



USAID | BURMA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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Under Existing Annual Program Statement APS-OAA-12-000003

CALL FOR CONCEPT PAPERS FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE ALLIANCES IN BURMA:

HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT THE US-BURMA COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY, PEACE AND PROSPERITY

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

I. INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) promotes public-private alliances as a business model that can bring new partners and resources into development assistance and thus further the impact of its programs. By identifying the intersection between USAID's development objectives and core business interests, the alliance model generates sustainable market-based and market-led solutions to critical development challenges. The model has been very successful, forging more than 1,613 partnerships and leveraging an average of 4.8 private sector dollars for every USAID dollar spent, totaling an approximate \$1.9 billion leveraged in all active USAID sectors. Recently, USAID's Administrator challenged the Agency to increase the number and value of private sector partnerships substantially, both in Washington and in the field.

USAID also recognizes the critical role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in developing the mix of human capital and institutional capacity needed to drive and sustain robust social and economic development. USAID's historic collaboration with the U.S. higher education community, including the Agency's support for higher education partnerships between US and host country HEIs, has achieved a rich array of development results and impacts. These include the development of human and institutional capacity at host country higher education institutions. Such capacity enables those institutions to generate the knowledge, human capital and technical assistance that are critical to social and economic development.

In close coordination with the U.S. Embassy and other donors, USAID/Burma will serve as a platform to leverage contributions from across the U.S. government and mobilize the investments and expertise of the business, academic, non-profit, and diaspora communities to focus on specific challenges in Burma.

With this Addendum, USAID/Burma is specifically calling for university-private sector partnerships involving U.S. businesses and U.S. and Burmese institutions of higher education to address Burma's critical short, medium and long-term development needs. This approach will provide a mechanism for U.S. universities, foundations and other organizations to collaborate with the private sector in enabling Burmese HEIs and organizations to accelerate and expand the valuable contributions of Burmese HEIs to Burma's social and economic development.

Given this objective, USAID/Burma welcomes participation by and Concept Paper submissions from a wide range of U.S. organizations with a strong interest in or concern about higher education in Burma. This would include but not be limited to universities, state and community colleges, private companies, think tanks, foundations, business associations, non-government organizations, and civil society organizations. Eligible applicants are discussed in more detail under Section V below.

USAID/Burma is seeking to engage with interested parties to develop initiatives that can mobilize institutional assets, funding, technology, innovations, expertise, training and capacity building, and other resources from USAID, the private sector, and the university community to advance democratic rights, transparent governance, economic growth, food security, and the health and livelihoods of the people of Burma.

Additional discussion of these priorities can be found in Section II below.

Note: The Burmese Parliament (the *hluttaw*) is currently in the process of drafting a new higher education law (see Section III, below). Concept Papers should define a partnership arrangement that is sufficiently flexible to allow the organizations to adapt to the evolving situation (i.e. if the new law is promulgated).

USAID's Office of Innovation and Development Alliances (IDEA) has developed an Annual Program Statement (**APS-OAA-12-000003**) as a framework to guide the development of GDAs and the solicitation of ideas. The referenced APS can be found at the following website: <http://idea.usaid.gov/gp/aps>.

This Addendum is intended to supplement the APS by providing background, goals and criteria specific to USAID/Burma. At this time, we are soliciting Concept Papers as defined in III. B "Concept Paper Instructions" of the APS, subject to the additional guidance and objectives detailed below.

II. USAID/BURMA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The U.S. Government (USG) is committed to supporting the multi-faceted reform process underway in Burma as part of its broader commitment to a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Burma that respects the human rights of all its peoples.

The United States is seeking to develop a partnership with Burma committed to supporting the Burmese people and advancing democratic development through the political reform process including support for rule-of-law, human rights, and political and civil liberties; improving quality and access of primary healthcare and strengthening health systems; reducing rural poverty and improving food security through a focus on agriculture; and creating an improved enabling environment for trade and investment. With regard to each of these priorities, the United States will assist in building the human and institutional

capacity needed to support market-led development and a robust private sector, as well as an effective, efficient, and transparent public sector.

