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**Subject:** Addendum #1 to the Annual Program Statement (APS) # 7200AA21APS00004

**Program Title:** Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative, Addendum to Diversifying Partnerships in WASH (DiP-WASH)

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance:** 98.001, Foreign Assistance for Programs Overseas

Pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, the United States Government, as represented by the [U.S. Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#), the [Bureau for Resilience, Environment, and Food Security](#) and USAID/India, is announcing the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum to the Diversifying Partnerships in WASH (DiP-WASH) Annual Program Statement (APS), hereafter known as the DiP-WASH APS.

Through this Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum, USAID/India aims to engage local partners to expand and amplify the Agency's work through and with water and sanitation. The overall Agency goal is to support partner countries to achieve sustainable, equitable, and resilient results, and catalyze more effective partnering for impact. This Addendum disseminates information to prospective Applicants so they may develop and submit concept notes in response and ultimately to be considered for USAID funding. This Addendum describes:

- The type of activities for which concept notes will be considered;
- Available funding, process and requirements for submitting concept notes and full applications;
- The criteria for evaluating concept notes; and
- Refers prospective Applicants to relevant documentation and resources.

USAID/India anticipates awarding one or more Cooperative Agreements under this Addendum. Issuance of this Addendum does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. Government to make an award, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a concept note or application(s). The actual number of assistance awards, if any, is subject to the availability of funds, as well as the viability of eventual full Applications received.

Based on the submitted concept note(s), USAID/India will determine whether to request a Full Application from an eligible organization. To be competitive under this Addendum to the DiP-WASH APS, concept notes and full applications must be fully responsive to all directions under the addendum and the overall APS except when specifically noted otherwise in this Addendum.

Please be advised that any questions regarding this Addendum should be submitted to [indiarco@usaid.gov](mailto:indiarco@usaid.gov), copying Prateek Nanda at [pnanda@usaid.gov](mailto:pnanda@usaid.gov) no later than the date and time indicated on cover page #1. Unless otherwise notified by an amendment to this Addendum, no questions will be accepted after the due date. Responses to questions received by the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this Addendum posted to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this Addendum will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this Addendum, if that information is necessary in submitting concept notes or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NOFO. USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifiers and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements stated in this Addendum. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, Applicants are encouraged to obtain them early to be eligible to apply for any award.

It is the responsibility of the Applicant to ensure that the entire APS and Addendum Opportunity has been downloaded from [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or accessing the APS, please contact the grants.gov Help Desk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) for technical assistance.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Rachel Muth  
Agreement Officer  
Office Acquisition and Assistance, USAID/India

**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES**

**Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative**  
**Addendum Number 72038624RFA00006**  
**UNDER EXISTING**

**DIVERSIFYING PARTNERSHIPS IN WASH (DiP-WASH)**  
**Annual Program Statement**

**No.: 7200AA21APS00004**

**PLEASE NOTE: This is an Addendum to an existing annual program statement (APS) announcement. All interested organizations should carefully review both the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum AND the full APS announcement referred to as “Umbrella APS” which can be found here: <<https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/331500>> . Important information contained in the full worldwide announcement is not repeated in the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum.**

This activity is authorized in accordance with Part 1 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Through the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum to the Diversifying Partnerships in WASH (DiP-WASH) Annual Program Statement (APS) No. 7200AA21APS00004, the Bureau for Resilience, Environment, and Food Security's Center on Water Security, Sanitation and Hygiene (REFS/CW) and USAID/India seek to promote inclusive and resilient WASH systems for universal water and sanitation coverage.

Subject to the availability of funds, the total estimated contribution from USAID for this initiative will not exceed \$6 million over a total expected project life of 3 years. USAID/India anticipates supporting one or more awards of up to \$2 million each over the life of the awards. While USAID expects to make at least one award, it is not obligated to do so and reserves the right to not make any awards. Therefore, publishing this Addendum does not commit USAID to make any awards. USAID also reserves the right to not engage in a co-creation process and instead to request full application from the applicant(s) successful at concept note stage or any stage per discretion.

Unless otherwise stated herein, all terms and conditions of the DiP-WASH APS can be found here<<https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/331500>>.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AO Agreement Officer

ADS Automated Directives System

APS Annual Program Statement

AMRUT Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation

AMELP Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plans

CDCS Country Development Cooperation Strategy

CFR Code of Federal Regulation

CLA Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting

CoE Centers of Excellence

DiP-WASH Diversifying Partnerships in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Program DO

Development Objective

DEIA Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility

FAA Foreign Assistance Act

GOI Government of India

MEL Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

MoHUA Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

NBC Nature-based solutions

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NUP New and underutilized partners

NPI New Partnerships Initiative

PIO Public International Organization

POC Point of Contact

TOC Theory of Change

TBC Toilet Board Coalition

RFA Request for Application

SD-FSSM The Skill Development in Fecal Sludge and Septage Management Page 5 of 35

SBM Swachh Bharat Mission

SDG Sustainable Development Goals

SUWASI The Support for Water and Sanitation in India

SME Small Medium Enterprise

ULB Urban Local Bodies

US United States

USAID United States Agency for International Development

WASH Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

WASH-FIN 2 Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Financing 2

WRM Water Resources Management

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## SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### A.1 Introduction

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is issuing this Addendum pursuant to the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. Any potential resulting award(s) will be subject to 2 CFR 700 and 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards and USAID’s Standard Provisions for U.S and Non-U.S Based organizations per ADS 303.

The main goal of the **Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative addendum (Addendum No. 72038624RFA00006)** is to strengthen and expand inclusive, climate-resilient, and low-emissions water security and sanitation through collaborative approaches to position India as a global leader in the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector. The Transforming Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative is a New Partnerships Initiative (NPI) Activity under the DiP-WASH APS.

The Activity on planning seeks to strategically diversify USAID’s water security, sanitation, and hygiene partnerships by drawing on specific capacities that will help to close knowledge, capacity, or technical gaps in service to the objectives of this Addendum. The apparently successful partner should identify specific expertise that it will bring to build capacity, and others that may be sourced from other partners through resource leveraging. USAID encourages the recipient to include channels for ongoing analysis, synthesization and dissemination of results that can be used by worldwide partners in planning future needs in a range of contexts. These channels may also serve to share best practices and lessons learned that will inform future WASH and WRM programming.

