

USAID/Initiative for Hygiene, Sanitation and Nutrition

Annual Program Statement

Title: Innovation for Improvement of Nutrition and WASH Status in Afghanistan (Phase II)

Original Annual Program Statement Dates

Announcement: July 23, 2019

Closing: December 31, 2019

Concept papers and applications are accepted on a rolling basis, according to the review process presented in table 1.

Table 1. Concept and application review process schedule.

| Concept/applications submission batch | Concepts/applications submission deadline | Estimated Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) meeting date |
|--|---|---|
| 1 st batch of concepts/applications | August 15, 2019 | August 20, 2019 |
| 2 nd batch of concepts/applications | September 15, 2019 | September 20, 2019 |
| 3 rd batch of concepts/applications | September 30, 2019 | October 6, 2019 |
| 4 th batch of concepts/applications | October 15, 2019 | November 6, 2019 |
| 5 th batch of concepts/applications | December 31, 2019 | January 6, 2020 |

Initiative for Hygiene, Sanitation and Nutrition

FHI 360 Kabul, Afghanistan

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The Initiative for Hygiene, Sanitation and Nutrition (IHSAN) is a five-year project implemented by FHI 360 beginning May 11, 2016. IHSAN is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under contract No. AID-306-C-16-00007. The contents of this Annual Program Statement are the responsibility of FHI 360 and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID.

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ATTACHMENTS

| NO | Template/Documents name | Concept package submission |
|-----------|---|--|
| 1 | Complete Concept Paper Template | Annexes (H) |
| 2 | Budget Template | Annexes (L) |
| 3 | Proposed Implementation plan (Work plan and M&E Template) | Annexes (I) |
| 4 | Any other relevant information | |
| 5 | Copy of valid Afghan registration certificate | |
| 6 | Signed copies of the required certification package | Annexes (M) |
| | | |
| No | Template/Documents name | Full Grant Application Package submission |
| | | |
| 1 | Grant Application Template | Annexes (G) |
| 2 | Copy of valid Afghan registration certificate | |
| 3 | Copy of last annual financial report, income/losses report (balance) sealed and approved by licensed audit firm, if available | |
| 4 | Signed copies of the required certification package | Annexes (M) |
| 5 | Implementation plan or chronology of activities and results/ Work plan and M&E Template | Annexes (I) |
| 6 | Any other supporting document(s) as requested in the below list | |
| 7 | IHSAN standard indicators list | Annexes (J) |
| 8 | Simplified grant budget template | Annexes (Q) |
| 9 | Fixed amount award grant budget template | Annexes (S) |
| 10 | Pre-award assessment tool (PAT) acceptance | N/A |
| 11 | USAID vetting information form | Annexes (N) |

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------|---|
| ALCS | Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey |
| APS | Annual Program Statement |
| CSO | civil society organization |
| DUNS | Data Universal Numbering System |
| GIRoA | Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan |
| IHSAN | Initiative for Hygiene, Sanitation and Nutrition |
| M&E | monitoring and evaluation |
| NNS | National Nutrition Survey |
| SAM | System for Award Management |
| SBCC | social and behavior change communication |
| TAC | Technical Advisory Committee |
| TEC | Technical Evaluation Committee |
| USAID | U.S. Agency for International Development |
| USG | U.S. Government |
| WASH | water, sanitation and hygiene |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| WRA | women of reproductive age |

INITIATIVE FOR HYGIENE, SANITATION AND NUTRITION: BACKGROUND

Introduction

FHI 360 and its partners — Aga Khan Foundation, Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, Humanitarian Assistance and Development Association for Afghanistan and International Rescue Committee — are implementing the Initiative for Hygiene, Sanitation and Nutrition (IHSAN), while MgtWell provides monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and Assess, Transform and Reach (ATR) implements the research scope. IHSAN, under contract number AID-306-C-16-00007, runs from May 11, 2016 to May 10, 2021 to support the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Afghanistan in assisting the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector to carry out and scale up evidence-based nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions that will improve the nutritional status of women and children under 5 years of age in Afghanistan. IHSAN will serve as a catalyst to bring promising interventions to scale and strengthen their integration into existing GIROA systems.

I. Goal, Objectives, Principles and Strategy

FHI 360, as the lead agency for the implementation of IHSAN, is committed to the achievement of the project's goal and objectives.

Project goal

Improve the nutritional status of women and children under 5 years of age, with a focus on the first 1,000 days (from the beginning of pregnancy to 24 months of age).

Expected impact

Decrease stunting in children by at least 5 percent, from the national estimated stunting rate of 41 percent to 39 percent and reduce anemia in women of reproductive age (WRA) from 40 percent to 36 percent, i.e., a 10 percent reduction, over the five-year implementation period.

Objectives

1. Enhance capacity to institutionalize nutrition programs.
2. Increase adoption of optimal nutrition and hygiene behaviors at community and household levels.
3. Increase availability of nutrition, hygiene and sanitation services and products.