Principles of Engagement

USAID assistance in Burma will be guided by the following principles, reflecting best practice in the discipline of development, the Global Development Presidential Policy Directive, as well as the specific Burma context:

Prioritize the People: U.S. assistance will prioritize those programs where there is a confluence of interests between our long-standing commitment to the Burmese people's welfare and support for the democratic transition. Flexible, adaptable programs with small investments will allow us to continue to assess our effectiveness and to adhere to our operating principles. All programs will strive for maximum inclusivity, including of women, youth, and disenfranchised minority groups. All technical assistance programs will be designed with the goal of enhancing responsive, accountable governance, with institutions capable and willing to respond to citizens' demands.

Link our Efforts to Concrete GOB Commitments: Our assistance strategy will be designed to encourage the Government of Burma to address the needs of the public. We will ask the government to demonstrate its commitments by providing matching funds, allowing access to restricted areas, eliminating laws that limit political, civil or economic participation, and other measures of good will.

Model Donor Coordination and Aid Effectiveness: To avoid duplication of effort we will build upon our strong relationships with other donors and civil society actors in Burma to align our support to leverage the greatest impact. Assistance will be sensitive to the local context and the absorptive capacity of nascent organizations and institutions, consistent with universal aid effectiveness principles.

Build Upon Local Capacity: Despite external enthusiasm and good will, the transition will come from inside Burma. Our assistance will provide actors inside the country with information and tools, but it cannot drive the reform process. Our initiatives recognize that while institutions are still learning to be more transparent and accountable, communities are resilient. Accordingly, our civil society support will focus on developing new competencies and avoiding donor dependency. Our assistance programs will expand the definition of civil society beyond NGOs to include business associations, labor unions, universities, and parent-teacher associations.

Strengthen Linkages: Our assistance will incentivize civil society, the private sector and the government to work together on common problems, promoting linkages between actors across the geographic, political and core-periphery divide. The U.S. government will focus on connectivity, linking diverse populations within the country as well as supporting efforts to take advantage of new technology to reinforce linkages within the region. Support for both formal and informal media can accelerate these linkages and create additional stakeholders supportive of further political and economic reform.

Enlist New Partners: Our programs will leverage existing institutions and relationships, working together with regional bodies and initiatives, such as ASEAN and the Lower Mekong Initiative. Our programs will leverage public-private approaches to build sustainable investments in human and institutional capacity, including by enlisting private sector companies and U.S. universities.

Anticipated Areas of USAID Assistance

In keeping with the broad priorities and Principles of Engagement enumerated above, USAID/Burma's interim strategic framework prioritizes investments in the following areas:

- **Advance Democratic Rights:** Support and accelerate the political reform process, including by supporting the development of the rule-of-law, human rights, civil and political society and civil liberties, and supporting a credible national election in 2015.
- **Promote Transparent Governance:** Create a more transparent, accountable government, responsive to the needs of the Burmese people and civil society and committed to inclusive, equitable and transparent economic growth. USAID will work to help Burma become eligible for the [Open Government Partnership](#) by 2016.
- **Expand Peace and Security:** Maintain a commitment to the Burmese people by providing humanitarian assistance inside the country and along the Thai-Burma border. USAID will support efforts to achieve inclusive national reconciliation and durable peace processes.
- **Improve People's Lives and Opportunities:** Increase assistance that will improve the lives of the Burmese people through health, food security and livelihood activities in support of Millennium Development Goals #1 and #4. Health related assistance will focus on improving access and quality of care, particularly for the rural populations and addressing the infectious disease burden inside Burma and along the border. USAID will work to reduce poverty and hunger by supporting inclusive economic growth through agricultural-led development and improved nutrition.

Concept Papers submitted in response to this Addendum should reflect USAID's principles of engagement; should be aligned with the priority areas described above; and should advance USAID/Burma's strategic priorities as it works with the Government of Burma (GOB) and the Burmese people to advance the overall reform process.

III. HIGHER EDUCATION IN BURMA: BACKGROUND & CONSIDERATIONS

Background

Burma's long tradition of higher education dates back to 1876, when the first tertiary education institution, the University College in Rangoon, was established based on the British college model. The number of tertiary education institutions has grown to make up today's education system of over 150 institutions in various regions of the country.

While Higher Education structures and systems are in place, the state of higher education in Burma is dire. Decades of military rule and chronic deficiency of investment in higher education have left the country with insufficient human and institutional capacity to provide quality and relevant higher education services to its citizens and communities. Additionally, the higher education system is burdened by a cumbersome administrative structure, high costs of higher education administration and inadequate teaching capacity. These are some of the challenges calling for a systematic investment and reform of the higher education system in Burma.