The application process for the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative has been properly defined in the subsequent sections of this Addendum. USAID/India is soliciting concept notes from interested organizations that will be reviewed based on the approach, feasibility, and alignment with the addendum’s purpose and USAID’s guidelines along with criteria as stated in Section E of this addendum. Only selected applicants will advance to the next phase and will be invited to a co-creation phase to refine objectives, design interventions, align timelines, and finalize budgets. Participation in the co-creation phase does not guarantee funding/award or a full application request. USAID encourages successful partners to draw on global trends as well as regional and national-level data on safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, WRM, and other sectors or issues that are linked to the objectives of this Addendum, and on the results and lessons learned from previous USAID-funded activities. In addition, USAID encourages the recipient to leverage work based on the stated NPI approaches that is being supported by other donors and stakeholders, as well as other USAID-funded activities.

## A.2 Background

India is considered one of the most water stressed countries in the world, as it has 18 percent of the world's population, but only 4 percent of its water resources<sup>1</sup>. More than half of the country faces high to extremely high water stress and about 600 million people in India suffer the consequences of growing water risks<sup>2</sup>(Map 1).

The main reasons behind India's growing water stress are water pollution, groundwater depletion, and climate change impacts. Large amounts of used water and human waste are not properly treated and disposed of, leading to the contamination of surface and groundwater resources. In addition, groundwater resources are being extracted at high rates for domestic and agricultural purposes, resulting in the depletion of groundwater resources and increased salinity of such resources. Climate change is expected to further exacerbate these conditions. Climate change is altering the availability of water reserves and increasing the duration of seasonal water shortages, due in part to increasingly erratic seasonal summer monsoon rainfall. Water demand is also expected to increase due to rising temperatures. Extreme weather events such as droughts, floods or cyclones are becoming more frequent and intense in India, with the potential to adversely affect safe drinking water supplies, human health, and basic WASH infrastructure.

Rapid urbanization and population growth will add more pressure to already stressed water and sanitation systems. It is expected that between 2018 and 2050, 416 million more people will be living in urban areas in India<sup>3</sup>. In this context, improving urban water governance in India will be critical to promote sustainable, equitable, and climate-resilient water supply and sanitation. In 2018, the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), in a report on transforming urban India, provided a series of recommendations to improve urban governance including empowering local governments, creating a single point of accountability to improve coordination and monitoring of activities, improving financial management, strengthening citizen participation, and enhancing capacity building<sup>4</sup>. The GOI has launched several initiatives including the Swachh Bharat Mission, the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), and the Smart Cities Mission to improve the WASH situation of the country. Significant progress has been made with these initiatives but challenges still remain.

Women and girls in all their diversity, people with disability, the elderly, and the underserved and underrepresented<sup>5</sup> are disproportionately impacted by water security concerns, lack of safely managed sanitation, and climate change impacts. The above-mentioned groups often do not benefit from improvements in WASH because their needs are not acknowledged, and they are excluded from the decision making process. Strengthening local and regional institutions

<sup>1</sup> World Bank, 2019. [Helping India overcome its water woes](#).

<sup>2</sup> World Resources Institute, 2015. [Three maps explaining India's growing water risks](#).

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Urbanization



Prospects: The 2018 Revision (ST/ESA/SER.A/420). New York: United Nations.

<sup>4</sup> NITI Aayog, 2018. Transforming Urban India: The Path Ahead.

<sup>5</sup> USAID/India defines underrepresented and underserved as “All those stakeholders, including marginalized groups, who are excluded from mainstream development because of (but not limited to) their gender, ethnicity, age, caste, sexual orientation, disability, religion, cultural practices, or economic status.”

and fostering inclusive, climate-resilient solutions that can be scaled will be critical to reach the most vulnerable and ensure water security and safely managed sanitation for all in the country and the region.

USAID/India is currently funding four activities in the WASH sector. The Support for Water and Sanitation in India (SUWASI) program engages with the GOI at national and state levels, and focuses on policies, processes, and planning, and the creation of an enabling environment for greater private sector participation. The Skill Development in Fecal Sludge and Septage Management (SD-FSSM) activity strengthens local capacities at the state and city levels by creating a workforce of skilled sanitation workers and WASH centers of excellence that can train and promote innovative solutions in India and other countries. USAID’s Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Financing (WASH-FIN 2) activity addresses financing constraints at the municipality and enterprise levels, focusing on mechanisms that mobilize public and private funds to improve urban water and sanitation services and enhance Urban Local Body (ULB) financial management. USAID/India in partnership with the Toilet Board Coalition (TBC) fosters entrepreneurship in the WASH sector. Finally, USAID/India promotes innovations through

Map 1.  
Geographic  
Distribution of  
Water Stress in  
India



Baseline water stress measures the ratio of total water demand to available renewable surface and groundwater supplies. Water demand includes domestic, industrial, irrigation, and livestock uses. Available renewable water supplies include the impact of upstream consumptive water users and large dams on downstream water availability. Higher values indicate more competition among users.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> World Resources Institute, [Aqueduct 4.0](#)

### **A.3. The New Partnerships Initiative (NPI)**

The Transforming Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative is a New Partnerships Initiative (NPI) Activity under the DiP-WASH APS. [NPI](#) was relaunched in 2019 as part of the Agency's first ever Acquisition and Assistance Strategy. Currently, NPI seeks to operationalize principles articulated in the [Agency's updated 2022 Acquisition and Assistance Strategy](#), including Objective 3: "A more diverse set of partners engaged to implement locally-led development solutions." NPI's focus on lowering barriers to entry to working with USAID, improving collaboration with new, nontraditional, and local actors, supporting greater local engagement, enhancing local capacity strengthening, and expanding the use of co-creation is closely linked with key issues of rebalancing power and accountability to local populations.

NPI uses three specific approaches for engagement, each intended to offer entry points for working directly or indirectly with new, underutilized, or established organizations. These approaches are listed below, and elaborated further in Section C "Eligibility Information":

1. Direct awards to new and underutilized partners;
2. Mentoring awards, where the prime implementing partner awards 50% or more of the

total award to organizations that meet both NPI criteria and local entity or locally established partner criteria; and

3. Non-traditional financing partnerships awards allow partners of any type to serve as prime recipients so long as the prime EITHER meets a minimum of a 1:2 cash leveraging of other public or private sector resources OR implements the activity in such a manner that it will significantly strengthen community financing ecosystems.

#### **A.4. Alignment with USAID/India 2024 Country Development Cooperation Strategy**

The Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative should align with the 2024 USAID/India Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) which focuses on advancing the U.S.-India partnership to achieve shared global development priorities. USAID/India CDCS aims to advance: 1) climate change ambitions; 2) systems for inclusive social and economic prosperity; and 3) coalitions and collaboration for sustainability.