Strategy

The overall IHSAN strategy will integrate lessons learned, balance innovation with evidence and link supply- and demand-side health practices through facility-based service delivery and community-based mobilization. This strategy supports the promotion of the GIROA-adopted Essential Nutrition Actions (improving maternal, newborn, infant and young child health and nutrition) and the Essential WASH Actions in the USAID WASH Improvement Framework.

The project strategy posits that three key domains must be engaged in order to realize sustained behavior change:

- Hygiene promotion and demand creation, which includes community mobilization, community participation, social marketing and social and behavior change communication (SBCC) (addressed under Objective 2).
- Access to hardware and services, such as water supply, hygiene and sanitation products and financial services such as loans (addressed under Objective 3).
- An “enabling environment,” including a supportive policy environment, institutions with the needed capacities and coordinated planning by governmental and nongovernmental organizations (addressed under Objective 1).

The key principles of the IHSAN strategy are:

- Strengthening nutrition governance and national ownership of activities and results.
- Building sustainable capacity for nutrition and WASH health service delivery and SBCC.
- Intensifying approaches to SBCC through the use of maximum coverage and multiple channels of communication, including mass and mobile media, community mobilization and interpersonal counseling.
- Strengthening women’s empowerment and promoting gender equality.
- Improving M&E and promoting a robust learning agenda to inform decision-making.

IHSAN’s Innovation Fund will grant awards for innovative approaches aimed at increasing access to and utilization of nutrition, hygiene and sanitation services for pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 years of age, with a particular focus on the first 1,000 days. The focus of this project is to fund activities that test the feasibility of new interventions or interventions that have been implemented in other settings with demonstrated results addressing IHSAN objectives. The project will also support the testing and scale-up of appropriate, scientific, low-cost technologies and community-based interventions across its three objectives to reduce stunting and improve nutrition outcomes through grant awards.

IHSAN issued an Annual Program Statement (APS), open from July 23, 2019 to December 31, 2019, for activities to be supported through December 31, 2020. The Fund is also available to support the testing and scaling up of innovations that increase the reach and quality of high-impact, cost-effective and evidence-based nutrition, hygiene and sanitation interventions in the country. These include (1) supporting existing CSOs at the community level to test and scale up nutrition-related behavior change models, (2) testing innovative SBCC activities at the household level, (3) scaling up proven homegrown or regional innovations by introducing appropriate low-cost technologies to improve food production, post-harvest processing techniques and consumption at the community level, (4) scaling up cost-effective initiatives to increase access to nutritious complementary foods and (5) scaling up tested homegrown and regional technologies to increase access to hygiene and sanitation commodities.

During the period of this APS, concept notes will be accepted on a rolling basis, with preset deadlines for review as shown in table 1. Applications will be evaluated by IHSAN’s TEC and endorsed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). TAC is comprised of representatives from the Public Nutrition Directorate of the Ministry of Public Health, the National Rural Water

Supply, Sanitation and Irrigation Program of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the Home Economy Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock and the Health Directorate of the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT: CONTEXT AND CONTENTS

I. General Description

An APS mechanism will be used for competitive award of grants where IHSAN intends to support a variety of creative approaches by applicants to develop their own ideas and methodologies in assessing and/or implementing activities that support IHSAN objectives.

The purpose of this APS is to support the testing and scaling up of innovations that increase the accessibility and quality of high-impact, cost-effective and evidence-based nutrition, hygiene, and sanitation interventions in Afghanistan.

The Innovation Fund is a cross-cutting component of the IHSAN program; its aim, through this APS, is to catalyze innovative solutions to address challenges within the nutrition and WASH sectors in Afghanistan. To achieve this goal, IHSAN will provide short-term and long-term grants (six months to one year for proof of concept and one to two years for concept to transition) to test and scale up proposed innovative interventions. The project will also support the development and evaluation of the most promising innovative program approaches, technologies and processes, as well as the integration of those innovations with Afghanistan's nutrition and WASH systems. Using an evidence-based approach, the proposed innovations should demonstrate the potential to have a measurable impact on nutrition and WASH. The Fund will support the development of the selected innovations until these are better positioned for additional investment or integration into existing programs or systems.

II. Problem Statement and Current Context

Afghanistan has made substantial progress in improving maternal and child health outcomes over the last 14 years. However, the rate of progress has slowed, and maternal and child mortality rates remain among the highest in Asia. Malnutrition is a major contributor to child morbidity and mortality and, indirectly, to maternal morbidity and mortality.¹

The 2013 National Nutrition Survey (NNS) of Afghanistan revealed that 41 percent of children aged 0–59 months were stunted, and just over half were severely stunted.² Wasting rates among children under 5 years of age were 9.5 percent, and the proportion of underweight children was 25 percent, whereas only 5.4 percent of children were overweight. The nutritional status of WRA (15–49 years) showed that 9.2 percent were thin or undernourished (body mass index < 18.5), and 8 percent of adolescent girls (10–19 years) were thin.

