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Application Process/Rounds: See Section IV. B.

APS Closing Date: April 29, 2021

Subject: Annual Program Statement (APS) Number: 72038820APS00001

Program Title: USAID/Bangladesh and the Private Sector: Partnering to Fight COVID-19

Dear Applicants:

Pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended, the United States Government as represented by the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bangladesh, Office of Acquisition and Assistance, invites applications for Global Development Alliances (GDAs). Awards under this GDA/APS are subject to 2 CFR 700 and 2CFR 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

This Annual Program Statement (APS) is designed to describe and provide a process through which organizations can work with USAID and the private sector to build GDAs that:

a) respond to the current outbreak of COVID-19 in Bangladesh; b) address important business interests and objectives; and c) advance USAID's strategic priorities and objectives.

This APS also provides an opportunity for organizations to receive an award of USAID funding to support activity implementation under a GDA developed through this APS.

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted under this APS. In lieu of an award under this APS, USAID reserves the right to link prospective applicants with an ongoing USAID-supported activity to structure a partnership under that existing award should this prove advantageous from a strategic, programmatic, or budgetary standpoint.

The GDA APS is not a Request for Applications (RFA) or a Request for Proposals (RFP). Instead, the GDA APS requests GDA Concept Papers. Based on those Concept Papers plus attachments, USAID will determine whether to request a full application from an appropriate partner in a proposed alliance.

Do not submit a full application unless specifically requested to by the USAID/Bangladesh Agreement Officer.

The GDA APS is a solicitation aimed at fostering extensive collaboration with the private sector to respond to COVID-19. While the value of the expertise, capabilities, assets and resources contributed to an alliance by the private sector must equal or exceed the value of resources requested from USAID, this is NOT a matching grants program. The focus of this APS is proactive engagement of the private sector for: problem identification, problem definition, solution scoping and development, and solution implementation.

USAID Bangladesh is available to respond to questions from Applicants about the process. Questions should be submitted by email to: bdaps@usaid.gov and copying Andrew Holland (aholland@usaid.gov) and Ahsan Rahman (marahman@usaid.gov). We sincerely hope that your organization will consider submitting a Concept Paper to partner with USAID Bangladesh. Thank you for your interest in the USAID Bangladesh Program!

Sincerely,

Andrew Holland
Supervisory Agreement Officer
Director, Office of Acquisition & Assistance
USAID Bangladesh

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SECTION I: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. Issuance of this APS does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government (USG), nor does it commit the USG to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of questions, comments, suggestions or an application. Applicants submit Concept Paper applications at their own risk and all preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant's expense.

A. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is having dramatic ramifications throughout the world. Morbidity and mortality rates are staggering and the negative impacts on the world economy will be felt well into the future. In Bangladesh, the current confirmed case load has increased 100-fold during April and the virus continues to spread. Significant social and economic impacts are already being felt.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has a long history of partnership with the government and people of Bangladesh. USAID has also enjoyed great success partnering with the private sector across multiple activities including health care, agriculture, energy, and humanitarian assistance and is committed to explore new avenues of partnership including in the fight against COVID-19.

B. Purpose

The purpose of this APS is to announce the competitive process and solicit Concept Paper applications from the private and public sectors for engaging with USAID/Bangladesh under the APS. The GDA APS is a solicitation aimed at fostering extensive collaboration with the private sector to respond to COVID-19. While the value of the expertise, capabilities, assets and resources contributed to an alliance by the private sector must equal or exceed the value of resources requested from USAID, this is NOT a matching grants program. The focus of this APS is proactive engagement of the private sector for: problem identification, problem definition, solution scoping and development, and solution implementation.

C. Area/s of Partnership

This APS is designed to describe and provide a process through which organizations can work with USAID and the private sector to build GDAs to reduce the caseload and mitigate the economic hardships posed by COVID-19, both public and private sector entities have resources to contribute. Strategic and proactive engagement of the private sector improves the identification and definition of critical economic and social issues; strengthens the design and implementation of promising solutions to those issues; and increases the sustainable impact of our respective investments in halting the spread of COVID-19 and mitigating the impacts.

D. Partnership with USAID

Alliances developed under this APS must advance private sector interests and objectives AND the development objectives and priorities that guide USAID's development assistance programs

and investments while specifically addressing COVID-19 in Bangladesh. Therefore, building an effective GDA requires a mutual understanding of USAID and private sector interests and priorities. The most successful GDAs are grounded in the mutually reinforcing relationship between core business interests (rather than purely philanthropic interests) and one or more of USAID's development objectives.

By partnering with USAID, the private sector is able to leverage USAID's expertise, assets and working relationships in a manner that advances business success to address COVID-19 and fosters the broader economic growth and poverty reduction that is vital to sustaining such success. At times it may make sense to work within an existing USAID activity instead of under the APS framework. Therefore, in lieu of an award under this APS, USAID reserves the right to link prospective applicants with an ongoing USAID-supported activity to structure a partnership under that existing award should this prove advantageous from a strategic, programmatic, or budgetary standpoint.

By partnering with the private sector, USAID is able to leverage private sector markets, expertise, interests, and assets in a manner that solves critical development problems and promotes effective market-led development. Through strategic and ongoing collaboration, the private sector and USAID are better able to increase the impact, reach, efficiency, and effectiveness of our business and development investments to fight COVID-19.