In addition, any activities, interventions or solutions proposed under the DiP-WASH APS should also be responsive to the four guiding principles of USAID/India:

- **Systemic Change:** USAID/India seeks to transform structures, mindsets, power dynamics, and policies through partnerships and active collaboration with a diverse group of actors. Such partnerships will include, but are not limited to, civil society, government, and the private sector, with a focus on continuous learning and the expansion of successful models in India and beyond.
- **Localization:** USAID is undertaking a set of internal reforms, and actions to ensure its work is more responsive to local communities and puts local actors in the lead to strengthen local systems. USAID/India seeks to foster locally-sustained change by

supporting local organizations, promoting local leadership, and advancing locally-driven solutions.

- **Innovation:** USAID/India is committed to promoting new, alternative solutions to development challenges that can be taken to scale. USAID/India is also committed to supporting enabling ecosystems, approaches and relationships that allow for innovations to enter the system, expand program reach, improve cost-effectiveness, and increase sustainability.
- **Inclusive Development/Gender:** As per [USAID 2023 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy](#), ADS 205, and USAID/India's priorities, the proposed initiative should intentionally and meaningfully include and engage all populations and their voices for a wider impact. This initiative will also align with USAID Policy Paper on Disability (being updated), [USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2020](#), [LGBTQI+ Inclusive Development Policy](#) and [Youth in Development Policy 2022](#). These policies reflect USAID's commitment to supporting inclusive and sustainable development and advancing human dignity by protecting and empowering every social

segment of the society.

The guiding principles mentioned above are in addition to, and complementary to the DiP-WASH Principles outlined in Section D of the umbrella APS: (1) Sustainability, (2) Systems Approaches, (3) Local Context, (4) Equitable and Inclusive Outcomes, and (5) Leverage for Sustainable Impact. See Section D of the DiP-WASH APS for definitions of these Principles. Finally, applicants must also be responsive to the U.S. Global Water Strategy 2022-2027, including its principles.

#### **A.5. Purpose**

The purpose of the Diversifying Partnerships in WASH (DiP-WASH) Annual Program Statement (APS) is to engage a diverse range of partners, including new, nontraditional, and local actors on innovative and evidence-based approaches that address persistent challenges in water security, inclusive of drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, and that are not adequately addressed by other USAID investments, and that result in increasing the equitable availability and sustainable management of climate-resilient safe water and sanitation for underserved and marginalized communities and people in vulnerable situations.

The overall goal of the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative is to strengthen and expand inclusive, climate-resilient, and low-emissions water security and sanitation through collaborative approaches to position India as a global leader in the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector.

The Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative seeks to promote innovative water and sanitation approaches that have broad scalability potential to improve water security and safely managed sanitation services for all in India and beyond. This

initiative also aims to promote inclusive development, climate-resilience, knowledge management, and the creation of collaborative platforms. By addressing key systemic issues, this initiative aims to not only tackle immediate challenges but also lay the groundwork for sustained, long-term improvements in water, sanitation, and hygiene outcomes across India and beyond.

Concept notes are encouraged to plan for collaboration with existing USAID/India activities by leveraging the impacts of SUWASI, SD-FSSM, WASH-FIN 2, and TBC. The Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative should also contribute to GOI's priorities in WASH, particularly in relation to major urban programs such as Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation 2.0. This alignment can also extend to rural WASH priorities to promote comprehensive water and sanitation solutions across diverse geographic contexts.

#### **A.6. Theory of Change**

USAID/India's Theory of Change (TOC) for the initiative is presented below.

IF inclusive, climate-resilient, and low-emissions water security and sanitation approaches are tested and implemented effectively, and

IF WASH Centers of Excellence are established, and

IF knowledge-sharing platforms and networks are created,

THEN:

(i) stakeholder coordination, innovation, and workforce capacities will be improved and expanded,

(ii) equitable access to sustainable WASH services will increase, public health will improve, and greenhouse gas emissions will decline,

(iii) India will be positioned as a regional and global leader in the WASH sector.

#### **A.7. Programmatic Focus**

USAID/India anticipates that the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative (Addendum No.: 72038624RFA00001) will contribute to the US Global Water Strategy and to USAID/India Country Development Cooperation Strategy through successful achievement of one or more of the following objectives and outcomes:

##### **i. Inclusive, climate-resilient, and low-emissions water security and sanitation improved**

Climate change can have significant impacts on the WASH sector and its effects are

disproportionately felt by underserved communities and vulnerable populations. Floods can harm WASH infrastructure, droughts reduce water supply, and rising temperatures impact water usage and disease vectors. The WASH sector is also an important contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Wastewater treatment produces around 1-3 percent of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions, including about 12 percent of global methane emissions<sup>7</sup>. Methane emissions from the WASH sector tend to be underestimated because they usually focus on wastewater from sewerage sanitation systems and do not account for the emissions from non-sewered sanitation systems, which are used by more than 75% of the population in India<sup>8</sup>. Methane is a powerful, short-lived climate pollutant with far greater heat-trapping potential than carbon dioxide and therefore, integrating methane abatement into sanitation systems can have a significant impact on climate mitigation.

Nature-based solutions (NBS) use natural processes and systems, such as plants, soil, and bacteria to enhance water availability, improve water quality, and reduce risks associated with

water-related disasters and climate change. NBS have been recognized as effective alternatives or supplements to conventional centralized wastewater treatment systems and could play a key role in closing the wastewater treatment gap in India.

The Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative seeks to support approaches and solutions that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as improve the resilience of cities and WASH systems against extreme weather events, with a special focus on vulnerable communities. Some illustrative solutions may include but are not limited to the promotion of nature-based solutions, or the creation of an enabling environment to reduce methane emissions.

Improving the feasibility of inclusive, climate-resilient, low-emissions solutions to the Indian context and developing quality assurance mechanisms and standards, targeted training, or methodologies to accurately estimate the climate mitigation and adaptation potential of different technologies also fall within the scope of this initiative. The geographic focus for activities under this objective should be informed by data-driven analysis of hazard, exposure, vulnerability, and overall risk related to WASH systems.

USAID/India, through this APS, also encourages applications that support a sector-wide strategy, including policy and regulatory reforms, data management, mobilization of financial resources, and behavioral change initiatives to improve inclusive, climate-resilient, and low-emissions water security and sanitation. Some illustrative outcomes for this focal area include:

- Significant reduction in methane emissions from sanitation systems, contributing to improved air quality and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

<sup>7</sup> Stockholm International Water Institute, 2023. What can the WASH sector do to tackle climate change? 4 questions to Ricard Giné.

