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REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

RFA Number: RFA-388-14-000001

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Questions due by: March 17, 2014, 1600 Bangladesh Time

Application Deadline: April 8, 2014, 1600 Bangladesh Time

SUBJECT: Request for Applications (RFA) Number RFA-388-14-000001; Women's Empowerment Activity in Bangladesh.

Dear Prospective Applicants:

The United States Agency for International Development in Bangladesh (USAID/Bangladesh) is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified US and non-US organizations to implement USAID's Women's Empowerment Activity in Bangladesh. The authority for this RFA is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

The successful Applicant will be responsible for ensuring achievement of the program objectives. Please refer to the Program Description in Section I of this RFA for a complete statement of goals and expected results.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/Bangladesh intends to provide approximately **\$5,500,000** to **\$6,000,000** in total USAID funding for this activity to be allocated over a three-year period. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Although it is planned to make an award of one Cooperative Agreement under this RFA, USAID/Bangladesh in its discretion may make awards to more than one organization or no award.

This RFA consists of this cover letter and the following:

1. Section I, Funding Opportunity Description;
2. Section II, Award Information;
3. Section III, Eligibility Information;
4. Section IV, Application and Submission Information;
5. Section V, Application Review Information;
6. Section VI, Award and Administration Information;
7. Section VII, Agency Contacts;
8. Section VIII, Other Information;
9. Attachment 1, Certifications and Assurances, and
10. List of Annexes

To be eligible for an award, the applicant must provide all required information in its application, including the requirements found in any attachments to this Grants.gov opportunity. Applications that are submitted late, incomplete or are non-responsive will not be considered. Award will be made to the responsible applicant(s) whose application(s) best meet(s) the requirements of this RFA and the evaluation criteria contained herein.

The preferred method of distribution of USAID Requests for Application (RFA) is electronically via Grants.gov. This RFA and any future amendments can be downloaded from <http://www.grants.gov>. It is the responsibility of the recipient to ensure that it has received the RFA and any future amendments from <http://www.grants.gov> in its entirety. All interested parties are encouraged to register on <http://www.grants.gov> to receive automatic notification of amendments to this RFA.

Applicants may upload applications to <http://www.grants.gov>; however, USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions. **Additionally, USAID/Bangladesh requires that applications be submitted both electronically (e-mailed) AND in hard copy.**

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

Thank you for your interest in USAID's programs.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Crow Yang
Agreement Officer
USAID/Bangladesh

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADS	Automated Directives System
AO	Agreement Officer
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BEO	Bureau Environmental Officer
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DO	Development Objective
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
FTF	Feed the Future
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GSMA	Group Special Mobile Association
HDI	Human Development Index
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IGA	Income-generating Activity
IR	Intermediate Result
JFA	Justice for All
LDP	Leadership Development Program
LOE	Level of Effort
M/OAA	USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NICRA	Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
NWDP	National Women's Development Policy
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OP	Operational Plan
PHR	Protecting Human Rights
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PPR	Performance Plan and Report
RFA	Request for Application
SHOUHARDO	Strengthening Household Abilities for Responding to Development

	Opportunities
TEC	Technical Evaluation Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VAT	Value Added Tax
WEA	Women's Empowerment Activity
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index

SECTION I– FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

“Women’s Empowerment Activity”

i).OBJECTIVE

USAID/Bangladesh intends to award a three year activity entitled “Women’s Empowerment Activity.” The activity objective is to increase the empowerment of women in the Feed the Future (FTF) zone of influence¹.

In support of this objective, by the end of the activity, the recipient will have increased community leadership by women, improved decision-making by women over productive resources, improved women’s control over income, strengthened decision-making by women in agricultural production, improved time use by women, and increased social acceptance of women’s empowerment.

ii). BACKGROUND

In Bangladesh, women’s opportunities and public participation have changed significantly in recent decades. For example, Bangladesh made major progress in closing the gender gap in school enrollments at both primary and secondary levels. Girls currently outnumber boys in enrollment². The rapid growth of the garment industry has provided a large number of jobs for women, who comprise an estimated 70-80% of its labor force³. Many women are now members of the local government councils that have important responsibilities for rural and urban development. These developments reflect changes in norms, values, customs, practices, and opportunities as a result of a range of forces, including leadership through government policy, advocacy, awareness of rights, innovations by civil society organizations, and actions of individuals and households.

The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) has formulated a general statement of commitments to equality of women and men as evidenced by The National Women Development Policy, formulated in 2011⁴. The GOB constitution provides for formal equality of women and men with women being entitled to the same fundamental rights as men. Article 10 of the constitution

¹ This area includes Barisal and Khulna divisions, and four southern districts of the Dhaka division

² <http://data.worldbank.org/country/bangladesh>

³

[http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/\(httpAuxPages\)/F01D859A3C9E8AD2C1256D55003849F5?OpenDocument&panel=additional](http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/(httpAuxPages)/F01D859A3C9E8AD2C1256D55003849F5?OpenDocument&panel=additional)

⁴ <https://sites.google.com/site/womensempowermentactivity/>

ensures the participation of women in all spheres of national life. Article 65(3) provides for reserved seats for women in parliament and Article 9 provides for the special representation of women in local government. One third of seats on local councils are reserved for women commissioners and there is a 10 percent quota for women in civil service.

The progress that has been made demonstrates the potential for change despite entrenched views about appropriate roles for women in the private and public sectors; but the broad challenges that remain are evident.

Gender inequality persists in many forms in Bangladesh. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report indicates that Bangladesh's gender-related development Index (GDI) is lower than the human development index (HDI). The report also states that, out of the 155 countries with both HDI and GDI values, 100 countries have a better ratio than Bangladesh's index⁵.

The Asia Development Bank's (ADB) Country Gender Assessment Report indicates many key issues related to gender inequalities in Bangladesh per the human development report generated by UNDP. Some key issues mentioned in the ADB report that should be addressed include:

- (1) Women's economic opportunities continue to be limited by factors, such as discrimination in the labor market, limited access to market-relevant training, high illiteracy levels, and particularly heavy household work burdens due to deficiencies in basic services.
- (2) Women's work tends to be in the low-wage side of formal employment and informal sector activity, and the gender gap in earnings is significant⁶.

A World Bank report has explained women's role in food production and how poor and vulnerable women are affected by the gender based discrimination; the report states that, "[w]omen in Bangladesh contribute greatly to food production, particularly to subsistence food production. They play vital roles in post-harvest processes of rice, seed storage, as well as horticultural crops, small livestock and poultry, and aquaculture... Despite performing identical tasks, rural women earned just 60 percent of the wages paid to men for the same work"⁷.

⁵ Human Development Report 2009 Bangladesh, The Human Development Index - going beyond income, Page 4
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/25902179/Human-Development-Report-2009-Bangladesh-the-Human>

⁶ <http://www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/Country-Gender-Assessments/cga-women-bangladesh.pdf>

⁷ Kelkar, G. (2009) 'The Feminization of Agriculture in Asia: Implications for Women's Agency and Productivity', New Delhi: South Asia UNIFEM Regional Office, <http://www.agnet.org/library/eb/594>

In 2011, researchers from USAID, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative developed the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), collected data through an integrated household survey of the USAID/Bangladesh's Feed the Future zone of influence. The WEAI is a significant innovation in its field that measures multiple indicators of empowerment and generates a score that can be compared over time. It is the first tool of its kind—a survey-based index designed to measure the empowerment, agency, and inclusion of women in the agricultural sector in an effort to identify ways to overcome those obstacles and constraints.

According to IFPRI's WEAI household survey⁸, women tend to be unrecognized in the agricultural sector in Bangladesh. This is due to assumptions that women are not involved in agricultural production and cultural norms that value female seclusion and undervalue female labor. In reality, however, it is more likely that poor women are the ones more involved in agriculture, particularly as wage laborers that contribute their earnings to sustain their families. Women's ability to earn incomes in agriculture is also severely constrained by their lack of ownership and access to productive assets. A recent IFPRI report also described the relationships between the WEAI and household food security⁹.

Piloted in 2011 and officially launched in February 2012, the US government plans to use the index to track change in women's empowerment that occurs as a direct or indirect result of Feed the Future interventions in targeted geographic zones within the initiative's 19 focus countries. FTF will also use the WEAI for impact evaluations of distinct activities to examine the effectiveness of different approaches and how they impact women and men.

The WEAI breaks down women's empowerment into five domains as seen below.

Production: This dimension concerns decisions over agricultural production, and refers to sole or joint decision-making over food and cash-crop farming, livestock, and fisheries as well as autonomy in agricultural production.

Resources: This dimension concerns ownership, access to, and decision-making power over productive resources such as land, livestock, agricultural equipment, consumer durables, and credit.

Income: This dimension concerns sole or joint control over the use of income and expenditures.

⁸ <http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/weaitr.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp01297.pdf>

Leadership: This dimension concerns leadership in the community, here measured by membership in economic or social groups and comfort in speaking in public.

Time: This dimension concerns the allocation of time to productive and domestic tasks and satisfaction with the available time for leisure activities.

A woman is defined as empowered if she has adequate achievements in four of the five domains or is empowered in some combination of the weighted indicators that reflect 80 percent total adequacy.

The WEAI baseline results for Bangladesh show that only 33 percent of women in the FTF zone are empowered, while more than half do not have gender parity with the primary male in their household. Weak leadership, lack of control over income and lack of control over resources are the main areas of women's disempowerment. Hence, achieving gender equality remains a challenge and a goal for Bangladesh.

iii). USAID COORDINATION

The Women's Empowerment Activity is complementary to other USAID activities, and specifically to much of USAID's Feed the Future (FTF) portfolio, which focuses on improved food security. USAID's activities are striving to identify gender-based constraints and take necessary actions to remove them. USAID's activities also measure gender impacts by collecting sex-disaggregated data to fill critical knowledge gaps in gender-related activity outcomes.

The applicant is expected to harmonize with current USAID activities to avoid overlap, build on lessons learned, and explore future collaborations that expand impact. There are many USAID/Bangladesh activities (including activities outside of the FTF portfolio) focusing on aspects of women's empowerment. A few examples are listed below.

Strengthening Household Abilities for Responding to Development Opportunities II (SHOUHARDO II)

The purpose of the SHOUHARDO II program is to transform the lives of women and men in 370,000 households in 11 of the poorest and most marginalized districts by reducing their vulnerability to food insecurity. This program improves women's empowerment to exercise their needs and rights through active participation, improved access to basic and life skill education, and sensitizing the community. This program forms Empowerment Knowledge and Transformative Action groups, promotes early childhood care and development, and builds capacity of formal and informal institutions. As a result of these interventions, poor women and

adolescent girls will have increased ability to influence decisions related to their community, household food security issues, and reductions in domestic violence.

Agriculture Infrastructure Project

The Agriculture Infrastructure Project works directly with the Government of Bangladesh to improve infrastructure to help increase productivity and facilitate access to markets to complement selected agricultural commodities value chains, such as horticulture and fisheries. As women mobility is a constraint, this project selects space for market/collection centers that are easily accessed by women farmers, buyers, and entrepreneurs. In fact, in the design and construction phase, the project will consider and allocate a certain percentage of the construction specifically for women farmers to sell their produce.

Agriculture Input Project

The Agriculture Input Project aims to create a network of privately owned certified agricultural input retailers and thus address the farmer's lack of access to quality unadulterated inputs. This project plans to certify women retailers and establish start-up grants of women-owned retailers. This project also plans to ensure that retailers are well-stocked with female-friendly inputs, such as small bags of fertilizer, vegetable crops for kitchen gardens, and small packets of inputs.

Agricultural Extension Capacity Building activity

The Agricultural Extension Capacity Building activity focuses on increasing agricultural productivity and farm incomes; activities include the formation of women and small farmer producer groups to facilitate linkages between those groups and extension services. This activity plans to support extension that delivers services according to the demands of both female and male farmers who may need different types of support services. This activity also plans to work with women-only producer groups because they are the entry point of the local level institutionalization of female-centered agricultural extension.

Mobile Solutions

USAID/Bangladesh's Mobile Solutions activity aims to integrate the use of mobile transaction and electronic payments in the programs and operations of implementing partners. The objectives of the activity are to increase programmatic mobile money and electronic payments and improve active adoption of mobile money by end-users. The activity includes improving financial literacy and consumer education in adopting mobile or electronic payments.

In the technical approach, the applicant should detail how WEA will work with current USAID projects to avoid overlap and maximize impact. The applicant should not detail collaborations with every USAID activity listed, but should strategically select and describe collaborations with the highest potential for impact.

Horticulture Project

The Horticulture Project aims to improve the nutrition, food security and livelihoods of 100,000 potato, sweet potato, and vegetable producers in the FTF zone of influence. This project supports and trains women in home garden production. This training includes both agronomic and nutritional elements to underline the potential contribution of vegetables and orange-flesh sweet potato production for household nutrition.

Avian Influenza Project

The FTF Avian Influenza project entitled, Improving food security of women and children by enhancing backyard and small-scale poultry production in the Southern Delta Region, will reduce food and nutrition insecurity and enhance the household incomes. This project targets rural and peri-urban populations of Bangladesh's southern delta region, with special attention to women and children. The aim of the project is to enhance the capacity of 200 small-scale farmers and 1,500 backyard poultry producers to engage in more efficient poultry farming activities with increased biosecurity.

Protecting Human Rights

The Protecting Human Rights (PHR) program aims to reduce the high prevalence of domestic violence and other related human rights violations in Bangladesh including sexual harassment, child marriage, and other root causes of domestic abuse. To achieve this, PHR activities advocate for policy reform, enhanced public awareness, and increased public dialogues between the government and civil society on issues of violence against women, domestic violence, and other human rights abuses.

Leadership Development Program

The Leadership Development Program (LDP) promotes community and youth leaders as change agents for democracy and development. By promoting greater understanding of democratic practices and values and providing opportunities for community leaders and youth to engage in community development, the LDP will promote a better informed citizenry actively engaged in democratic processes.

Justice for All

The Justice for All (JFA) activity provides technical assistance to Government of Bangladesh institutions to improve the quality and accessibility of legal aid services for all citizens.

JFA supports legal aid committees in conducting public awareness campaigns to increase citizens' knowledge of their legal rights and to educate them on the process of accessing courts to redress their issues. These efforts target the poor and other underserved groups, including women, to help them exercise their rights to legal aid more effectively. Nationwide campaigns also increase public knowledge regarding the availability of legal services and how to utilize these resources.