E. Partnership Requirements

This GDA APS is designed to catalyze, facilitate and support such collaboration. This APS is an invitation to co-creation that USAID extends to the private sector and other organizations interested in working closely with the private sector to achieve significant and sustainable development results and impact.

Partnerships are expected to bring significant new, non-USG resources, whether money, ideas, technologies, experience, or expertise, to address COVID-19. The APS is aimed at fostering extensive collaboration with the private sector to respond to COVID-19. While the value of the expertise, capabilities, assets and resources contributed to an alliance by the private sector must equal or exceed the value of resources requested from USAID, however. For example, the minimum USAID funding for Concept Papers addressing COVID-19 is \$1 million. This means that a potential partner, or an alliance of partners, should be able to contribute at least \$1 million in cash and/or in-kind (expertise, assets, technology, money, etc.) of non-USG resources to the proposed partnership. The focus of this APS is proactive engagement of the private sector for: problem identification, problem definition, solution scoping and development, and solution implementation to fight against COVID-19. Please note that while the GDA APS provides Agency policy with regard to GDAs and a core platform and process for the development of GDAs, USAID may build or support the development of GDAs in other manners as well, including through the issuance of other solicitations or the incorporation of GDA development and implementation under acquisition and assistance awards. This particular GDA APS is issued specifically for USAID/Bangladesh seeking partnerships to fight COVID-19.

In addition, developing an effective alliance is a collaborative endeavor founded on several key practices:

- Robust partner engagement;
- Proactive and extensive communication;
- The clear articulation and understanding of partner interests and objectives;
- Thorough exploration of whether and how those interests and objectives overlap or complement one another; and
- Joint problem identification, problem definition and solution development.

Interested applicants are highly encouraged to use the below resources while considering as one of the prospective applicants:

USAID Global Development Alliance (GDA): www.usaid.gov/gda

GDA APS: Partner & Applicant Resources: <https://www.usaid.gov/gda/gda-resources>

Private Sector Engagement: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/partnership-opportunities/corporate/commercial-engagement>.

GDA Frequently Asked Questions:

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/15396/Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%202016-2017%20GDA%20APS_Final_0.pdf

F. Program Background

The following section draws heavily from the COVID-19 Country Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) for Bangladesh prepared by the United Nations working in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh and the international community. One of the objectives of GDAs originating from this APS is to help support the CPRP by working under its framework and supporting activities that are linked to it.

1. The situation involving COVID-19 in Bangladesh is evolving rapidly. What was true, or believed to be true, today may not be tomorrow.
2. The confirmed number of COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh has been growing steadily from March into April. The official tally on April 15 was 1,231 confirmed cases and 50 deaths up from approximately 50 total cases at the beginning of the month. By April 19, the total confirmed cases had surpassed 2000. The actual number may be higher due to the limited number of testing facilities available. Trends throughout the world show exponential growth in the rate of infection and many speculate that Bangladesh is heading into difficult times.
3. Awareness, preparedness and political and social engagement has improved as the virus has spread in Bangladesh. People and institutions are taking it more seriously. Social distancing is being practiced with some success and the government shutdown/holiday, which began March 17 and is now extended until April 25, has helped to create greater awareness and action.
4. There are still reports of medical facilities unprepared to treat suspected COVID-19 patients.

5. There is a dearth of high-quality PPE in Bangladesh. PPE coveralls and gowns currently being produced in Bangladesh are water resistant or waterproof. These PPE would offer some level of protection, but do not meet WHO guidelines against viruses, and could offer a false sense of security. In addition, there continues to be a lack of clarity on which Government of Bangladesh institution would certify PPE once produced.
6. COVID-19 testing capacity remains limited with a concentration in Dhaka.
7. An estimated 9-11 million people moved out of Dhaka ahead of the 26 March shutdown. This most likely dispersed incubating and infectious individuals throughout the country. While accelerating the spread of the disease around the country, the burden of growing clusters within Dhaka has lessened and the case burden may now be more evenly distributed nationally.
8. However, with the confusion over whether the Ready-Made-Garment (RMG) factories were opening back up on April 5, many garment workers returned to Dhaka only to be met with closed doors at their factories. This created additional hardship and tension for this labor pool.
9. A high level of cooperation amongst telecommunication operators coordinated by a central information management initiative, A2i, offers the opportunity for harnessing real-time big data for supporting social distancing, case identification, and home isolation interventions. More needs to be done in terms of outreach and communication, tracking case loads, monitoring supply chains, and establishing a portal to allow for efficient dissemination of information and collaboration among a myriad of stakeholders.

The CPRP is divided into six pillars which are reflected below. Some immediate needs associated with each pillar have been identified from the CPRP. Some needs have been modified from the CPRP.

The needs articulated below and in the following sections on secondary impacts represent priorities that have been identified by various stakeholders working on the COVID-19 response. They are, however, meant to be illustrative. Potential partners should feel free to propose their own ideas, which may or may not mirror needs identified in the six pillars or three cross-cutting areas.

Pillar	Immediate needs
<i>Surveillance and laboratory support</i>	Activate all available testing capacity: Rapid assessment of all available real-time testing capacity in country followed by training of laboratory staff in testing and biosafety SOPs and training of sample collectors in safe sampling and transport.
<i>Contact tracing and Point of Entry (POE) screening</i>	Initiate national case finding: Expansion of the nationwide case identification system and establishment of a mobile phone case tracking system.
<i>Case Management and infection</i>	IPC: Introductory training, including on donning and doffing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers.