The NNS also showed that while overall breastfeeding rates were high (98 percent), the introduction of breastfeeding within one hour of birth was lower (69 percent) and possibly influenced by the practice of prelacteal feeds (52 percent). Exclusive breastfeeding until 6

¹ Bartlett LA, Mawji S, Whitehead S, Crouse C, Dalil S, Ionete D and Salama P. Where Giving Birth is a Forecast of Death: Maternal Mortality in Four Districts of Afghanistan, 1999–2002. *Lancet*; 2005;365(9462):864–70. Available from: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15752530.

² Ministry of Public Health, United Nations Children's Fund, Aga Khan University and Silk Route Training and Research Organization. *National Nutrition Survey Afghanistan*. Kabul, 2013. Available from: <http://www.reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/national-nutrition-survey-afghanistan-2013>.

months of age was practiced with a little over half of the infants (58 percent). The delayed introduction of complementary foods and inadequate complementary feeding practices represent a larger concern. Only 41 percent of children aged 6–8 months were receiving complementary foods, and only 27 percent of children aged 6–23 months received four or more food groups. Only 12 percent of children aged 6–23 months received solid, semisolid or soft foods the minimum number of times or more daily. The lowest rates of adequate complementary feeding were observed in households with illiterate mothers.

According to the NNS, micronutrient deficiencies are widespread in Afghanistan. Anemia (hemoglobin levels < 11.99gm/dl) was common in WRA (40.4 percent) and among children aged 6–59 months (44.9 percent). Vitamin A deficiency was markedly more common in children aged 6–59 months (50.4 percent) than among WRA (11.3 percent). As the World Health Organization (WHO) pointed out,³ deficiency of vitamin A among children aged 6–59 months is a severe public health problem for Afghanistan. Zinc deficiency was observed in both women and children, with a prevalence of 23.4 and 15.1 percent, respectively. Similarly, iodine deficiency was fairly common among both WRA and children aged 7–12 years, with a prevalence of 40.8 and 29.5 percent, respectively. The majority of WRA and children aged 6–59 months (81 percent) were found to be deficient in vitamin D.

When considering the causes of these conditions, data from surveys conducted with mothers reflect relatively low awareness or knowledge regarding the nutritional benefits of vitamins, particularly vitamin A. Findings from the knowledge, attitudes and practices module revealed that understanding of micronutrients was generally poor: only around one-third (38.7 percent) of respondents across Afghanistan had knowledge about vitamins. The NNS indicates the existence of prevailing beliefs that may promote or exacerbate malnutrition among children, including perceptions surrounding breastfeeding and complementary feeding and a lack of knowledge about the nutritional content of food.

Water and sanitation

The Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (ALCS) 2013–2014 showed high awareness and reported the practice of hand-washing after toilet use and before food preparation. However, only 45 percent of households were observed to have soap, and less than a quarter (18 percent) had a dedicated place for hand-washing with water.

Drinking water

Compared to previous surveys, ALCS 2013–2014 recorded that access to improved drinking water sources had increased significantly (65 percent) and almost equally in urban and rural areas, except among the Kuchi population. In urban areas, nine out of 10 persons were using improved water sources, reducing the time spent collecting water, which previously contributed to decreasing the household's quality of life and productivity.

The most common protected water source types in the country are hand pumps. Surface water is the most common source among unprotected types, which are predominantly used by the

³ WHO. *Guideline: Vitamin A supplementation in infants and children 6–59 months of age*. WHO: Geneva; 2011. Available from: www.apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/44664/9789241501767_eng.pdf;jsessionid=ACB9EC4A690E4D1B1A9A1054D9C1294F?sequence=1.

Kuchi population. Hand pumps are mostly private in urban areas and public in rural areas. Piped water is almost nonexistent in rural areas.

Sanitation

The sanitation situation is poor in Afghanistan. According to ALCS 2013–2014, only 39 percent of the population has access to improved sanitation. The widespread lack of basic infrastructure for water and sanitation implies a high risk of potentially fatal diseases and is especially detrimental for the health, nutrition and survival of infants and young children.

Overall, up to 76.5 percent of the urban population has access to improved sanitation, compared to about one-third of the population living in rural areas. The most commonly used sanitation facilities in Afghanistan are open-pit latrines (almost 42 percent) and covered pit latrines (26 percent), while flush toilets are used by only 9.5 percent of the population.

At the subnational level, disparities among provinces are marked. In 17 provinces, less than 20 percent of the population has access to improved sanitation; in nine provinces, the proportion is higher but still below the national average of 39 percent.

WHO has estimated that half of all undernutrition is associated with infections caused by drinking water contaminated with feces and eating food with unclean hands. A child who is suffering from chronic diarrheal illness or intestinal worms is no longer able to absorb nutrients, regardless of the quality of nutrition. Furthermore, one-quarter of all stunting can be attributed to as few as five episodes of severe diarrhea before age 2.⁴

III. Target Activities for the Innovation Fund

Considering the current nutrition situation of children under 5 years of age and WRA, as well as the overall nutrition, hygiene and sanitation situation of the general population in Afghanistan, there are several gaps and shortfalls that require quick, innovative and sustainable approaches. IHSAN is seeking interventions that have not been tested before in Afghanistan. To be considered, proposed innovative concepts must also support the achievement of one or more of the IHSAN objectives and indicators detailed below:

Objective 1: Enhance capacity to institutionalize nutrition programs.