<sup>8</sup> UNICEF & WHO. Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000–2022: special focus on gender. New York: United Nations

- Significant increase in access to basic and safely managed sanitation and drinking water services, improving public health and ensuring reliable and safe water supply for communities.
- Effective development and enforcement of policies and standards for low-emission WASH practices, resulting in lower environmental impact and increased compliance.
- Sustainable management and use of water resources, resulting in increased water security.

## **ii. WASH Centers of Excellence Established for Innovation and Capacity Strengthening in India and Beyond**

The Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative will support the establishment of Centers of Excellence (CoE) dedicated to promoting knowledge management, innovation, capacity strengthening, and technical assistance to regional and local

governments to address existing challenges in urban water management and sanitation. The CoEs are expected to collaborate with government institutions and other key stakeholders including the private sector and universities to promote continuous learning and scaling of successful models in India and the region.

The CoEs are also expected to provide training to professionals in the field of water and wastewater service provision. In addition, CoEs should play an important role in promoting innovations and a climate-resilient and low-emissions WASH sector by creating an enabling environment for the dissemination and adoption of cutting edge technologies and best practices. The CoE will contribute to evidence-based decision making and policymaking by improving knowledge management and identifying and filling key research and data gaps. Another important focus of the CoEs should be on advancing WASH solutions by, for and with the underserved and underrepresented, with a special focus on women and girls in all their diversity. Through these concerted efforts, the CoEs are expected to become leading institutions in the field of urban water and sanitation in India and beyond.

Some illustrative outcomes include:

- Centers of Excellence (CoEs) are established and operational in key regions, serving as hubs for advancing innovation and the professionalization of WASH services.
- Enhanced organizational readiness and capacity to effectively implement and sustain WASH initiatives.
- CoEs provide regular training and capacity-strengthening programs, leading to a more skilled and knowledgeable WASH workforce.
- Innovations and best practices in WASH are developed, documented, and disseminated, driving continuous improvement and adoption of effective solutions in India and beyond.
- Strong partnerships between the government, private sector, and academic institutions are established, facilitating collaborative efforts and resource sharing for sustainable WASH outcomes.

### **iii. Coalitions and Collaboration Enhanced for Sustainable WASH outcomes**

The third focus area revolves around the pivotal role that USAID can play as a facilitator to bring together different stakeholders and foster new partnerships that drive transformative outcomes in India, the broader South Asia region, and the global community. USAID has been actively engaged in initiatives like the National Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (NFSSM) Alliance which supported the national government in drafting the Faecal Sludge and Septage Management Policy in 2017. Similarly, USAID/India has supported platforms like TBC and the Safe Water Network, which have been effective in promoting innovation and private sector participation in the drinking water and sanitation economy.

According to Swachh Survekshan, the annual survey conducted under the Urban Swachh Bharat Mission, many metropolitan and secondary cities lag behind in their WASH performance. Cities across India struggle with similar challenges such as rapid urbanization trends, inadequate

financial resources, limited institutional capacity, and lack of inclusive approaches to ensure equitable WASH services for communities in vulnerable situations.

The Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative envisions the creation of a knowledge-sharing platform among city managers to share both successes and challenges experienced during planning, implementation, and monitoring of WASH interventions.

A City-to-City Learning Platform could help underperforming cities enhance their WASH performance. The creation of a unified platform or network that brings together the public and private sector, NGOs, and local communities could be instrumental in facilitating the exchange of best practices and successful innovations between cities. This platform or network would also be important to promote coordination among stakeholders, avoid duplication of efforts or isolated initiatives, and contribute to identifying new opportunities or synergies for the design of effective solutions adapted to the local context.

Some illustrative outcomes include:

- Implementation of a knowledge-sharing platform for city managers and strengthened collaborative networks among WASH stakeholders, leading to improved information exchange and collective problem-solving.
- Successful models and practices from high-performing cities are replicated in underperforming cities, leading to improved WASH outcomes across diverse urban settings.
- Improved coordination among public, private, and community stakeholders, resulting in more effective and integrated WASH solutions.
- Ensured availability of affordable and desirable WASH products and services to all market segments, enhancing access and equity in WASH services.

## **A.8. Geographic focus**

In their response to the solicitation, offerors will propose where in India their interventions will be implemented and provide the justification for the selection based on the greatest potential to achieve the project goals. The final selection of geographic locations will be at the co-design stage, in consultation with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

## **A.9. Gender analysis / Inclusive development**

As highlighted in Section A.4, applicants should consult [USAID ADS 205: Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle](#), [Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy](#), [Policy Paper on Disability](#), Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2020 Policy ([PRO-IP Policy](#)), [Youth Policy 2022](#), and [LGBTQI+ Inclusive Development Policy](#) to



integrate relevant gender and inclusive development considerations throughout the initiative. The initiative will be designed in consultation with, by, and for different underrepresented and underserved communities, and stakeholders and will benefit everyone equally and equitably. In order to address gender-based inequities and for the initiative to be effective and inclusive, the initiative will use the following approaches to identify and collectively resolve gaps:

- Gain an understanding of gender relations, the division of labor, and who has access to and control over resources.
- Use participatory processes that include a wide range of female and male stakeholders at the governmental level and from civil society, including women's organizations, marginalized groups, and gender equality experts.
- Identify on the ground barriers to underrepresented and underserved communities that limit access to water supply and sanitation services, digital services, finance, and other related services.
- Foster participation and partnerships with women-led organizations, youth-led organizations and networks and seek to empower women and girls in all their diversity, and other gender diverse individuals.
- Empower underrepresented and underserved communities such as (but not limited to) women, girls, youth, people with disabilities, and gender diverse individuals by helping them to take advantage of the opportunities arising from addressing the global climate change, WASH, and health nexus.
- Identify and be sensitive towards issues of disability and of gender diverse individuals who face additional barriers to access resources, capital, and markets and often are victims of violence, discrimination, or regular stigma.

Please refer to the [gender and inclusive development analysis](#) done by USAID for this initiative.

## **SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Issuance of this Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor do those commit the U.S. Government to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation or

submission of questions, comments, suggestions, concept notes, and/or full application. Applicants submit concept notes/applications at their own risk, and all preparation and submission costs are at their expense.

### **B.1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated**

USAID/India intends awarding one or more assistance award(s) subject to the availability of funds, the total estimated contribution from USAID for this initiative will not exceed \$6 million over a total expected project life of 3 years. USAID/India is anticipating to support one or more awards of up to \$2 million each over the life of the awards. The actual number of assistance awards, if any, under this addendum is subject to the availability of funds and the interests and requirements of USAID/India, as well as the viability of eventual applications received. USAID reserves the right to change funding amounts, provisions and terms of the resulting award(s) as a result of this Addendum to the DiP-WASH APS.

