youth obtain the skills they need to function in a modern economy and society. The percentage of all children in grade 3 who can read grade 2 text is only 27; the percentage of all children in grade 3 who can do subtraction is only 28. Further, both teacher and student attendance are a matter of concern as they are at 85% and 72% respectively.

According to the Indian Ministry of Human Resource Development's (MHRD) 2018 Educational Statistics at a Glance, as many as 8 million students drop out of school by the time they reach grade 8; and the government's figure is usually very conservative. One of the primary causes of dropouts is the low quality of education at the primary grade level, including the absence of effective reading programs. According to ASER 2018, about 50 percent of children in Class V are not able to read Class II level texts in India; also, in grade 5, less than 28% students are able to solve simple division problems correctly.

Also, public dissatisfaction with the government system is growing, as evidenced by a significant increase in private school enrollment. According to ASER 2018, the private school enrollment of 6-14 year olds nationally, stands at a high of 31% (it increased from 19 percent in 2006). What this marked shift towards private school enrollment reveals is the intense desire on the part of parents, even those who have never attended schools themselves, to have their children educated. The Government of India, in key planning documents, now recognizes the vital need to focus on quality of education, including the importance of reading and math, not just access to

classrooms. This was reiterated with the MHRD launch of the “Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat” program, which lists early reading, writing, comprehension and numeracy as key focal areas.

Partnership objectives: Partnerships should be framed in the context of USAID’s Global Education Policy, 2018. The policy states that there should be prioritization of country-focus and ownership, and missions must work in partnership and leverage resources.

Over the last 5 years, USAID/India has been focused on supporting innovative approaches for improving the early grade reading skills of millions of primary school age children (ages 6-14) in cost-effective and sustainable ways. The Mission now seeks to catalyze a multi-stakeholder partnership that provides an assurance of results (e.g., Development Impact Bond, Social Impact Bond etc.) in early grade education, especially early literacy, using a previously tested model, and expects that it will have the potential of stimulating the adoption and scale up of the model by the Indian state governments and other key players in India’s education sector.

References:

USAID Global Education Policy Links:

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/2018_Education_Policy_FINAL_WEB.pdf

Educational Statistics At A Glance:

https://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics-new/ESAG-2018.pdf

Annual Status of Education Report, 2018

<http://img.asercentre.org/docs/ASER%202018/Release%20Material/asereport2018.pdf>

5. Triangular Cooperation

The United States and India are jointly working to achieve shared development goals for India, and the South Asia Region. Commitments include initiatives to improve disaster resilience, bolster regional energy connectivity, and fortify regional digital connectivity, objectives through a program of Triangular Cooperation with the GOI and South Asia Countries. One goal of this cooperation is to support continued regional integration and stability. An approach of cooperation is harnessing expertise and innovation, of both the United States and India and applying these resources in India, and other South Asian countries.

India is one of the world’s leading laboratories for innovation and it provides a unique setting for USAID/India to source or create, test, and apply proven innovations at scale for global impact.

a. **Regional Energy Cooperation in South Asia**

Minimum award amount: \$3 million

With more than one-fifth of the world's population, South Asia is developing rapidly, and resulting in strong, emerging global economies that are increasingly concerned about energy. It is estimated that the regional average GDP will grow to 7.1 percent in 2018-19 with much of the progress driven by India. Achieving energy security is one of the single largest challenges of the 21st century, and critical to the economic future of 1.5 billion people and the political future of one of the world's most dynamic regions. The region faces basic development challenges that circumscribe its energy security requirements. It lags behind most regions of the world in energy trade and regional integration. There are a range of issues that are common throughout the region, including poor energy access, power shortages, limited energy diversity, inefficient power systems, limited use of electricity markets, limited power sector reforms, low private sector investment, low regional connectivity, and environmental pollution.

Desired Results: ASIA Enhancing Development and Growth through Energy (EDGE), is a whole-of-government initiative that will grow sustainable and secure energy markets across the Asia-Pacific region. Asia EDGE's four strategic objectives include: 1) Strengthening the energy security of allies and partners; 2) Creating open, efficient, rule-based, and transparent energy markets; 3) Improving free, fair, and reciprocal energy trading relationships; and 4) Expanding access to affordable, reliable energy. Asia EDGE seeks to expand market opportunities and modernize the energy sector through the four Asia EDGE pillars of regional energy trade and integration (electricity and gas), increased deployment of advanced technologies, utility modernization, and transparent, best value procurement. USAID/India will be the South Asia hub for Asia EDGE.

Partnership Objectives: USAID/India welcomes concept notes for an inception activity for achieving Asia EDGE's goals in South Asia. The inception activity will establish a regional energy cooperation platform, which will include two core elements of (1) management and administrative services; and (2) targeted technical assistance services.

- The management and administrative services will require active stakeholder engagement (such as convening events and building private sector partnerships), coordination internally and externally to USAID, communications and outreach; and programmatic support (annual work planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, learning, and technical services to client USAID missions). To fulfill these objectives, a regular presence is expected in the region.
- The technical assistance services component will offer transaction advisory services, country-specific needs and market assessments, private sector

engagement, and other types of analysis that can provide value of the South Asia EDGE platform and help inform future technical assistance activities. These activities will require regional knowledge and technical expertise.

The inception activity is expected to draw from the rich set of ongoing energy activities by USAID/India, USAID missions across South Asia, the array of USG agencies and departments and coordination with private sector enterprise. Thus, the ability to coordinate and collaborate effectively with a wide set of external partners is essential. Given the range of both administrative and technical services, consortium proposals are welcome and organizations are expected to be familiar with USAID business practices. The inception activity is expected to continue over a period of 3-5 years and as additional activities are commissioned under South Asia EDGE, the management and services component may continue to serve as the “secretariat” for South Asia EDGE.