Objective 2: Increase adoption of optimal nutrition and hygiene behaviors at community and household levels.

Objective 3: Increase availability of nutrition, hygiene and sanitation services and products.

IHSAN will also fund scale-up initiatives, approaches and services in the areas of hygiene, sanitation and food and nutrition that are tested in Afghanistan and have proven effective, based on evidence. In addition, the Fund will support any SBCC innovation that focuses on

⁴ International Food Policy Research Institute. *Global Nutrition Report 2016: From Promise to Impact: Ending Malnutrition by 2030*. Washington, DC; 2016 Available from: www.globalnutritionreport.org/reports/2016-global-nutrition-report/.

positive behavior change for hygiene, sanitation and nutrition practices. Approaches for greater promotion and increased access, availability and production of low-cost and locally acceptable nutrition, hygiene and sanitation products and services will also be funded.

IV. Level of Grant Funding

IHSAN will provide funds for the purpose and as per the levels outlined below.

Seed Grants: Concept activities that are innovative and not previously implemented in nutrition or WASH in Afghanistan are eligible. Such activities will be tested for feasibility and design refinement with limited funding and activity scope. These funds are to support previously untested innovative approaches, technologies, services, products and processes. Funding will be provided for innovations at the concept stage or innovations that are developed and need to be tested for the first time. Through the funding, the grantee must evaluate the feasibility of the activities on a small scale. Grant Amount up to USD \$60,000 for a period up to two years.

Advance Grants: This category will include but not limited to nutrition and wash polit activities, including those supported through seed Grants and deemed feasible. Such activities will be requested to demonstrate provincial coverage. These funds are to support proposed innovative approaches, technologies, services, products and processes that have already demonstrated feasibility in a primary testing phase and are ready to transition to the scale-up stage. Applicants are required to present the testing stage results or evidence in their applications. These innovations will be considered for implementation at a relatively wider scale to provide evidence of effectiveness. The funding level available ranges from Grant Amount may range from USD 60,000 to USD 250,000 for a period up to two years.

Scale Up Grants: These nutrition, WASH, and/or Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) activities will be typically implemented at a regional level These funds are to support the scale-up stage of currently employed community-based programs, such as Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) in Urozgan province and community-based nutrition programs (CBNP) in Ghazni, Zabul, and Kabul provinces. Both types of programs are GIRoA-approved approaches to address nutrition and WASH challenges in the community. Maximum individual grant amounts and period are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Basic packages of health services

Strengthening Mechanism of MoPH is implementing basic packages of health services (CBNP) in Panjsir, Parwan and Kapisa provinces. Local non-governmental organizations with experience in implementation of similar grants are encouraged to apply. The funding level will be based on the proposed scale of the activity, geographic coverage, and established capacity of the proposed applicant in terms of fund management and similar experience and will be established by IHSAN's TEC and endorsed by TAC. The funding level Maximum individual grant amounts are determined on a case-by-case basis, Grant Amount may range from USD 100,000 to USD 25,000 The period for support may be considered up to two years.

CONCEPTS, APPLICATIONS AND SELECTION PROCESS

I. Concept Paper Submission⁵

A concept paper is simpler and quicker than the full grant application package, taking applicants less time and generating a higher volume and a variety of creative approaches. When concept papers are required per the APS, the TEC will review the concept paper against eligibility and merit review criteria listed in the APS. Criteria could be based on a number- rating system or be designed as questions on a yes/no basis and could include the following questions:

- Is the activity consistent with the objectives of IHSAN, and does it contribute to the project's target beneficiaries, including:
 - Children less than five years of age;
 - Pregnant Women;
 - Women of Reproductive age (15 years and above); or
 - General population for WASH intervention?
- Does the organization demonstrate adequate capability to manage the activity, or does it have previous experience relevant to the activity proposed?
- Does the proposed activity fall within the technical specifications in the APS?
- If applicable, does the activity consider women, youth, and vulnerable groups as beneficiaries?

If the applicant's concept paper meets the criteria, as decided by the TEC, the applicant may be asked to submit a full application. Should the TEC determine the concept paper is ineligible, the IFM will review the documentation and the applicant will be notified. If a full application is requested, it will be submitted to the TEC for evaluation

To initiate the process, applicants are required to submit a concept paper of no more than 10 pages (A4 size) with font size 12. The concept template (attachment H) should be used for formatting. The paper is meant to describe the "who, why, how, when, what and how much" of the proposed activity. More specifically, it should outline the applicant's background and capacity (who), the proposed issue(s) to be addressed (why), activities (how), a timeline (when), intended results (what), and a summary budget (how much). The concept paper should also provide a list of former donor-supported and topically related activities implemented by the applicant. Additional details that must be included in the paper are detailed below.

Background information of the applicant

- Official name and mailing address of applicant entity
- Applicant's legal structure and registration number
- Name, title and contact information (email and telephone) of primary and secondary contacts

Current capacity of the organization

Description of the organization's (1) capacity, product or service features, (2) scale and scope of current operations, including key information and (3) related past performance.

