



**RFA: SC-TOPS-WASH-RFA-2018-01**

**Subject: Design challenge: sanitation solutions for vulnerable populations in flood-prone areas of Bangladesh**

**Date RFA issued: October 1, 2018**

**Due date for applications: 5PM EST November 1, 2018**

**Issued by: Save the Children Federation, Inc./The TOPS WASH Award**



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# Introduction from the TOPS WASH Award Director

October 1, 2018

Dear prospective applicants,

I am pleased to share with you the first in what will be a brief series of calls for applications for applied research to support the learning and evidence building efforts of the TOPS WASH Award funded by USAID's Office of Food for Peace (FFP). TOPS-WASH aims to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of WASH practices in FFP-funded development and emergency food security activities.

In many locations around the globe, there are populations that struggle daily with access to clean drinking water and facilities and services that support proper sanitation and hygiene. Poverty, weak or corrupt government systems and acute or chronic crises – conflicts and natural disasters – both create and exacerbate the WASH challenges vulnerable people face. In many circumstances, the development community and the beneficiaries we work alongside know what is needed, but the solution to the WASH problem remains out of reach due to cost or is unlikely to be sustainable because of social-cultural barriers or other challenges within the broader enabling environment. TOPS-WASH is calling on the WASH community – non-governmental organizations, research institutions, private-sector firms—to see where we can bring proven practices together with new research, innovative technologies, creative policies, and other approaches to develop affordable, sustainable solutions to meet the WASH needs of the vulnerable population assisted by FFP programming.

This RFA is designed to generate a solution to one of these intractable problems: ensuring access to affordable, environmentally appropriate sanitation in a rural, flood prone area. Our particular call is to develop a comprehensive solution for the populations living in the Char and Haor Regions of Bangladesh, however, our hope is that it can serve a model for other vulnerable populations residing in areas of other countries that experience seasonal flooding.

For details on proposal submission guidelines, timing, subject areas, and review criteria, please see the RFA package included in this document and its attachments.

Sincerely,

*Rebekah Pinto*

Rebekah Pinto  
TOPS-WASH Program Director

## A. Authority and Introduction

The purpose of this request for applications (RFA) is to solicit applications to tackle key sanitation challenges in CARE’s SHOUHARDO III program areas of northern Bangladesh. Save the Children may fund up to two awards under this RFA funded up to US\$75,000 per award, for the design of a sanitation solution and accompanying implementation plan that is affordable and sustainable for the flood prone areas detailed in section B of this RFA.

This RFA describes the objectives of the TOPS-WASH applied research; explains the technical area of focus; lists the qualifications of applying organizations; lists the criteria for evaluating applications; and provides information on funding, application format, and other relevant information.

The authority for these awards is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and is re-delegated to Save the Children Federation under its Cooperative Agreement No. 72DFFP18LA00005 with USAID.

## B. Specific Programmatic Guidance

### B1. Background

TOPS-WASH is a five-year USAID Office of Food for Peace (FFP) funded activity that aims to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of WASH practices in FFP-funded development and emergency food security activities. The goal of TOPS-WASH is to improve the impact, sustainability, and scalability of FFP’s programming in WASH in emergency and development settings. It seeks to achieve this through four key areas of work: knowledge capture; knowledge generation; knowledge application; and knowledge sharing.

The TOPS WASH Award contains funding to issue small grants for applied research to develop field-viable solutions for improving WASH service delivery for the ultra-poor, and to identify or develop solutions to select technological barriers for moving from unimproved or limited to basic and safely managed service delivery for water and sanitation. This RFA is for the first of a limited number of applied research activities under TOPS-WASH to address a particular WASH challenge in the context of FFP programming.

### B2. Program Scope and Objectives

The objective of this RFA is:

To solicit design and implementation proposals from research partners to tackle key sanitation challenges in the implementation area of the USAID-funded SHOUHARDO III (Development Food Security Activity) DFSA led by CARE that arise from: (1) seasonal inundation of Chars/Haor

regions; (2) minimal land availability for household latrines; and (3) inability to afford existing flood-resistant latrine models for the poor and extreme poor (FFP's target beneficiaries).