### **B.2. Expected Performance Indicators, Targets, Baseline Data, and Data Collection**

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

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

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

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

HL.8.1-1 Number of people gaining access to a basic drinking water service

HL.8.1-2 Number of people gaining access to a safely managed drinking water service

HL.8.1-3 Number of people receiving improved service quality from an existing basic or safely managed drinking water service as a result of USG assistance

HL.8.2-2 Number of people gaining access to a basic sanitation service as a result of USG assistance

HL.8.2-3 Number of people gaining access to safely managed sanitation services as a result of USG assistance

HL.8.2-7 Number of people receiving improved sanitation service quality from an existing “limited” or “basic” service as a result of USG assistance

HL.8.3-3 Number of water and sanitation sector institutions strengthened to manage water resources or improve water supply and sanitation services as a result of USG assistance

HL.8.4-1 Value of funding mobilized to the water and sanitation sectors as a result of USG assistance

HL.8.5-2 Number of people benefiting from the adoption and implementation of measures to improve water resources management as a result of USG assistance

GNDR-1. Number of legal instruments drafted, proposed or adopted with USG assistance designed to promote gender equality or non-discrimination against women or girls at the national or sub-national level

### **B.3. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Award**

The anticipated period of performance for an award made under the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum to the DiP-WASH APS is 3-years with an anticipated start date in March, 2025.

### **B.4. Substantial Involvement**

The applicant will operate in accordance with the terms and provisions of the resultant Cooperative Agreement. Cooperative Agreements allow USAID to be substantially involved in

one or more areas. In this activity, USAID will be substantially involved in the program and performance management of all awarded Cooperative Agreement(s) through technical collaboration on the program intervention areas mentioned below.

In accordance with ADS 303.3.11, USAID will remain substantially involved over the life of the Cooperative Agreement to assist the Recipient in achieving the expected outcomes and results of the program. This includes prior approval requirements for items outlined in 2 CFR 200.308(c)(1) through (c)(8). Substantial involvement during the implementation of this Agreement may include the elements listed below:

- a. **Approval of recipient implementation plans** during initial and subsequent stages of implementation.
- b. **USAID's ability to immediately halt an activity if the recipient does not meet detailed performance specifications.**
- c. **Approval of specified key personnel assigned to the project.**
- d. **Collaboration with USAID** to facilitate coordination and communication with key stakeholders. Joint collaboration to assist the implementing partner to engage with the multiple US stakeholders (such as with USAID Washington, US based private sector) and Government of India (GOI) stakeholders during implementation.
- e. **Approval of Substantive Provisions of Proposed Subawards** (*Ref. definitions in 2 CFR 200*): Recipient must seek prior approval from the AO for the subawarding, transferring or contracting out of any work, including fixed amount subawards as described in 2 CFR 200.332. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services.
- f. **Agency monitoring to permit specific kinds of direction or redirection of work.** g. **Direct agency operational involvement or participation** to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.
- h. **Prescriptive Agency requirements established *prior to award* that limit the recipient's discretion** with respect to the scope of services, structure, operation, and management processes.

In accordance with ADS 303.3.21, prior to providing subaward approval (see 2 CFR 200.308c(vi)), the recipient must provide confirmation to the AO that a risk assessment has been conducted for the proposed subrecipient(s) by name, including the recipient's verification that the subrecipient(s):

- i. Does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM) ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov));
- ii. Does not appear on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons List maintained by the U.S. Treasury for the Office of Foreign Assets Control, sometimes referred to as the "OFAC List" (online at: <http://www.treasury.gov/resourcecenter/sanctions/SDNList/Pages/default.aspx>; and
- iii. Is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list (online at: [http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq\\_sanctions\\_list.shtml](http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml)).

- i. **Approval of Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plans:** USAID's involvement in monitoring progress toward the achievement of program objectives during the performance, including written guidelines for the content of annual reports and final evaluations through AOR's approval of AMELP.

During the initial activity planning period, the awardee will work closely with USAID to establish major deliverables, program monitoring indicators, as well as baseline data and performance targets which will demonstrate successful achievement of the results addressed in the Program Description.

#### **B.5. Authorized Geographic Code**

The authorized geographic code for the procurement of services and commodities is 937.

#### **B.6. Nature of the Relationship between USAID and the Recipient**

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the India Partnership for Early Learning activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

#### **B.7. Selection of Instrument**

Awards that result from this Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum will take the form of a Cooperative Agreement as USAID believes a cooperative agreement will provide a more effective partnership and the ability to be involved to successfully implement the activity. The [Shock Responsive Programming and Adaptive Mechanisms](#) guide can help inform how to make an award that can be responsive to a context subject to recurrent crises or conflict.

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## SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

### C.1. Eligible Applicants

USAID defines “Implementing Partners” as U.S. and non-U.S. non-governmental organizations that can design and implement assistance activities outside the United States. All Implementing Partners must be legally registered entities under applicable law and eligible under the relevant laws to receive funding from a foreign source. Individuals, unregistered, or informal organizations are not eligible to be Implementing Partners.

For this activity, USAID/India is following the NPI approaches, in line with the overall DiP WASH APS requirements. Eligible partners must be one of the following:

- Local entity, defined as:
  1. Is legally organized under the laws of India;
  2. Has its principal place of business or operations in India;
  3. Is majority-owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of India; and
  4. Is managed by a governing body, the majority of whom are citizens or lawful permanent residents of India.
- Local community-based organization
- Locally established partner (LEP), defined as:
  - A U.S. or international organization that works through locally led operations and programming models. LEPs:
    1. Have maintained continuous operations in India for at least five years and materially demonstrate a long-term presence in a country through adherence or alignment to the following:
      - Local staff comprises at least 50% of office personnel;
      - Maintenance of a dedicated local office;
      - Registration with the appropriate local authorities,
      - A local bank account; and
      - A portfolio of locally implemented programs.
    2. Have demonstrated links to the local community, including:
      - If the organization has a governing body or board of directors, then it must include a majority of local citizens (in the host country, this is not required);
      - A letter of support from a local organization to attest to its work; and
      - Other criteria that an organization proposes to demonstrate its local roots.
- New and underutilized organizations, defined as:

- Organizations that have never received any funding from USAID, or have received less than \$25 million cumulatively in direct or indirect awards from USAID over the last five years.
- Non-local organization, defined as:
  - A non-traditional organization that has received less than \$25 million in director or indirect awards from USAID over the past five years.