⁵ Applies to new concepts only.

Proposed innovation

- Concept title: the title of activity should be short and convey clearly what is proposed.
- Description: what is the innovation? Why is it needed? IHSAN encourages applicants to demonstrate that they have fully researched the context and are aware of cases where the innovation has been used in other countries as well as the particular need of Afghan communities that the innovation addresses.
- Scalability: how will the innovation be scaled to help IHSAN reach its objectives and targets?
- Lessons learned: what information will be captured to help the organization reflect on whether the innovation would succeed or fail? How will the learning be used to inform the innovation design or approach?

Project plan and timeline

Applicants should submit a detailed project plan describing all activities funded by the grant, including a timeline and milestones.

Impact measurement plan

The concept paper should clearly define the outcome(s) of a successful pilot, scaling up and what IHSAN can learn as a result of the pilot. The plan should indicate how data will be collected to demonstrate the effectiveness of the innovation as compared to existing practices. Measurable performance criteria should be clearly outlined.

Applicant team capacity

The applicant should demonstrate how its existing or proposed team has the necessary skills and capability to implement the innovation and achieve the desired results.

Future scale-up plans

Although the awarded grant will not fund further stages that may become available through the separate grants application process in future, applicants must articulate a strategy for planning for scaling up of successful pilot projects and include (1) a timeline for scale-up activities and (2) plan for taking innovation to scale, if successful during pilot stage. The Innovation Fund will provide: 1) seed funds to test proof-of concept for up to two years and 2) funds to transition innovations with demonstrated proof of-concept towards scale-up for up to two years. For interventions that have already been tested and evaluated within the Afghan context, the Innovation Fund can also provide funding to accelerate scale-up of these interventions.

II. Full Application⁶

Applicants passing the concept stage will be requested to submit a full application. This may not be required for all grants. IHSAN may choose to request that applicants complete a concept

⁶ Applies to shortlisted concepts and applications for transition to scale-up and scale-up stages of funding.

paper as a first and only step or may request full applications to be submitted without an initial concept paper as specified in the solicitation. The full grant application submission consists of the following documents (if there was a concept paper phase, some of this documentation, if it remains current, may have already been submitted):

- Completed grant application and budget forms and notes
- Copy of valid Afghan registration certificate
- Copy of last annual financial report, income/losses report (balance) sealed and approved by licensed audit firm, if available
- Signed copies of the required certification package
- Implementation plan or chronology of activities and results (Annex I)
- Any other supporting document(s) as requested in the solicitation

To assist in preparing the full grant application, IHSAN has provided templates and reference documents per the below table.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Grant Application Template | Annexes (G) |
| Copy of valid Afghan registration certificate | |
| Copy of last annual financial report, income/losses report (balance) sealed and approved by licensed audit firm, if available | |
| Signed copies of the required certification package | Annexes (M) |
| Implementation plan or chronology of activities and results/ Work plan and M&E Template-Milestone Deliverable for FAA grant | Annexes (I) |
| Any other supporting document(s) as requested in the below list | |
| IHSAN standard indicators list | Annexes (J) |
| Budget Template/Budget Note | Annexes (L) |
| Simplified grant budget template | Annexes (Q) |
| Fixed amount award grant budget template | Annexes (S) |
| Pre-award assessment tool (PAT) acceptance | N/A |
| USAID vetting information form | Annexes (N) |

The applicant will need to include a timeline or schedule and a full budget with budget narrative. The associated templates are provided in attachments 2, 3 and 4. The application should not exceed 35 pages (not including annexes) in font size 12. The information provided in the full application should include the following at minimum:

- CVs of key personnel who will be leading the implementation in the field. Key personnel must have demonstrated relevant experience of similar activities, as well as confirm their availability by signing their CV.
- A detailed background is required for small and new organizations. This should

⁷ CBPN/CLTS are considered innovations since they'll be implemented through BPHS.

demonstrate how they are able to implement the proposed activity and highlight experience with the same or similar activities only. If the organization does not have that experience, justification and details are needed to showcase its capability to implement the proposed activity. An organization chart and information about where the proposed project fits into the organization in terms of administration, implementation support and control should be included.

- Background information on key individuals, including owners, the organization's president or other senior leadership.
- Detailed work plan and logical framework. The work plan should be presented as a narrative in the body of the application, including the schedule and timeline with milestone(s) or result(s) for each activity.
- Description of milestones in alignment with the work plan, including timeline (estimated time to complete), milestone(s) or result(s) for each activity and means of verification (see Annex I template of work plan and M&E plan).

SELECTION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

I. Concept Evaluation

Concept papers will be evaluated based on the initial set of criteria detailed in table 3.