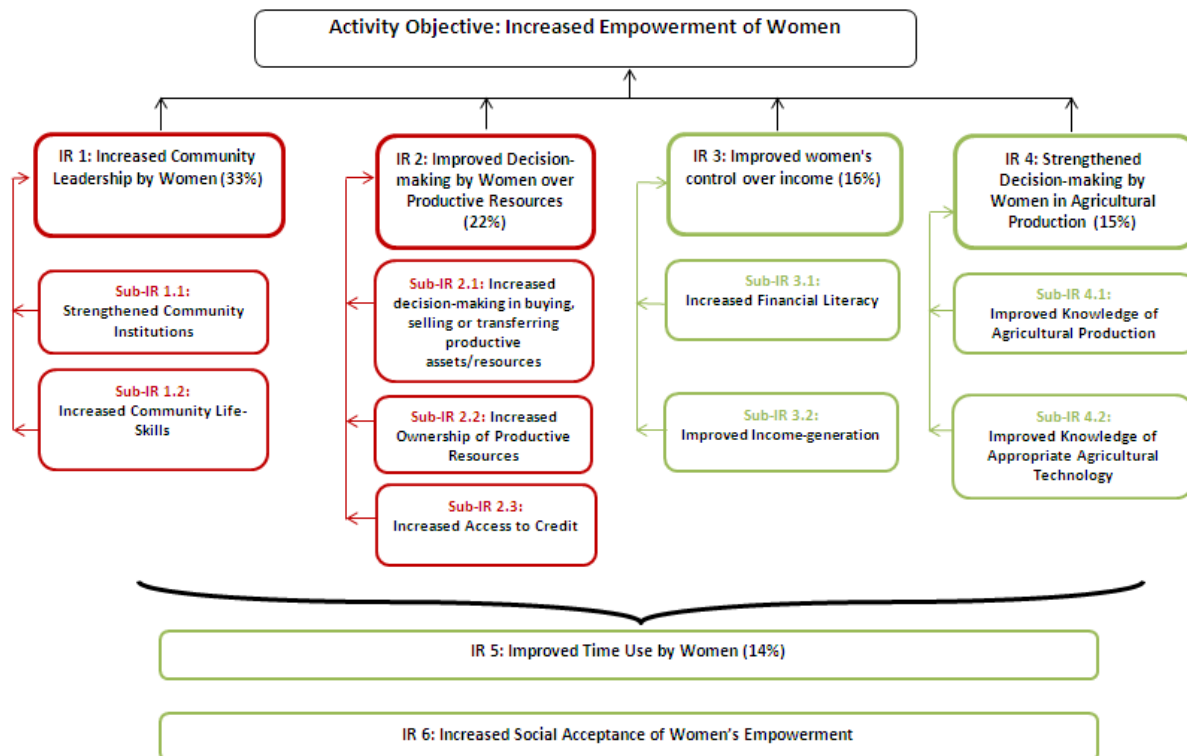
iv). RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Results Framework

USAID/Bangladesh has developed a Results Framework to act as a graphic representation of the strategy to achieve WEA's objective: increased empowerment of women. In the Results Framework below, the applicant should note that IRs 1-5 have corresponding percentages. These reflect the percentage each area contributes to the disempowerment of women according to the baseline WEAI survey conducted by IFPRI¹⁰. The higher percentage, the more this area contributes to women's disempowerment. The applicant should provide an approach that addresses all IRs; this approach should also reflect how there are larger power gaps in IR 1 and 2 (as evidence by the color scheme in the framework). The survey did not measure IR 6, but this result remains essential to the successful achievement of the activity objective.

Intermediate Result 5 and 6 cross-cut the other four intermediate results.

¹⁰ <http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/weaitr.pdf>



The development hypothesis is: if decision-making by women in agricultural resources, production, and income use improves and they have increased leadership roles underpinned by balanced time management, then women will be empowered to actively participate in and benefit from economic growth and move towards gender parity.

Activity Overview

WEA seeks to achieve the activity objective of increasing the empowerment of women. To lead to this objective, the recipient will design and implement the activity and subsequent interventions to achieve the following intermediate results:

- Increased community leadership by women (IR 1)
- Improved decision-making by women over productive resources (IR 2)
- Improved women's control over income (IR 3)
- Strengthened decision-making by women in agriculture production (IR 4)
- Improved time use by women (IR 5)
- Increased social acceptance of women's empowerment (IR 6)

The recipient will implement WEA to achieve these results. The application will be evaluated on the technical soundness and cohesiveness of the approach. The activity overview is divided into three components:

- Targeting beneficiaries
- Women's empowerment groups
- Income-generating activities

Targeting beneficiaries

A successful approach for the Women's Empowerment Activity should utilize community-led and participatory methodologies to identify potential target beneficiaries and refine target interventions. Successful approaches include the Participatory Rural Appraisal approach¹¹. The participatory approach should determine the needs and aspirations of the targeted women as a first step in achieving the activity's objective to increase women's empowerment. The applicant should show how they plan to use the initial analyses to form women empowerment groups.

Furthermore, to align with the specific intermediate result (IR) 6 – *increased social acceptance of women's empowerment* – the applicant's preliminary approach should identify how to include men in achieving sustainable results. The applicant should describe strategies that best identify assets at the household and community level to assist in achieving the activity results. Conversely, the preliminary approach should identify the constraints and barriers that preclude or inhibit women's empowerment in economic growth sectors, such as agriculture. A successful application will show an approach that can build activities specifically tailored for each community, within its socio-political context and its unique needs and challenges. The applicant should also highlight an approach to recruit and train local group facilitators/instructors.

The preliminary approach should also treat influential household members of the potential women group members as secondary targets of the activity. The applicant should involve household members in the development of curricula, community discussions and activities to encourage buy-in. Their buy-in and involvement in the empowerment process will be crucial for the sustainability of any activity achievements. These secondary targets should be significant and influential household members, which could include husbands, brothers, male and female in-laws (especially mothers-in-law¹²), adolescent males and females and elders. This strategy will

¹¹

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEV/0,,contentMDK:21233809~menuPK:3291499~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:3177395~isCURL:Y~isCURL:Y,00.html>

¹²Please see Gender Approach on pg. 19 of Section I- Program Description regarding the influence of mothers-in-law

help create an enabling environment for women empowerment groups in their respective households. The specific areas of involvement could include, but are not limited to, child care, parenting responsibilities, division of domestic chores, gender-based violence, and access to rights and services. The applicant should describe an approach that includes government counterparts, such as relevant ministries, local government units, etc. in selection of geographic areas and target audiences for the activity.

Women's Empowerment Groups

Increased Community Leadership (IR 1)

To achieve IR 1 – *increased community leadership* – the applicant's approach should articulate how to make women empowerment groups sustainable, as these groups are a critical component and represent the backbone of the activity. The groups should have a formalized constituency and set of guidelines and procedures of operations including financial management and administrative procedures. The applicant should describe a strategy to customize training materials and modules on the basis of the capacity and socio-political context of a group. The applicant should describe an approach that builds the groups' awareness of the functions and services of local government and service providers. A successful approach should include exposure visits to effective and sustained community based organizations to replicate successful initiatives and best practices.

As part of the graduated involvement with communities, interventions could include selecting days to invite relevant local government and/or key persons to be guest of honors. On these days, group members could share and engage with local communities and use the events to lobby for a particular issue. In the process of training, exposure visits, and day observations, the applicant should detail how each group will determine their own set of time-bound targets and identify resources, potential partnerships, and support within local government and/or communities. In response to the achievement of targets, the applicant should develop a plan to facilitate a phase-out in partnership with the members of each group. The applicant's approach should show how WEA will create the foundational support for each group to sustain their activities as a group or individually after completion of USAID support.

A successful application will show strategies to increase women's life-skills (IR 1.2) and build their leadership skills. As necessary, the life-skills trainings should address the needs of basic numeracy, literacy and accounting and record keeping skills. This is directly related to IR 3.1— *increased financial literacy*. Successful interventions could also include learning how to get services utilizing the Rights to Information Act, Human Rights Commission, union level information centers, and local service delivery centers. WEA interventions should build on the

best practices of existing curricula, modules, and materials used in current or planned USAID-supported programs.

A key part of the life-skills interventions will be the development of public speaking skills. In this regard, the applicant should show WEA will allow women the opportunity to express themselves and voice their concerns, first in a controlled setting, such as women empowerment group meetings and then in more public fora such as community meetings. Women could use this public speaking skill in day observations and exposure visits mentioned under strengthened community institutions. This public speaking could be manifested as women taking turns leading sessions or facilitating discussions on technical topics. The applicant's approach should describe how WEA will foster an open environment for women to speak their concerns and learn about resources for where to go, or who to see for solutions to their domestic and economic issues. One result of this focus on life-skills should be an increased awareness of women's rights and their increased access to all the legal, medical, and business resources available to them to resolve their issues.

Increased Social Acceptance of Women's Empowerment (IR 6)

Throughout the activity, the inclusion of other community members and their awareness-building will be crucial to IR 6—*increased social acceptance of women's empowerment*. The applicant should describe a strategy to increase community awareness of the value of women's empowerment both to the household and to the community. This applicant's approach should also address how to improve the community's understanding of women's rights. This may include sensitization sessions where men and other community members discuss topics such as women's role in decision-making in agricultural production in their household. WEA interventions should allow women, who are typically the key preparers of food in the household, more of a say in what food crops are grown. The applicant should highlight how targeted communities will understand that women themselves should receive the training and extension services for improved knowledge on agricultural production, especially for income-generating activities (IGAs) in which they may be already engaged. These sessions should touch upon most of the sub-IRs to increase the likelihood that success in those areas will be sustained long after activity completion.

Income Generating Activities

In order to achieve IR 2 – *improved decision-making by women over productive resources* – and IR 3 – *improved women's control over income* – the applicant should describe an approach that promotes income-generating activities (IGAs) for the women participating in the empowerment groups. The applicant should show how WEA will tailor IGAs to the needs and aspirations of

the community members. The applicant should detail interventions that will increase women's control of resources, production decisions, and income through promoting IGAs that result in sustainable economic growth for the community and sustainable empowerment for women. As the majority of women's employment in Bangladesh is agriculture-related¹³, the primary focus of IGAs will be agriculture-related, but IGAs should not be limited to agriculture. The applicant should show how to support income-generating activities by skills-building, networking, increase mobility and exposure to technologies, input suppliers, market actors, credit providers and female business role models.

A successful approach will show how WEA IGAs will build upon resources that women already own as well as promote new livelihood opportunities to enable women to accumulate assets and have increased ownership of their accumulated productive resources. This is meant to obviate and address males' concern that the activity would seek to usurp male control over IGAs that they may already be engaged in. Although it is envisioned that the women-based IGAs may focus on subsistence level activities, there is potential to identify and promote the growth of small- and medium-sized enterprises within the scope of the activity. Particularly, successful applications will describe approaches that will promote and support entrepreneurship for women.

When considering the promotion of IGAs, it is critical to have a thorough understanding of the market. The applicant must be aware and detail how WEA's IGA promotion will not result in a large number of suppliers that may flood a small community that lacks sufficient demand. The applicant must consider the sustainability of IGA promotion. Additionally, not all women are entrepreneurs by nature, so the applicant should detail interventions that address this constraint as well.

Improved Decision-Making by Women Over Productive Resources (IR 2)

To achieve increased women's participation in the purchase, sale or transfer of assets (IR 2.1), the applicant should describe methods to establish linkages between women group members and credit providers, input suppliers, and marketers of agricultural produce. WEA should build women's awareness of the credit options available as well as their pros and cons, leading to their *increased access to credit* (IR 2.3). This effort could especially target women who may not have capital to start-up or for those who wish to receive additional capital to expand their IGAs. The applicant should propose interventions that address constraints (e.g., loan repayment timelines often do not correspond to growing seasons). A successful application will also detail how WEA will design and market appropriate savings vehicles to women. These savings vehicles should build upon best practices in Bangladesh and provide a low risk system for savings that is uniquely designed for rural women.

¹³ According to [World Bank \(2005\)](#), 68% of women's employment is agriculture-related in Bangladesh

Additionally, the applicant should describe how WEA will establish linkages between input suppliers and market actors. The applicant should show how this effort will empower women to make appropriate asset purchases for their IGAs as well as make informed decisions about where to market and sell their product or service. Interventions could include presentations to women empowerment groups by local agricultural input representatives/dealers and credit suppliers, resulting in women having *increased buying of productive resources* and *increased access to credit*.

The applicant should describe how WEA interventions will support women throughout the business cycle—from selection of an appropriate IGA, to sourcing of inputs, and finally to the marketing stage to ensure achievement of the IR 2: *improved decision-making by women over productive resources*. Studies have shown that some IGAs created for women have resulted in the control of income being shifted to men at the marketing stage of the business. The applicant should propose a strategy to retain control of women-generated income in the hands of women. For example, interventions could include encouraging traders/market actors to pick up produce at the homestead to work around women's mobility issues or to pay women directly (regardless of who delivers the product) via mobile phone banking systems. The applicant should also demonstrate innovative ways to increase women's access to markets through increasing their mobility and access to market information.

Improved Women's Control Over Income (IR 3)

To achieve *improved women's control over income* (IR 3), it is necessary for women to have *increased financial literacy* (IR 3.1). Therefore, the applicant should describe how to build women's financial literacy. Financial literacy training could be basic literacy and numeracy activities alongside more tailored and practical training such as filling out credit applications for increased access to credit, or training on mobile banking. The applicant should describe an approach that addresses the educational challenges to achieving financial literacy, especially in adult populations. Interventions could include partnering with organizations that understand the constraints of rural poor clientele. Applicants should describe how interventions, such as IGAs and financial literacy training, will increase women's ability to do basic bookkeeping and financial tracking so they can better leverage themselves into a position of control over income that they earn.

The applicant should also detail the feasibility of engaging both men and women in farming households on the control over the income that comes from farming and not just from additional income that comes from the women's IGA.

Strengthened Decision-Making by Women in Agricultural Production (IR 4)

To support the development of IGAs, the applicant should highlight the needed technical skills training and access needs for extension services. As most of women's employment is agriculture-related, WEA should train women on the use of appropriate agriculture technology to achieve IR 4.2 *improved knowledge of appropriate agricultural technology*. This will allow them to be competitive in their IGAs and serve to educate them to have strengthened decision-making in agricultural production (IR 4) at the household level. The applicant should detail how women will gain knowledge on the availability and costs of agriculture technology and how WEA's interventions will allow women to more effectively participate in the decision-making process (on what agricultural activities to engage in and what technologies to use).

The applicant should detail how WEA can promote course revisions/improvements and ensure proper adoption of appropriate techniques and technologies after women have started up their IGAs. Training should also include mentoring, such as one-on-one counseling or involve visits to women empowerment groups by successful female entrepreneurs, who could share best practices and serve as role models. WEA interventions could include sessions where women discuss ideas and challenges with other women, especially younger women. The applicant should highlight how these WEA interventions will lead to *improved knowledge of agricultural production* (IR 4.1). For some IGAs, one intervention could include organizing and conducting technical training through Farmer Field Schools, which have demonstrated success with capacity-building for women. The USAID mission encourages teaching the whole family at once to assure access to women and the next generation of farmers for better information retention. The applicant should also include interventions that link IR 4 with IR 1 as they are complementary results.

Improved Time Use by Women (IR 5)

The applicant should describe how WEA will achieve IR 5—*improved time use by women*. One intervention could include increasing shared responsibility at the household level. In this regard, the applicant should detail how to encourage secondary target group members, especially adolescents, spouses and in-laws, to participate in developing a household schedule after being exposed to sub-IR level activities under IR 1 and IR 6. The applicant should describe how WEA will obtain the initial consent of secondary target group members to be part of group formation processes. A WEA intervention could include group members discussing time management strategies with other household members to decide on shared responsibilities. Interventions could use improved agricultural technologies to help women manage their time. The applicant should also discuss how to monitor, in weekly or monthly meetings, how the group members are implementing their respective household schedule and how the extra time is being used by group members such as in leisure, socializing, etc.

Conclusion of Activity Overview

The activity overview is to provide an example or suggest interventions that may be incorporated by the recipient, but are not required. Additional interventions are strongly recommended. The applicant must demonstrate how results will be achieved and how those results will lead to the overall objective of WEA.

v). GENDER APPROACH

As the primary objective of this activity will be to increase women's empowerment and address gender equity within the household, the applicant will capture the gender approach throughout the technical approach. However, USAID recognizes the crucial role of men towards achieving the goal of women's empowerment. Without the support and buy-in of males in Bangladeshi society, any progress made through this activity will be short-lived. Within the results framework of the Women's Empowerment Activity, the intermediate result of *increased social acceptance of women's empowerment* will directly address gender equity at the social level. A successful application for the WEA will show an approach that works to integrate men in each stage of the activity.

Specifically, the applicant should involve both men and women throughout the participatory rural appraisal process to identify the strengths and challenges faced within the community to achieving gender equality. In this initial analysis phase, the applicant should engage men and women to determine the specific opportunities and constraints present in communities to women's empowerment in agriculture, based specifically on the target objectives of this activity. Once the applicant identifies opportunities and constraints, the applicant should develop a plan to capitalize on resources within a community and resolve or circumvent the barriers or constraints to accelerate women's empowerment.