This may include U.S. and non-U.S. public, private, for-profit, and non-profit organizations (NGOs), as well as institutions of higher education (especially minority-serving institutions), and public international organizations (PIOs)<sup>9</sup>. All applicants must be a legally recognized organizational entity in India pursuant to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) or equivalent authority guidelines.

Applicants are encouraged to form partnerships when developing concept notes, especially with local entities. Please note that Applicants may serve as sub-awardees, members of a consortium or supporting partners on multiple concept notes. However, all eligible interested organizations are restricted to submitting only one concept note as the **prime applicant** at any given time. Please see Section III. Eligibility Information in the USAID DiP-WASH APS for additional information at Full Announcement - DiP-WASH APS .

If more than one concept note is received with the same Prime Applicant, USAID will seek written clarification from the relevant entity regarding which concept note should be considered for review. Responses from prime applicants must be submitted within five (5) business days; otherwise, all concept notes submitted by the Applicant will be deemed ineligible.

Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted.

**Note: Please note that Applicants can serve as sub-awardees or supporting partners on multiple concept notes.** All terms and conditions of the DiP WASH APS apply.

**C.2. Concept notes must address which one of the following New Partnership Initiative Approaches:**

#### **Approach #1: Direct Awards to Local, New, and Underutilized Partners**

Approach 1 focuses on empowering partners with strong ties to local and national communities, and relies heavily on these partners during co-creation processes to offer innovative ideas and solutions to WASH and WRM challenges. Under NPI Approach 1, awards may be issued only to prime recipients that meet one or more of the below definitions as defined in Section C.1:

<sup>9</sup> Please see ADS 308 for USAID policy on defining PIOs

- 1. Local entity**
- 2. Locally established partner**
- 3. New and underutilized organizations**

## **Approach #2: Mentoring Awards**

Approach 2 allows for established partners of any size and type to apply to strengthen the capacity of local new and underutilized partners to implement activities under this Addendum that have measurable impact, and/or to enable them to meet the requirements to become a USAID direct awardee. Under this approach, the prime is required to subaward 50% or more of the total award to organizations that meet both new and underutilized organization criteria and local entity or locally established partner criteria, as described in Section C.1. This Approach requires organizations with past experience working with USAID to transfer knowledge and capacity to local new and underutilized organizations through formal and informal mentoring as well as through issuing sub-awards.

Transition Awards can be part of any Mentoring Award and guidance for Transition Awards can be found in ADS 303. Transition awards must meet the following three criteria:

- i. The recipient of the transition award is a local or regional subrecipient that has not previously received a direct award from USAID;
- ii. The initial award required the recipient to strengthen the capacity of the local or regional subrecipient(s) to become more capable of receiving a direct award from USAID or other donors; and
- iii. The initial award recipient recommended the local or regional subrecipient for a potential transition award based on explicit criteria contained in the initial award.

The transition award process consists of two stages:

- i. The Initial Award: The award of an initial assistance award for a distinct development activity with an additional requirement to strengthen the capacity of local or regional subrecipients, and
- ii. The Transition Award: The award of a subsequent assistance award to a local or regional subrecipient whose capacity has been developed by the initial award recipient.

## **Approach #3: Leverage Awards**

Approach 3 allows for partners of any type to serve as prime recipients as long as Primes meet a minimum of a 1:2 cash leveraging of other public or private sector resources OR the implementation of the activity will significantly strengthen community financing ecosystems. The



objective of these awards is to ensure that applications include ideas for maximizing USAID investments by identifying additional resources to support achievement of development objectives. These awards may also strengthen local philanthropy, support community financing, or develop models that provide sustained funding for local organizations over time.

A. Leverage Awards: NPI seeks to support partnerships with organizations that can leverage private, non-U.S. Government, and/or local funding sources. Organizations of all types can qualify for these awards if they are able to propose and demonstrate commitment of leveraged funds worth a minimum of 50 percent of the total value of the award they seek from USAID. The leveraged funds can include non-Federal grants, contributions from local philanthropic sources and external awards, and/or in-kind contributions of intellectual property and volunteer hours provided by third-party actors. Applicants are encouraged to seek multiple funding sources to reach the 50 percent requirement. The leveraged funds cannot include additional types of in-kind contributions from the awardee.

B. Awards to Strengthen Local Funding Networks: NPI seeks to support approaches that will strengthen local philanthropic organizations' and community-based financing models that have the ability to provide sustained funding over time to local organizations. This model aims to strengthen local philanthropic and community-based financing models to reach common development objectives. Organizations of all types can apply and do not need to propose leveraged funding. At least 25% of the proposed activity must have the objective of leveraging local philanthropic contributions, strengthening philanthropic networks locally, supporting alternative financing methods for local actors, supporting community-based financing models or similar activities.

### **C.3. NPI Reporting**

DiP-WASH Addenda that utilize one or more NPI Partnership Approaches will require that Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plans include the Agency's new standard capacity building indicator, CBLD-9, to enable Agency-level reporting against the goals of the New Partnerships Initiative. For more information on CBLD-9 please see <https://www.usaid.gov/npi/capacity-building-indicator-resources>.

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## **SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **D.1. Agency Point of Contact(s)**

Name: Rachel Muth

Title: Agreement Officer

Name: Prateek Nanda

Title: Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

If an award is made, the Agreement Officer (AO) will appoint an Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) at that time to provide technical and administrative oversight of the specific award during implementation. AO and the Acquisition and Assistance Specialist will service as the points of contact during award administration.

### **D.2. Questions and Answers**

USAID will provide two weeks for applicants to submit questions. All questions should be submitted by email to [indiarco@usaid.gov](mailto:indiarco@usaid.gov), copying Prateek Nanda at [pnanda@usaid.gov](mailto:pnanda@usaid.gov) no later than **September 28, 2024 at 11:59 PM** Indian Standard Time. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this Addendum will be publicized to all prospective applicants as an amendment to this Addendum. After the closure of the Q&A submission period, USAID/India will post written responses on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) within a timely period.

### **D.3. Content and Format of Application Submission**

This Addendum will utilize a multi-tiered review process in accordance with [ADS 303.3.6.1\(c\)](#). Selection under this Addendum will be based on a three-step process:

1. An open call through this Addendum for a brief (5-page) Concept Note;

2. In-person and/or virtual co-creation discussions with selected concept note applicant(s), by invitation only: and
3. Submission of Full Application(s), by invitation only.