A crucial strategic objective of TOPS-WASH is to generate reliable and high-quality information that will improve the delivery of WASH interventions for the beneficiaries of FFP programming. This includes identifying solutions to delivering WASH services in challenging contexts, such as those found in the Char/Haor regions of Bangladesh. The award(s) resulting from this RFA should provide a sustainable, affordable sanitation solution to vulnerable populations in the SHOUHARDO III implementation area, while also providing a concept that can be tailored and used in other flood prone areas in which FFP implementing partners work.

### B3. Focus and Subject Areas

The Office of Food for Peace has been investing in large-scale integrated development food assistance activities in Bangladesh for decades. These activities have often been complemented by emergency activities when natural disasters strike (e.g, floods, cyclones, or the recent influx of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees). The operating environment in Bangladesh is difficult, with high population densities in many regions, lack of public infrastructure (for roads, water, electricity, etc.) and many flood-prone geographic areas. In particular, FFP has invested in programming in the Char and Haor regions of northern part of Bangladesh. "Char" is a term to describe a tract of land surrounded by water with riverine and/or deltic deposits (islands and bars). The Char region of Bangladesh has many of such tracts of land around the three large rivers of the country: the Brahmaputra, Ganges and Meghna rivers. The term "Haor" is a wetland ecosystem in the north eastern part of Bangladesh which is physically shaped as a bowl or saucer-shaped shallow depression, also known as a backswamp with several rivers passing through it.

The Haor area faces moderate to severe floods almost every year where sudden and early flash floods occur sometimes before the monsoon period. Usually the Haor area remains inundated by water for about six months between May and October. Water waves created by wind causes erosion of the earth that has built up mounds upon which the population resides during these flooded months. Early flash floods in March and April destroy standing crops and productive assets.

Due to population growth, the mounds are becoming very over-crowded, resulting in 'rural slums' that lack health and sanitation. Facilities are poor with extremely poor sanitation infrastructure resulting in high-rates of open defecation, and a high-incidence of water-borne diseases. Most of the latrines are 'hanging latrines', constructed at the edge of the mounds, with the discharge outlet flowing into surrounding water during the monsoon season. Due to space scarcity, drinking water sources and latrines are often located close together, creating greater risk of ground water contamination through the shallow tube wells.

The Char areas of Bangladesh are located primary in the north, in the Jumuna, Bramahputra and Tista (or Teesta) river basin. The Char area faces severe flooding annually – typically July to

October – as well as occasional flash floods. Due to river erosion and shifting river patterns, most of the population living in the Char areas become landless and rent land in isolated Char areas where the sanitation conditions are very poor.<sup>1</sup> Similar to those in the Haor, the population typically uses temporary hanging latrines and pit latrines, with few using ring slab latrines. The Char residents frequently construct latrines next to canals and in other low land areas that become inundated with water during floods, resulting in contamination of the water by waste matter.

The Office of Food for Peace currently funds CARE’s SHOUHARDO III Program, a five-year development food security activity in Bangladesh, with a performance period of September 29, 2015 to September 28, 2020. Led by CARE and implemented in partnership with six national NGOs and the Government of Bangladesh, the goal of SHOUHARDO III is to achieve improved gender equitable food and nutrition security and resilience of the vulnerable people living in the Char and Haor regions in Bangladesh by 2020. The program uses an integrated approach in which multi-sectoral activities are implemented together to address food insecurity, maternal and child malnutrition, and gender inequality to achieve women’s and youth empowerment and overall improved food security. The program promotes better governance and disaster resilience while contributing to the targeted households for overall livelihood enhancement. CARE’s SHOUHARDO III program works to reach Poor and Extreme Poor (PEP) persons living in the program areas covering four districts in each of the Char and Haor areas.