During the activity implementation stage, the applicant should determine the most appropriate methods for the involvement of men in all activities that contribute to each intermediate result. Although each sub-intermediate result will have some form of male involvement, there may be some exceptional activities which would not benefit, or may even be negatively influenced, by the involvement of men. As identified in the findings of the WEAI, the empowerment of women is not intended to be accomplished at the expense of the empowerment of men, and this should be reflected and reinforced throughout the technical approach of the application so as to avoid male resentment or sabotage of activity's interventions. The IRs for increased control of productive resources and for increased control of household income could easily be viewed as being achieved at the expense of male control. However, the WEAI specifically emphasizes that

these results can be achieved by building off of current, or creating new, livelihood opportunities for women to increase their bargaining power and ownership of household decision-making.

Furthermore, the strong role that mothers-in-law play in the gender dynamics of the household is very important within the Bangladeshi context. Thus, it is likewise critical that activities do not exclude this valuable actor when considering who to target for increased social acceptance, buy-in and support. Members include but are not limited to household men, local leaders and mother-in-laws, who play a major role in determining gender dynamics in rural Bangladeshi society.

vi). STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

USAID/Bangladesh Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS)¹⁴

Gender inequity is a cross-cutting issue that affects the long-term development of Bangladesh and hinders economic growth. Hence, it is highlighted in the CDCS and is mainstreamed in all four development objectives. As stated in the CDCS, USAID/Bangladesh activities should incorporate recommendations as identified by the April 2010 Gender Assessment for USAID/Bangladesh. The development of this activity, based on CDCS analysis and the WEAI, is in direct response to the importance placed on gender equity in the CDCS. In fact, in the design process, USAID/Bangladesh identified the need to form female farmer/entrepreneur groups and associations in order to better involve women in the various value chain activities.

USAID/Bangladesh, through this activity, will continue to be active in facilitating knowledge-sharing on gender-based development with other donors in the Women's Advancement and Gender Equality sub-group of the Local Consultative Group. The development hypothesis informing this design is in direct alignment with the CDCS development hypothesis that addressing constraints (in this case, females' constraints) of availability, access, and utilization of food will lead to positive outcomes for health and income security.

USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy¹⁵

Gender equality and female empowerment are core development objectives, fundamental for the realization of human rights and key to positive social and economic development outcomes. No

¹⁴ USAID/Bangladesh Country Development Cooperation Strategy:

http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/Bangladesh_CDCS.pdf

¹⁵ USAID Gender Equality Policy:

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/GenderEqualityPolicy.pdf>

society can develop successfully without providing equitable opportunities, resources, and life prospects for males and females so they can shape their own lives and contribute to their families and communities. Although many gender gaps have narrowed over the past two decades, substantial inequalities remain across all sectors in which USAID works, particularly in low-income and disadvantaged groups.

USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy states that USAID investments should be focused on three overarching outcomes for all people.

- Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities, and services – economic, social, political, and cultural
- Reduce gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities, so that all people can live healthy and productive lives
- Increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, explore their opportunities, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities, and societies

These outcomes are especially important for males and females who are marginalized or excluded due to ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, lack of income, disability, or other factors. They reflect the gamut of activities that USAID can undertake across multiple sectors and fields to achieve the goal of this policy:

The Women's Empowerment Activity will directly contribute to the achievement of the first and third outcomes, while indirectly addressing the second outcome.

vii). ESSENTIAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

Country Ownership: This activity should engage the GOB from the beginning to promote host government ownership of the challenges and solutions to sustainability.

The Government of Bangladesh has also focused on gender equity by implementing the proposed National Women's Development Policy (NWDP) and CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women).

NWDP's goals are to establish gender equality at all levels of national life and to ensure the socio-economic and political empowerment of women. The demand for a uniform Family Law Civil Code to end discriminatory inheritance laws is gathering momentum, putting pressure on the government to adopt and implement the NWDP. To the relief of many, the long awaited law against domestic violence has been recently approved by the cabinet for enactment in Parliament.

Bangladesh ratified CEDAW in 2000 with reservations that impact religion-based personal laws on women's rights in the private sphere. Initially, there were reservations for Articles 2(a)(f), 13(a) and 16.1(c)(f). Later all but reservations for Article 2(a) and 16.1(c) were withdrawn. Article 2(a) pertains to achieving equality of men and women in national constitutions or other appropriate legislation and in practical realization. Article 16.1(c) ensures the same rights and responsibilities for men and women during marriage and at its dissolution. The women leaders have lobbied successive governments to withdraw the reservations on Article 2 on the grounds that it contradicts Bangladesh's constitution. The proposed NWDP, if adopted, will create the basis for doing this.

The objective of CEDAW is to abolish all discriminatory laws and initiate legal reforms to ensure the rights of women in public and private spheres. CEDAW's Optional Protocol allows individuals or organizations to submit written claims of violations to the committee that monitors CEDAW compliance. It also gives the committee a mandate to investigate violations in countries that are signatories. CEDAW has been employed by advocates of women's human rights in many countries. In Bangladesh, a case brought by the Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association, challenged the High Court to prohibit sexual harassment although there was no national law against it.

Successful applications will show an awareness of the GOB gender-related legislation and a viable strategy that achieves the activity's results while also leveraging GOB support.

Strategic Coordination and Integration: Applicants must address how proposed activities are in line with technical and programmatic priorities of the GOB and USAID, and how programs will work in collaboration to avoid duplication of existing activities.

As such, applicants are strongly encouraged to form and describe partnerships with the GOB (at all appropriate levels), USG- and non-USG-funded implementing partners, private and NGO sector. These stakeholders should have a sense of ownership and participate in the design and execution of the program. Applicants must also ensure that they have, or will have, carried out a gap analysis of on-going activities in the geographic areas in which they propose to work, and explain how their application coordinates with, leverages, and does not duplicate those efforts.

Donor Coordination: The successful application will consider other donor interventions and their relationship to this activity. This approach should limit overlap and explore partnerships that will magnify impact.

Sustainability: In addition, all applicants must describe sustainability plans after the life of the activity, including an exit strategy. Sustainability includes the development of technical competence, human capacity, management systems, relationships with government programs, and financial independence. Capacity-building of local organizations should be carried out with a view to facilitating the “graduation” of local organizations from the emerging, growing, consolidating, to sustainable phase of organizational development. The successful application will include proposed indicators to measure performance of systems and institutional strengthening activities in the short-, medium-, and long-terms. This capacity building refers to technical capacity building to make local organizations more qualified to carry out women's empowerment programming.

The applicant must address how IGAs will be sustainable. This means that interventions must be targeted and responsive to market conditions.

Research and Evidence-Based: Monitoring systems should be designed to provide iterative feedback to continuously improve effectiveness.

Innovation and State-of-the-Art: Successful communications and promotion activities thrive on innovation, constantly striving to find new ways to increase activity effectiveness. This includes the use of best practices in all stages of communications development and delivery, as well as “beyond training only” capacity building approaches. Preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate a dynamic, innovative activity, based upon robust monitoring and evaluation. Approaches should respond to opportunities and challenges that are not only based on international and regional best and promising practices, but are well-tailored to the Bangladesh environment.

Mobile Technology

For WEA, there is potential to use mobile technology due to the growing mobile market in Bangladesh. In 2000, mobile phones were virtually absent in Bangladesh's rural population, but today there are more than 100 million mobile phones in use and that figure is growing daily¹⁶.

Mobile phone penetration to the rural poor is growing worldwide, with mobile phones presenting another opportunity for achieving poverty alleviation goals. The growing trend towards mobile banking is an example of an opportunity for greater financial inclusion of women. A recent

¹⁶ http://www.btrc.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=816:mobile-phone-subscribers-in-bangladesh-january-2012&catid=49:telco-news&Itemid=502

study¹⁷ by the Group Speciale Mobile Association (GSMA) Development Fund and the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women found that in South Asia women are 37% less likely to own a mobile phone than men, even though nine out of ten women surveyed that do own mobile phones feel safer and 85% feel more independent with their phones. This study also found that more than half of women business owners found their phones to be essential productivity enhancers and that ownership of one allowed them to earn more income.

Based on this evidence, the applicant should present an innovative approach to incorporating mobile solutions into the technical approach. Specifically, the applicant should detail how WEA can use mobile phones to improve social and business networking and increase financial transactions and market information for women. For example, women could use mobile phones for credit linkages to credit and/or productive resource inputs. Mobile phones could also serve to inform women producers of market conditions, input and product prices, and innovative agricultural production and post-harvest technologies. Women's concerns over being able to learn mobile technology is a major barrier to mobile phone adoption, so the applicant should highlight how WEA could address this barrier. Ideally, this activity would tie into USAID's mobile banking project or similar initiatives in the geographic area.

[REQUIRED] Utilizing Geographic Information Systems: Utilizing geographic information systems (GIS) technology and geographic data is increasingly important in USAID's effort to geographically target aid investments and effectively report on the scope and impact of the Agency's aid investments. Furthermore, collecting and analyzing geographic data with GIS technology is integral to achieving the objectives set forth in the USAID Policy Framework (2011-2015) as well as increasing overall aid effectiveness while also making important contributions to the Agency's aid transparency and open data goals.

The applicant must apply geospatial methods using GIS technology to support USAID's effort to incorporate geographic data and analysis into the Agency's overall development planning, design, and monitoring & evaluation. Geographic data collection, analysis, and submission methods should be included in the section on Monitoring and Evaluation and work plan as a separate section. There are three types of geographic data that the Mission will collect in a standardized manner:

Project and Activity Location Data: In consultation with the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR), the activity will submit location data according to the geographic precision defined by the Mission's data requirements. Capturing a discrete location for

¹⁷ http://www.cherieblairfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/women_and_mobile_a_global_opportunity.pdf

activity locations is an essential step towards establishing an effective method of managing and communicating activity information.

Thematic Data: This includes information such as demographic indicators, built infrastructure, environmental features, and any other thematic data. When created or acquired using USAID funds, these datasets are considered the property of USAID and must be submitted to the AOR.

Project Specific Data: This includes data that is created during an activity and may be useful to the Mission's own strategic planning and design purposes. When created or acquired using USAID funds, these datasets are considered USAID's property and must be submitted to USAID.

Community Centered Approach: Achieving sustained behavior change requires an approach that addresses the entire spectrum of influence and support around individual Bangladeshis, including families, their communities, and leaders. The behavior change approach should take into consideration regional and demographic differences of the targeted audience. Using participatory methodologies, the successful applicants will demonstrate an approach that can adapt and respond to the constraints facing individuals, avoiding a “one size fits all” approach to programming.

Rapid Start Up: USAID expects the applicant to demonstrate their ability to establish operations rapidly and efficiently through the use of implementation partners to rapidly accomplish formative research and other preparatory work. This includes collecting the baseline data needed to be able to measure activity effectiveness and impact. The applicant should demonstrate a model for working with local partners that have proven know-how and experience to manage effective activities in each location. Moreover, where appropriate, the recipient should use existing national, regional, and global best practices, proven initiatives, protocols and tools to avoid a long start-up period.

Sub-Grants: The applicant may propose to award sub-grants to local, regional, or international NGOs under the resulting agreement. As WEA is a diverse and multi-disciplinary activity, sub-grants can be an effective tool to promote the activity objective and results, and often more importantly, may serve as a means to leverage expertise of other organizations (e.g., financial/administrative, communications and outreach, or technical expertise). The applicant should ensure that prospective organizations considered as sub-grantees should have the capacity to adequately manage and account for USG funds.

Management Plan: USAID/Bangladesh expects rapid start-up of WEA with major and verifiable activation milestones achieved within the first 90 days. The recipient must hold early and intensive meetings with the AOR during and after the start-up. The AOR may ask the recipient to provide technical advice or informational inputs to USAID on women's empowerment.

The key personnel of the recipient must remain alert to changes that may occur in the implementation environment, inform its impact on the program implementation, and be prepared to respond as quickly as possible to achieve desired activity results. Accordingly, USAID will expect the recipient to be flexible enough to change course if the Chief of Party and the AOR agree that other approaches will be more effective. The recipient will need to be open and prepared to revise and adjust WEA interventions as necessary, and regularly report, consult and seek advice from the GOB counterparts, USAID, other USG agencies, other donor(s), civil societies, and business partners in Bangladesh within the stipulation of the Cooperative Agreement.

USAID expects that the applicant will demonstrate the ability to establish operations rapidly and efficiently through the use of implementation partners to quickly accomplish formative research and other preparatory work. The applicant should demonstrate an effective model for working with local partners that have proven know-how and experience to manage effective programs in each location. Moreover, where appropriate, the recipient should use existing national, regional, and global best practices, protocols, and tools to avoid a long start-up period.

The applicant must address how possible registration with Bangladesh NGO Affairs Bureau (<http://www.ngoab.gov.bd/>) and use of Bangladesh National Board of Revenue (<http://www.nbr-bd.org/>)-generated Value Added Tax (VAT) coupons will impact timing of implementation in the required initial mobilization plan.

Finally, the applicant is advised that they are responsible for applying for and obtaining any and all necessary work visas for any foreign personnel employees.

viii). KEY PERSONNEL

Certain skilled experienced professional and/or technical personnel are essential for accomplishing the work to be performed. These individuals are defined as "Key Personnel." Applicants must propose how they will staff the project, identifying and describing key personnel positions and the candidates that will fill these positions. Applicants must clearly describe the professional qualifications, education, and relevant experience of each of the proposed key personnel, including demonstrated management, leadership, interpersonal skills and working experience in a project of similar size and breadth, as appropriate.

The key personnel positions and related qualifications that must be included in the application are as follows:

Chief of Party (COP) –

- Senior level professional with a minimum of 12 years of experience working in development, with a recognized expertise and experience in women's empowerment programming. Technical expertise should complement the skills of the Deputy Chief of Party and/or other Key Personnel.
- International experience in developing countries, preferably including South Asia/Bangladesh.
- Master's Degree or PhD in gender studies, development, or a relevant discipline.
- Proven leadership in the administration of similar activities with skills in strategic planning, management, supervision and budgeting. Extensive experience working with the USG or international donors is critical.
- Proven experience and knowledge in promoting the role of gender.
- Demonstrated ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams and develop a network of contacts among international donor officials, host government officials, and non-government staff.
- Evidence of excellent skills in intercultural communications and proven experience in facilitating dialogue, coordination, and collaboration on gender-related programming. Possesses a demonstrated ability to establish strong working relationships with senior representatives of national and local government, the private sector and civil society.
- Excellent communication skills in English (Foreign Service Institute [FSI] level IV), both written and orally.
- The COP must be a full-time dedicated staff member and does not need to be the head of the applicant's organization.
- The COP must be from the prime applicant.

Livelihood Specialist–

- Minimum seven years' experience in developing livelihood interventions and the technical aspects related to the proposed program description, including skills training, micro-lending, micro-saving, employment generation, alternative/additional income generation and social protection.
- Master's degree in gender studies, development, or a relevant discipline.
- Extensive experience in projects promoting livelihood interventions with a gender focus, working successfully with international donor/USG agencies, international NGOs, and host country NGOs.

- Excellent communications skills in English (FSI level IV), both written and orally. Knowledge of Bangla strongly preferred.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist –

- Minimum eight years' experience designing, managing, and implementing multi-disciplinary and results-based M&E surveys.
- Minimum of a Master's degree in a relevant field.
- Extensive experience in M&E work for international donor/USG agencies or international NGOs.
- Excellent communications skills in English (FSI level IV), both written and orally. Knowledge of Bangla strongly preferred.