Table 3. Concept evaluation criteria.

| No | Criteria | Yes | No |
|----|--|-----|----|
| 1 | Concept addresses one of IHSAN's objectives | | |
| 2 | Concept meets innovation definition ⁷ | | |
| 3 | Concept has identified existing gaps and proposes a solution that meets the needs identified | | |
| 4 | Concept addresses the constraints and geographical barriers of the demand side (feasibility) | | |
| 5 | Concept has the potential for scalability and sustainability | | |
| 6 | Target population matches IHSAN's target beneficiaries ⁸ | | |
| 7 | Concept results are measurable | | |

Concepts must meet all of the above criteria to be shortlisted for the full application stage. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to submit a full application. The full application will be evaluated according to the criteria outlined in the next section.

II. Full Application Evaluation

All applications submitted (1) from a shortlisted concept, (2) for transition to scale-up and (3) scale-up will be evaluated according to the criteria below.

Table 4. Full application evaluation criteria.

| No. | Technical evaluation criteria | Max score | |
|-----|--|--|---|
| 1 | Applicant's background and past experience | • Organization board, management and staff information | 5 |
| | | • Number of similar activities implemented in the past | 5 |
| | | • Number of same activities (if any) implemented in the past | |

⁸ Definition of innovation: executing an idea that addresses a specific challenge and achieves value for both company and customers (community).

⁹ IHSAN's target beneficiaries for nutrition are WRA and children under 5 years of age. For sanitation and hygiene, target beneficiaries are all inhabitants of one area.

| | | | |
|--------------|--|---|------------|
| 2 | Application responsiveness | Page limitation and template provided by IHSAN are considered | 5 |
| 3 | Innovation and relevance to IHSAN's objectives | The seven criteria for concept evaluation (table 3) are met | 10 |
| 4 | Technical approach and methodology | Activity objectives are clearly linked with USAID/IHSAN objectives | 5 |
| | | Activity is linked with GIROA's strategies and priorities (reference to strategies is provided) | 5 |
| | | Proposed methodology for activity implementation will increase access, utilization, quality and sustainability of nutrition or hygiene and sanitation products and services | 10 |
| | | Proposed methodology for implementation will increase community participation, acceptance and sustainability | 10 |
| | | Proposed activities are interlinked, consistent, easy to understand and have measurable outputs and outcomes | 10 |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision, M&E and reporting are clearly explained with specific timelines • Selected applicable indicators from IHSAN standard indicators list presented in the document | 5 |
| 5 | Work plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative and schedule of work are provided • Activities presented in the work plan match the proposed methodology | 5 |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed staff has required knowledge and training to implement proposed activities • Proposed staff has relevant experience (community mobilization, communication, geographical area awareness, understanding of social context) | 5 |
| 7 | Cost-effectiveness (cost/benefit) | Reasonableness of proposed cost | 15 |
| Total | | | 100 |

Applications that score 75 or above out of 100 will be considered for further review by the TAC.

The Application will also be reviewed by Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprising representatives from key line ministries (Ministry of Public Health (MOPH)/Public Nutrition Department (PND)), Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), and Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL), and Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MOWA)) that will jointly guide the Innovation Fund. Grant concept notes and applications will be evaluated based on criteria developed in collaboration with the TAC. Selected interventions will be based on criteria grounded in the latest scientific, technological, behavior change, and communication advances after the endorsement of TAC the application consider for further process.

III. Cost Evaluation

IHSAN will analyze the specifics of all proposed budgets. Applicants should note that budgets must be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate cost reasonableness and completeness. Budgets with cost information determined to be unreasonable, incomplete or based on a methodology that is not adequately supported may be deemed unacceptable. The project team will determine cost reasonableness based on its experience of purchasing similar items or services, what is available in the marketplace and other competitive offers.

IV. Other Administrative Requirements

IHSAN will work with the applicant as needed to complete the remaining steps:

- Obtaining a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and registering the organization on www.sam.gov/SAM (compulsory for organizations receiving a grant of \$25,000 or more).⁹
- Completing the financial pre-award assessment tool (to be done by IHSAN staff).
- Signing the mandatory certifications (see attachment 7).
- Supplying audited financial statements, if available (in English, if possible). If no recent audit has been conducted, a revenue and expense statement and balance sheet for the previous financial year should be provided instead.
- Undertaking SAM and other related vetting searches (to be done by IHSAN staff).

Once these steps are completed, the project will let the applicants know whether their application is funded. Funding may be full or partial and with or without conditions. In some cases, funding may not be offered at all.

Any award resulted from the above review and evaluation of applications is subject of

⁹ U.S. law requires organizations that receive over \$25,000 in U.S. Government (USG) funds through grants and subgrants to share certain information. To track this information, the USG requires the organizations to obtain a DUNS number. Applicants must visit www.fedgov.dnb.com/webform to fill in and submit the web form to receive a DUNS number. The process usually takes 24–72 business hours. System for Award Management (SAM) is a USG system that FHI 360 uses to determine if an entity has been banned from doing business with the USG. All organizations wishing to receive USG funds must register on the SAM website at: www.sam.gov.

compliance with Foreign Assistance Act requirements and provisions of 2 CFR 200.

Locations

IHSAN is implemented primarily in 10 provinces (Badakhshan, Samangan, Bamyan, Badghis, Ghor, Farah, Paktia, Nangarhar, Kunar and Nuristan), but concepts will be accepted for all provinces across Afghanistan.