<p><i>prevention control (IPC)</i></p>	<p>This includes triage, isolation, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH).</p> <p>Intensive Care Unit (ICU): Training in case management of critical and severe COVID-19 cases.</p>
<p><i>Risk communication and community engagement</i></p>	<p>Outreach on the causes of and protection against COVID-19: Drawing from reputable sources such as WHO and CDC it is important to communicate in a timely, accurate, and non-inflammatory fashion in order to provide citizens the correct information to protect themselves and help quell the spread of the virus.</p> <p>Unfortunately, there is inaccurate information on COVID-19 being shared through various platforms including social media which is counterproductive.</p> <p>It is important to identify the message, the means of communication, and the messenger. Often community leaders including religious leaders are effective change agents. In addition, existing institutions such as schools, community centers, or places of worship can prove to be effective venues for outreach and communication.</p> <p>Information flow: Use of Information and Communication Technology to facilitate COVID-19 messaging, track supply chain issues, identify caseloads and hotspots, and establish a platform to facilitate the flow of crisis communication actions among <i>upazila</i>, district, divisional and national levels.</p> <p>National hotline: Strengthening the Hotline Centre, including infrastructure strengthening, server management, app and web management, course management, volunteer management, incentives and appreciation.</p> <p>Hand washing installation and demonstration: Installation of hand washing stations and demonstration of improved hygiene in multiple venues throughout the country will serve to create greater awareness and provide improved facilities for implementation.</p>
<p><i>Logistics and procurement</i></p>	<p>Testing: Sampling and testing supplies and equipment and improvement of testing facilities.</p>

	<p>PPE: (Note due to procurement guidelines, USAID will not be able to fund this component))</p> <p>Surgical masks, N95 masks, eye protection, gloves, coveralls, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant.</p> <p>Hospital equipment: Procurements based on identified needs within specific hospitals.</p> <p>Inventory: Rapid development of real-time inventory and supply chain management system.</p>
<p><i>Preserving Stability and Addressing Social Tensions</i></p>	<p>Address misinformation: Identify sources of misinformation and address.</p> <p>Mitigate secondary impacts: Mitigate the secondary impacts of COVID-19 on social and economic development.</p> <p>Promote social harmony Foster collective action including social distancing and improved hygiene to protect communities from COVID-19 while emphasizing the importance of working across ethnicities and religious groups and ensuring marginalized populations are included.</p>

Three cross-cutting areas which reflect secondary impacts of the COVID-19 response have been identified:

Economic Impacts

The economic impacts of COVID-19 are already being felt and will have a dramatic impact on Bangladesh’s prosperity for some time to come. The following two examples of negative economic impacts are provided for illustrative purposes. Potential private sector partners should propose ideas which resonate with them.

An area of great concern is the Ready-Made-Garment (RMG) sector. Approximately 83% of Bangladesh’s total exports can be attributed to textiles and particularly to the ready-made garments (RMGs) sector. RMGs have helped drive economic growth in this country. However, a heavy concentration in one commodity makes Bangladesh’s economy vulnerable. And that vulnerability has been exposed under COVID-19.

Western buyers have either cancelled or postponed \$2.8 billion worth of product orders, directly affecting the livelihoods of nearly two million workers and presenting severe financial challenges for factory owners. Dr. Rubana Huq, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) stated, “Our situation is apocalyptic.” Pennsylvania State University’s Center for Global Workers’ Rights in a recent survey found that millions of workers, mostly rural women, have already been sent home without wages or

severance pay. Although Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced a 50 billion-taka (over \$600 million) bailout, mainly for the export-oriented apparel manufacturers, factory owners suggest it will only provide about one month's salary for the workers. USAID partners anticipate that workers will face severe poverty and food shortages in the coming months. They also note the potential for a rise in domestic violence, as families face greater economic stress.

Illustrative interventions:

- Provide in-kind support to the families of laid off factory workers.
- Launch health and hygiene training at the Workers' Community Centers (WCCs), and establish hand washing facilities.
- Promote civic education training in preventing domestic violence.
- Provide counseling and social service resources to family and community members in crisis.
- Partner with private sector international brands for training workers and producing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in their supply factories.

A second area of particular concern include impacts on food security. A majority of the population (87%) still derives at least part of their livelihood from agriculture, either by producing food itself or having jobs linked to agricultural value chains. Agriculture in Bangladesh has transformed and become more sophisticated. There are a growing number of agriculture-related jobs in the agricultural value chain of input supplies, processing, transport, and exports rather than solely in the growing of crops. Therefore, there is tremendous potential for additional growth within agriculture-value chains, but also potential vulnerabilities when one or more of those value chain links are threatened, which is the case today under COVID-19.

Under the lock down mandated by COVID-19, demand for agricultural commodities has declined sharply with less food being required in institutions like restaurants, canteens, and schools. In addition, USAID partners have noted challenges farmers are facing in getting products to market. With a breakdown in regular transport systems, farm gate prices for perishables like milk are declining dramatically. Concurrently, prices for input supply such as animal feed are rising due to transport constraints and import restrictions. As Bangladesh heads into the *boro* crop harvest and then the next planting season, these challenges will amplify.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has highlighted particular concerns over COVID-19's impact on livestock production (dairy and poultry), fisheries, and marketing of crops. Price variation was noted with a concern that farm families were earning less with prices dropping at farm gate, but consumers were paying more as prices were rising in urban areas.