### **D.3.1. Application Process**

#### **D.3.1.A Concept Note Submission**

All interested applicants will submit a concept note in English using the provided template (see Annex 1) of this Addendum. Respondents may download the template from [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) in Word format and email a PDF saved copy of the document to [indiarco@usaid.gov](mailto:indiarco@usaid.gov) with the file name saved as: **“Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative”**. **Concept Notes must be no more than five (5) pages**, single-spaced with 12 point Calibri font and one-inch margins on 8.5 x 11 inch sized paper. **The cover page included in the template is not considered part of the 5 page limit. Any information included in the cover**

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**page beyond the template will not be considered.** Applicants are advised that any pages exceeding these limits will not be evaluated. Concept notes may be submitted by email to the contacts on the cover page of this addendum until **11:59 p.m IST on October 30, 2024**. Concept notes submitted after the deadline will not be accepted and reviewed.

#### **D.3.1.B Content of the Concept Note**

Applicants may select and address one or more of the objectives stated in Section A: Program Description Subsection A.7 “Programmatic Focus”. The concept note must demonstrate an understanding of the activity and outline the applicant’s strategy and methodology, including its strategic approach and illustrative interventions. Additionally, concept notes must include an estimated total budget and timeframe information. Even though applicants are not required to address all the aforementioned programmatic focus areas in the concept note, applicants **may** integrate more than one focus area at their will to showcase their expertise/experience in that particular area as specified in A.7 section. Note that there is no need to prepare a separate title page and/or institutional logos.

Concept notes will be evaluated in accordance with the merit review criteria set forth in Section E of this addendum. Upon review, a limited number of applicants will be invited to proceed to the co-creation phase within approximately 60 days of the closing date outlined on the Cover Page. USAID/India will advise applicants who are not selected to proceed to the co-creation phase by email.

USAID/India may request supplementary information or pose clarifying questions to any applicant at its discretion. Requesting supplementary information or posing clarifying questions to one or more applicant(s) does not obligate USAID to do so with all/any applicant(s), nor does it guarantee invitation to the co-creation meeting or to submit a full application.

By submitting a concept note or full application to the Transformative Partnerships for

Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative addendum, applicants authorize USAID/India with the right to share concept notes with appropriate external partners for the purposes of evaluation or co-creation. All parties privy to the contents of submitted concept notes, whether within or outside of USAID, will be required to keep contents in confidence.

#### **D.3.1.C Co-Creation Process**

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/India will invite one or more applicants to engage in co-creation with USAID/India to further define activity objectives, design interventions, align timelines, and finalize budgets. Through discussions, both the applicant(s) and USAID/India may identify additional resources, partners, or strategies necessary to successfully implement the activity. This process may involve extensive discussions with USAID/Washington, USAID Mission staff, or other experts, within or outside of USAID. Co-creation may happen in-person or virtually, through video conference, and phone calls.

Additional information about the co-creation process can be found in the “Co-Creation” section of the umbrella DiP-WASH APS and through USAID’s Co-creation Toolkits.

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**Note: Communication with USAID/India during the concept note/co-creation phase should NOT be interpreted as a commitment to funding/award or guaranteed request for a full application. Any expenses incurred by applicants during this time are solely the responsibility of the applicants, unless otherwise stated in writing by USAID/India.**

#### **D.3.1.D Step 3: Full Application**

USAID/India will invite successful applicants from the co-creation process to submit final applications.

**USAID/India will only accept full applications from applicants invited to continue in the application process after the co-creation phase.** It is expected that full applications will expand upon their concept note and incorporate any discussions, ideas, plans, feedback or changes from USAID/India and other partners discussed during the co-creation phase. **Note: USAID/ India’s Request for Application (RFA) letter should not be interpreted as a commitment of funds.**

#### **D.4. System Awards Management (SAM) Requirements**

USAID encourages interested Applicants to have an issued Unique Entity ID (UEI), SAM registration, and for non-U.S. organizations, a NATO Commercial and Governmental Entity (NCAGE) code as early as possible, although this is not required at the concept note stage. However, the registration process for obtaining a UEI number, SAM, and/or NCAGE may take many weeks to successfully complete. Therefore, Applicants are encouraged to begin the process as early as possible. Please be advised that SAM registration can be accessed through [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

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## **SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **E.1. Review of Concept Notes**

Once a concept note has been submitted in response to the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum, USAID will conduct an initial review of the concept note using the criteria outlined in the Merit Review Criteria and Considerations section (E.2) below.

The purpose of the initial review and related communication is to determine whether USAID wishes to engage in further discussions regarding the proposed approach and activities. The initial review and communication will result in one of following outcomes:

- A decision to forego further consideration of the approach proposed in the concept note;  
or
- An invitation to engage in more in-depth and specific co-creation discussions aimed at further developing the proposed approach and determining whether to request a full application.

### **Co-creation, Shared Responsibility, Collaboration, and Communication**

Please see the DiP-WASH Umbrella APS Section IV Subsection “PHASE 2: CO-CREATION” for information on co-creation, shared responsibility, collaboration, and communication as that applies to the Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum as well.

## **E.2. Merit Review Criteria and Considerations**

Concept notes will be assessed according to the following merit review criteria on an adjectival system: Very Good, Satisfactory, and Marginal. The Criteria 1-4 below are all of equal importance.

USAID anticipates two possible results from the concept note process:

**Conditional Acceptance:** Applicant is invited to the co-creation stage. Although additional clarity may be needed, the concept note was considered adequate against the below criteria.

Note: USAID/India may request supplementary information or pose clarifying questions to any applicant at its discretion. Requesting supplementary information or posing clarifying questions to one or more applicant(s) does not obligate USAID to do so with all/any applicant(s), nor does it guarantee invitation to the co-creation meeting or to submit a full application.

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**Rejection:** Applicant is not invited to participate in future stages as the concept note was considered inadequate against the merit review criteria.

If invited to submit a Full Application, the Request for Application (RFA) letter will include information on Merit Review Criteria against which the Full application would be evaluated.

### **Criterion 1 - Technical Approach**

The extent to which the approaches articulated in the concept note: a) Offer a credible, evidence-based development hypothesis for the Objectives or Intermediate Objectives identified in the Program Description in Section A; b) use data-informed approaches to increase the efficiency and equity of the proposed work. c) Demonstrate credible approaches to addressing the DiP-WASH Principles (sustainability; use of systems approaches; understanding of local context; equitable and inclusive outcomes; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA), and leveraging) as relevant; and d) Show potential to drive systemic change, prioritize local leadership, foster innovation, and demonstrate a commitment to gender equality and the meaningful inclusion of marginalized groups, in alignment with USAID/India's guiding principles.

### **Criterion 2 - Institutional Capability**

The extent to which the Applicant demonstrates institutional capacity to: a) Perform proposed activities; b) Build and manage relationships with host country stakeholders and with the U.S. Government; and c) Assemble high-quality technical teams.