Fortunately, there appears to be recognition by the Burmese of the need to reform Higher Education. As result of the National Seminar on the Improvement of Higher Education, a 30-year Education Development Plan for the reform of higher education was developed with a vision to create an education system that can generate the learning society capable of facing the challenges of the knowledge age. As with many aspects of the broader reform process, efforts to reform higher education have been controversial. The Ministry of Education submitted a higher education bill to Parliament, but it was thrown out on July 31, 2012 due to concerns that it did not offer universities sufficient autonomy.¹ Parliament (the *hluttaw*) is currently in the process of drafting a new higher education law.²

In February 2012 the Ministry of Education (MOE) agreed to undertake a Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR), a two-year process led by the MOE with support from UNICEF and other partners. A presentation at that time by the Director General of the Department of Higher Education identified nine areas of potential collaboration with donors and other stakeholders.³

The higher education reforms underway coupled with the robust interest in partnerships between Burmese and U.S. HEIs provide a unique opportunity to assist and engage Burmese higher education institutions as they strive to be valuable assets and contributors to Burma's short, medium and long-term development.

IV. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR UNIVERSITY & PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Prospective applicants should thoroughly review the entire GDA APS before developing a Concept Paper for submission under this Addendum.

USAID has a four-decade long history of forging university partnerships to support development objectives around the world and has distilled lessons describing how such partnerships can best contribute to positive development outcomes. In general, potential university and private sector partnership(s) should:

- reflect USAID's principles of engagement; align with the priority areas described above; advance USAID/Burma's strategic priorities as it works with the GOB and the Burmese people to advance the overall reform process; and advance market-based solutions in support of the priority area(s) that the applicant seeks to address;
- leverage a minimum of one dollar in private sector resources (cash and in-kind) for every dollar of public funding requested. (Note: Generally, a minimum of 25% of the leverage from the resource partners should be in the form of cash. University cost share does NOT count toward the leverage requirement);
- stimulate new investments and new practices, tools, or models that significantly expand the reach, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainable impact of USAID's development investments;
- engage a full range of stakeholders in a highly substantive, sustainable and effective manner;

¹ See e.g. this article from University World News: <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20120823122331617>.

² If the partnership and alliance ideas set forth in a Concept Paper are deemed to warrant a request for a full application, the applicant and partners will have an opportunity to revise proposed activities to be consistent with the implications of the emerging legislation.

³ For more information, see background and resource materials: <http://unic.un.org/imucms/yangon/80/1015/dpo-conference-naypyitaw-13-15-feb-2012.aspx>.

- involve at least one U.S. HEI, at least one Burmese higher education institution, and at least one private sector partner;
- reflect and advance the respective core interests of the private sector partners, the higher education institutions, the people of Burma, and USAID/Burma;
- include an emphasis on building local partner capacity; and
- address relevant gender issues and ensure gender equality in participation and benefit. See the attached USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (see Annex 1 for considerations in incorporating a gender-sensitive approach).

Selection Criteria

The GDA APS details the general criteria through which Concept Papers are evaluated (please refer to Pages 14 through 16). Additionally, Concept Papers submitted under this addendum should address the following criteria specific to the Burma context:

- *Robust working relationships and collaboration between the Burmese higher education institutions and the business community.* Given the complexities and challenges associated with working in Burma, and the value of strong, established working relationships, USAID/Burma is especially interested in Concept Papers wherein the core higher education institution(s) and private sector partner(s) already have an effective history of collaboration. Such relationships and collaboration help ensure that higher education institutions develop and deliver relevant and high quality curriculum, teaching, training, applied research and extension services.⁴
- *Be targeted, tailored and integrated to specifically address the development priorities elaborated in this Addendum:* To ensure that the partnerships are directly responding to and supporting the priority development objectives of Burma, they will need to be jointly designed, planned and implemented by the key stakeholders: the people of Burma and their government, the private sector, the participating higher education institutions, and USAID. In light of the dynamic operating environment and ongoing higher education reform process, proposed partnerships and alliances should NOT be aimed at higher education systems reforms or policy development.
- *Management Capacity:* Any entity seeking to receive and manage a prospective alliance award under this Addendum to the GDA APS must have experience managing partnerships or alliances with private sector companies and must have the capacity to effectively manage the activities to be conducted under the proposed alliance. USAID/Burma is a new Mission with limited staff and the