Illustrative interventions:

- Rapidly assess the impacts of COVID-19 on markets systems and food security to identify intervention points.
- Strengthen the weakened market links through targeted interventions to market actors with a particular focus on supply chains, transport, and local markets.

- Promote a communication campaign among market system actors on the causes and effective responses to COVID-19 including emphasis on food safety, water, sanitation and hygiene, and improved nutrition. This would include tracking and dispelling rumors, developing narratives to build social cohesion and empathy within communities, and strengthen the social compact between citizens and government.
- Implement improved hygiene facilities and practices within selected communities.
- Organize youth to support various elements of the work including communication campaign, hygiene responses, and livelihood activities.

Peace, Stability, and Human rights

Fear over exposure to COVID-19, has led to reported incidents of suspected COVID-19 positive patients being refused treatment at medical facilities. There is a potential for these incidents to increase, as well as a potential for a more widespread breakdown of social cohesion and an increase in animosity towards religious or ethnic minorities or other marginalized segments of society. Recently, for example, a number of people protested against developing specialized hospitals for the COVID-19 affected patients in their areas and attacked a home where patients were being quarantined. The attack is but one indication of growing insecurity and the threat of open hostility.

Social media provides an easy platform to spread misinformation on the causes and remedies of COVID-19, which is being exploited by various groups or individuals, to further inflame tensions. This type of xenophobic rhetoric increases the risk of communal conflict. The Government of Bangladesh has begun creating more awareness of COVID-19 in general and providing advice on how to keep citizens safe, including through the use of information and communication technology. There is ample opportunity for private sector engagement to support these efforts to provide fact-based information, address citizens' concerns, and counter false narratives. Illustrative activities:

- Conduct a quick stock-taking of social media platforms in order to track misinformation.
- Provide awareness-raising information about COVID-19 through social media platforms.
- Develop positive narratives to counter false narratives.
- Work through youth organizations of existing institutions such as schools or places of worship to provide awareness information to the community.
- Support the national government to disseminate accurate, timely, and transparent information.

Gender

The extent, degree and type of impact of any crisis varies significantly by gender. Development lessons from the past demonstrate the need to understand how impacts differ by gender and to include a gender lens in identifying and implementing program interventions. Disease outbreaks affect women, girls, men, boys, and persons of all gender orientations differently. Initial research indicates that older persons are most likely to suffer serious complications from COVID-19 and

that men are more likely to experience higher mortality rates than women, but this does not take into account the secondary impacts of the pandemic¹.

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of the global health workforce is female and the front-line health professionals and workers most exposed to the infectious disease are nurses, nurse aides, teachers, childcare workers, aged-care workers, and cleaners, most of whom are women. Though it is still early in the trajectory of COVID-19's spread to assess the gender differentiated impact in Bangladesh there is some evidence that women are being negatively impacted. For example, women make up 80% of the RMG labor pool and were among the first to lose employment when the crisis hit. Migrant women workers including nurses and domestic workers provide a major source of foreign currency. Currently Bangladesh is facing pressure to take back undocumented Bangladeshis from other countries. For example, there could be about 75,000 (sex-disaggregated data are not available) undocumented Bangladeshis in Kuwait and the Maldives only.

Forty three percent (43%) of women are engaged in the agricultural sector and greatly impacted by the recent losses in agricultural sales especially in the livestock sector. In addition to economic losses, domestic violence may be on the rise in Bangladesh. Lock downs and quarantines are making women and children more vulnerable and BBC recently reported that domestic violence in the UK has increased by 120% during this crisis. Gender Based Violence (GBV) is likely to increase in Bangladesh, which traditionally already experiences very high levels.

When organized, women, girls and youth can often act as an incredibly powerful force for change. Delivering gender-responsive programming with the appropriate disaggregation of data and indicators is important in any crisis. Identifying and working closely with existing women's networks, networks of marginalized groups (such as LGBTI, indigenous people, and people with disability) and youth rights groups will help to strengthen leadership and meaningful participation of women, girls, transgender, and people with disability to address unique needs of different groups impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Illustrative activities:

- Conduct an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, men and boys, LGBTI and people with disabilities in Bangladesh.
- Provide opportunities for women, female youth, and women with disabilities to engage in livelihood opportunities including access to small grants.
- Develop strategies including through vocation training centers, schools or within worksites to provide diversified skill and entrepreneurship training to returning female migrant workers to help them get jobs or become entrepreneurs.
- Raise mass awareness on gender-based differences of COVID-19 and support women's and youth organizations to disseminate messages.

¹ Sharon Begley, "Who Is Getting Sick, And How Sick? A Breakdown of Coronavirus Risk by Demographic Factors," March 3, 2020

- Develop strategies including digital strategies to handle disclosures of GBV, develop the capacity of workers to have basic skills to respond to disclosure of GBV, and provide care and support for clinical management,
- Promote gender-responsive social protection measures alongside support services such as parenting and caregiver support programs.