### **Criterion 3 - Local Capacity Development**

The extent to which the concept note proposes forms of engagement that increase the likelihood that local and locally established partners or the affected communities themselves will be able to continue the program's activities and/or maintain its achievements without funding from USAID (on a scale of 1 - 3; 1 represents none/minimal advancement, and 3 represents significant advancement): The use of the proposed form of engagement is likely to achieve: 1) No or minimal chance of sustainment; 2) Some chance of sustainment; or 3) Significant chance of sustainment.

*NOTE: At a minimum, concept notes should include illustrative indicators used to track progress, quality, and impact (custom or standard F indicators as applicable), note any technical frameworks that should shape the approach to monitoring, evaluation, or learning, and include at least one illustrative learning priority. At the full application stage, additional guidance will be provided through the RFA letter only to the selected applicant(s).*

**Applicants are advised to refer to both the umbrella APS and this addendum in preparing concept notes and full applications, as applicable.**

### **E.3. Additional Considerations**

In addition to aligning with the [2022-2027 U.S. Global Water Strategy](#), applicants should ensure that their concept note is aligned with other relevant USAID strategies, policies, and priorities, such as the [USAID Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy](#), [USAID Youth in Development Policy](#), [USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous People](#), [USAID Education Policy](#), [USAID Environment and Natural Resources Management Framework](#), [USAID Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance](#), and the [US Global Food Security Strategy](#).

Proposed activities should reflect best practices highlighted in USAID's series of [technical guidance briefs on water security, sanitation, and hygiene programming](#).

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## **SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **F.1. Federal Award Notices**

The USAID Agreement Officer (AO) is the only individual who may legally commit the U.S. Government 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. USAID will administer awards in accordance with Parts 700 and 200 of Title 2 of the CFR, and Standard Provisions for U.S./non-U.S. organizations.

### **F.2. Type Of Award**

USAID/India anticipates awarding one or more assistance award, Cooperative Agreement, under this Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative Addendum to successful Applicants. Furthermore, the type of award and terms and conditions included therein depends upon the type of recipient organization, programmatic factors, and other



due-diligence matters (including responsibility determinations.). Therefore, USAID/India reserves the right to change the Assistance instrument from Cooperation Agreement to any other befitting Assistance instrument at its discretion should a compelling need arise for the change.

### **F.3. Additional Information On Award Administration**

- ADS Chapter 201 Program Cycle Operational Policy:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/201.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 204 Environmental Procedures:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/204.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 205 - Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in  
USAID's Program Cycle:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/205.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental  
Organizations:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>
  - ADS Chapter 303 Standard Provisions for U.S. organizations:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 318 Intellectual Property Rights:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1876/318.pdf>
- ADS Chapter 579 USAID Development Data:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/579.pdf>
- Grant and Contract Process:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/grant-and-contract-process>
- USAID Graphic Standards Manual and Partner Co-branding Guide:  
[https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1869/USAID\\_GSM\\_03\\_05\\_2019.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1869/USAID_GSM_03_05_2019.pdf)

## **SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)**

### **G.1 DiP-WASH APS Addendum Points of Contact :**

Rachel Muth  
Agreement Officer, Office Acquisition and Assistance  
USAID New Delhi India/U.S. Embassy

Prateek Nanda  
Acquisition and Assistance Specialist  
USAID New Delhi India/U.S. Embassy

### **G.2 Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman**

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

[The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov](mailto:Ombudsman@usaid.gov)

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## **SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION**

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the concept notes/full applications submitted under this, Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative, addendum to the DiP-WASH APS.

### Applications with Proprietary Data

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

"This application includes data that must not be disclosed, duplicated, or used – in

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

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

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

**[END OF DiP-WASH APS Addendum No: 72038624RFA00006]**

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Transformative Partnerships for Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Initiative  
Addendum No. 72038624RFA00006

## **Annex #1**

### **CONCEPT NOTE TEMPLATE**

**Cover Page: (NOTE: THIS COVER PAGE IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE FIVE PAGE LIMIT FOR THE CONCEPT NOTE)**

**A. Application Overview:***(Please complete the following questions below:)*

**1. Proposed Activity Name/Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Explanation of Qualification Under Eligibility/Engagement Listed in Section C:**

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**3. Proposed Period of Performance (i.e., start date and end date):**

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**4. Total Estimated Program Amount (in USD):** \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Total Amount of Funding Requested from USAID and total amount leveraged (if applicable), including from what source(s):**

\_\_\_\_\_ **6.**

**Applicant Organization Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Applicant Contact Person** (name, phone, e-mail):

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. Full Address for Applicant Organization:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**9. Type of Organization** (e.g., US, non-US, multilateral, private, for-profit, non-profit) date of incorporation, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Describe under which NPI Approach in accordance with Section C.2 are you applying and why?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**11. (If Applicable) Name(s) of Partner(s) Organization(s)** (Applicants that are applying as Mentors will name Subpartners here):

\_\_\_\_\_

**Concept Note Narrative Instructions:**

**A. Concept Introduction:** (approximately one [1] page)

Identify the problem and geographical focus area(s) you will address, linking it to one or more of the Addendum focus areas and briefly describe your intervention for tackling this problem. Describe why there is a strategic need for your concept. Include the proposed total estimated cost (full detailed budget not required) in U.S. dollars (please

use an exchange rate of INR 83/\$1) and the proposed duration of the activity.

**B. Intervention approach** (approximately two [2] pages )

Describe your intervention including the types of benefits the intervention will produce and the types and range of people who will benefit from this intervention. Explain in what location(s) (e.g. State, districts) you intend to work and why. Propose a Theory of Change for how this intervention will produce the desired impact in the focus area(s) identified. Be certain to include information describing why the approach is creative or innovative, how it is potentially scalable, and how it advances locally-led and inclusive development.

**C. Intervention outcomes and Results:** (approximately one [1] page) Describe the anticipated outputs, outcomes, results and/or impact of the proposed intervention. What are the key, quantifiable metrics related to your project's performance or expected performance? What is the scale needed to achieve results sufficient to address the problem? What are the baselines that you will measure before the project begins?

**D. Partner Roles:** (approximately ½ page)

Describe and define the role of other entities/ local organizations in the partnership. This must include a description of the leveraged funding, if necessary, or sub-partners if submitting a mentorship program proposal.

**E. Applicant Capacity:** (approximately ½ page).

Describe organizational capacity and institutional experience – technical, managerial, financial, etc. – to carry out the proposed intervention. Explain your business model and previous experience in this sector and/or geographic area.

*Signature of the individual with the authority to obligate your organization.*