Gender Specialist –

- Minimum eight years' experience of progressive professional experience in gender analysis and programming.
- Minimum of a Master's degree in gender studies, development, or a relative discipline.
- Demonstrated experience working on projects promoting women's empowerment.
- Extensive field-based experience, preferably in Bangladesh.
- Excellent communications skills in English (FSI level IV), both written and orally. Knowledge of Bangla strongly preferred.

Designating a Deputy Chief of Party is imperative. The applicant must designate one of the key personnel as the Deputy Chief of Party who will work with the Chief of Party and supervise staff, field activities, and other work requirements jointly with and in place of the Chief of Party when out of office.

Other staff - Additional personnel are critical to the success of the activity. The applicant should suggest other full-time personnel and short-time technical experts (if required) as necessary to effectively implement the activity. This position may be combined with other important roles; the applicant shall provide details on staffing to describe these roles.

The below list of other staff roles are necessary for successful implementation of the activity. However, the applicant may choose to combine roles and/or propose new roles/personnel depending on the desired technical approach and management structure. This list is not intended to be comprehensive.

- Community/Field Coordinator
- Information Technology Specialist

- Institutional Capacity Building Specialist/Training Facilitator
- Logistics, Finance, and Administrative Support

ix). MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A. Overview

M&E comprises an essential component of WEA for the following reasons:

- To inform USAID of progress
- To enable detailed and ongoing design (and redesign) of interventions
- To contribute critical information for public awareness/outreach (where applicable) to demonstrate that progress can be made in women's empowerment
- To document lessons learned for future gender-related programming

The recipient shall maintain open, timely and effective communications with USAID, resulting in an implementation partnership that proactively addresses potential problems with flexible, workable solutions.

For the purpose of routine and formal M&E, the applicant shall present an illustrative M&E Plan as part of the application. Once the agreement has been awarded, the recipient shall develop a formal M&E Plan, based on the illustrative M&E Plan, for USAID's review and approval in accordance with ADS 203.3.5.

Upon implementation, the recipient will work closely with the Assistance Officer Representative (AOR) to devise scientific methods for measuring the impact of the activity. The recipient will submit the M&E Plan pursuant to Section V requirements. The recipient will complete all M&E activities proposed in its plan within a timeframe defined in the Annual Work Plans by, for example, commissioning surveys, conducting internal evaluations and baseline assessments for the interventions and their expected targets for subsequent years. USAID/Bangladesh anticipates that the recipient will budget up to ten percent (10%) of its total budget on M&E. It is the applicant's responsibility to budget for all costs related to the implementation of the M&E Plan (e.g., human resources, equipment).

The recipient must disaggregate by sex the impact on the beneficiaries and provide analysis of this data. If a single sex is disproportionately involved or benefited (relative to WEA's targets), the recipient should explain the reason and whether or not it is appropriate. If deemed inappropriate and the result of a structural cause, the recipient should inform USAID and suggest remedial interventions to improve the equity of implementation. Due to the design of WEA, this

activity will disproportionately affect women, but men's participation is still a key facet of WEA and should be tracked accordingly.

B. M&E Plan

Consistent with the Development Objective (DO) 2 Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP)¹⁸, the applicant's M&E Plan will provide detailed information regarding the proposed survey methods that will be used to measure the impact of the activity's interventions over time on:

- Women's empowerment
- Women's decision-making
- Women's empowerment groups
- Women's income-generating activities

The M&E Plan will further serve as a management tool to monitor project progress and assess programmatic results, including the how and why results were achieved, and what actions should be taken to improve performance further. Evaluations will provide accountability to stakeholders and learning to improve effectiveness.

The M&E Plan is required to include the elements indicated below:

- Measurable indicators pertinent to activity-level management, monitoring, and reporting
- A Results Framework aligned with the DO2 PMP
- A development hypothesis and critical assumptions
- Baseline values and targets to show progress over time
- A Performance Data Table summarizing the key performance monitoring information
- Performance Indicator Reference Sheets for each indicator that includes detailed description of the indicator, data source, and data survey method and limitations
- Data baselines established within three months of award
- A Performance Management Task Schedule that includes any special studies, assessment, and surveys that will be conducted as part of the M&E activities
- An outline of the means of communicating findings and data among partners and to stakeholders including USAID

C. Indicators

The illustrative M&E Plan should make use of USAID/Bangladesh's DO2 PMP. Annex 1 contains a list of indicators that USAID/Bangladesh is currently using in the DO2 PMP to measure performance. Illustrative PMP indicators are provided below. Based on the applicant's

¹⁸ Annex 1

experience, the applicant should propose additional indicators that measure WEA's progress in achieving expected results. A successful M&E Plan will be one that is tailored to the activity but is both complete and concise. The M&E Plan must take into consideration the following criteria when choosing indicators:

- **Validity.** Validity refers to the extent to which a measure actually represents what we intend to measure. In the USAID context, we focus on three key dimensions of validity: face validity, attribution, and measurement error. Face validity means that an outsider or an expert in the field would agree that the data is the true measure of a result. Attribution focuses on the extent to which a change in the data is related to USAID interventions. Measurement error results primarily from poor design or management of data collection processes.
- **Integrity.** Data that are collected, analyzed, and reported should have established mechanisms in place to reduce the possibility that they are intentionally manipulated for political or personal reasons. Data integrity is at greatest risk of being compromised during collection and analysis.
- **Precision.** Data should be sufficiently precise to present a fair picture of performance and enable management decision-making at the appropriate levels. One key issue is whether data is at an appropriate level of detail to inform related management decisions. A second key issue is what margin of error (the amount of variation normally expected from a given data collection process) is acceptable given the management decisions likely to be affected. In all cases, the margin of error should be less than the intended change.
- **Reliability.** Data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes and analysis methods over time. The key issue is whether analysts and managers would come to the same conclusions if the data collection and analysis process were repeated. Progress toward performance targets should reflect real changes rather than variations in data collection methods. When data collection and analysis methods change, the plan should be updated.
- **Timeliness.** Data should be timely enough to inform management decision-making at the appropriate levels. One key issue is whether the data is available frequently enough to inform the appropriate level of management decisions. A second key issue is whether data is current enough when it is available.

The DO2 PMP indicator that the applicant will use in the M&E Plan is the Women's Agricultural Empowerment Index.

The applicant should propose additional meaningful indicators that measure the activity's performance and impact. These indicators should be specific to the activity and not necessarily USAID indicators. Illustrative custom indicators (included as an example and not mandatory) are listed below:

- Percentage of respondents who participate in decision-making to buy, sell or transfer his/her owned assets
- Percentage of respondents who own their assets (sole or joint)
- Percentage of respondents with access to credit
- Percentage of respondents with input to credit use
- Percentage of respondents with sole or joint control over income
- Percentage of respondents who are members of a group
- Percentage of respondents who have spoken in public
- Percentage of respondents who have sole or joint decision-making on productive decisions
- Percentage of respondents who believe their values are reflected in their decision-making on production choices
- Percentage of respondents satisfied with allocation of time between production and domestic tasks
- Percentage of respondents satisfied with time available for leisure

D. Evaluations

External evaluations at USAID will be impact or performance evaluations and will be commissioned by USAID and not the implementing partner. USAID/Bangladesh evaluations will be conducted according to ADS 203.3.1. It is anticipated that there will be an impact evaluation, including a baseline, midterm, and endline survey for both a rigorously defined counterfactual and treatment group. USAID will use the midterm evaluation to suggest needed modifications to the activity focus and implementation, and the final evaluation will include recommendations for potential future USAID investments in women's empowerment as well as an assessment of the activity.

x). 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 the Code of Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in ADS Part 201.5.10(g) and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-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. Respondents' environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs.

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, the latter shall govern.

No activity funded under this Cooperative Agreement will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion, Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO).

As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the recipient, in collaboration with the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and Mission Environmental Officer or BEO, as appropriate, shall review all ongoing and planned activities under this Cooperative Agreement to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation. The recipient must comply with:

USAID Regulation 22 CFR 216, Agency Environmental Procedures

(http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/22cfr216.htm)

Environmental Guidelines for Small-Scale Activities in Africa, 2nd edition

(<http://www.encapafrica.org/egssaa.htm>)

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. 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.

An IEE of the USAID/Bangladesh's Feed the Future Project that includes this activity will be approved by the BEO before funds are sub-obligated into this activity. USAID/Bangladesh will provide a copy of the IEE to the recipient, who must follow the conditions outlined therein. The recipient shall be responsible for implementing all IEE conditions, as established in the BEO-Approved IEE, pertaining to the activities (including sub-contracts and grants) to be funded under this Agreement.

The recipient must include required environmental compliance and reporting language into each sub-implementation instrument and ensure that appropriate resources (budget), staff, equipment, and reporting procedures are dedicated to this portion of the activity. The recipient will ensure

that sub-implementing partners have sufficient capacity to complete the environmental screening process and to implement monitoring and mitigation measures. The recipient shall be responsible for training staff, grantees, subcontractors, and counterparts on the agreements' environmental requirements and for ensuring they are in compliance with these requirements.

xi). COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Communication and Outreach Strategy

The recipient must develop a Strategic Communications Plan (SCP) with a clearly focused action plan. The SCP will detail how the activity will reach out to stakeholders at the national and local levels, including government officials, other donors and various target populations. After technical evaluation of applications for USAID funding, USAID Agreement Officer will request Apparent Successful Applicants to develop and submit the SCP within a specified time period. The Agreement Officer shall review the plan for adequacy and will negotiate, approve and include the SCP in the award. The purpose of the SCP is to concisely outline how the organization will publicize the activity's achievements and credit USAID to ensure the target audience is aware that the funding is coming from the American people.

The SCP (totaling 2-3 pages) should:

- State key messages about the activity's objectives and achievements;
- Identify target audiences, such as media, youth, or government officials;
- Identify the tools and tactics the partner will use to publicize project achievements, such as social media, television and radio, press releases and newspaper articles, television commercials, public service announcements, and/or media round table discussions;
- Propose a calendar or timeline for outreach events; and,
- Include how the partner proposes to monitor the impact of its communication strategy, such as tracking the number of articles or press releases published in newspapers or the number of events organized. This monitoring information can be included in the annual workplan per the direction of AORs.

The recipient is required to submit the draft SCP following the required USAID policies and regulations on Branding Strategy and Marking Plan within the 90 calendar days of the effective date of the award for the AOR's clearance.

2. AUTHORIZED LEGISLATION

This is a discretionary Cooperative Agreement opportunity to be competed and awarded pursuant to the authority of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, as amended, and the applicable sections of USAID regulation 22 CFR 226.

3. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Type of entities which may apply is described in Section III.

4. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

For US organizations, USAID Regulation 22 CFR 226, OMB Circulars, and USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental recipients will be applicable. For non-U.S. organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental recipients and the applicable cost principles (OMB Circular A-122 for non-profit organizations and OMB Circular A-21 for universities) will apply. The OMB circulars are available in the following link: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html>. For both U.S. and non U.S. for-profit organizations Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 will be applicable. Please refer to Section VI of this RFA for more information on the standard provisions. While 22 CFR 226 does not directly apply to non-U.S. applicants, the Agreement Officer will use the standards of 22 CFR 226 in the administration of the award. Further information including the referenced documents may be obtained via our agency website <http://www.usaid.gov> directly or via links in USAID Automated Directive System (ADS) Chapter 303: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>. Copies may also be obtained from the listed agency points of contact for this RFA.

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.81, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, direct and indirect, which are related to the Cooperative Agreement and are in accordance with applicable cost standards may be paid under the Award.

[END OF SECTION - I]

SECTION II – AWARD INFORMATION

1. ESTIMATED FUNDING AVAILABLE

The total estimated funding for WEA is anticipated to be \$5.5-\$6 million over three (3) years, subject to the availability of funds. USAID reserves the right to fund any one, none, or several of the applications submitted.

USAID may make an award on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions or negotiations. Therefore, each initial application should contain the applicant's best terms from a cost and technical standpoint. USAID reserves the right (but is not under obligation to do so), however, to enter into discussions with one of more applicants in order to obtain clarifications, additional detail, or to suggest refinements in the program description, budget, or other aspects of an application. Neither financial data submitted with an application nor representations concerning facilities or financing will form a part of the resulting Cooperative Agreement unless explicitly stated otherwise in the agreement.

2. ANTICIPATED START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance anticipated herein is three (3) years, beginning on the effective date of the cover page of the Cooperative Agreement.

3. AWARD TYPE AND SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

A. Award Type

USAID intends to award one or more Cooperative Agreements from this Request for Application (RFA) to the recipient whose application conforms to this RFA offering the greatest value to the US Government (see also Section V of this RFA for Evaluation Criteria). The US Government may: 1) reject any and all applications; 2) accept alternate applications; 3) accept more than one application; 4) accept alternate applications; and/or 5) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

B. Substantial Involvement

USAID/Bangladesh anticipates a strong and close working partnership with the recipient of this Cooperative Agreement. USAID will be substantially involved in the implementation of the selected activity that is consistent with USAID policy contained in ADS Chapter 303 concerning non-governmental assistance activities. This substantial involvement will be through the Agreement Officer, except to the extent that the Agreement Officer delegates authority to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) in writing. The intended purpose of the substantial involvement during the award is to assist the recipient in achieving the supported objectives of the agreement.

In addition to the requirements in 22 CFR 226 and other applicable regulations or provisions, USAID/Bangladesh will be substantially involved during the implementation of this Cooperative Agreement in the following ways through the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) or the Agreement Officer as per ADS 303.3.11:

A. Approval of recipient's Implementation Plans

- Approval of annual work plans

B. Approval of Key Personnel and any change in key personnel

C. Agency and recipient Collaboration or Joint Participation

- Approval of Subawards and Subcontracts
- Approval of Monitoring and Evaluation Plans
- Agency monitoring to permit specified kinds of direction or redirection because of interrelationships with other projects.

[END OF SECTION II]

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

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

In addition to the above requirements the applicants should:

- Have managerial, technical, and institutional capacities to achieve the results outlined in this Program Description.
- Have a politically neutral humanitarian mandate, a commitment to non-discrimination with respect to beneficiaries and adherence to equal opportunity employment practices. Non-discrimination includes equal treatment without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and political affiliation.

Applicants are reminded that US Executive Orders and US law prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws. This provision must be included in all sub-awards issued under this Cooperative Agreement.

2. NEW PARTNERS

USAID encourages applications from organizations that have never received a direct award from USAID. However, resultant awards to these organizations may be significantly delayed if USAID must undertake necessary pre-award reviews of these organizations to determine their “responsibility” (see below). These organizations should take this into account and plan their implementation dates and interventions accordingly.

3. COST SHARING

It is USAID policy to encourage cost share contributions from Cooperative Agreement recipients. Cost sharing under the proposed award is required to be at least 5% of the total

estimated amount over the life of the three-year activity. Cost sharing may be cash or in-kind contributions, but may not include USG funds or USG-funded in-kind contributions. Cost sharing must be used for the accomplishment of activity objectives and must consist of allowable costs under the applicable USG cost principles (Office of Management and Budget [OMB] Circular A-122, and Required, as applicable, Standard Provision No. 21 for Non-US Nongovernmental Recipients). The applicant must estimate the amount of cost sharing resources to be mobilized over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. To be eligible to receive this Cooperative Agreement, an organization must propose to contribute from their own, private, or local sources no less than 5% of the amount of funds provided by USAID for the implementation of this activity over the course of the agreement.

4. “RESPONSIBILITY” OF APPLICANT

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

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

[END OF SECTION III]

SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. POINTS OF CONTACT

Jennifer Crow Yang
Agreement Officer
USAID/Bangladesh
c/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Email: jcrow-yang@usaid.gov

Ahsanur Rahman
Acquisition & Assistance Officer
USAID/Bangladesh
c/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Email: marahman@usaid.gov

2. APPLICATION FORMS

All applicants must submit the application using the SF-424 series, which includes the:

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-construction Programs
- SF-424B, Assurances – Non-construction Programs

The program described in Section I above includes non-construction elements. Therefore, these mandatory forms for non-construction programs must be completed. Costs to non-construction activities should be included on the SF-424A. Copies of these forms may be found in the following website: <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormsMenu?source=agency>.