In order to improve overall food security, the SHOUHARDO III program endeavors to improve the utilization of nutritious food for pregnant and lactating women, children under five, and adolescent girls. To achieve this, the program strives to improve access to health and nutrition services, reduce prevalence of water-borne diseases, and change nutrition, health, and WASH behaviors through a targeted Social and Behavioral Change Communication (SBCC) strategy. Coupled with the WASH SBCC, activities in the SHOUHARDO III program focused on WASH fall under Purpose 2 of the program and consist of the following:

- Capacity building of community health volunteers (CHVs) on basic health, hygiene and nutrition issues;
- Capacity building of community groups (CGs) and community support groups (CSGs) on their roles and responsibilities in improving community health systems (including WASH systems);
- Training households on good WASH practices, including separating children from animal feces and hand washing by mothers at critical times;
- Implementation of demonstrations on improved low-cost household latrines;
- Implementation of arsenic and coliform testing in existing wells;
- Training for Private Health Service Providers (PHSP) on reduction of harmful practices, IYCF, maternal nutrition, and sales/business for common nutrition and hygiene items;
- Mobilization of communities for Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS); and

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<sup>1</sup> See [video](#) developed by France24 about living conditions in the *Char* areas.

- Provision of support for communities to lobby for increased water and sanitation services.

### Existing Sanitation Solutions

Despite Bangladesh's notable achievement of effectively ending open air defecation, parts of the country remain plagued by difficult sanitation challenges such as those noted by CARE in SHOUHARDO III's implementation areas.<sup>2</sup> In rural Bangladesh more than 90 per cent of latrines are pit latrines.<sup>3</sup> Bangladeshis traditionally use water to clean themselves after defecation, therefore waste matter, urine and water accumulate quickly in single pits that are prone to overflowing, increasing health hazards in flood prone areas.

In the Haor areas, households dig temporary pit latrines and children defecate in the open; or as previously noted, households using hanging latrines. Hanging latrines are a solution of last resort and are recommended for areas where conventional terrestrial types such as pit latrines cannot be built. However, it is never recommended in areas where water the same waters is used for daily living purposes in addition to a means of seeking livelihoods (e.g. fishing), transportation and/or recreation, as is the case in the Haor Basin area.<sup>4</sup>

Over the past decade, a number of organizations have undertaken studies and pilot projects to develop latrines and sanitation systems appropriate for the flood prone areas of Bangladesh. Oxfam GB conducted four pilot projects to explore socially and culturally appropriate, cost-effective and sustainable sanitation technologies in various contexts (e.g. flood-prone/char areas; waterlogged areas; Haor areas; and cyclone-affected coastal areas) for women and men, children and the disabled.<sup>5</sup> Oxfam GB field-tested nine different latrine technologies together with technologies for the low-cost desludging of pits. Oxfam GB organized village committees that worked with project staff to select the technology to pilot, determine sites, and participate in monitoring to determine the appropriate sanitation solution for flood-prone areas. Oxfam GB also ensured that the Government of Bangladesh (Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE) was extensively involved at all stages of development and implementation of the pilots. The review by Morshed and Shobhan details the findings of the field testing of the range of sanitation technologies. This analysis found that raised pit latrines were deemed more appropriate in terms of both their acceptance by the Haor community, and their suitability for flood and cyclone-prone areas.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP ) for Water Supply and Sanitation ( [wssinfo.org](http://wssinfo.org) ).  
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.ODFC.ZS?locations=BD>

<sup>3</sup> Morshed, G. and Sobhan, A., 2010. The search for appropriate latrine solutions for flood-prone areas of Bangladesh. *Waterlines*, 29(3), pp. 236-245.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sswm.info/water-nutrient-cycle/wastewater-treatment/hardwares/user-interface/overhung-latrine>

<sup>5</sup> Morshed and Sobhad, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, p. 243.