⁴ An example of the above discussed approach is the Higher Engineering Education Alliance Program in Vietnam (www.heeap.org). HEEAP is a university partnership program led by USAID and Intel Corp and implemented by Arizona State University. The alliance works with eight Vietnamese institutions and two Vietnamese ministries to improve the quality and relevance of engineering education and contribute to shared USG-GVN economic growth objectives. Starting with \$800,000 in USAID funding in 2010, the alliance is now valued at over \$100 million, includes four new private sector partners, and enjoys the highest levels of Government of Vietnam (GVN) attention and support, including over \$20 million in GVN funding. While the programmatic components of HEEAP are fairly standard (faculty training, curriculum reform, technology integration and laboratory improvements), the power of the alliance stems from the foundational and continued private sector support; a highly qualified and motivated U.S. university; and a development objective shared by all parties. In addition, the program is serving as a driver of and model for broader systemic reforms.

situation in Burma requires highly capable organizations. Awardees will be expected to shoulder extensive management responsibilities and perform at the highest level.

- *Capacity for Effective Collaboration:* Given the low capacity of Burmese higher education institutions and the urgent development needs, any U.S. higher education institution(s) participating in partnerships proposed under this Addendum to the GDA APS must have the capacity to effectively collaborate with the proposed Burmese higher education partner institution(s). Previous or present collaboration with the Burmese higher education institution(s) may help demonstrate such capacity.
- *Sustainability:* The Concept Paper should indicate how the outcomes, results and impacts of the partnership and alliance will be sustained beyond the duration of the requested USG funding (see pg. 16 of the GDA APS), with a clear definition of metrics for success. How will the partnership regularly evaluate success and the likely sustainability of partnership outcomes, results and impacts? To the degree that the partnering institutions will seek to continue partnering beyond the duration of the requested USG funding, the partners should also indicate how they will achieve that in the absence of USG funding.

All awards made under this Addendum to the GDA APS must follow applicable USG and USAID rules and regulations.

V. INSTRUCTIONS FOR INTERESTED PARTIES

USAID/Burma anticipates supporting multiple calls for Concept Papers through issuance of this and future Addendums. The first call is being conducted via this Addendum. In order to be considered for possible funding as a Global Development Alliance under the GDA APS, Concept Papers against this Addendum must be received by January 31, 2013.

In light of funding constraints, USAID anticipates making 2-3 awards over the course of multiple calls for concept papers. While multiple awards might be made under any call for Concept Papers, USAID anticipates making at least one award under each call, subject to funding. Awards will likely range between \$750,000 and \$2,000,000. This means prospective applicants must engage the private sector in an effective manner so as to mobilize the private sector expertise, assets, commitments and resources necessary to meet – and preferably significantly exceed – the 1:1 leverage requirement. Prospective applicants need to think carefully and strategically about the array of private sector partners whose interests and assets will be most relevant and effective in advancing the development and implementation of the proposed activities and the achievement of USAID/Burma’s priorities.

While this Addendum specifically calls for university-private sector partnerships involving U.S. businesses and U.S. and Burmese institutions of higher education, the Addendum does not presume that, if an award is made by USAID, a U.S. university has to be the prime with regard to such an award. Page 10 of the GDA APS details what organizations are eligible to submit concept papers.

USAID welcomes applications from many types of U.S.-based organizations including private businesses, business and trade associations, foundations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), faith-based organizations, international organizations, colleges and universities, civic groups, regional organizations, etc.

This list of potential applicants is not exhaustive and is provided for illustrative purposes only. All applicants must be legally recognized U.S. organizational entities under applicable law. An applicant is not an individual.

Prospective applicants should give significant consideration to the sort of organizational and management structures that will most effectively ensure the success of the proposed partnership and alliance. (Note: If USAID determines that a concept paper warrants further consideration under the GDA APS process, the matter of alliance management structures will be discussed extensively and will be a key consideration in USAID/Burma's decision to seek or forego a full application from the partners.)

While USAID is open to considering university consortia approaches, applicants interested in such a model will need to demonstrate how such an approach offers greater value than other models, including how the partners will overcome the management and transaction costs often associated with such approaches.

Applicants may submit more than one concept paper if they have compelling competencies in more than one of the assistance areas identified in Section II. Applicants may also submit concept papers for more than one call. Applicants are expected to be familiar with the Burma context and demonstrate an understanding of the obstacles and opportunities in the higher education sector.