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

In addition to the certifications that are included in the SF 424, applicants must provide the following certifications, assurances and other statements. Complete copies of these Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements are located in the Attachment 1 of this RFA.

4. APPLICATION FORMAT

A. Preparation of Applications

- i. Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this RFA.

- ii. Each applicant shall furnish the information required by this RFA. The applicant must sign the application form (SF 424) and print or type its name on the Cover Page of the technical and cost applications. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent shall be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.
- iii. 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, must:
 - a. Mark the title page with the following legend:

"This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed - in whole or in part - for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this applicant as a result of - or in connection with - the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. 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 ____". and,

- b. Mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following legend:

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

- iv. Applicants should retain for their records one copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany it.
- v. Application shall be split into two separate parts: (1) Technical Application; and (2) Cost Application. The formats for each of these parts of the application are set forth below.

B. TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORMAT

The technical application should be specific, complete, and presented concisely. Applications should demonstrate the applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the results of this activity, taking into account the technical evaluation criteria found in Section V.

Applicants are invited to present 1) an innovative technical approach and an effective implementation strategy to achieve the activity objective and results set forth in Section I; 2) a well thought-out implementation plan with sound rationale for the proposed level of effort and scheduling of work; 3) an illustrative M&E Plan that identifies appropriate milestones, gender sensitive indicators and targets (including sex disaggregated targets), as well as plans to gather and utilize baseline data, the illustrative M&E Plan is expected to reflect concern for results and

include proper impact indicators; and 4) an exit strategy and approach to ensure that the program results can be sustained after completion of the project.

The technical application shall be written in English and **shall not exceed 30 single-spaced typed pages**. Page limitations include the following requirements: single-spaced text printed on one side of the page only, one-inch (1") margins, **12-point (minimum) Times New Roman font** with each page numbered consecutively. It shall include an executive summary, not to exceed two (2) pages. The executive summary shall provide a clear overview of the results to be achieved, milestone or benchmark measures of progress and a brief summary of applicant's experience implementing similar activities.

As part of the technical application, the applicant shall include five (5) Annexes:

- A. Illustrative M&E Plan
- B. Resumes for Key Personnel (including references) and Letters of Commitment
- C. Memorandum of Understanding with proposed partners
- D. Mobilization Plan
- E. Relevant Past Performance Information (for recipient and primary sub-grantees)

The above annexes – as well as the cover page, table of contents, list of acronyms, and executive summary – are excluded from the 30-page limitation. Elaborate art work, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted. Unnecessarily elaborate brochures or other presentations beyond those sufficient to present a complete and effective application in response to this RFA are not desired and may be construed as an indication of the prospective recipient's lack of cost consciousness.

The technical application will become the program description incorporated into the final Cooperative Agreement, if selected.

Applicants should prepare their applications using the following general format:

A. Cover Page

A single page with the names of the organization/institutions involved and the lead or primary applicant clearly identified. Any proposed sub-grantees (hereafter referred to as the "subs") should be listed separately. In addition, the Cover Page should provide a contact person for the prime applicant, including the individual's name (both typed and his/her signature), title or position with the organization/institution, address, telephone and fax numbers. State whether the contact person is the person with authority to contract for the applicant and, if not, that person should also be listed. The cover page should be a maximum of one page and is excluded from the 30-page limitation.

B. Executive Summary

This should provide a clear summary of the key elements of the applicant's strategy and approach as well as resources, methodologies and roles of contributing organizations, as appropriate. The executive summary should be a maximum of two pages and is excluded from the 30-page limitation.

C. Technical Approach

The technical approach must set for the strategy, concept, tactics, methodology, techniques, and interventions for accomplishing anticipated results set forth in the Program Description (Section I) of the RFA. The technical approach must demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the development challenge and backgrounds in addressing women's empowerment, a realistic assessment of opportunities to link and synergize with other USAID and donor-funded activities, and a focus on results. Applicants are encouraged to propose innovative yet realistic approaches that are most appropriate in the context of Bangladesh. The technical approach should include:

- outline of all activity components, with a clear vision of concrete proposed results
- understanding of the issues to be addressed, including recommendations for prioritization
- criteria for selecting populations to be assisted and an illustrative list of partners, as well as benchmarks that would signify graduation from assistance
- plan for effective rapid launch of WEA interventions
- timeline for implementation
- strategy for the phase-out and sustainability of interventions
- creative use of new technology, innovative tools, and lessons learned
- responsiveness to essential design elements

As part of the technical approach, the applicant shall also include **an illustrative M&E Plan** as annexes to the application. The illustrative M&E Plan must explain how the applicant proposes to monitor the activity and assess activity impact. The M&E Plan must include indicators, targets, data sources and collection methods, baseline information, and benchmarks. The applicant must discuss the ways in which the collection, analysis and reporting of performance data will be managed under the activity. Applicants are encouraged to provide an M&E Plan that they believe would best monitor the activity's progress which includes indicators and data collection systems that will provide reliable, valid, timely, and precise information in a cost-effective manner. All data collected must be disaggregated by sex. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all costs related to the implementation of the M&E Plan are included in the cost application and consider the required human resources for implementing the M&E Plan.

D. Personnel

Applicants must specify the qualifications and abilities of selected personnel that are suited to successfully implement the proposed technical approach. The applicant shall also include, in an annex, **resumes** for all key personnel candidates (including references) and any other personnel proposed for significant positions. Resumes may not exceed two (2) pages in length and shall be in chronological order starting with most recent experience. The application should include documentation to support how each key personnel fit the requirements listed in Section 1.iv Key Personnel in the Program Description. The application should include information for proposed staff in the format of curriculum vitae (CV) or a resume that illustrates the competency and experience in the skills required in the Project Description. This information should reflect the length and variety of experience in similar tasks and clearly demonstrate relevant training and experience. The key managers' CV or resume shall reflect their experience and ability to coordinate and manage the contract requirements. Each resume shall be accompanied by a **signed Letter of Commitment** from each candidate indicating his/her: (a) availability to serve in the stated position, in terms of days after award; (b) intention to serve for a stated term of the service; and (c) agreement to the compensation levels which correspond to the levels set forth in the cost application.

E. Management Plan

The applicant should propose a management plan and describe how the proposed plan will contribute towards achieving the objectives and results described in the Program Description. The proposed plan should specifically state and justify the composition and organizational structure of the entire activity team. It should also describe how the technical expertise and experience of all staff members is most conducive to achieving expected results of the activity. The plan should specify the role and estimated amount of time each staff member will devote to the activity and/or specific components within the activity. Delineation of roles, responsibilities, authority, and processes for decision-making within applicant's in-country team and between the home office and the field must be spelled out clearly. **An organizational chart should be included** and clearly depict lines of authority, staff responsibility, and the role of sub-recipient organizations (if any).

The applicant should clearly identify proposed partners, explaining the roles and responsibilities of each and the proposed management operating structure. **Signed Memorandum of Understanding with proposed partners should be presented in an annex** (excluded from the 30-page limitation) and will be reviewed. Services to be provided by each partner institution or organization shall be described. Applicants shall describe the process of identifying and supporting sub-grantees (if any) and specify the technical resources and expertise of proposed

subcontract/sub-recipient organizations (if any). Should the applicant decide to utilize sub-agreements, detailed information on its experience in overseeing and implementing sub-agreements should be provided.

The management plan should also describe how the applicant would coordinate and synergize its interventions with other programs of USAID/Bangladesh and other donors. The applicant should provide information on proposed field management structure and financial controls as well as details on home office backstopping and its purpose (if applicable).

Finally, a **Mobilization Plan** should be included as a step-by-step outline that concretely demonstrates how the applicant will get the activity underway. The Mobilization Plan must cover the first 90 days of activity implementation and address how the applicant can rapidly launch the activity. The Mobilization Plan shall provide information on how planned interventions might contribute to expected results within the first 90 days. The Mobilization Plan should include the management of identified challenges described in Section I(7)(M).

F. Institutional Capacity

Applicants must demonstrate technical and managerial expertise that would directly benefit the activity implementation and reflect comparative advantages in implementing proposed interventions. Applicants should articulate: 1) financial and administrative capacity; and 2) technical capacity relative to women's empowerment.

Information in this section should include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Brief description of organizational history/expertise
- Relevant experience with proposed interventions
- Organizational strength as represented by experience in managing successful programs of similar scope and complexity
- Information demonstrating the applicant's financial/procurement capability, such as confirmation of existing automated financial systems, personnel policies, travel policies, audit policies, and any other applicable information.
- Sub-awardee or subcontractor capabilities and expertise.

G. Past Performance

Applicants must provide evidence of pertinent past performance and clearly describe examples of successful development and implementation of programs similar to what is required under this RFA. Applicants must submit a list of the all U.S. Government or other donor-funded contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, etc. involving similar or related programs during the past three years. This information is also required for all identified sub-recipients, as it relates to their

proposed role, that represent 10% or more of the total estimated cost. Include the following for each award:

- Name of awarding organization or agency
- Address of awarding organization or agency
- Place of performance of services or program
- Award number
- Amount of award
- Period of Performance (begin and end dates of services/program)
- Name, current telephone number, current fax number, and email address (if one is available) of a responsible technical representative (activity manager or other contact person) of that organization or agency
- Brief description of the activity

Disclaimer

USAID may contact references and use the past performance data regarding the organization, along with other information to evaluate the applicant's relevant past experience. The Government reserves the right to obtain information for use in the evaluation of past performance from any and all sources inside or outside the Government.

H. Technical Application Outline

The suggested outline for the technical application is:

- I. Cover Page
- II. Table of Contents, listing all page numbers and attachments
- III. List of Acronyms
- IV. Executive Summary
- III. Technical Approach
- IV. Past Performance
- V. Personnel
- VI. Management Plan
- VII. Institutional Capacity
- VIII. Annexes:
 - a. Illustrative M&E Plan
 - b. Resumes for Key Personnel (including references) and Letters of Commitment
 - c. Memorandum of Understanding with proposed partners
 - d. Mobilization Plan
 - e. Relevant Past Performance Information (recipient and key sub-grantees)

C. COST APPLICATION FORMAT

The Cost Application is to be submitted under separate cover from the technical application. Certain documents are required to be submitted by an applicant in order for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. However, it is USAID policy not to burden applicants with undue reporting requirements if that information is readily available through other sources. There is no page limitation on the Cost Application.

The following sections describe the documentation that applicants for an assistance award must submit to USAID/Bangladesh prior to award. While there is no page limit for this portion, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible, but still provide the necessary detail to address the following:

A. Budget Narrative

The budget must have an accompanying detailed budget narrative and justification that provides in detail the total program amount for implementation of the program your organization is proposing. The budget narrative should provide information regarding the basis of estimate for each line item, including reference to sources used to substantiate the cost estimate (e.g. organization's policy, payroll document, vendor quotes, etc.).

In addition to the detailed budget, a summary of the budget must be submitted using Standard Form 424 and 424A which can be downloaded from the following web site:

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormsMenu?source=agency>

B. Budget Categories

The cost/business application should contain the following budget categories:

- i) **Direct Labor** – Direct salaries, wages and annual increases for all personnel proposed under the application shall be in accordance with the applicant's established personnel policies. To be considered adequate, the policies must be in writing, applicable to all employees of the organization, is subject to review and approval at a high enough organizational level to assure its uniform enforcement, and result in costs which are reasonable and allowable in accordance with applicable cost principles. The narrative should include a level of effort analysis specifying personnel, rate of compensation, and amount of time proposed. Anticipated salary increases during the period of the agreement should be included.
- ii) **Fringe Benefits** – If accounted for as a separate item of cost, fringe benefits should be based on the applicant's audited fringe benefit rate, supported by a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) or historical cost data. If the latter is used, the budget narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of

- fringe benefits (e.g. unemployment insurance, workers compensation, health and life insurance, retirement, FICA, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in dollars and as a percentage of salaries.
- iii) **Supplies and Equipment** – Differentiate between expendable supplies and nonexpendable equipment (Note: equipment is defined as tangible nonexpendable personal property including exempt property charged directly to the award having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit, unless the applicant's established policy establishes nonexpendable equipment anticipated to be required to implement the program, specifying quantities and unit cost.)
 - iv) **Allowances** – Allowances must be broken down by specific type and by person and must be in accordance with the applicant's established policies.
 - v) **Travel and Per Diem** – The narrative should indicate number of trips, domestic and international, and the estimated unit cost of each travel in accordance with the technical application. Proposed per diem rates must be in accordance with the applicant's established policies and practices that are uniformly applied to federally-financed and other activities of the applicant.
 - vi) **Other Direct Costs** – This could include any miscellaneous costs such as office rents, communications, transportations, supplies and utilities, report preparation costs, passports, visas, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than the applicant's normal coverage), etc. The narrative, or supporting schedule, should provide a complete breakdown and support for each item of other direct costs.
 - vii) **Proposed Sub-Agreements** – Applicants who intend to utilize sub-contractors or sub recipients should indicate the extent intended and a complete cost breakdown, as well as all the information required herein for the applicant. Sub-contract/agreement cost applications should follow the same cost format as submitted by the applicant.

C. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) – Existing Agreement

A current NICRA if your organization has such an agreement with an agency or department of the USG.

D. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) – No Current Agreement

Applicants who do not currently have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from their cognizant agency shall submit the following information:

- 1) Copies of the applicant's financial reports for the previous 3-year period, which have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID
- 2) Projected budget, cash flow and an organizational chart for the applicant

- 3) A copy of the organization's accounting manual

E. Assurances – Non-Construction Programs

Required assurances, certifications and representations as indicated in 424 B entitled Assurances – Non Construction Programs and the certifications identified in subsection 2 and 3 of the section.

F. Determination of Responsibility

Applicants should submit any additional evidence of responsibility deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to make a determination of responsibility. The information submitted should substantiate that the applicant:

- 1) has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award
- 2) has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, nongovernmental and governmental
- 3) has a satisfactory record of performance – past relevant unsatisfactory performance is ordinarily sufficient to justify a finding of non-responsibility, unless there is clear evidence of subsequent satisfactory performance
- 4) has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics
- 5) is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a grant under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO)

G. New Partners

Applicants that have never received a grant, cooperative agreement or contract from the US Government are required to submit a copy of their accounting manual. If a copy has already been submitted to the US Government, the applicant should advise which Federal office has a copy.

H. 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, formerly known as M/OP).

I. Cost-Share

Cost sharing under the proposed award is required to be at least 5% of the total estimated amount. Cash or in-kind contributions associated with the proposed project must be reflected separately and clearly defined in the budget (see 22 CFR 226.23 and ADS 303.3.10 for guidance on cost share). Information regarding the proposed cost share should be included in the SF 424 and the Budget as indicated on those documents. The cost sharing plan should be discussed in the Budget Narrative to the extent necessary to determine its feasibility and realistic access to the sources and funds.

5. SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Applications shall be due at 1600 hours Bangladesh Local Time on April 8, 2014. USAID will determine whether an application that is not received by the Agreement Officer by one of the methods specified below by the time and date indicated will be late. Because making an award is critical to USG foreign policy goals, time is important and late applications may not, at the sole discretion of the Agreement Officer, be considered.

6. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS/PRE-AWARD COSTS

There are no funding restrictions applicable to this RFA at this time. USAID in its discretion and at the request of the winning applicant may allow pre-award costs.

7. APPLICATIONS SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Applicants may upload applications to <http://www.grants.gov>. Additionally, a separate electronic (e-mail) AND a hard copy submission are still required by USAID/Bangladesh. All applications received by the submission deadline will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the application format. No addition or modifications will be accepted after the submission date.