A SANTE BRAC project in 2013-2014 aimed to use existing sanitation concepts and work with Bangladesh partners to have them adjusted to the conditions in Bangladesh, including hydro-geographical challenges; social acceptance; and the availability of materials.<sup>7</sup> The report from this project documents valuable lessons learned in terms of ensuring that partners select materials that are durable; assessing the tradeoffs between cost and quality; and the need for social research around acceptance of any in-house solutions. The designs in this project were all on-site solutions and most focused on increasing the lifetime of pits without emptying – however there was associated release of potential pollutants into the direct environment. The project also acknowledged that even a reduced amount of pit emptying still contributes significantly to costs. SANTE BRAC found that five of the 15 designs developed met the criteria set forth by the project and concluded that a combination of the different proposed solutions would “solve all problems.”<sup>8</sup> Further, the project report cautioned that “local entrepreneurs provide valuable information on how to improve existing toilet systems, but their designing and technology capacity is too limited to be able to make new innovations possible.”<sup>9</sup> This is a critical consideration as applicants to this Bangladesh Sanitation Solution RFA need to articulate a sustainability strategy as a part of the proposed design solution that would necessarily include local sanitation entrepreneurs.

More recently, a civil servant in Sunamaganj district developed a “floating latrine” using empty fuel barrels, a plastic sanitary pan, bamboo, rope, and polythene sheet to provide shade. During the dry season, the latrine rests on the ground but during monsoons or flooding, it becomes a floating platform.<sup>10</sup> The advantage to this latrine solution is that it is made from materials readily available in the Haor areas and is affordable – together with the supplies costing around BDT 3,000 (USD 40). An initial pilot project provided 48 of these latrines to residents in Ghagatia village in Sunamaganj and found it well received. Local officials planned to submit a proposal for additional funding to introduce the floating latrine to additional villages.

Additionally, there are actors in the sanitation community that have been developing systems to tackle challenges similar to those found in the Haor and flood prone areas of Bangladesh. In Cambodia, the social enterprise firm *Wetlands Work!* piloted its “HandyPod” treatment system that contains a floating household’s wastewater and treats it to a high grey water standard.<sup>11</sup> Originally piloted with funding from Conservation International and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s Grand Exploration Challenges Program for Water and Sanitation, *Wetlands Work!*

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<sup>7</sup> SANTE BRAC worked with a number of Dutch and Indian partners and their local Bangladeshi partners based their designs on the concepts presented to them by these partners. See *Final Report SANTE BRAC Project Country: Bangladesh*. December 2014. [https://www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/sante\\_brac\\_final\\_report\\_20150906.pdf](https://www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/sante_brac_final_report_20150906.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 47.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Roy, Pinaki. “Floating toilets to the rescue in Bangladesh.” *The Third Pole*. September 27, 2016. <https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/2016/09/27/floating-toilets-to-the-rescue-in-bangladesh/>

<sup>11</sup> See <https://wetlandswork.com/products-and-services/sanitation-in-challenging-environments/handy-pods/>

is now scaling up HandyPod's use in ten floating villages on Cambodia's Tonle Sap Lake supported by Canada Grand Challenges Program for Stars in Global Health.

The organization Toilets for People has worked on a small scale with NGOs in Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and Senegal to build, install, and maintain waterless, composting toilets using locally available materials.<sup>12</sup> In addition to being affordable and easily able to be constructed and maintained, this model of compostable toilet features mixing through a horizontally mounted drum that spins. Unlike more traditional models used in developing countries that are dual-vault and result in less breakdown of the human waste, the spinning process facilitates the composting of the waste matter, making it more readily available as fertilizer.<sup>13</sup>

**Scope of work:** The scope of work for this award is to develop and support piloting - through the development of an implementation plan – low-cost, locally available sanitation solutions for the populations living in the Haor and Char areas of Bangladesh. The application for funding will outline an initial idea that addresses the problem of latrines and how the applicant will research, develop, expand and modify the solution for effective implementation in CARE's SHOUHARDO III activity areas. Applications must include a detailed description of the criteria for the proposed sanitation solution(s), and should consider the following:

- a. **The potential need for non-technological solutions:** As described above, cost remains a major barrier particularly for SHOUHARDO III target beneficiaries. While the core focus of the proposal should be on providing a locally-available sanitation solution to address the ongoing needs of the Haor and Char areas, the 'solution' may include non-technological elements. While the current trend suggests that the Government of Bangladesh is moving away from subsidies, they are still being employed by many unions, along with micro-credit solutions, as a pathway for increasing uptake of improved sanitation. Partial subsidies may also provide a potential solution to support the poorest households to move up the sanitation ladder. Proposed design solutions can consider the role of non-technological solutions, such as subsidies for very poor households, and should clearly articulate specifics on the four critical elements that comprise a subsidy approach – i.e. form, timing, channel, and amount. It should also include a plan for targeting and coordinating with appropriate ministries/offices of the Government of Bangladesh.<sup>14</sup>
  
- b. **Meeting the WHO UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) and USAID criteria for 'limited' sanitation services indicator:** Proposals can be a shared solution, given

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.toiletsforpeople.com/projects/>

<sup>13</sup> See commentary: <https://www.engineeringforchange.org/news/high-tech-toilets-what-we-need-is-a-low-tech-toilet-revolution/>

land/space constraints in the targeted area. If a communal sanitation solution is proposed, the proposed solution must include a sustainable model for managing the communal sanitation facility. Evidence demonstrating this elsewhere in the world will be preferred.

- c. **Durability:** The proposed solution must be able to withstand seasonal flooding and inundation in the Char/Haor areas while remaining effective for six months out of the year during the monsoon season and also must be appropriate/effective for the remainder of the year during the dry season.
- d. **Affordability:** Proposed solution should cost households between 5,000 and 12,000 BT (USD \$60 – \$150). Note that the final costs will also be assessed in terms of overall affordability for targeted SHOUHARDO III participants compared to the durability of the proposed solution.
- e. **Behavior change solutions that address appropriateness for context and social norms:** There are a number of socio-cultural norms that must be taken into account for the sanitation solution to be successful. Behavior change interventions will likely need to be a part of the solution package proposed to address anticipated barriers to use. Some of these considerations include:
  - Tradition and practice in the rural areas that favor open defecation and defecation into bodies of water.
  - Latrines are typically set away from the home, particularly far away from kitchens and populations in the Char and Haor regions are not familiar with in-home toilets.
  - When latrines are shared or in open locations, women and girls prefer to use them in the evenings or early morning, when they are less likely to be seen.
  - A daughter-in-law is not allowed to use the same facility as her father-in-law.
  - Women and girls are also not allowed to use the toilets adjacent to mosques as they are only available to men during prayer time.

Applicants should consider the ways in which uptake of a locally-available sanitation solutions could be improved through an “updated” package of behavior change solutions, including hygiene behaviors. This package should consider the unique context and social norms of households located in SHOUHARDO III target areas and outline an approach that details the steps needed for integration in community and local government.

- f. **Environmental impact:** The proposal must account for safe fecal sludge management during all stages of collection, storage, and final disposal. In exploring options for alternative waste use, it should be noted that activities testing the use of human biogas for cooking have not shown ready acceptance by communities in rural Bangladesh.<sup>14</sup>

**Deliverables** under this grant include:

1. Design of sanitation solutions, including:
  - Drawings
  - Specifications
  - Bill of Quantities and Pricing
  - Business plan or sustainability strategy for implementing proposed technology/solution

Note: if proposed solution does not involve re-design of a latrine, application must clearly outline the deliverable that will be produced that details the solution package and how it will operate.

2. Operations and maintenance manual for latrine solution or other applicable guidance document relevant for proposed solution
3. Implementation plan: detailed document outlining how to pilot the use of the proposed solution, including but not limited to:
  - List of identified materials and resource suppliers
  - Construction/set-up
  - Behavioral components
  - Links with enabling environment (government etc.) as appropriate
  - Monitoring framework
  - Proposed budget for installation and maintenance

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<sup>14</sup> Ghimire, Prakash C. Technical Study of Biogas Plants Installed in Bangladesh. National Program on Domestic Biogas in Bangladesh A Partnership Program of Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) and Infrastructure Development Company Ltd (IDCOL), 2005  
<http://www.bibalex.org/Search4Dev/files/338832/172332.pdf>