COVID-19 Public-Private Partnership Trust Fund

One concept that may appeal to private sector partners is to establish a trust fund to address a multitude of specific needs and provide an opportunity for additional contributions for other public and private sector entities. USAID has some experience both in Bangladesh² and in other countries establishing trust funds. Some important though not exhaustive elements to address regarding trust funds include:

- Whether the fund is meant to last or simply to address the immediate needs of the COVID-19 crisis.
- If meant to last, how will it be sustained (i.e. what minimal level of fund needs to be retained and what level can be invested in COVID-19 response)?
- What will be the focus of the trust fund once the crisis passes?
- What will the legal authority of the fund be?
- How will the fund be governed (i.e. who would make up the board of directors, what are their authorities)?
- What is the process for receiving additional funding?
- What is the process for making grants?
- How will the impact of trust fund activities be measured?
- How will the fund be audited?

Attracting Private Financing for Development Interventions

The proposed APS focuses on COVID-19 response, however, concepts and proposals that consider seeking USAID support to encourage flow of investments, technical skills and expertise in areas to address development challenges such economic development, employment generation, agriculture and value chain solutions, peace, stability and human rights, and pharmaceutical and health care post-COVID 19 are encouraged. Proposals are welcome with the potential to attract private financing over time to scale up activities or expand economic and social opportunities by leveraging USAID support as:

-provision of seed capital to achieve a long-term objective of becoming a viable commercial venture in areas such as pharmaceutical and health care, agriculture and related value chain,

² The Arannayk Foundation was originally established under the U.S. Tropical Forestation Act and continues to operate in Bangladesh as a not-for-profit company.

sustainable and eco-friendly ventures; and

-pre venture capital contributions that lower risks in the short term while broadening the base of commercially successful small and medium scale enterprises or minority groups and women owned and managed businesses in the long run by attracting private equity investors in the selected ventures and boosting private markets in under-served areas; and,

-part of a 'blended' financing proposal that:

- reduces start-up uncertainty or disadvantages in the selected areas,
- aids high risk projects to experiment, test and pilot new approaches,
- encourages/attracts investments at more generous terms than the market in areas with high developmental impact,
- anchors to 'crowd in' private capital on equal terms to demonstrate viability,
- facilitates transitioning a pipeline of mature investments cultivated by development funders by attracting scalable investments through exits to commercial players.

Applicants are encouraged to consider a range of solutions combining many techniques such as technical assistances, matching grants, innovation funds, incubator financing, venture capital schemes, and seed equity supported by a suitable structure such as a social enterprise, a commercial enterprise, or a community organization seeking to provide market based solution to a developmental challenge.

Environmental Compliance:

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Part 201.5.10(g) and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. No activity funded as a result of this solicitation 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, or Environmental Assessment duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer. Please reference the following Programmatic Initial Environmental Examination (PIEE) for COVID-19 Response Actions (<https://ecd.usaid.gov/repository/pdf/52764.pdf>). Successful respondents' environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures will be specified during the award. During the COVID19 pandemic, applicants are encouraged to consider activities where all work is done while maintaining social distancing requirements, where there is no direct contact with potentially affected people, and done online when possible.

[END OF SECTION I]

SECTION II: FEDERAL AWARD AND AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Federal Award Notices

USAID Bangladesh cannot make awards under this APS until it has appropriated, allocated, and committed funds through internal USAID procedures. While USAID Bangladesh anticipates successfully completing these procedures, potential Applicants are notified of these requirements and conditions. The Agreement Officer (AO) is the only individual who may legally commit the USG to the expenditure of public funds. Applicants are prohibited from charging or incurring costs to the proposed award prior to receipt of either a fully executed Award or a specific, written authorization from the AO.

B. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

This APS is currently supported by specific funds which allow for consideration of applications related to COVID-19's impact on food security. Additional funds have been identified and will be added to the APS over time. Any concept may be considered, however, currently any funding for an alliance proposed under this APS outside of food security would have to be identified by USAID for the specific alliance. The funding for any alliance proposed under this APS will be reviewed and would be specified, if USAID Bangladesh requests a full application in response to a concept paper submitted under this APS. Concept Paper budgets should meet the minimum USAID funding and leverage by partners. For example, the requested program areas require the application to be for a minimum award amount of \$1 million in total. This means Applicants are offering resources of at least \$500,000 as leveraging. As specified on the grants.gov, currently, the award floor is \$900,000 and award ceiling is \$10,000,000.

Note: USAID Bangladesh reserves the right to fund anyone, or none of the applications submitted or to fund applications that fall below the stated dollar threshold. In lieu of an award under this APS, USAID reserves the right to link prospective applicants with an ongoing USAID-supported activity to structure a partnership under that existing award should this prove advantageous from a strategic, programmatic, or budgetary standpoint.

C. Performance for Federal Awards

Applications must offer a period of performance in the APS. It is expected that the programs supported by a proposed alliance will have a period of performance from 12 to 60 months.

D. Expected Implementation Mechanism

USAID has a number of award types to choose when providing funds under this APS to successful Applicants. The type of award and terms and conditions included therein is based upon recipient organization type, program factors, and other due diligence matters (including responsibility determinations.) The type of award(s) may include, Fixed Amount Award (FAA), Cooperative Agreement, Grant etc.

[END OF SECTION II]

SECTION III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

USAID Bangladesh is targeting both potential **Resource Partners** and **Implementing Partners** for this APS.

Resource Partners are US and non-US (with a focus on Bangladesh) private sector businesses, foundations, financial institutions, entrepreneurs, investors, philanthropists and others who can identify and suggest ways to use their financial or other resources to collaborate with USAID/Bangladesh. Resource Partners can also be public sector (e.g., GOB, public companies, other bilateral or multilateral donors).