Eligibility

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- National and international nonprofit organizations
- National and international for-profit organization (private entities)
- National and international academies and institutions working in nutrition or WASH
- Community-based organizations
- CSOs

All organizations must be legally registered and must agree with the terms and conditions of USAID funding regulations.

The following are not eligible to apply:

- Individuals
- IHSAN's current partners or relatives of IHSAN employees
- Any organization that has misused USAID funds in the past
- Political parties, groupings, institutions or their subsidiaries and affiliates
- Organizations that advocate, promote or espouse antidemocratic policies or illegal activities
- Faith-based organizations whose activities are for discriminatory and religious purposes and whose main objective for the grant is of a religious nature
- Any entity included in any supplementary information concerning prohibited individuals or entities that may be provided by USAID
- Any entity whose name appears as debarred in SAM
- Any organization that does not pass the USAID vetting requirement for grants above \$25,000
- Any organization that is not willing to submit the required information for USAID vetting

Grant funds cannot be utilized for the following:

- Private ceremonies, parties, celebrations, or "representation" expenses
- Purchases of restricted goods, such agricultural commodities, motor vehicles (including motorcycles), pharmaceuticals and contraceptive items, pesticides, used equipment, USG excess property and fertilizers, without previous approval by the USAID Contracting Officer through IHSAN
- Prohibited goods under USAID regulations, including but not limited to military and surveillance equipment, police or law enforcement equipment, abortion equipment and services, weather modification equipment, luxury goods and gambling equipment

- Purchases of goods or services restricted or prohibited under the prevailing USAID source and nationality regulations, as per 22 CFR 228 and relevant Standard Provisions, or from countries or suppliers as identified by USAID's consolidated list of debarred, suspended or ineligible subcontractor
- Any purchase or activity deemed unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by FHI 360, including any grantee headquarters expenses that are not directly linked to the implementation of the proposed project
- Previous obligations and/or debts
- Fines and/or penalties

NEXT STEPS FOR SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS

Upon award, shortlisted applicants will work with IHSAN staff on the items listed below.

I. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Based on the list of IHSAN indicators (see table 5), the applicant should provide a M&E plan. The purpose of the plan is to indicate how the project's outputs, outcomes and overall impact will be determined. The plan will assist the grantee in managing the collection of their project's performance data. IHSAN's M&E Department will provide guidance and assistance to grantees to ensure that the M&E plan contains the following:

- Clearly defined project results and objectives
- Measurable performance indicators for project results and objectives
- A definition of each performance indicator
- The unit of measurement
- The sources of data collection
- Data collection methods
- Frequency and schedule of data collection
- Name of the project team member responsible for ensuring that M&E data are available on time
- Baseline, benchmarks, and targets

The applicant may choose relevant performance indicators from the list below that relate to its concept or proposal.

Table 5. List of IHSAN performance indicators.

| No. | Performance indicator |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Number of people trained in child health, nutrition and WASH |
| 2 | Number of people trained to improve hygiene behavior and sanitation practices |
| 3 | Number of health facilities with established capacity to manage acute malnutrition |
| 4 | Number of children under 5 reached by the key nutrition-specific services |
| 5 | Number of children under 2 reached by the key community-based nutrition services |
| 6 | Number of pregnant women who receive nutrition-specific interventions during pregnancy |
| 7 | Indicators solely related to capacity building and implementation phases of community-based nutrition programs |
| 8 | Number of women reached with education on nutrition and WASH |
| 9 | Prevalence of children exclusively breastfed |
| 10 | Prevalence of children aged 6–23 months receiving a minimum acceptable diet |
| 11 | Women's dietary diversity: mean number of food groups consumed by WRA |

| | |
|----|--|
| 12 | Percent of households practicing correct use of recommended household water treatment technologies |
| 13 | Percent of households using an improved sanitation facility |
| 14 | Number of communities verified as open defecation free |
| 15 | Percent of children under 2 who had diarrhea in the previous two weeks |
| 16 | Proportion of households with increased consumption of diversified diets |
| 17 | Number of small farmer schemes developed tailored to women |
| 18 | Number of people gaining access to an improved sanitation facility |
| 19 | Number of people gaining access to an improved drinking water source |
| 20 | Percent of households with soap and water at a hand-washing station commonly used by family members |
| 21 | Number of new WASH or nutrition products successfully developed for Afghan rural markets |
| 22 | Average household dietary diversity score |
| 23 | Proportion of children with nutrition problems referred to health facility who reached the health facility |

II. Gender and Inclusion

The project will provide technical assistance as needed to support grantees in mainstreaming gender into the project plan and provide complementary capacity-building support to ensure that the grantee's design and delivery of programs achieve its proposed inclusion strategies.