### **Collaboration with TOPS-WASH and SHOUHARDO III**

It is expected that the successful applicant will work closely with TOPS-WASH and CARE/Bangladesh, the lead implementing partner for SHOUHARDO III. The purpose of this collaboration will be to ensure that the design is responsive to the needs of the SHOUHARDO beneficiaries in the planned pilot sites and that the implementation plan is developed in alignment with CARE’s implementation approach. Collaboration may include coordinating site visits during the assessment/design stage as appropriate, working with CARE’s SHOUHARDO III staff to contact local Bangladesh officials and sanitation actors, and communicating revisions to the design in a timely manner to support the procurement of supplies or the establishment of other necessary systems to begin pilot testing of the design following the conclusion of this award.

The successful applicant will also collaborate with TOPS-WASH staff for support as needed during the life of the award, and provide bi-weekly updates to TOPS-WASH on the progress of the design. Following the submission of the final deliverable, the successful applicant will be available to collaborate with CARE and/or TOPS-WASH by answering any questions on the design, operations manual, or implementation plan during the first six months of implementation (June – November 2019).

### **Expected Timeline**

February 15, 2019	Anticipated award start date
February 15 – April 14, 2019	Research and design
April 15, 2019	Submit draft design with specifications
April 16 – May 1, 2019	Collaborate with TOPS-WASH to finalize the design
May 3, 2019	Submit procurement list and draft Implementation Plan
May 20, 2019	Submit final Design, Operations and Maintenance Manual and Implementation Plan

Applications must articulate a detailed implementation plan to ensure timely submission of deliverables.

## B4. Duration of the Bangladesh Sanitation Solution Award

The duration of an award under this RFA, depending upon the proposed activity, may be up to three and a half months from the date of award, with all final deliverables submitted by May 20, 2019.

## B5. Funding Availability

Final funding levels for each award will depend on content and needs of the proposed activity, with a ceiling of US\$75,000. The award/s will be a Fixed Amount Award (FAA), which is a type of award that provides a pre-defined level of funding based on a schedule of pre-determined deliverables and results rather than reimbursement based on actual costs.<sup>15</sup>

## B6. Type and Number of Awards

TOPS-WASH plans to award up to two awards under this Bangladesh Sanitation Innovation Challenge RFA. The number of awards will depend on the quality of applications received and the availability of funding.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Save the Children Federation, Inc. or TOPS-WASH nor does it commit Save the Children Federation, Inc. or TOPS-WASH to pay for the costs incurred in the submission of an application. Save the Children Federation, Inc. and TOPS-WASH reserve the right to reject any or all submissions received and to negotiate separately with an applicant, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of Save the Children Federation, Inc. and the TOPS-WASH donor, USAID.

Save the Children reserves the right to cancel the RFA at any time.

## B7. Authorized Geographic Code

The authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services under this RFA is 937. However, local procurement is authorized within the parameters specified in 22 CFR 228.40, "Local Procurement."

## B8. Post-Award Reporting

### Deliverables

1. Design of sanitation solutions, including:
  - Drawings
  - Specifications

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<sup>15</sup> Please see 22 CFR 200.45 "Fixed amount awards" for more information

- Bill of Quantities and Pricing
- Business plan for implementing proposed technology/solution

Note: if proposed solution does not involve re-design of a latrine, application must clearly outline the deliverable that will be produced that details the make-up and operation of the solution and if applicant is therefore combining this deliverable with #2, immediately below.

2. Operations and maintenance manual for latrine solution or other applicable guidance document relevant for proposed solution.
3. Implementation plan: detailed document outline for FFP implementing partner how to pilot use of proposed solution. Including but not limited to:
  - List of identified materials and resource suppliers
  - Construction/set-up
  - Behavioral components
  - Links with enabling environment (government etc.) as appropriate
  - Monitoring framework
  - Proposed budget for installation and maintenance

## **Payment**

Fixed payments will be scheduled in the award as Milestone Payments. The payment and schedule of the Milestone Payments will depend on the selected applicant’s negotiated budget amount, the agreed upon amount for each Milestone, and successful completion of the deliverable(s) associated with each Milestone.