Implementing Partners are US and non-US (with a focus on Bangladesh) non-governmental, private sector entities (for-profit, non-profit) that can engage and work with Resource Partners. Implementing Partners may provide the 1:1 leveraging themselves, or they must secure private sector funding for the projects they are proposing to implement. Individuals are not eligible to be Implementing Partners, although they may be Resource Partners.

USAID Bangladesh encourages applications from organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

While this APS is open to worldwide competition, USAID Bangladesh is particularly interested in working with the Bangladeshi private sector. This includes non-traditional development partners such as private businesses, business and trade associations, chambers of commerce foundations, and financial institutions, in addition to traditional non-profit NGOs and for-profit development firms. Partnerships from a consortium of organizations which include private sector actors will also be eligible.

Applications must follow all instructions in this APS and should address the Merit Review criteria in Section V.

B. Leveraging

USAID defines leveraging as “significant resource mobilization. In the case of public- private alliances, USAID seeks the mobilization of resources of other actors on a 1:1 or greater basis. Resources may include funds, in-kind contributions, and intellectual property.” GDAs are USAID’s premiere model for public-private partnerships, helping to improve social and economic conditions in developing countries and deepening USAID’s development impact.

USAID develops GDAs where the relationship between business interests and development objectives provides a promising opportunity for:

- the private sector to leverage USAID’s objectives, assets and expertise to address key business challenges and opportunities; and
- USAID to leverage private sector interests, assets, expertise and markets in a manner that fosters or accelerates sustainable and transformational development impact.

USAID Bangladesh has established at least a minimum of 1:1 leveraging requirement for applications submitted under this APS. This means for each dollar of USAID funding requested, the partner should provide at least an equal amount of assets, money, expertise, markets, etc.

[END OF SECTION III]

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SECTION IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Agency Point of Contact

USAID/Bangladesh, American Embassy

Email: bdaps@usaid.gov and copying Andrew Holland (aholland@usaid.gov) and Ahsan Rahman (marahman@usaid.gov).

Applicants should submit all questions regarding this APS via e-mail to the USAID/Bangladesh point of contact at the e-mail address above. USAID/Bangladesh will share information furnished to one prospective Applicant to all other prospective Applicants, through an amendment to this APS, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant.

Concept Paper submissions must be submitted to the e-mail address point of contact specified above.

B. Application Process

USAID Bangladesh will follow a three phase process:

Phase 1: Concept Paper submission.

A Concept Paper is a short document where the Applicant provides an overview of their idea. USAID Bangladesh has provided a template in Section C for the concept paper. This APS will be amended to reflect actual dates if and when any changes are made to the APS. A Concept Paper submitted by a consortium which includes private sector actors will also be eligible.

Applicants may submit a Concept Paper at any time. USAID will acknowledge Concept Papers upon receipt; however, USAID will meet to review Concept Papers against merit review criteria, and make Concept Paper selection decisions in rounds as follows:

Concept Papers received:	USAID selection committee beginning review on or about:
Round 1 - May 24, 2020, 8:00 am Dhaka Time	May 28, 2020
Round 2 - June 15, 2020	June 20, 2020
Round 3 – July 15, 2020	July 20, 2020
Round 4 – August 15, 2020	August 20, 2020

It is the intent that applications will be accepted and evaluated on a new schedule through the closing date specified on the cover page after the first four rounds, therefore, USAID will make a determination on a new schedule for receiving Concept Papers, and amend the APS accordingly.

USAID plans to make determinations on the Concept Paper merit review process for each

Concept Paper within approximately 20 days of the Selection Committee’s initial meeting date and will notify Concept Paper Applicants with “Pass” rating of their status immediately after a decision has been made. Concept Paper Applicants with a “No-Pass” may or may not be notified.

USAID, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to review Concept Papers out of cycle.

USAID anticipates two possible results from the Concept Paper merit review process “Pass” and “No Pass”:

- **Pass - Invited for Co-Creation:** Concept Paper generally satisfies the Concept Paper merit review criteria and receives a “Pass” status. USAID invites Applicant with an invitation letter to engage in co-creation. The specific details of the co-creation process will be described in the invitation letter to Applicants of conditionally accepted Concept Papers. If the co-creation process is successfully concluded, USAID will follow with a request for submission of a full application.
- **No-Pass:** Concept Paper does not satisfy the Concept Paper merit review criteria and received a “No Pass” status. USAID rejects the Concept Paper and the process is ended.

Phase 2: Co-Creation Process

Applicants whose Concept Papers are invited for Co-Design will engage with USAID to work through areas of weakness, and to respond to USAID questions and clarify aspects of the concept that are not clear. The Co-Design process builds on a Concept Paper that has strength and potential; it is not intended to supplant Applicant initiative or build new concepts from the ground up. During this phase, Applicants will work with USAID technical teams to address issues such as environmental concerns, impact indicators and evaluation of their application. USAID Bangladesh envisages a product of the Co-Design process is a strong draft project description for the full application phase, as well as quantitative and/or qualitative indicators or performance milestones, as necessary.

If an Applicant does not succeed at the Co-Design phase, the process ends for that Applicant, and will be so notified.

