

USAID Implementing Partner Survey: Operating in the COVID-19 Environment

Supporting Statement

PART A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Implementing Partners (IPs) for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are vital to delivering development assistance and humanitarian aid around the world and COVID-19 has affected their ability to implement programs. In order to protect the health and safety of our global workforce—including our IPs—and support partner countries in their response to COVID-19, the Agency must gain an understanding about how partners can continue to operate in the current environment and implement life-saving interventions and work to mitigate secondary impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

The USAID Implementing Partner Survey is a new effort to help USAID's COVID-19 Task Force obtain quantitative data by region of our programs and the challenges being faced by our implementing partners since the COVID-19 pandemic began. With this information, USAID will identify opportunities to target support and guidance for implementing partners during COVID-19.

The survey will be sent by email to implementing partners around the world. Participation in the survey is anonymous and optional. Names of organizations and email addresses of respondents will not be collected.

The analysis of the survey will be shared with Agency Leadership in Washington and relevant regional data will be shared with Mission Directors. Survey results will be used to determine how USAID provides guidance, communication, and support for continuity of operations, when possible, in the current operating environment.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

The survey will be conducted through Google Forms and responses will be collected through this application.

The form will be available for public printing. However, results will need to be submitted through the form to maintain the anonymity of submissions and to ensure timely analysis of data.

An overview of results will be presented to relevant IP stakeholder and stakeholder groups. Results will not be displayed on the internet as this may deter participants from responding to the survey.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in item 2 above.

This is the first survey from USAID to collect written information from implementing partners regarding the operating environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Comments have been collected through various sources in the Agency but the Agency is interested in having quantitative data to accompany qualitative data to ensure diverse stakeholder interests are being represented.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The survey should not negatively impact small businesses or other small entities. Most questions are multiple choice. From start to finish the survey should only take 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the number of regions in which the partner implements USAID-funded activities.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing the burden.

If the survey is not conducted, it would be difficult to identify across implementing partners what challenges they are experiencing implementing USAID activities since COVID-19 began. With this data, USAID can learn where issues are occurring geographically and make suggestions for improvement or guidance to support partners in this operating environment. Awareness of challenges also better positions the Agency to protect the safety, health, and security of our global workforce—including our Implementing Partners—in order to ensure that we can continue our life-saving mission across the world, and support partner countries in their response to COVID-19 and the secondary impacts of COVID-19. No decision has been made on how frequently this survey will be conducted due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 duration.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner.

None are applicable for this survey.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, USAID is seeking emergency approval of the information collection, thus the proposed information collection request has not been published in the Federal Register for comment.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

Not applicable.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

The survey will be confidential. Email address, company name, and personally identifiable information are not required and will not be captured during the survey.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

Not applicable.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

We anticipate 4,000 responses to the survey, which will be conducted once in a span of 2 months. The survey should take between 15-30 minutes depending on the number of programs and countries a responded works with USAID. Most questions have multiple choice responses.

Respondent activity	No. of respondents	No. responses / respondent	Total responses	Avg. burden / resp. (hours)	Total burden hours
USAID Partner Survey: Operating in the COVID-19 Environment	4000	1	4000	0.5	2000

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection of information.

There is no annual cost burden to respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection of this information.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal Government.

There is no annualized cost to the Federal Government with this survey. There will be no cost beyond the normal and existing labor costs for staff.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported on the burden worksheet.

Not applicable as this is a new survey.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

Not applicable as an overview of results will be presented to relevant IP stakeholders, rather than published.

Also, will the results of the collection be made available on your organization's Web site? If not, why not?

Results will not be displayed on the internet as this may deter participants from responding to the survey.

17. If you are seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

Not applicable as this is an electronic survey.

18. Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.

There are no exceptions.

PART B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

If your collection does not employ statistical methods, state that and delete the following five questions from the format – UNLESS your proposed information collection is a survey. OMB recently clarified that Part B must be completed for all survey requests, whether or not statistical analysis will be applied. In addition to statistical analysis, Part B addresses the description of the target group of respondents, the sampling plan, and plans to maximize response rates and address nonresponse. When item 17 of the OMB 83-I is checked "Yes", the following documentation must be provided to the extent that it applies to the methods proposed.

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection methods to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

Response rate means -- Of those in your respondent sample, from what percentage do you expect to get the required information (if this is not a mandatory collection). The nonrespondents would include those you could not contact, as well as those you contacted but who refused to give the information.

The survey will be sent to approximately 4,700 organizations. We anticipate that less than half 2,350 organizations will respond and expect no more than 4,000 total responses.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information, including:

- Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection.

There will be no sample selections. However, the data will be broken down by reported U.S. small business, new USAID implementing partners, local organizations, and by region.

- Estimation procedure.

Reporting will only be based on actual respondents. No extrapolation or estimation of responses from other organizations will be made.

- Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification.

As the survey is anonymous, data verification by organization will not take place. However, data will be reviewed for outliers and trends.

- Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures,

No sampling procedures will be used.

- Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

At this time the survey is only proposed to take place one time.

If you are selecting a uniform respondent universe, you may be using a simple random numbers table to select a sample.

Stratified sampling is often used when the sampling population can be split into non overlapping strata that individually are more homogeneous than the population as a whole (e.g., gender and age groups). If there are no obvious "dividing lines", grid lines can be used to divide the population. Random samples are taken from each stratum (or class) and the results are combined to estimate a population mean. Stratified sampling is most successful when the variance within each stratum is less than the overall variance of the population.²

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Any aspect of your plan that makes it easier and more attractive to comply with the request for information would tend to maximize response rate. This would include:

- Such steps as prenotification and various types of followup with those who did not respond at the first opportunity (give details, e.g., intervals for followup, types of followup, how many times you will follow up).
- Making the questions as simple and brief as possible.
- Already having a good working relationship with this group or the group's perception that actions based on the information collected would be helpful to them.

A lower response rate than 75% would definitely require a plan to address nonresponse, according to OMB's standards. This means that a large enough number of respondents didn't give information so that there is a possibility that their answers as a group might have differed significantly from those who did respond. Following up with nonrespondents – resending surveys or sending a shorter version of the survey, trying a phone interview if possible, etc. – are all effective strategies.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or

more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

If you are employing testing, please describe it here.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractors, grantees, or other person(s) who will actually collect or analyze the information for the agency.

Self-explanatory.

OIRA has produced a number of documents that may serve as useful reference material for completing Supporting Statement Part B. These can be found at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/infoereg_statpolicy/.