## **C. Applicant Eligibility**

TOPS-WASH will not accept applications from individuals. All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. Applicants must comply with all applicable Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Applicants are not required to have a DUNS number at the time of application but must have a DUNS number at the time of the award. Hence, applicants should be in the process of receiving a DUNS number to avoid any delays in the award process. Applicants must have completed all required steps (if any) with the host government to legally operate their program.

Organizations are welcome to propose collaborative efforts, but each proposal must identify one organization that will be the lead/prime recipient of funding and be responsible for program

requirements. The lead/prime organization also will be responsible for coordinating efforts with other partners. All collaborative efforts must be clearly identified and described in the proposal.

The following are **not** eligible to apply for grants under this RFA:

- Individuals
- Government entities, including ministries
- Multilateral organizations
- Firms operating as commercial companies or other organizations (including nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations) that are wholly or partially owned by foreign governments or agencies

In their cost application, organizations should indicate whether they have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with USAID. Organizations or institutions that do not have a NICRA are eligible for grants under this RFA either by using a de-minimus indirect cost rate (if requirements of 2 CFR 200.414(f) are met) or by direct charging all costs using a documented cost allocation methodology.

## D. Selection Process and Schedule

### D1. Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set forth in **Section F**, below. After evaluation of the applications, either award(s) will be made or, if deemed necessary or desirable by TOPS-WASH, written discussions/negotiations will be conducted with applicants who submit the most-highly rated applications. TOPS-WASH reserves the right to conduct subsequent rounds of discussions/negotiations and/or request a revised application. TOPS-WASH also may limit the number of applicants with whom such subsequent discussions/negotiations would be conducted or from whom revised applications are requested.

### D2. Schedule

This Bangladesh Sanitation Solution RFA is open from the date of issue. Submissions are due by 5PM EST on November 1, 2018.

This Bangladesh Sanitation Solution RFA may be amended at any time.

### D3. Questions

The point of contact concerning this RFA is Ms. Rebekah Pinto, Director, TOPS-WASH, [rpinto@savechildren.org](mailto:rpinto@savechildren.org). Questions on this RFA may be submitted in writing before October 10, 2018 with TOPS-WASH Bangladesh Sanitation Solution RFA in the subject line and should be copied to [tops.wash.bangladesh.rfa@savechildren.org](mailto:tops.wash.bangladesh.rfa@savechildren.org). Answers to the questions will be posted on the [TOPS WASH page](#) of the FSN Network webpage by October 17, 2018.

## E. General Guidance

### E1. Content of Applications

Applicants must submit applications in compliance with the guidelines under **Sections E2** and **E3** of this RFA. Applications that do not adhere to those guidelines will not be considered for funding. Applications must be in English.

### E2. Bangladesh Sanitation Solution Proposal Format

Applications shall be submitted in accordance with the Proposal Submission Package of this RFA, included as **Attachments 1–4**.

### E3. Application Submission

Applications (to include proposal and detailed budget) must be submitted **electronically** to:

[tops.wash.bangladesh.rfa@savechildren.org](mailto:tops.wash.bangladesh.rfa@savechildren.org).

### E4. Program Branding and Marking Guidelines

As a condition of receipt of the TOPS-WASH applied research award, adherence to the TOPS WASH Associate Award Branding and Marking Guidelines is required. The guidelines will be sent to applicants whose proposals are selected for further review or at the time of the award.

## F. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation process set forth below. Awards will be made to the responsible applicant whose application best meets the requirements of the Save the Children Federation, Inc./TOPS-WASH Bangladesh Sanitation Solution RFA. The TOPS-WASH RFA Evaluation Committee (REC) will evaluate and rank all applications independently and uniformly in writing, based on the selection criteria of this RFA.

TOPS-WASH reserves the right to determine the resulting level of funding for the award(s).