III. Environment Compliance

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 requires that the impact of USAID-financed activities on the environment considered. The regulation in 22 CFR 216 requires that the potential environmental impact of USAID-financed activities is identified and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted. FHI 360 project staff must become aware of the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) or Environmental Assessment (EA) for the prime award. Grants will be subject to assessment and criteria mandated in the IHSAN Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP). Grants funded by USAID must also be compliant with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID and such direction is incorporated in the grant. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern the grant and consider Afghanistan's Environment Law published in Official Gazette No. 912, January 25, 2007 ([www.wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7620/-Environmental Law Official Gazette No 912 dated 25 January 2007 As approved by the National Assembly-2007environmental law afghanistan.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](http://www.wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7620/-Environmental%20Law%20Official%20Gazette%20No%20912%20dated%2025%20January%202007%20As%20approved%20by%20the%20National%20Assembly-2007environmental%20law%20afghanistan.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)).

REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

Below is a summary of the APS grant concept, application and reporting processes.

I. Application Process

Table 6. Summary of the primary documents required in the application process.

| Stage | Documents required |
|---------------------|--|
| Initial application | Concept paper |
| Shortlisted | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full application including gender inclusion approach • Detailed budget • Cost backup documentation • Budget notes • CVs of key personnel • Other documents as required |
| Due diligence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for DUNS number if necessary • Register at www.sam.gov/SAM/ if necessary • Financial/management pre-award assessment by IHSAN staff • Provide audit reports if necessary • Sign mandatory certifications • IHSAN staff performs required terrorist financing and exclusion searches • USAID vetting approval if the amount is above \$25,000 |

II. Reporting Requirements

Table 7. Summary of the narrative and financial reporting requirements for each type of grant.

| Type of grant | Narrative reporting | Financial reporting |
|--------------------|---|---|
| In-kind grant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final report describing achievements • Photos documenting grant activities (if applicable) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None (no payments are made to the grantee) • All procurement will be done by IHSAN |
| Fixed amount award | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milestone deliverables (as described in the grant agreement, including quarterly narrative reports, final report and M&E reports) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed payments based on milestones and deliverables |
| Simplified grant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly narrative reports • Final report • M&E reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost reimbursable based on financial reports |
| Standard grant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly narrative reports • Final report • M&E reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost reimbursable based on financial reports |

MISCELLANEOUS

I. Orientation Workshops

IHSAN will hold orientation workshops approximately one month before each concept deadline. The workshops are meant to give potential applicants an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the project and its priorities, the APS application process and the grant-awarding procedure. Notices of the workshops will be posted on the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development website and will be announced and circulated through email. Any organization wishing to participate in the workshop should send a request via email to IHSANgrantquestions@fhi360.org or call +93(0)728970453. The workshop dates will be circulated via email or phone calls to interested applicants.

II. Questions and Answers

Requests for clarification of issues relating to the APS are accepted on an ongoing basis via email only at IHSANgrantquestions@fhi360.org. Consolidated lists of questions and answers will be posted periodically on the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development website and shared by email with interested applicants.

III. Application Deadlines and Submission Procedures

Concept papers will be accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed on a periodic basis, as per the schedule in table 1. Electronic copies of concepts and applications are acceptable and should be submitted via email to IHSANApplications@fhi360.org.

IV. Application Requirements

Concepts should only be submitted in English. Budgeted costs must be represented in Afghan Afghani. Applicants must submit concepts in the aforementioned format. Any application submitted in any other format will not be eligible for consideration.

V. Authorized Signatory

The concept paper and any subsequent full application must be signed by a person authorized to submit an application on behalf of the applicant organization, binding the applicant to the application. The application form should include the name, title, email and telephone number of the person(s) in the organization authorized to discuss and accept a grant if awarded.

VI. Subgranting

Subgranting is not allowed under this APS. However, applicants can apply as a consortium, where one organization will act as the primary organization responsible for the management of the grant.

VII. Timeline

The following chart outlines the steps that will be taken throughout the APS competition

period. The timeline for processing a grant is dependent on selected organizations being able to finalize full applications and budgets and submit the required documentation without delay.

Rejection of Application

Any applicant organization who has queries or has identified any fraud in the selection process of IHSAN should submit their query to the IHSAN compliance Manager (ANoori@fhi360.org) within 15 days after receiving notification letter that your application was not selected.

Figure 1. APS process outline.



DISCLAIMERS

- USAID/IHSAN may cancel a solicitation and/or not award any grants.
- USAID/IHSAN may reject any or all responses received.
- Issuance of a solicitation does not constitute an award commitment by USAID/IHSAN.
- USAID/IHSAN reserves the right to disqualify any offer based on an applicant’s failure to follow solicitation instructions.
- USAID/IHSAN will not reimburse applicants for costs incurred to prepare and submit an application. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant’s expense.

- USAID/IHSAN reserves the right to issue an award on the basis of an initial evaluation of offers without further discussion.
- USAID/IHSAN may choose to award a grant only for part of the activities in the solicitation or issue multiple awards based on the solicitation activities.
- USAID/IHSAN reserves the right to waive minor application deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition.
- USAID/IHSAN reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.
- USAID/IHSAN reserves the right to check an applicant's donor references.
- All awards under this APS are subject to USAID/IHSAN Contracting Officer approvals.