Successful concept papers will clearly explain how these approaches will help achieve mutual economic opportunities for the U.S. and India.

Background: In July 2018, the United States Government (USG) announced the Asia Enhancing Development and Growth in Energy (EDGE) as a key component of its Indo-Pacific strategy. As a whole of government approach, Asia EDGE is a regional energy cooperation platform that aims to address several four key issues confronting the region, through (1) strengthening the energy security of regional partners; (2) creating open and transparent energy markets; (3) improving free, fair and reciprocal energy trading relationships; and (4) expanding access to affordable, clean and reliable energy.

Asia EDGE draws on the expertise of multiple USG agencies, private sector entities, and international financial institutions, and seeks ongoing collaboration with like-minded governments, non-governmental organizations, think tanks and private sector that are dedicated to sustaining equitable economic progress throughout the region. Due to the unique features that define the sub-regions of Asia, USAID's support to Asia EDGE is being implemented through three subregional hubs: South Asia (led by USAID/India), South East Asia (led by USAID/RDMA) and Central Asia (led by USAID/Kazakhstan).

References:

USAID Asia Enhancing Development and Growth through Energy website:
<https://www.usaid.gov/energy/asia-edge>

b. Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity
Minimum award amount: \$500,000

Due to the technology revolution, the Asia Pacific region has been the biggest contributor to global mobile phone subscriber growth in recent years. However, significant opportunities for increased digital connectivity remain. Furthermore,

cyberattacks have far-reaching ramifications that include financial and reputational losses to companies. To address these challenges, USAID's "Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership" supports communications infrastructure development through public-private partnerships, promotes transparent regulatory policies for open, competitive markets, and builds partners' cybersecurity capacity to address shared threats.

Partnership objectives: The USAID South Asia Regional Digital Initiative will strengthen digital and cyber capacity of SMEs, financial institutions, technology service providers, and government agencies, and empower civil society organizations in the South Asia Region to promote a fair, open and secure digital ecosystem. Through digital impact grants, tech coaching and advisory services, university competitions and programs, and workshops, the project will also build SMEs, civil society and citizen capacity to engage in digital economy policy development. Proposed activities should be designed to provide digital and cybersecurity upskilling of SMEs, financial institutions, technology service providers, and government agencies through technical assistance, embedded technical experts, industry association support, training and workshops.

References:

Advancing a Free and Open Indo-Pacific:

<https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2018/07/284829.htm>

White House Fact Sheet:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trumps-administration-advancing-free-open-indo-pacific/>

Cyber Surakshit Bharat:

<https://negd.gov.in/cyber-surakshit-bharat>

c. **Disaster Risk Reduction**

Minimum award amount: \$250,000

South Asia is home of 1.8 billion people, of whom more than 70% live in poverty.³ Despite a rich resource base that includes water, minerals, forest, productive fertile land, and industrious people, the region remains underdeveloped partially due to an inability to utilize these resources and regular occurrence of disasters. All the member states of South Asia are highly prone to hydro-meteorological and geological hazards such as floods, landslides, droughts, cyclones, earthquakes, heat waves, avalanches and tsunamis. Economic vulnerability analysis shows that India and the neighboring countries exhibit the largest losses, due to poverty, a large population exposed

³ Kafle SK (2017) Disaster Risk Management Systems in South Asia: Natural hazards, Vulnerability, Disaster Risks and Legislative and institutional Frameworks.

to risks, and a lack of preparedness for natural hazards. This exposure to risks also results in greater mortality rates.

Based on experience from past disasters, it may also be noted that countries in this region like India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bangladesh are also vulnerable to tsunami, floods and the potential risk of sea level rise mainly due to climate change. Urbanization, environmental degradation and a lack of strong governance exacerbate vulnerabilities in most of the countries in South Asia. The impact of disasters has increased due to political instability, border disputes, ineffective regional networks and climate change coupled with high population density and unplanned economic growth.

The occurrence and impact of disasters due to natural hazards are not confined to a country's political boundary. Floods, earthquakes, forest fires and volcanoes have significant cross border impacts. Some examples of cross border impacts of disasters include the Koshi flooding in South Asia (2008), Kashmir earthquake (2005), Indian Ocean Tsunami (2004), and recurrent tropical cyclones in Bangladesh and India. Good governance, regional stability, economic prosperity and sound environmental management are required to reduce disaster impacts. For this, a sound disaster risk management system together with strong coordination among the disaster risk management actors in the countries should prevail to build the capacity of communities and institutions and build their resilience capabilities.

Partnership objectives: Our goal is to help countries in the Indo-Pacific region reduce disaster risks by enhancing institutional capacities, integrating risk management measures in their development plans, and enhancing the capacities of the local government and communities including the private sector to be able to better prepare and respond to disasters.

USAID/India invites applications for partnerships to reduce disaster risk and improve the capacities of communities and institutions to be better prepared and respond to disasters in the region to reduce social and economic vulnerabilities. Some of the key focus areas in disaster risk management in the Indo-Pacific region are:

- (i) Develop regional response mechanisms for disaster response;
- (ii) Strengthen Emergency Operation Centers (EOC) and establish a well-coordinated response mechanism;
- (iii) Strengthen institutional mechanisms and communities;
- (iv) Integration of Disaster Risk Reduction plans in development plans;
- (v) Private sector engagement in reducing disaster risks;
- (vi) Formulation of appropriate and relevant policies, strategies and frameworks and their effective implementation; and
- (vii) Knowledge Management

Successful concept papers should clearly explain how these approaches will work closely with the respective governments for better coordinated regional response and preparedness with technical assistance from U.S. Government. Knowledge Management could be an integral part of the above mentioned focus areas.