### F1. Evaluation Criteria (Maximum 100 Points)

To evaluate proposals, the REC will consider the following evaluation factors:

#### 1. Understanding of the context/challenge (Maximum 10 Points)

- Demonstrate understanding of the reasons for success and failures of previous sanitation improvement efforts in flood-prone areas of Bangladesh

- Demonstrate understanding of the environmental, market and social contexts within the target geographies
- Demonstrate an in depth understanding of the target population needs (social, economic, health, convenience) related to a sanitation solution

## **2. Proposed approach to research and design (Maximum 35 Points)**

- Describe how the approach and potential solution is suited to flood prone areas of Bangladesh
- Demonstrate how target population needs (social, economic, health, convenience) are addressed through the proposed solution
- Describe the potential for sustainability and scale of the sanitation solution

## **3. Cost-effectiveness of proposed design (Maximum 10 Points)**

- Describe how the approach and potential solution will be affordable to the population living in the Char and Haor regions of Bangladesh
- Describe how the approach and potential solution considers the life cycle costs related to fecal-sludge management and disposal

## **4. Approach to social and behavior change associated with solution (Maximum 20 Points)**

- Describe the process that will be used to ensure proposed solution will be accepted by key segments of the target population (men, women, children, disabled)
- Describe the proposed process and platforms for marketing the sanitation solution among the target population

## **5. Potential for scalability and application for solution outside of Bangladesh (Maximum 10 Points)**

- Describe how proposed solution could be scaled up in Bangladesh following successful pilot in approximately 20 initial sites
- Describe applicability in of proposed solution in other flood-prone areas where FFP and USAID fund development and emergency programs

## **6. Cost proposal (Maximum 10 Points)**

See **Attachment 2: Budget Template** and **Attachment 3: Budget Narrative Template**. For the purposes of this RFA, technical considerations are more important than cost. Proposed costs will be analyzed for cost realism, reasonableness, completeness, effectiveness, and allocability. Applications will be assessed to determine if the overall costs proposed are realistic for the work

to be performed, if the costs reflect the applicant’s understanding of the requirements, and if the costs are consistent with the technical application. Applications that do not meet these criteria may risk not being considered for award. Applications that have more efficient operational systems that reduce operation costs will be more favorably considered. As technical scores converge, applications that maximize direct activity costs and that minimize administrative costs will be more favorably considered. It is important to note that where applications are found to be technically equal, cost will become the determining factor for award. Applications will be assessed to determine if the overall costs proposed are realistic for the work to be performed, if the costs reflect the applicant’s understanding of the requirements, and if the costs are consistent with the technical application.

## **7. Past performance/management capacity (Maximum 5 Points)**

- Demonstrated experience in innovation: designing, piloting, and/or scaling technological or programmatic solutions
- Demonstrated experience in WASH programming in Bangladesh or in a similar context
- Demonstrated experience in quantitative, qualitative and cost analysis (monitoring and evaluation)

## **G. Intellectual Property**

Any materials developed under this award relating to intangible property such as intellectual property or patents are subject to applicable rules under 2 CFR 200.315, “Intangible Property.”<sup>16</sup> If applicants have intangible property developed previously under non-federal awards and are planning to use the intangible property in this award, clearly identify the intangible property and its anticipated use in the application. Applicants must also specify if the proposals include any proprietary information and must also mark as proprietary, if applicable.

## **H. Other Applicable USAID Regulations**

Awards will be administered in accordance with USAID policies and procedures. Awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, the applicable OMB Circulars, and USAID Standard Provisions.

Awards to non-U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with the cost principles contained in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E and USAID Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations. Please refer to **Attachment 4** for applicable USAID regulations.

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<sup>16</sup> In 2 CFR 200.315, “The applicant may copyright any work subject to a copyright that was developed under a Federal award. The federal government has the right to: (1) obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data under a Federal award; and (2) Authorize other to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes.” For more details, see 2 CFR 200.315 and e-CFR 401 “Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights.”

# I. Attachments

Applications shall be submitted as per the following proposal submission package:

- Attachment 1: Program Narrative Template
- Attachment 2: Budget Template
- Attachment 3: Budget Narrative Template
- Attachment 4: Applicable USAID Regulations