A. Submission of Hard Copy Applications

Hard copies of applications and modifications thereof shall be submitted in sealed envelopes or packages (1) addressed to the office specified below; and (2) showing the date and time specified for receipt (i.e., the due date and time), the RFA number, and the name and address of the applicant.

Applications submitted via courier service or mail shall be submitted in two separate parts and delivered in two separate envelopes: (a) technical and (b) cost or business application. The hard copy technical application shall consist of one (1) original and two (2) copies. The cost or business application shall consist of one (1) original and two (2) copies. Applications shall be submitted with the name and address of the applicant and RFA number (referenced above) inscribed thereon, to:

By Courier Service/Hand Delivery:

Agreement Officer
Office of the Acquisition and Assistance
U.S. Agency for International Development
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Telephone: (880 2) 885-5500

By Mail:

Agreement Officer
Office of the Acquisition and Assistance
U.S. Agency for International Development
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

Hard copies of submissions must arrive by the due date and time. It is recommended that applicants use courier service instead of international mail for the hard copy submission.

Faxed applications are not acceptable.

Please be advised that in the past, some firms have experienced delays with international air courier services. Applications received after the closing date and time will be processed as late. Also, if you utilize the services of an independent agent in Bangladesh to deliver your application, please be certain that he/she understands that additional time may be needed to allow for security review of any packages, and the closing date and time are firm.

Note: Delivery to the air courier representative does not constitute meeting the statutory requirement that applications are received on time at the designated office. For purposes of recording the official receipt of applications, the date/time stamp of the Office of the Acquisition and Assistance at USAID/Bangladesh will govern.

B. Submission of Electronic Applications

Applications may be uploaded to <http://www.grants.gov>; however, separately submitted applications, e-mailed AND in hard copy, are still required by USAID/Bangladesh. USAID/Bangladesh bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions.

Applications shall be submitted with the name and address of the applicant and the RFA number (referenced above) inscribed thereon, to marahman@usaid.gov and jcrow-yang@usaid.gov, respectively.

For electronic submissions, your organization must ensure that the applications are received at USAID/Bangladesh in its entirety. No addition or modifications will be accepted after the submission date. E-mail attachments should be formatted in Microsoft Word and/or Microsoft Excel format with **5 MB limit per e-mail**. Please convert your documents to one of these formats before sending them to USAID/Bangladesh, or provide scanned copies of pages in .pdf format (Adobe PDF) if they include signatures or forms. **USAID/Bangladesh cannot accept .zip files, as they will be blocked by USAID's firewall.**

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

- 1) Applications submitted electronically must be in either Microsoft Word (for narrative text) or Excel (for tables), unless you are providing scanned copies of pages that include signatures or forms.
- 2) After you have sent your applications electronically, please immediately check your own email to confirm that the attachments you intended to send were indeed sent. If you discover an error in your transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name if submitted via grants.gov that it is a "corrected" submission.
- 3) Please 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.
- 4) If you send your application by multiple emails, please indicate in the subject line of the email whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of multiple emails (if more than one is sent) and of attachments (e.g. "no. 1 of 4", etc.). For example, if your cost application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line which says: "[organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2".

Our preference is that the technical application and the cost application be submitted as single email attachments (i.e., that you consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending them). If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID/Bangladesh will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear.

C. Receipt of Applications

Applications must be received at the place designated and by the date and time specified in this section of the RFA. Applications which are submitted late or are incomplete run the risk of

not being considered in the review process. Late applications will be considered for award if, in the sole discretion of the Agreement Officer, it is determined that it is in the US Government's interest and if the evaluation process has not yet commenced.

The applicant must ensure that applications sent electronically are received at USAID/Bangladesh in their entirety. Applicants shall confirm with Jennifer Crow Yang or Ahsanur Rahman that their electronic submissions (either via grants.gov or via email) were successfully received at USAID/Bangladesh by the required due date.

D. Questions & Answers

Any questions regarding this RFA should be submitted in writing to Ms. Jennifer Crow Yang, Agreement Officer and Mr. Ahsanur Rahman, A&A Specialist via e-mail to the addresses above.

Questions regarding this RFA should be submitted no later than **1600 Dhaka local time on March 17, 2014**, to provide sufficient time to address the questions and incorporate the questions and answers as an amendment to this solicitation. Verbal explanations or instructions given before award will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this RFA will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this RFA, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

[END OF SECTION IV]

SECTION V – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Technical Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the Technical Evaluation Criteria set forth below. The technical evaluation committee will use the evaluation criteria when reviewing the technical applications. The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this particular RFA. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters that the Applicant should address in their applications and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated. The criteria listed below are weighted in the order of relative importance with weights assigned for evaluation purposes.

The applications will be evaluated on the following:

- 1) Technical Approach (40 points)**
- 2) Management Plan and Institutional Capacity (25 points)**
- 3) Personnel (20 points)**
- 4) Past Performance (15 points)**

Applicants should review *Section IV – Application and Submission Information* to ensure the completeness of their application. Applications are a reflection of quality of work and attention to detail. Applications should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the work requirements, be clear, and free of errors.

The application must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the requirements of the Program Description and describe an approach that demonstrates how results will be achieved in a timely and effective manner. The Applicant will provide sufficient detail to demonstrate how they will accomplish the objective and intermediate results outlined in the Project Description. The Technical Approach will demonstrate creativity, practicality, and offer concrete interventions to achieve women's empowerment.

The Applicant will present an understanding of the socio-political challenges, scope of work, and the requirements from a management and technical standpoint. The applicant should address each of the components separately with a complete discussion of the challenges and opportunities to achieve women's empowerment. Applications must demonstrate the ability to prepare clear, concise, organized, and informative written materials. In addition, evaluation of the application will include evaluation of the organization, demonstration of the organization's ability to comply with USAID's annual monitoring and evaluation reporting requirements, and

demonstration of key personnel's knowledge, skills, experience, and abilities to implement and manage the proposed activity.

A successfully completed application will include the following:

- (1) Demonstration of the understanding of the scope of the problems and work to be accomplished. Mere repetition of the material in the Request for Application/Project Description does not constitute a satisfactory response.
- (2) Proposal of technical approach and methodologies for accomplishing the objective and intermediary results.
- (3) Demonstration of the management structure (including rationale) for the activity, including managing the separate interventions and their relationships to achieving results.
- (4) Appropriateness of personnel to accomplish the project requirements.

An award will be made to the responsible applicant whose application offers the Government the best value, cost and other factors considered. The final award decision is made by the Agreement Officer.

Technical Approach

(40 Points)

Applicants will be holistically evaluated on:

- The extent to which the Application proposes a technical approach and implementation strategy that demonstrates responsiveness, innovation and originality to achieve the goals as described in the Program Description;
- Approach demonstrates sustainability and shows clarity in scope and focus for the interventions. The technical approach clearly articulates an estimation of the number of beneficiaries the activity will serve with a brief description of the rationale for such a projection and adequately describes how funding will be allocated into the three project components: targeting beneficiaries, women's empowerment groups, and income-generating activities;
- Extent to which Applicant's M&E plan ensures a robust and reliable M&E approach so that the activity is results focused, including methodologies for establishing baselines and targets and measuring progress.

Personnel

(20 Points)

In assessing this factor the Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) will holistically consider:

- Extent to which the proposed key personnel meet the criteria specified in the RFA with regards to experience, education and qualifications and demonstrated ability to coordinate and manage activities of a similar size and scope.
- Demonstrated and documented experience (roles and responsibilities) for proposed staff.
- Evaluation of references obtained for key personnel including information obtained from sources other than those provided by the Applicant.

Management Plan and Institutional Capacity

(25 Points)

In assessing this factor the Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) will holistically consider management and institutional capacity:

- Extent to which the Application's Management Plan adequately demonstrates management structures and systems in place to effectively carrying out and mobilize the Women's Empowerment Activity.
- Extent to which the Applicant clearly differentiates the roles and responsibilities of both the Applicant and the sub-awarded implementer(s), the Home Office and field based staff along with the relevant capacities to fulfill those roles and achieve the goals of the activities.
- Extent to which the Applicant clearly presents the overall staffing plan (including use of consultants) and demonstrates the Applicant's ability to implement the proposed technical approach effectively – including an appropriate mix of expatriate and local staff to manage field based activities.

Institutional capabilities will be evaluated based on the demonstrated effectiveness in organization and management discussed in Section IV(5)(F), including:

- **Financial and administrative capacity.** Applicants will be evaluated on organizational expertise and demonstrable experience in successful financial and administrative management.
- **Technical capacity.** Applicants will be assessed on their demonstrated technical expertise in promoting women's empowerment and demonstrated understanding of working in South Asia and in the Asian development context. Supplemental institutional capacities and experience of sub-grantees and partners will also be evaluated favorably.

Past Performance**(15 Points)**

All applicants (and each major sub-recipient, as applicable) will be subject to a past performance review for demonstrating successful past performance in previous and/or existing projects and will take into consideration the following:

- The quality of performance demonstrated by the Applicant based on references provided by the Applicant and other references as determined by USAID.
- Demonstrated knowledge, experience and ability to implement programs with a similar size and scope of the Women's Empowerment Activity.
- Demonstrated ability to provide timely and sufficient home office management, sub-award procedures and experiences, and technical support to ensure smooth implementation and achievement of program targets.
- The quality and capability to collaborate and partner with host-country officials and other organizations, and other implementing partners to achieve objectives and results.
- The technical capability and experience of the Applicant in monitoring and evaluating projects with high level of quality, cost effectiveness and timeliness.

B. COST EVALUATION:

Evaluation points will not be awarded for cost. Cost will primarily be evaluated for realism, allowability, allocability, and the applicant's understanding of the requirements. The evaluation will consist of a review of the cost portion of the application to determine if the overall costs proposed are realistic for the work to be performed, if the costs reflect understanding of the requirements, and if the costs are consistent with the technical application. Effective cost saving measures to improve cost efficiency of the program will also be considered. Given the nature of this activity, USAID/Bangladesh will weigh carefully potential benefits from the proposed staffing plans and level of effort. While cost may be a determining factor in the final decision of an awardee, especially between closely ranked applicants, the technical merit of applications is substantially more important under this RFA.

2. COST SHARING

Cost share is required to be **at least 5%** of the total estimated amount. If the applicant proposes a cost share of less than 5%, it will be removed from further consideration. Cost sharing may be cash or in-kind contributions but, by definition, may not include USG funds or USG-funded in-kind contributions. Cost sharing must be used for the accomplishment of program objectives, and must consist of allowable costs under the applicable USG cost principles (see OMB Circular A-110 and 22 CFR 226.23). It should be noted that there is no separate/additional evaluation criteria category for cost-share because cost-share is included within cost-effectiveness.

3. REVIEW AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Application(s) which are deemed to offer the best overall value and meet USAID objectives will be selected for award. The Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) will evaluate the technical/programmatic merit of each application as measured against the evaluation factors mentioned above. At the time of RFA issuance, all panel members are anticipated to be USAID employees. However, USAID may include personnel from Government of Bangladesh and US Government if necessary and available. The panel may make an award recommendation based on the extent of its evaluation scope. In addition, one or more panel members may be asked to provide input to the cost effectiveness review, any substantial implementation involvement desired by USAID, and on any special provisions that may be included in the award.

Once an apparent successful applicant is identified, additional information and discussion may occur between the applicant and USAID Agreement Officer, before the Agreement Officer makes the final funding decision. The Apparently Successful applicant means the applicant recommended for an award of a component after evaluation, but who has not yet been awarded a grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance award by the Agreement Officer. Apparently Successful applicant status confers no right and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

The recommendation or selection of an application for award does not in any way guarantee an award. The USAID Agreement Officer must be fully satisfied that the applicant has the capacity to adequately perform in accordance with standards established by USAID and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This issue of organizational capability is generally referred to as a pre-award "responsibility determination." The Agreement Officer must also complete any other necessary pre-award arrangements.

Details on USAID pre-award responsibility determination policy and procedure can be found on our agency website, in ADS 303.3.9: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>.

USAID/Bangladesh intends to make this award without any discussion. To the extent that they are necessary, negotiations will be conducted with the applicant(s) whose application(s), has or have a reasonable chance of being selected for award. The final award decision will be made by the Agreement Officer, with consideration of the Technical Evaluation Committee recommendations.

Other areas of review and discussion will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to the application. The following areas commonly require discussion and agreement prior to award:

- A. Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. In accordance with ADS 303.3.6.3.f and 22 CFR 226.91, the apparently successful applicant must submit a Branding Strategy and a Marking Plan for evaluation and approval by the Agreement Officer before an award under this solicitation will be made. "Marking Plan" and "Marking of

USAID-funded Assistance Awards” are contained in AAPD 05-11 and in 22 CFR 226.91. Please note that in contrast to “exceptions” to marking requirements, waivers based on circumstances in the host country must be approved by Mission Directors or other USAID Principal Officers, see 22 CFR 226.91(j). USAID approved Branding Strategy and Marking Plan is required for award execution.

- B. Final program and budget plans.
- C. Payment terms.
- D. Procedures concerning administrative reporting and logistical requirements for program including training components.
- E. Other award terms including audit, special provisions and/or special award conditions.

[END OF SECTION V]

SECTION VI – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. NOTIFICATION TO APPLICANTS

The Notice of Award (ADS 303.3.7.1.a) signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorizing document that will be provided to the successful applicant to inform the applicant of its selection to be further considered to negotiate a cooperative agreement. USAID will provide this Notice electronically to the person designated to receive this information in the application. Notification will also be made electronically to unsuccessful applicants pursuant to ADS 303.3.7.1.b.

2. AWARD NOTIFICATION

Notice of Award signed by the Agreement Officer is the authorizing document, which shall be transmitted to the recipient for countersignature to the authorized agent of the successful organization electronically.

Request for debriefings: USAID will follow the procedures included in ADS 303.3.7.2 to receive and accept requests for debriefings from unsuccessful applicants.

3. STANDARD PROVISIONS AND DEVIATIONS

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

☐ Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental recipients can be accessed through following URL: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303maa.pdf>

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

☐ Standard Provisions for PIO recipients can be accessed through the following URL: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/308mab.pdf>

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

A. PREVENTING TERRORIST FINANCING -- IMPLEMENTATION OF E.O. 13224 (AUGUST 2013)

a. The recipient must not engage in transactions with, or provide resources or support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism, including those individuals or entities that appear on the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List maintained by the U.S. Treasury (online at:

<http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/SDNList/Pages/default.aspx>) or the United Nations Security designation list (online at: http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml).

b. This provision must be included in all subagreements, including subawards and contracts issued under this award.

B. MARKING AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS UNDER USAID-FUNDED ASSISTANCE (AUGUST 2013)

a. The USAID Identity is the official marking for USAID, comprised of the USAID logo and brandmark with the tagline "from the American people." The USAID identity is on the USAID Web site at www.usaid.gov/branding. Recipients must use the USAID Identity, of a size and prominence equivalent to or greater than any other identity or logo displayed, to mark the following:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

d. The recipient is encouraged to give public notice of the receipt of this award and announce progress and accomplishments. The recipient must provide copies of notices or announcements to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and to USAID's Office of Legislative and Public Affairs in advance of release, as practicable. Press releases or other public notices must include a statement substantially as follows:

”The U.S. Agency for International Development administers the U.S. foreign assistance program providing economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 80 countries worldwide.”

e. Any “public communication” in which the content has not been approved by USAID must contain the following disclaimer:

“This study/report/audio/visual/other information/media product (specify) is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of [insert recipient name] and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.”

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

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

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

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

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

(4) Impair the functionality of an item;

(5) Incur substantial costs or be impractical;

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

(7) Conflict with international law.

h. The recipient may submit a waiver request of the marking requirements of this provision or the Marking Plan, through the AOR, when USAID-required marking would pose compelling political, safety, or security concerns, or have an adverse impact in the cooperating country.