Concept Papers should not exceed 5 pages in total and should contain the following (as per Annual Program Statement, Section III, Pages 13 and 14):

Completed Summary Form (does not count toward the 5 page limit):

1. Name and address of organization;
2. Type of organization (e.g., for-profit, non-profit, university, etc.);
3. Contact point (lead contact name; relevant telephone, and e-mail information. Regional or multi-country applications should provide the name of at least one local partner for each country targeted in the program);
4. Names of other organizations (federal and non-federal as well as any other USAID offices) to whom you are/have submitted the application and/or are funding the proposed activity;
5. Resources (cash and in-kind) leveraged and contributed; and
6. Signature of authorized representative of the applicant.

Technical Information (limited to 5 pages):

1. Concise title and objective of proposed activity;
2. Discussion of the objectives, the method of approach, the amount of effort to be employed, the anticipated results, and how the work will help accomplish USAID's objectives
3. Roles, level of effort, responsibilities and contributions of the prospective partner organization(s);
4. Key evaluation questions and metrics for evaluation: what defines success?
5. Type of support the applicant requests from USAID (e.g., funds, facilities, equipment, materials, personnel resources, etc.).
6. Detailed sustainability plan clearly demonstrating how outcomes, results and/or impact will continue in the long term without USAID support when the GDA program ends

Supporting Information (does not count toward the 5 page limit):

1. Proposed estimated cost;
2. Brief cost breakdown (e.g., salaries, travel, etc.) with proposed budget and projections;
3. Proposed amount of the applicant's financial as well as in-kind participation (clearly identify which resources are cash and which are in-kind and provide information on the nature of the in-kind contributions);
4. Proposed amount of prospective or existing partner (or partners') financial as well as in-kind participation. Cash and in-kind resources leveraged from the private sector should be clearly delineated;
5. Proposed duration of the activity; and
6. Brief description of applicant's, as well as prospective or existing partner (or partners'), previous work and experience.

In addition, all concept papers must be accompanied by a letter of commitment from each Burmese partner institution that conveys that institution's commitment to the partnership and alliance and clearly communicates and demonstrates the importance, value, and feasibility of the proposed activities.

All Concept Papers must be in English and submitted electronically by email by January 31, 2013 to:

Brian Stout, USAID/Burma, stoutbc@state.gov

With a copy to: Maria Rosario Arenas, Sr. Acquisition Specialist, USAID/RDMA, at marenas@usaid.gov and to gda@usaid.gov.

Concept papers should demonstrate familiarity with Burma's development context, an understanding of USG and USAID objectives, and a clear explanation of how the proposed interventions align with the priorities outlined in this addendum.

If prospective applicants have questions regarding this Addendum and/or USAID/Burma programming priorities, they should contact Brian Stout at stoutbc@state.gov with a copy to: Maria Rosario Arenas at marenas@usaid.gov.

If prospective applicants have questions regarding the terms of the GDA APS and the Global Development Alliance model, they should contact Ken Lee at kenlee@usaid.gov with a copy to: Brian Stout at stoutbc@state.gov and Maria Rosario Arenas at marenas@usaid.gov.

Prospective applicants who are interested in participating in an information session to be held in Washington in December or January should contact Mitch Kirby at mkirby@usaid.gov with a copy to: Brian Stout at stoutbc@state.gov and Maria Rosario Arenas at marenas@usaid.gov.

Resources:

Descriptions of the Agency's public-private partnership strategy, accomplishments and best practices are highlighted on the Office of Innovation and Development Alliances, Global Development Alliances webpage: <http://idea.usaid.gov/organization/gp>

More information on USAID/Burma's programs can be found at: <http://www.usaid.gov/burma>.

Annex 1: Expectations for Gender-Sensitive Programming

- a) Ensuring that program and project decision-making bodies (e.g. technical working groups), through participation or otherwise, allow for full representation of women's views;
- b) Ensuring the integration of gender analysis and considerations in program interventions;
- c) Mandating participation of women's groups in policy consultations, planning processes, and the development of interventions; and supporting the engagement of these groups with policymakers and decision-makers;
- d) Requiring that technical assessments, which will inform the development of procedural reforms and activity designs, take into account the specific needs of males and females (drawing on the gender analysis referred to in point (b) above);
- e) Strengthening the capacity of all project staff, partners, cooperators and beneficiaries on gender awareness, gender analysis, and gender responsive planning; and
- f) Collecting sex-disaggregated data on performance management indicators.