Phase 3: Full Application

If Applicants successfully complete Co-Design, a full application will be requested based on the consensus reached during Phase 2. At this point, USAID Bangladesh will issue a Request for Application (RFA) to the Applicant or consortium of Applicants. The RFA will provide complete instructions for submission of a full application. The full application will detail and expand the Co-Designed concept. The full application also requires the Applicant to complete specific USG forms and to provide some additional information that USAID Bangladesh will need to move forward with an appropriate implementing instrument.

DO NOT SUBMIT A FULL APPLICATION UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED TO DO SO BY USAID.

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

C. Concept Paper Application Content

Concept Papers MUST be in English and submitted electronically via e-mail in Word 2000 or Word 2003 text accessible or Adobe PDF. Concept Papers must not exceed seven (7) pages, using standard page margins with 12pt font. Applicants must follow the format below. Clarity and specificity are important as is ensuring that Concept Paper narrative addresses the points USAID/Bangladesh will use to review the Concept Paper (see Section V, Merit Review Criteria, of this APS). During the merit review process, USAID/Bangladesh is likely to reject funding for those Concept Papers that are vague or merely restate APS language. The approximate page lengths are provided as a rough guide and are not mandatory as long as the entire Concept Paper does not exceed the page limit above. In addition, applicants may submit up to four letters of support from Private Sector Partners. Each letter should be no more than two pages. There are reasons why an Applicant may be unsuccessful at any phase of the application process. For example:

- The detailed program does not satisfy criteria and definitions provided in the Concept Paper;
- A Resource Partner drops out or does not materialize and there is no longer at least 1:1 leverage;
- The Applicant cannot provide evidence that it is a legal entity;
- USAID Bangladesh has other concerns after conducting due diligence or pre-award surveys.

Annual Program Statement (APS) Number: 72038820APS00001

Program Title: USAID/Bangladesh and the Private Sector: Partnering to Fight COVID-19

A. Cover Page (1-page maximum) – to the extent possible or applicable, please complete the following questions below: [Note that #1-10 shall be submitted as a cover page]

- 1. Applicant Contact Information** (name, title, phone, email):
- 2. Title of Proposed Alliance/Activity:**
- 3. Proposed Period of Performance:**
- 4. Overall Objective of Alliance** (1-2 sentences):
- 5. Applicant Organization Name & Address:**
- 6. Type of Organization** (e.g., non-US, multilateral, private, for-profit, non-profit) date of valid registration, etc.):
- 7. Name(s) and Contact Information of Partner(s)** (Applicants that are Implementing Partners will name Resource Partner(s)/ Private Sector Partner(s) (if any) here; and Resource Partners may list Implementing Partner(s) (if any) here):

(Note: If the applicant cannot provide this information, the applicant should not submit a concept paper. If an applicant submits a concept paper, USAID is under no obligation to review the concept paper.)

8. When did the applicant connect each Resource Partner(s)/ Private Sector Partner(s) to USAID and to whom at USAID?

(Note: If applicant has not met this requirement and cannot provide the requested information, applicant should not submit a concept paper. If an applicant submits a concept paper, USAID is under no obligation to review the concept paper.)

9. Total Program Amount (in USDs):

10. Amount of Funding (if any) Requested from USAID \$ _____

Value of Anticipated Resource Partner(s)/Private Sector Resource Contributions (generally should equal or exceed amount of funding requested from USAID) \$ _____

(Note: As discussed in the GDA APS, if an applicant cannot demonstrate resource contributions that satisfy the leverage requirements set forth in SECTION III of the GDA APS. USAID is not obligated to entertain, consider or review the concept paper. Consideration or review of the concept paper is wholly at USAID's discretion.)

B. Concept Introduction: *(approximately 1/2 page). [Briefly identify the Covid 19 problem you will address, linking it to one or more of the USAID focus areas in Section I, and briefly describe your intervention for tackling this problem. Describe why there is a strategic need for your concept, how it differs from alternatives and any relevant gender specific considerations for the problem or solution.]*

C. Target Beneficiaries: *(approximately 1/2 page). Describe and provide evidence for the demand for your concept. Describe the number and type of beneficiaries the intervention will reach under this partnership. Describe your expected end-users. Was this innovation designed with end user input? Has the innovation been adapted to reach both women and men, and poorer populations? What is the total addressable market or community and potential market share for your concept? What is the basis for your claim? How can the concept be scaled up to reach more people?*

D. Geographic Location: *(approximately 1/2 page). In what location(s) (e.g., district, city) are you proposing to operate under this proposed partnership and why? What are the biggest challenges and opportunities? If you are proposing to expand an existing partnership, describe the region in which you are proposing to expand. What is the basis for your claim?*

E. Resource Partner(s)/Private Sector Engagement *(approximately 1/2 page).*

[Engagement of the private sector as a core partner is a key requirement under the GDA APS. This portion of the concept paper should describe how the applicant engaged the private sector partner(s) in:

1. the identification and definition of the problem(s) to be addressed;

2. *the development of prospective solutions to the problem(s);*
3. *the determination of results to be achieved; and*
4. *the development of the alliance proposed in the concept paper.*

(Note: If an applicant cannot demonstrate robust engagement of the private sector partner(s) as described in the GDA APS, the applicant should not submit a concept paper. If applicant submits a concept paper, USAID is under no obligation to review that concept paper.)]

