

SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. POINTS OF CONTACT

All questions must be submitted to the following email address: AgExt_RFA_Dhaka@usaid.gov.

Maychin Ho
Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
USAID/Bangladesh
C/o American Embassy
Madani Avenue, Baridhara
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

M. Sirajam Munir
Acquisition & Assistance Specialist
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Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this RFA must request it in writing **by the due date and time specified on the cover page of this RFA** in order to allow a reply to reach all prospective applicants before the submission of their applications. Oral 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 of this RFA, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicants.

USAID/Bangladesh will hold a pre-application conference on Sunday, March 18, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. The pre-application conference will review the requirements of this RFA and will answer questions. Interested applicants should register for the pre-application conference, with the name of the organization and the name(s) of the attendee(s), by email to AgExt_RFA_Dhaka@usaid.gov with the following subject heading, “Pre-Application Conference” no later than Thursday, March 1, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. USAID/Bangladesh will respond with an email confirming registration, details of the location of the meeting, and a confirmation of the date and time. A registration confirmation is necessary to be guaranteed entrance.

B. APPLICATION FORMS

As prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-102, the application must be submitted using the standard form (SF) 424 series, which includes (hyperlinked below):

- [SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance](#)
- [SF-424a, Budget Information – Non-construction Programs](#)
- [SF-424b, Standard Assurances \(Non-Construction\)](#)

Copies of these forms may also be found at the following website:

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

C. PRE-AWARD CERTIFICATIONS, ASSURANCES AND OTHER STATEMENTS OF THE RECIPIENT

The Cost/Business Application must include the following signed Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient, attached as Attachment I:

- a. Certification Regarding Lobbying;
- b. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for covered assistance in covered countries;
- c. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing Implementing Executive Order 13224;
- d. Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking;
- e. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants; and
- f. All applicants must provide a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.

Additionally, the Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient may be found at the following website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303sad.pdf>

D. APPLICATION PREPARATION GUIDELINES

General Instructions: Applicants are expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this RFA. Failure to do so will be at the applicant's risk. The penalty for making false statements in applications to the U.S. Government is prescribed in 18 U.S.C. 1001.

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/business 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.

Any application with data not to be disclosed should be marked 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 [insert numbers or other identification of sheets]."

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."

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 applicant's lack of cost consciousness. Elaborate art work, expensive paper and bindings, and expensive visual and other presentation aids are neither necessary nor wanted.

The applicant shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment to this RFA by signing and returning the amendment. The Government must receive the acknowledgment by the time specified for receipt of applications.

The applicant should retain for their records one copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany it.

To facilitate the competitive review of applications, USAID will consider only applications conforming to the format prescribed below.

E. TECHNICAL APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Technical application shall be written in English and shall not **exceed 24 single-spaced typed pages**, exclusive of resumes, past performance references, and the illustrative Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP). Page limitations include the following requirements: single-spaced text printed on one side of the page only, one-inch (1") margins, **12-point (minimum) Arial 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 three Annexes:

1. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP);
2. Resumes for Key Personnel and Letters of Commitment; and
3. Relevant Past Performance Information (recipient and Key Partner Organizations).

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:

Cover Page (1 page maximum, does not count against the 24 page limit): 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.

Executive Summary (2 pages maximum, does not count against the 24 page limit): 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.

Technical Approach: The technical approach must set forth the strategy, concept, tactics, methodology, techniques, and activities for accomplishing anticipated results set forth in the Program Description (Section I) of the RFA. The technical approach must include:

- outline of all program elements, 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 activities;
- timeline for implementation;
- strategy for the phase-out and sustainability of activities;
- creative use of new technology, innovative tools and lessons learned;
- substantive attention to gender and other cross-cutting themes under the USAID Mission Strategy; and
- responsiveness to special considerations.

As part of the technical approach, the applicant must include an illustrative Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP) as an annex to the application. The PMEP must explain how the applicant proposes to monitor the program and assess program impact. The PMEP 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 project. All data collected must be disaggregated by sex, if applicable. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all costs related to the implementation of the PMEP are included in the cost proposal.

Organizational Capacity and Management Plan: The applicant must demonstrate organizational capacity and reflect comparative advantages in implementing the proposed activities to successfully carry out programs of comparable resource level and complexity to directly benefit Agricultural Extension Capacity Building Activity implementation. Information in this section should include (but is not limited to) the following:

- provide a brief description of the applicant's areas of expertise and particular capacities in being able to implement the program, including how the applicant will engage its own internal components to take a multidisciplinary approach;
- composition and organizational structure of the proposed project team and a description of each team member's role and technical expertise;
- describe the organizational capabilities and expertise of any proposed sub-recipients, if applicable; and
- explain the core technical capacities/resources and institutional support that the applicant offers and address the applicant's financial control system.