(1) Approved waivers "flow down" to subagreements, including subawards and contracts, unless specified otherwise. The waiver may also include the removal of USAID markings already affixed, if circumstances warrant.

(2) USAID determinations regarding waiver requests are subject to appeal by the recipient, by submitting a written request to reconsider the determination to the cognizant Assistant Administrator.

i. The recipient must include the following marking provision in any subagreements entered into under this award:

"As a condition of receipt of this subaward, marking with the USAID Identity of a size and prominence equivalent to or greater than the recipient's, subrecipient's, other donor's, or third party's is required. In the event the recipient chooses not to require marking with its own identity or logo by the subrecipient, USAID may, at its discretion, require marking by the subrecipient with the USAID Identity."

C. TRAVEL AND INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION (AUGUST 2013)

a. PRIOR BUDGET APPROVAL

Direct charges for travel costs for international air travel by individuals are allowable only when each international trip has received prior budget approval. Such approval is met when all of the following are met:

(1) The trip is identified by providing the following information: the number of trips, the number of individuals per trip, and the origin and destination countries or regions;

(2) All of the information noted at a.(1) above is incorporated in the Schedule of this award or amendments to this award; and

(3) The costs related to the travel are incorporated in the budget of this award. The Agreement Officer (AO) may approve, in writing, international travel costs that have not been incorporated in this award. To obtain AO approval, the recipient must request approval at least three weeks before the international travel, or as far in advance as possible. The recipient must keep a copy of the AO's approval in its files. No other clearance (including country clearance) is required for employees of the recipient, its subrecipients or contractors. International travel by employees who are not on official business of the recipient, such as rest and recuperation (R&R) travel offered as part of an employee's benefits package, must be consistent with the recipient's personnel and travel policies and procedures and does not require approval.

b. TRAVEL COSTS

All travel costs must comply with the applicable cost principles and must be consistent with those normally allowed in like circumstances in the recipient's non-USAID-funded activities. Costs incurred by employees and officers for travel, including air fare, costs of lodging, other subsistence, and incidental expenses, may be considered reasonable and allowable only to the extent such costs do not exceed reasonable charges normally allowed by the recipient in its regular operations as the result of the recipient organization's written travel policy and are within the limits established by the applicable cost principles.

In the absence of a reasonable written policy regarding international travel costs, the standard for determining the reasonableness of reimbursement for international travel costs will be the Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians, Foreign Areas), published by the U.S.

Department of State, as from time to time amended. The most current Standardized Regulations on international travel costs may be obtained from the AO. In the event that the cost for air fare exceeds the customary standard commercial airfare (coach or equivalent) or the lowest commercial discount airfare, the recipient must document one of the allowable exceptions from the applicable cost principles.

c. FLY AMERICA ACT RESTRICTIONS

(1) The recipient must use U.S. Flag Air Carriers for all international air transportation (including personal effects) funded by this award pursuant to the Fly America Act and its implementing regulations to the extent service by such carriers is available.

(2) In the event that the recipient selects a carrier other than a U.S. Flag Air Carrier for international air transportation, in order for the costs of such international air transportation to be allowable, the recipient must document such transportation in accordance with this provision and maintain such documentation pursuant to the Standard Provision, "Accounting, Audit and Records." The documentation must use one of the following reasons or other exception under the Fly America Act:

(i) The recipient uses a European Union (EU) flag air carrier, which is an airline operating from an EU country that has signed the US-EU "Open Skies" agreement (<http://www.state.gov/e/eb/rls/othr/ata/i/ic/170684.htm>).

(ii) Travel to or from one of the following countries on an airline of that country when no city pair fare is in effect for that leg (see <http://apps.fas.gsa.gov/citypairs/search/>):

- a. Australia on an Australian airline,
- b. Switzerland on a Swiss airline, or
- c. Japan on a Japanese airline;

(iii) Only for a particular leg of a route on which no US Flag Air Carrier provides service on that route;

(iv) For a trip of 3 hours or less, the use of a US Flag Air Carrier at least doubles the travel time;

(v) If the US Flag Air Carrier offers direct service, use of the US Flag Air Carrier would increase the travel time by more than 24 hours; or

(vi) If the US Flag Air Carrier does not offer direct service,

- a. Use of the US Flag Air Carrier increases the number of aircraft changes by 2 or more,
- b. Use of the US Flag Air Carrier extends travel time by 6 hours or more, or
- c. Use of the US Flag Air Carrier requires a layover at an overseas interchange of 4 hours or more.

d. DEFINITIONS

The terms used in this provision have the following meanings:

(1) "Travel costs" means expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence (meals and incidentals), and related expenses incurred by employees who are on travel status on official business of the recipient for any travel outside the country in which the organization is located. "Travel costs" do not include expenses incurred by employees who are not on official business of the recipient, such as rest and recuperation (R&R) travel offered as part of an employee's benefits package that are consistent with the recipient's personnel and travel policies and procedures.

(2) "International air transportation" means international air travel by individuals (and their personal effects) or transportation of cargo by air between a place in the United States and a place outside thereof, or between two places both of which are outside the United States.

(3) "U.S. Flag Air Carrier" means an air carrier on the list issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation at <http://ostpxweb.dot.gov/aviation/certific/certlist.htm>. U.S. Flag Air Carrier service also includes service provided under a code share agreement with another air carrier when the ticket, or documentation for an electronic ticket, identifies the U.S. flag air carrier's designator code and flight number.

(4) For this provision, the term "United States" includes the fifty states, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, possessions of the United States, and the District of Columbia.

e. SUBAGREEMENTS

This provision must be included in all subagreements, including all subawards and contracts, under which this award will finance international air transportation.

[END OF PROVISION]

D. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (JUNE 2012)

a. U.S. Government funds under this award must not be used to finance the travel, per diem, hotel expenses, meals, conference fees or other conference costs for any member of a foreign government's delegation to an international conference sponsored by a multilateral organization, as defined below, unless approved by the Agreement Officer in writing.

b. Definitions:

(1) A foreign government delegation is appointed by the national government (including ministries and agencies but excluding local, state and provincial entities) to act on behalf of the appointing authority at the international conference. A conference participant is a delegate for the purposes of this provision, only when there is an appointment or designation that the individual is authorized to officially represent the government or agency. A delegate may be a private citizen.

(2) An international conference is a meeting where there is an agenda, an organizational structure, and delegations from countries other than the conference location, in which country delegations participate through discussion, votes, etc.

(3) A multilateral organization is an organization established by international agreement and whose governing body is composed principally of foreign governments or other multilateral organizations.

[END OF PROVISION]**E. TRAINING RESULTS AND INFORMATION NETWORK (TRAINET)****Exchange Visitors and Training**

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

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

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

Muhammed Moinuddin: mmoinuddin@usaid.gov

E. NON-FEDERAL AUDITS

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

G. LENDING LIMITATIONS

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

H. SALARY SUPPLEMENTATION

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

4. GENERAL INFORMATION ON REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reports and related requirements will be included in the Cooperative Agreement issued as a result of this RFA. Requirements for periodic performance reports are contained below and supplemented by 22 CFR 226.51. The recipient will submit copies of all required financial reports to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and Agreement Officer at USAID/Bangladesh. Applicants are reminded to budget prudent and adequate resources for completing the required reporting. All reports shall be in the English language, unless otherwise specified by the AOR. Electronic submissions are preferred. The recipient will provide the

following reports to the USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) and the Agreement Officer, as specified below, in accordance with 22 CFR 226.51 and 226.52 and the Substantial Involvement provisions as mentioned in the Section II of this RFA.

i). FINANCIAL REPORTING

Financial reporting requirements will be in accordance with 22 CFR 226.52.

ii). PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING

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

A. Annual Work Plan

The recipient must submit a draft Annual Work Plan (AWP) within ninety (90) calendar days of the effective date of the Cooperative Agreement. The recipient will work with the AOR throughout the AWP development process prior to submittal to ensure the AWP appropriately reflects activity objective and the program description. The AWP must detail the work to be accomplished during the upcoming year. The scope and format of the AWP will be agreed to between the recipient and the AOR. AOR will review the work plan and provide comments within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt; the recipient must incorporate these comments and provide a final annual work plan within seven (7) calendar days of receiving AOR's comments. The AWP will serve as a guide for activity implementation—a demonstration of links between interventions and objectives in accordance with the M&E Plan. The AWP shall outline key activities and the expected results to be accomplished for that year and will be negotiated and shared with host government partners for comments as appropriate. The AWP will also serve as a basis for budget estimates for that year of program implementation. A budget with sufficient detail to allow the AOR to judge the efficiency of the implementation plan should be included. The AWP should delineate an overall budget by line item and a budget per result and intervention. The AWP may be revised on an occasional basis in the course of implementation, as needed, to reflect changes on the ground with the concurrence of the AOR. Subsequent AWP's must be submitted in a similar fashion, and the recipient must submit the work plans for successive years **forty five (45) calendar days** before the beginning of each successive year.

B. M&E Plan

The application must contain an illustrative M&E Plan that explains how the applicant proposes to monitor the program and assess program impact. The recipient must submit a comprehensive M&E Plan that measures impact and progress toward achieving results over the life of the award. The recipient must submit the M&E Plan within (90) calendar days of the effective date of the Cooperative Agreement. USAID will review the draft M&E Plan and provide comments/suggestions within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt. The recipient must then submit the final M&E Plan to the AOR not later than ten (10) calendar days from receipt of

USAID's comments/suggestions. The M&E Plan must cover the entire period of the Agreement. It must include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- a) Results Framework, aligned with the approved CDCS with a clear indication of the activity's contribution to DO2 and other relevant DOs.
- b) Development Hypothesis and critical assumptions.
- c) Baseline values and targets to show progress over time; baselines must be established within ninety (90) calendar days of the award, or the date of submission of the M&E Plan.
- d) Performance Data Table summarizing key performance monitoring information.
- e) Performance Indicator Reference Sheets for each indicator that include detailed description of indicators to be tracked, source, method and schedule of data collection, known data limitations, and planned actions to address the limitations.
- f) Performance Management Task Schedule that includes any special studies, assessments, and surveys that will be conducted as part of M&E of the project. Surveys must meet rigorous scientific standards in all aspects of sampling, instrumental design, and field implementation
- g) Discussion on the approach proposed to conduct annual performance assessments.
- h) Outline the means of communicating findings and data among partners and to stakeholders including USAID.

The recipient may consult with the AOR and other USAID officials in the development of the M&E Plan.

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

The recipient will finalize the M&E Plan in consultation with USAID/Bangladesh and its counterparts through participatory inception meetings with key implementing partners and other stakeholders. The M&E Plan must include indicators, targets, data sources and collection methods, baseline information, and benchmarks. The recipient must discuss the ways in which the collection, analysis and reporting of performance data will be managed under the project. All data collected must be disaggregated by sex.

The recipient will be expected to assign high priority to continuous monitoring and evaluation of all its operations and assistance, not only for the purpose of effective internal self-monitoring and planning, but also to ensure that the recipient can demonstrate results under the objectives of this project and to assist USAID's performance monitoring. The recipient will be expected to participate actively in data gathering for the Mission's PMP.

The indicators could include applicable Foreign Assistance Standard Indicators and custom-designed indicators that are specific to the unique socio-economic context and program environment of Bangladesh. The M&E Plan must include two types of indicators to measure impact and performance. The M&E Plan should also include output indicators as well as outcome indicators. The recipient must use effective and efficient mechanisms to monitor progress, impacts, and successes of their activities and performances at all levels. USAID expects that the recipient will be innovative and creative in their efforts to capture, document, and report all the outcomes of USAID assistance.

C. Performance Monitoring Reports

Quarterly Performance Reports: The recipient must submit a Performance Monitoring Report on progress toward agreed performance targets every three (3) months, based on the approved M&E Plan. Quarterly Performance Reports shall be submitted 30 calendar days after the end of the quarter pursuant to 22 CFR 226.51(b). The scope and format of the quarterly progress reports will be determined in consultation with the AOR, but the report should not exceed 1000 words. The quarterly report should seek to be brief yet precise description of the activities, with emphasis on issues that have arisen, impacts made, constraints encountered, and suggestions for additional actions that might be taken. The recipient is not required to follow the M&E Plan for the first quarterly performance report of the award. One original and two copies of the report shall be submitted to the AOR.

Annual Progress Report: The annual progress report shall be a review of the previous year's accomplishments relative to the M&E Plan, including challenges and success stories. Problems or issues encountered and how they were resolved shall be presented in the report. The report shall be submitted 90 calendar days after the end of fourth quarter, or the end of the USG fiscal year (September 30), pursuant to 22 CFR 226.51(b). It shall be submitted in lieu of the fourth quarterly progress report. The scope and format of the annual progress report will be determined in consultation with the AOR. One original and two copies of the report shall be submitted to the AOR.

The annual report shall include a discussion, supported with quantitative and qualitative evidence, (which evidence shall remain auditable under the terms of the agreement and USAID program implementation procedures), of progress against indicators and/or

impacts achieved to date. This shall include clear identification of which impacts achieved were within the manageable interests of the recipient and which were likely catalyzed by recipient-supported initiatives, leading to substantial, sustained achievement of results. This discussion will be instrumental in helping the Mission to complete mandatory reporting to Washington such as the Performance Plan Report (PPR), Feed the Future Monitoring System (FTFMS) and the Operational Plan (OP).

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

- Describe accomplishments in accordance with the specific paragraphs of the project description
- A comparison of actual activities and results with the plane established for the life of the project (presented in narrative and table format)
- Describe reasons why targets were not achieved or surpassed and why activities were delayed or not carried out, if appropriate
- Success stories, including examples of synergy and collaboration with partners.
- A summary of progress made in achieving indicator targets during the program (based on valid data collection and analysis and credible baseline)
- Other pertinent information, including recommendations with in-depth analysis and lessons learned, related to the overall program results

[END OF SECTION VI]

SECTION VII – AGENCY CONTACTS

The Agreement Officer for this Award is:

Jennifer Crow Yang
Agreement Officer
USAID/Bangladesh
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Email: jcrow-yang@usaid.gov

The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist for this Award is:

Ahsanur Rahman
Acquisition and Assistance Specialist
USAID/Bangladesh
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Email: marahman@usaid.gov

[END OF SECTION VII]

SECTION VIII – OTHER INFORMATION

1. FUNDING APPLICANTS

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

2. AWARD

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

3. AUTHORITY TO OBLIGATE THE GOVERNMENT

The Agreement Officer is the only individual authorized to commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Cooperative Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Cooperative Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

4. EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS

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

5. AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE

The authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services under this award is 937. The applicant is encouraged to specify any plans for the procurement of non-U.S. goods and/or services as part of its application.

6. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

A series of reference documents that provide background information can be found by accessing the following link: <http://www.nishorgo.org/>. In addition, the applicants are encouraged to search for the previous project-related documents and reports in the USAID Development Experience Clearing House (<http://dec.usaid.gov>).

[END OF SECTION VIII]

ATTACHMENT 1 – CERTIFICATIONS & ASSURANCES

NOTE: When these Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of Recipient are used for cooperative agreements, the term "Grant" means "Cooperative Agreement."

PART I - CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

1. ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING NON DISCRIMINATION IN FEDERALLY ASSISTED PROGRAMS

Note: This certification applies to Non-U.S. organizations if any part of the program will be undertaken in the United States.