F. Role of Proposed Alliance, Interventions, and Results *(approximately 3 page).*

[Clearly identify and describe the development problem or challenge to be addressed and provide a thorough description of:

1. *the alliance's objectives;*
2. *the proposed approach and activities, including an implementation timeline;*
3. *the anticipated outputs, outcomes, results and impact;*
4. *how the proposed alliance will clearly and significantly contribute to achieving USAID/Bangladesh Mission's specific strategic objectives or priorities;*
5. *the roles and responsibilities of the core partners. This must include a description of the role of the private sector partner(s) and how the private sector partner's involvement, expertise and resource contributions will support specific alliance activities and contribute to particular outputs, outcomes, results and intended impacts;*
6. *how the collaboration with the private sector will increase the reach, efficiency, effectiveness or sustainable impact of USAID's development assistance;*
7. *how the outcomes and results, as well as any activities that need to continue beyond the duration of a USAID award, will be sustainable without continued USAID funding or involvement after the award ends.]*

G. Monitoring and Evaluation Approach *(approximately ½ page)*

[Provide a brief description of the monitoring and evaluation approach to be used. Include how success will be defined, the availability of baseline data, the use of control groups, or the definition and development of comparison groups and counterfactuals.]

H. Applicant capacity: *(approximately ½ page)*

[Describe organizational capacity – technical, managerial, financial, etc. to carry out the proposed intervention. What is the business model for your innovation?]

I. Letter(s) of Support or Commitment from Core Private Sector Partner(s) *(does not count toward the 7-page total) (4 letters maximum; any letter must not exceed two pages)*

[Applicant must submit letters of support and commitment from the core private sector partner(s) to the alliance. The letter should identify the interests the private sector partner has in the alliance, the ways in which the private sector partner was engaged in developing the alliance, the objectives and results the private sector partner seeks to achieve through the alliance, the role and responsibilities the private sector partner anticipates having in the alliance, and the resources and contributions the private sector anticipates providing to the alliance.]

(Note: USAID has no obligation to entertain, consider or review a concept paper that does not include letters of support from core private sector partners. Consideration or review of the concept paper is wholly at USAID’s discretion.)

J. Resource Contributions Table *(See below; does not count toward the 7-page total)*

[Using the Resource Contributions Table below, list the projected resources to be contributed by each of the partners to the alliance. Please list any and all private sector partners first, followed by other types of partners. Please note that only the resources provided by entities defined as “Private Sector” under the GDA APS are potentially eligible to be counted toward the private sector resource requirement.]

PARTNER RESOURCE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ALLIANCE

Use this table to list and briefly describe the projected resources to be contributed by each of the partners to the alliance. Please list business contributions first, foundation contributions second, then any other private sector partner contributions. Contributions from other types of partners should be listed after the private sector contributions have been listed. Please note that only the resources provided by entities defined as “Private Sector” under the GDA APS are potentially eligible to be counted toward the private sector resource requirement.

Partner Name	Partner Type	Cash Contribution	In-Kind Contribution	Total	Description / Comment
<i>Full name of partner</i>	<i>Business, Foundation, NGO, Higher Education or Research Institution, Public Sector, Other</i>	<i>In US\$</i>	<i>In US\$</i>	<i>Total of previous two columns</i>	<i>Brief comments on nature, purpose of private sector contributions and how they will support specific activities under the alliance</i>
<i>Example : Company X</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>US\$ 1,000,000</i>	<i>100,000</i>	<i>1,100,000</i>	<i>Cash contribution to fund alliance rollout in Kenya 100k in-kind in staff time and donated technology</i>

[END OF SECTION IV]

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SECTION V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Concept Paper Merit Review Criteria

USAID Bangladesh will review for merit all Concept Paper applications that comply with the instructions in this APS. USAID will not provide feedback on concept papers that do not pass. USAID does not anticipate providing feedback to those applicants that pass as they will be invited for co-creation. The concept paper must be submitted within seven (7) page limits. USAID will not evaluate any additional pages that are submitted beyond the seven-page limit.

USAID Bangladesh will use the following merit review elements, which are all equal importance.

1. Technical Approach

- a. The degree to which it proposes a strategic vision to achieve quantifiable results in one or more of the key strategic objectives and outcomes and demonstrates a strong understanding of challenges related to COVID-19 intervention(s).
- b. The degree to which it is evidence-based, technically sound, appropriate to the population, feasible with regards to cost and capacity, and engages the appropriate expertise and stakeholders.
- c. The degree to which it clearly exhibits innovative, practical, and sustainable strategies.
- d. The degree to which it demonstrates institutional capability, technical and financial management capacity, and relevant technical expertise needed to achieve the proposed results.

2. Private Sector Engagement and Collaboration

The proposed alliance must be based on private sector engagement and collaboration, including but not limited to private sector engagement in problem identification and definition and the development of the proposed approaches to solve or mitigate the COVID-19 problem(s) in Bangladesh. The concept paper must clearly describe how the private sector was engaged in developing the alliance, the interests and results the private sector is seeking to achieve through the alliance, and the roles the private sector will play in the implementation of alliance activities.

3. Mobilization of High Impact Private Sector Resource Contributions (1:1)

Alliances must leverage and mobilize private sector assets, capabilities, expertise, and resources on at least a 1:1 basis over the course of an alliance. The concept paper should demonstrate the commitment of the resource partners to provide resources and contributions consistent with the private sector engagement and private sector resource mobilization requirements under this APS.

[END OF SECTION V]

[END OF ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS): 72038820APS00001]