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 project team. It should also describe how the technical expertise and experience of all staff members is most conducive to achieving expected results of the program. The plan should specify the role and estimated amount of time each staff member will devote to the project and/or specific components within the project. 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.

The applicant should clearly identify all proposed partners, explaining the roles and responsibilities of each and the proposed management operating structure. Proposed signed Memorandums of Understanding should be presented in an annex for all identified partners. 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 its activities with other programs of USAID/Bangladesh and other donors.

Staffing, including Key Personnel: The applicant will provide a complete staffing plan including key personnel and core technical staff, with underlying rationale, including an organizational chart demonstrating lines of authority and staff responsibility accompanied by position descriptions. Staffing plans are expected to include non-program staff, core technical staff and an explanation of how additional technical expertise will be obtained with attention to cost-containment and unnecessary staffing. Staffing charts are also to include the percentage of time on project per staff.

The applicant must propose which positions should be designated as Key Personnel and specify the qualifications and abilities of proposed key personnel that are suited to successfully implement the proposed technical approach. The applicant must include in the proposal an organizational chart that delineates the key positions together with a summary position description for each. Position description will include, at a minimum, the proposed position title, relationship to other key personnel and with the applicant's headquarters. The applicant's proposed position descriptions shall reflect a clear understanding of the technical and management skills necessary to achieve the results specified in Section I.

In the annex of the technical application, the applicant shall submit resumes for all key personnel candidates and any other personnel proposed for significant positions. Resumes shall be in chronological order starting with most recent experience. Resumes may not exceed two (2) pages in length and should include at least three (3) references with telephone numbers or email addresses for each reference. 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.

Past Performance (does not count against 24 page limit): As part of the Annex, the applicant is required to submit information on recent (3-years) previously performed or on-going contracts, grants or Cooperative Agreements that are the same or similar in complexity to this RFA. The same information is required for all identified sub-recipients as it relates to their proposed role. 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); and
- name, current telephone number, current fax number, and email address (if one is available) of a responsible technical representative (project officer, activity manager or other contact person) of that organization or agency.

Branding Strategy and Marking Plan (does not count against 24 page limit): It is a Federal statutory and regulatory requirement (see [Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961](#), as amended and [22 CFR 226.91](#)) that all overseas programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under an assistance award or sub-award must be appropriately marked with the USAID identity. Applicants may download the regulations, guidance, and graphics at www.usaid.gov/branding. Pursuant to ADS 303.3.6.3.f. and ADS 320.3.1.2, the apparently successful applicant will be requested to submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan that will have to be successfully negotiated before a Cooperative Agreement will be awarded. Budget for all communications and marking efforts

will be included in the overall budget of the project and will be sufficient for the achievement of the communications goals set in the branding strategy.

Cost Share: Applicants will be evaluated on their ability to maximize their cost share. At a minimum, the cost share requirement for the Cooperative Agreement is **10 percent**. Applicants will be evaluated on the effectiveness, cost efficiency and matching resources that the applicant and its partners bring to the implementation of the project.

F. COST APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The Cost or Business 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.

An electronic version of the budget must be provided in an unprotected Microsoft Excel format with full access to all cells, formulas, spreadsheets, and workbooks. No hidden information, cells, formulas, spreadsheets will be permitted. Information referring to cells that are not accessible will not be evaluated. Budget narratives shall be provided in Microsoft Word or PDF format.

The following describes the documentation that the applicant for the Cooperative Agreement must submit to USAID 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:

1. If the applicant has established a consortium or another legal relationship among its partners, the Cost/Business application must include a copy of the document establishing the parameters of the legal relationship between the parties. The agreement should include a full discussion of the relationship between the applicants including identification of the applicant with which USAID will treat for purposes of Agreement administration, identity of the applicant which will have accounting responsibility, how agreement effort will be allocated and the express agreement of the principals thereto to be held jointly and severally liable for the acts or omissions of the other.
2. To support the proposed costs, please provide detailed five-year budget with accompanying notes/narrative for all costs, explaining how the costs were derived. 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.). The following provides guidance on what is needed:

- a. The breakdown of all costs associated with the program.
 - b. The breakdown of all costs according to each partner organization involved in the Program.
 - c. The costs associated with external, expatriate technical assistance and those associated with local in-country technical assistance.
 - d. The breakdown of any financial and in-kind contributions of all organizations involved in implementing this agreement (cost-sharing).
 - e. Potential contributions of non-USAID or private commercial donors to this agreement (cost-sharing).
 - f. Procurement plan for commodities (if applicable).
3. The cost/business application should contain the following budget categories:
- a. Salary and Wages – 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.
 - b. 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 a fringe benefit rate has not been so approved, the application should propose a rate and explain how the rate was determined. 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.
 - c. Travel, Transportation 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. Specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, duration of travel, and number of individuals traveling. Proposed per diem rates must be in accordance with the applicant’s established policies and practices.
 - d. 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.)
- e. Allowances – Allowances must be broken down by specific type and by person and must be in accordance with the applicant’s established policies.
 - f. Contractual – Any goods and services being procured through a contract mechanism. **Subrecipient cost applications should follow the same cost format as submitted by the applicant.**
 - g. 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.
 - h. Indirect Costs – The applicant should support the proposed indirect cost rate with a letter from a cognizant U.S. Government audit agency, a NICRA, or with sufficient information for USAID to determine the reasonableness of the rates. (e.g., a breakdown of labor bases and overhead pools, the method of determining the rate, etc.).

Applicants who do not currently have a NICRA from their cognizant agency shall submit the following information:

- Copies of audited financial statements for the last three (3) years, which a Certified Public Accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID has performed;
 - Projected budget, cash flow, and organization charts; and
 - Copies of applicable policies and procedures (e.g. accounting, purchasing, property management, personnel).
4. Additionally, applicants must provide the following information on their financial status and management, as appropriate:
 - a. Copies of the applicant's financial reports for the previous 3-year period, which have been audited by a reputable certified public accounting firm;
 - b. Current NICRA, if applicable;
 - c. Organizational chart;
 - d. If the applicant has made a certification to USAID that its personnel, procurement and travel policies are compliant with applicable OMB circular and other applicable USAID and Federal regulations, a copy of the certification should be included with the application. If the certification has not been made to USAID/Washington, the applicant should submit a copy of its personnel especially regarding salary and wage

- scales, merit increases, promotions, leave, differentials, etc.), travel and procurement policies, and indicate whether personnel and travel policies and procedures have been reviewed and approved by any agency of the Federal Government. If so, provide the name, address, and phone number of the Cognizant reviewing official; and
- e. Applicants that have never received a grant, cooperative agreement or contract from the U.S. Government are required to submit a copy of their accounting manual. If a copy has already been submitted to the U.S. Government, the applicant should advise which Federal Office has a copy.
5. 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:
- a. has adequate financial resources or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award;
 - b. has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant, nongovernmental and governmental;
 - c. 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.
 - d. has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics; and
 - e. is otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a grant under applicable laws and regulations (e.g., EEO).

G. SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted to the location indicated below in Section IV.J, Application Submission Procedures, by the date and time specified on the cover page of this RFA. Applications received by the closing date and time specified will be reviewed for responsiveness to the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the application format. Applications that are submitted late or are incomplete will not be considered for award.

H. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

There are no funding restrictions applicable to this RFA at this time.

I. PRE-AWARD COSTS

No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either an Agreement signed by the Agreement Officer or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

J. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Applicants may upload applications to 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.

Hard Copy Application Submission: Hard copies of applications submitted via courier service or mail shall be 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 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 original and four (4) copies. The cost or business application shall consist of one 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 closing 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.

Electronic Application Submission: Applications may be uploaded to 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 AgExt_RFA_Dhaka@usaid.gov.

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 **2 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 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:

- i. Technical and cost proposal applications must be submitted in separate parts. Budgets must be submitted in unlocked Excel format with all formulas to demonstrate calculations.
- ii. 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 www.grants.gov that it is a "corrected" submission.

- iii. 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.
- iv. 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, e.g. 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.

The applicants must:

- i. Provide a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number. DUNS number is a nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be obtained from D&B at www.dnb.com.
 1. Click on D&B D-U-N-S Number;
 2. Click on “Are you a government contractor, vendor, or grant recipient?”;
 3. Click on “Click here to request your D-U-N-S Number via the web”;
 4. Follow the instructions.

Questions should be directed to Dun and Bradstreet.

- ii. Register in Central Contractor Registration (CCR) unless exempt under 2 CFR 25.110. CCR is the U.S. Government Federal repository into which an entity must provide information required for the conduct of business as a recipient. Additional information about registration procedures may be found at www.ccr.gov. Organizations that apply and do not have an exception must ensure they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the reporting requirements of 2 CFR 170 should they receive funding. See "Reporting Subawards and Executive Compensation" at <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf> (for Non-U.S. organizations).