(a) The recipient hereby assures that no person in the United States shall, on the bases set forth below, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity receiving financial assistance from USAID, and that with respect to the Cooperative Agreement for which application is being made, it will comply with the requirements of:

(1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352, 42 U.S.C. 2000-d), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin, in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;

(3) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (Pub. L. 95-478), which prohibits discrimination based on age in the delivery of services and benefits supported with Federal funds;

(4) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681, et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance (whether or not the programs or activities are offered or sponsored by an educational institution); and

(5) USAID regulations implementing the above nondiscrimination laws, set forth in Chapter II of Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(b) If the recipient is an institution of higher education, the Assurances given herein extend to admission practices and to all other practices relating to the treatment of students or clients of the institution, or relating to the opportunity to participate in the provision of services or other benefits to such individuals, and shall be applicable to the entire institution unless the recipient establishes to the satisfaction of the USAID Administrator that the institution's practices in designated parts or programs of the institution will in no way affect its practices in the program

of the institution for which financial assistance is sought, or the beneficiaries of, or participants in, such programs.

(c) This assurance is given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal grants, loans, contracts, property, discounts, or other Federal financial assistance extended after the date hereof to the recipient by the Agency, including installment payments after such date on account of applications for Federal financial assistance which was approved before such date. The recipient recognizes and agrees that such Federal financial assistance will be extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in this Assurance, and that the United States shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this Assurance. This Assurance is binding on the recipient, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and the person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign this Assurance on behalf of the recipient.

2. CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, United States Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that: If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

3. PROHIBITION ON ASSISTANCE TO DRUG TRAFFICKERS FOR COVERED COUNTRIES AND INDIVIDUALS (ADS 206)

USAID reserves the right to terminate this Agreement, to demand a refund or take other appropriate measures if the Grantee is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140. The undersigned shall review USAID ADS 206 to determine if any certifications are required for Key Individuals or Covered Participants.

If there are COVERED PARTICIPANTS: USAID reserves the right to terminate assistance to or take other appropriate measures with respect to, any participant approved by USAID who is found to have been convicted of a narcotics offense or to have been engaged in drug trafficking as defined in 22 CFR Part 140.

4. CERTIFICATION REGARDING TERRORIST FINANCING IMPLEMENTING E.O. 13224

Certification

By signing and submitting this application, the prospective recipient provides the certification set out below:

1. The Recipient, to the best of its current knowledge, did not provide, within the previous ten years, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it does not and will not knowingly provide, material support or resources to any individual or entity that commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated, or participated in terrorist acts, as that term is defined in paragraph 3.
2. The following steps may enable the Recipient to comply with its obligations under paragraph 1:
 - a. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will verify that the individual or entity does not (i) appear on the master list of

[Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons](#), which list is maintained by the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and is available online at OFAC's website : <http://www.treas.gov/offices/eotffc/ofac/sdn/t11sdn.pdf>, or (ii) is not included in any supplementary information concerning prohibited individuals or entities that may be provided by USAID to the Recipient.

b. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient also will verify that the individual or entity has not been designated by the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the "1267 Committee") [individuals and entities linked to the Taliban, Usama bin Laden, or the Al Qaida Organization]. To determine whether there has been a published designation of an individual or entity by the 1267 Committee, the Recipient should refer to the consolidated list available online at the Committee's website:
<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/1267ListEng.htm>.

c. Before providing any material support or resources to an individual or entity, the Recipient will consider all information about that individual or entity of which it is aware and all public information that is reasonably available to it or of which it should be aware.

d. The Recipient also will implement reasonable monitoring and oversight procedures to safeguard against assistance being diverted to support terrorist activity.

3. For purposes of this Certification.

"Material support and resources" means currency or monetary instruments or financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, safehouses, false documentation or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel, transportation, and other physical assets, except medicine or religious materials."

b. "Terrorist act" means-

(i) an act prohibited pursuant to one of the 12 United Nations Conventions and Protocols related to terrorism (see UN terrorism conventions Internet site:
http://treaties.un.org/Pages/DB.aspx?path=DB/studies/page2_en.xml&menu=MTDSG); or

(ii) an act of premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents; or

(iii) any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.

c. "Entity" means a partnership, association, corporation, or other organization, group or subgroup.

d. References in this Certification to the provision of material support and resources shall not be deemed to include the furnishing of USAID funds or USAID-financed commodities to the ultimate beneficiaries of USAID assistance, such as recipients of food, medical care, micro-enterprise loans, shelter, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that one or more of these beneficiaries commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.

e. The Recipient's obligations under paragraph 1 are not applicable to the procurement of goods and/or services by the Recipient that are acquired in the ordinary course of business through contract or purchase, e.g., utilities, rents, office supplies, gasoline, etc., unless the Recipient has reason to believe that a vendor or supplier of such goods and services commits, attempts to commit, advocates, facilitates, or participates in terrorist acts, or has committed, attempted to commit, facilitated or participated in terrorist acts.

This Certification is an express term and condition of any agreement issued as a result of this application, and any violation of it shall be grounds for unilateral termination of the agreement by USAID prior to the end of its term.

5. CERTIFICATION OF RECIPIENT

By signing below the recipient provides certifications and assurances for (1) the Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Non-Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs, (2) the Certification Regarding Lobbying, (3) the Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206) and (4) the Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224 above.

RFA No. _____

Application No. _____

Date of Application _____

Name of Recipient _____

Typed Name and Title _____

Signature _____

Date _____

PART II - KEY INDIVIDUAL CERTIFICATION NARCOTICS OFFENSES AND DRUG TRAFFICKING

I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

1. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.
2. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.
3. I am not and have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Title/Position: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain key individuals of organizations must sign this Certification.
2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

PART III - PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION NARCOTICS OFFENSES AND DRUG TRAFFICKING

1. I hereby certify that within the last ten years:

- a. I have not been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation

of the United States or any other country concerning narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances.

b. I am not and have not been an illicit trafficker in any such drug or controlled substance.

c. I am not or have not been a knowing assistor, abettor, conspirator, or colluder with others in the illicit trafficking in any such drug or substance.

2. I understand that USAID may terminate my training if it is determined that I engaged in the above conduct during the last ten years or during my USAID training.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

NOTICE:

1. You are required to sign this Certification under the provisions of 22 CFR Part 140, Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers. These regulations were issued by the Department of State and require that certain participants must sign this Certification.

2. If you make a false Certification you are subject to U.S. criminal prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1001.

PART IV

SURVEY ON ENSURING EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR APPLICANTS

OMB No. 1890-0014 Exp. 02/28/09

Purpose: The Federal government is committed to ensuring that all qualified applicants, small or large, non-religious or faith-based, have an equal opportunity to compete for Federal funding. In order for us to better understand the population of applicants for Federal funds, we are asking nonprofit private organizations (not including private universities) to fill out this survey.

Upon receipt, the survey will be separated from the application. Information provided on the survey will not be considered in any way in making funding decisions and will not be included in the Federal grants database. While your help in this data collection process is greatly appreciated, completion of this survey is voluntary.

Instructions for Submitting the Survey: If you are applying using a hard copy application, please place the completed survey in an envelope labeled "Applicant Survey." Seal the envelope and include it along with your application package. If you are applying electronically, please submit this survey along with your application.

Applicant's (Organization) Name: _____

Applicant's DUNS Number: _____

Federal Program: _____ **CFDA Number:** _____

1. Has the applicant ever received a grant or contract from the Federal government?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Is the applicant a faith-based organization?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Is the applicant a secular organization?

☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Does the applicant have 501(c)(3) status?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Is the applicant a local affiliate of a national organization?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. How many full-time equivalent employees does the applicant have? *(Check only one box.)*

☐ 3 or Fewer ☐ 15-50
☐ 4-5 ☐ 51-100
☐ 6-14 ☐ over 100

7. What is the size of the applicant's annual budget?
(Check only one box.)

☐ Less Than \$150,000
☐ \$150,000 - \$299,999
☐ \$300,000 - \$499,999
☐ \$500,000 - \$999,999
☐ \$1,000,000 - \$4,999,999
☐ \$5,000,000 or more

Survey Instructions on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants

Provide the applicant's (organization) name and DUNS number and the grant name and CFDA number.

Paperwork Burden Statement

1. Self-explanatory.
2. Self-identify.
3. Self-identify.
4. 501(c)(3) status is a legal designation provided on application to the Internal Revenue Service by eligible organizations. Some grant programs may require nonprofit applicants to have 501(c)(3) status. Other grant programs do not.
5. Self-explanatory.
6. For example, two part-time employees who each work half-time equal one full-time equivalent employee. If the applicant is a local affiliate of a national organization, the responses to survey questions 2 and 3 should reflect the staff and budget size of the local affiliate.
7. Annual budget means the amount of money your organization spends each year on all of its activities.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1890-0014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average five (5) minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: The Agency Contact listed in this grant application package.

OMB No. 1890-0014 Exp. 02/28/09

The form for the survey on ensuring equal opportunity for applicants can be found at: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/surveyeo.pdf>

PART V - OTHER STATEMENTS OF RECIPIENT

1. AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS

The recipient represents that the following persons are authorized to negotiate on its behalf with the Government and to bind the recipient in connection with this application or grant:

Name	Title	Telephone No.	Facsimile No.
------	-------	---------------	---------------

2. TAXPAYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (TIN)

If the recipient is a U.S. organization, or a foreign organization which has income effectively connected with the conduct of activities in the U.S. or has an office or a place of business or a fiscal paying agent in the U.S., please indicate the recipient's TIN:

TIN: _____

3. DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER

(a) In the space provided at the end of this provision, the recipient should supply the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number applicable to that name and address. Recipients should take care to report the number that identifies the recipient's name and address exactly as stated in the proposal.

(b) The DUNS is a 9-digit number assigned by Dun and Bradstreet Information Services. If the recipient does not have a DUNS number, the recipient should call Dun and Bradstreet directly at 1-800-333-0505. A DUNS number will be provided immediately by telephone at no charge to the recipient. The recipient should be prepared to provide the following information:

- (1) Recipient's name.
- (2) Recipient's address.
- (3) Recipient's telephone number.
- (4) Line of business.
- (5) Chief executive officer/key manager.
- (6) Date the organization was started.
- (7) Number of people employed by the recipient.
- (8) Company affiliation.

(c) Recipients located outside the United States may e-mail Dun and Bradstreet at globalinfo@dbisma.com to obtain the location and phone number of the local Dun and Bradstreet Information Services office.

The DUNS system is distinct from the Federal Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) system.
DUNS: _____

4. LETTER OF CREDIT (LOC) NUMBER

If the recipient has an existing Letter of Credit (LOC) with USAID, please indicate the LOC number:

LOC: _____

5. PROCUREMENT INFORMATION

(a) Applicability. This applies to the procurement of goods and services planned by the recipient (i.e., contracts, purchase orders, etc.) from a supplier of goods or services for the direct use or benefit of the recipient in conducting the program supported by the grant, and not to assistance provided by the recipient (i.e., a subgrant or subagreement) to a subgrantee or subrecipient in support of the subgrantee's or subrecipient's program. Provision by the recipient of the requested information does not, in and of itself, constitute USAID approval.

(b) Amount of Procurement. Please indicate the total estimated dollar amount of goods and services which the recipient plans to purchase under the grant:

\$ _____

(c) Nonexpendable Property. If the recipient plans to purchase nonexpendable equipment which would require the approval of the Agreement Officer, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types, quantities of each, and estimated unit costs. Nonexpendable equipment for which the Agreement Officer's approval to purchase is required is any article of nonexpendable tangible personal property charged directly to the grant, having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION (Generic) _____

QUANTITY _____

ESTIMATED UNIT COST _____

(d) Source, Origin, and Componentry of Goods. If the recipient plans to purchase any goods/commodities which are not of U.S. source and/or U.S. origin, and/or does not contain at least 50% componentry, which are not at least 50% U.S. source and origin, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, and probable source and/or origin, to include the probable source and/or origin of the components if less than 50% U.S. components will be contained in the commodity. "Source" means the country from which a commodity is shipped to the cooperating country or the cooperating country itself if the commodity is located therein at the time of purchase. However, where a commodity is shipped from a free port or bonded warehouse in the form in which received therein, "source" means the country from which the commodity was shipped to the free port or bonded warehouse. Any commodity whose source is a non-Free World country is ineligible for USAID financing. The "origin" of a commodity is the country or area in which a commodity is mined, grown, or produced. A commodity is produced when, through manufacturing, processing, or substantial and major assembling of components, a commercially recognized new commodity results, which is substantially different in basic characteristics or in purpose or utility from its components. Merely packaging various items together for a particular procurement or relabeling items do not constitute production of a commodity. Any commodity whose origin is a non-Free World country is ineligible for USAID financing. "Components" are the goods, which go directly into the production of a produced commodity. Any component from a non-Free World country makes the commodity ineligible for USAID financing.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION _____
QUANTITY _____
ESTIMATED GOODS _____
PROBABLE GOODS _____
PROBABLE (Generic) _____
UNIT COST _____
COMPONENTS _____
SOURCE _____
COMPONENTS _____
ORIGIN _____

(e) Restricted Goods. If the recipient plans to purchase any restricted goods, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each, estimated unit costs of each, intended use, and probable source and/or origin. Restricted goods are Agricultural Commodities, Motor Vehicles, Pharmaceuticals, Pesticides, Rubber Compounding Chemicals and Plasticizers, Used Equipment, U.S. Government-Owned Excess Property, and Fertilizer.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION _____
QUANTITY _____
ESTIMATED _____
PROBABLE _____
INTENDED USE (Generic) _____
UNIT COST _____
SOURCE _____
ORIGIN _____

(f) Supplier Nationality. If the recipient plans to purchase any goods or services from suppliers of goods and services whose nationality is not in the U.S., please indicate below (using a continuation page, as necessary) the types and quantities of each good or service, estimated costs of each, probable nationality of each non-U.S. supplier of each good or service, and the rationale for purchasing from a non-U.S. supplier. Any supplier whose nationality is a non-Free World country is ineligible for USAID financing.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION _____
QUANTITY _____
ESTIMATED _____
PROBABLE SUPPLIER _____
NATIONALITY _____
RATIONALE (Generic) _____
UNIT COST (Non-US Only) _____
FOR NON-US _____

(g) Proposed Disposition. If the recipient plans to purchase any nonexpendable equipment with a unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more, please indicate below (using a continuation page, as

necessary) the proposed disposition of each such item. Generally, the recipient may either retain the property for other uses and make compensation to USAID (computed by applying the percentage of federal participation in the cost of the original program to the current fair market value of the property), or sell the property and reimburse USAID an amount computed by applying to the sales proceeds the percentage of federal participation in the cost of the original program (except that the recipient may deduct from the federal share \$500 or 10% of the proceeds, whichever is greater, for selling and handling expenses), or donate the property to a host country institution, or otherwise dispose of the property as instructed by USAID.

TYPE/DESCRIPTION (Generic) _____

QUANTITY _____

ESTIMATED UNIT COST _____

PROPOSED DISPOSITION _____

6. PAST PERFORMANCE REFERENCES

On a continuation page, please provide past performance information requested in the RFA.

7. TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

The recipient, by checking the applicable box, represents that -

(a) If the recipient is a U.S. entity, it operates as ☐ a corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of, ☐ an individual, ☐ a partnership, ☐ a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, ☐ a state or local governmental organization, ☐ a private college or university, ☐ a public college or university, ☐ an international organization, or ☐ a joint venture; or

(b) If the recipient is a non-U.S. entity, it operates as ☐ a corporation organized under the laws of _____ (country), ☐ an individual, ☐ a partnership, ☐ a nongovernmental nonprofit organization, ☐ a nongovernmental educational institution, ☐ a governmental organization, ☐ an international organization, or ☐ a joint venture.

8. ESTIMATED COSTS OF COMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS

The following are the estimate(s) of the cost of each separate communications product (i.e., any printed material [other than non-color photocopy material], photographic services, or video production services) which is anticipated under the grant. Each estimate must include all the costs associated with preparation and execution of the product. Use a continuation page as necessary.

[END OF ATTACHMENT 1]

LIST OF ANNEXES

1. Development Objective 2 (Improved Food Security) Performance Management Plan (PMP)