

**ICH APS Pre-Submission Conference Webinar
Question and Answer Transcript
June 18, 2016**

The recording of the presentations given during the webinar can be found at the following link: <https://ghpod.adobeconnect.com/p3iy4r34h8v/>. The recording of the Question and Answer session of the June 18th session can be found at the following link: <https://ghpod.adobeconnect.com/p8vfbkhg88f/>.

Please note: this transcript has been edited for clarity.

1. We are a Canadian charity are we eligible to apply for this grant? Is this grant only specific to Africa?

Answer: I would recommend that you review eligibility criteria for both the APS and the Addendum. We have provided definitions in these documents. So we are not limiting eligibility to only U.S. organizations but you will want to review the eligibility criteria for each opportunity and note particularly in the Addendum that there is a category for local organizations with a specific definition that has four parts to it as I mentioned. There is a second category that is open to all eligible participants to the main APS.

I see the second part of the question “Is this grant only specific to Africa?” and it is not. As we mentioned, in the main APS, you can submit for any country with a USAID mission (country or regional Mission oversight) and for the Addendum there are 24 priority countries, which include countries in Africa as well as Asia, and I believe there is one in Latin America.

Can you remind us where these documents are found, the Addendum and the APS?

You can find everything on grants.gov. There are two separate funding opportunities listed on grants.gov and we provided the funding opportunity numbers where you should be able to look them up.

2. We need clarification on whether a local organization can apply under Category 2.

Answer: So, local organizations are also eligible under Category 2 in the Addendum but we do want you to note that in that category, 25% cost share is required as well as 1:1 resource leverage. So that is an important distinction between the two categories.

3. Small businesses would like to know if there are set asides for international small businesses or preference will be given to local organizations.

Answer: That’s a two-part question. Small businesses are certainly eligible to apply. We would just encourage you again, to review the eligibility criteria to determine which category in the Addendum fits you best. You’ve asked as well if there is a preference for local organizations and while there isn’t a stated preference for local organizations there are the different categories. So in the first category in the Addendum, only local organizations that meet the definition are eligible, but they are also eligible under Category 2. Those two categories are going to be competed separately. So hopefully that answers your question.

4. In a consortium of Tier 1 and Tier 2 organizations, does the leverage and cost share requirements follow the "prime" or does each "sub" have to follow the leverage rules for its category as a Tier 1 or Tier 2 organization?

Answer: The guidance for leveraging in the APS/Addendum documents state that leveraging represents all of the non-USAID resources that are expected to be applied to a project. Leveraging includes resources that third parties bring to the project without necessarily providing them to the recipient of the USAID assistance award. All that to say, that there is flexibility in the consortium that you are developing around the leverage requirement. It can come from one of the partners within your consortium. It could come from the prime. It could come from the sub-recipient but there are no strict rules or regulations in terms of the requirements being applied to a single organization within a broader collaboration or partnership.

5. May we get the copy of the presentation?

Answer provided via the chat box. The presentation and the recording of the webinar will be made available to you after this webinar.

6. Under objective 3, is capacity building a priority for local partnerships?

Answer: Yes, in our definition of community health approaches, we are interested in approaches that facilitate community engagement and build the capacity of communities to collaborate in health and local systems with other systems actors. We also indicate that we are very interested in capacity building with a focus on generating and using data for decision-making at the local level and up the chain of command at higher levels of the system. So there is a strong emphasis on local capacity building with a particular focus on collaboration and using data for decision-making. If applicants interested in responding to Objective 3 need to broaden out the capacity building agenda to include other types of capacity building, they can indicate that. We are trying to work with partners who have capabilities to build capacity of local and national entities to advance the scope of this procurement.

7. Community Health Workers can only be mobilized and trained through partnerships with local organizations working directly with communities.

Response to comment: As we highlighted in the overview section, we are interested in looking at promising or proven solutions and figuring out how to take those and scale them up to integrate with the national health system. And so certainly the types of activities described may be types of activities that are good examples of things that can be taken up and integrated into the national system, but we are not necessarily looking at unproven or testing approaches under this APS.

8. It is also suggested to be focused to one particular geographical area initially, the results then may be shared and expanded globally.

Answered in conjunction with Question #8. Please also see Q&A Transcript from June 16th webinar.

9. Under add.1; National level programs partnering with Min of Health plans will be prioritized over restricted geographical area programs seeking gap-filling to execute the national CHW plan?

Answer: We have developed a flexible format here and we encourage you to look at our guidance and evaluation criteria, which ask for responsiveness and buy-in from national-level stakeholders including governments and other important stakeholders in-country. We have alluded to the fact that there may be different types of country typologies across the 24 countries and that you may be working in different systems with different relationships within the context of existing partnerships between government and non-governmental organizations. Our objective is to strengthen collaboration between governments and a range of non-governmental organizations. We are not prioritizing one over the other but requesting that applicants provide us with a strong rationale for their chosen project design to support national and local policies and plans. We are using the evaluation criteria and our guidance that we have provided to you to determine what you have negotiated within the context of national government frameworks and where you have commitment and buy-in from in-country stakeholders. The government commitment and buy-in may be for an applicant to contribute to an existing program that is being implemented at scale or for an applicant to extend the current reach of programming to pockets or areas that are currently not being reached. We encourage applicants to work closely with the government to respond to needs and keep both sustainability and a scale-up plan in mind.

10. Could a UNICEF country office apply for Add 1 with their sub-partners to carry out part of the national health plan for CHWs?

Answer: The short answer to that question is no. But the longer answer is that UNICEF is a partner with USAID in this APS and the Addendum. So for the projects that are awarded, just as we would also expect a close relationship with the USAID mission in-country, we would also expect a close relationship with the UNICEF office in-country as implementation goes forward. But because UNICEF is our partner in this, UNICEF offices are not eligible to apply underneath the Addendum or the APS.

11. While the addendum is restricted to 24 priority countries, is the APS open to other countries?

Answer: Yes, so the Addendum is restricted to the 24 priority countries. The APS is open to all countries where USAID has a presence (country, regional). Please see the USAID website for a list of USAID presence countries: <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work>.

12. Does leverage need to be documented in an "auditable" way? (OAA)

Answer: So that is one of the major differences between cost share and leverage. So cost share is auditable, whereas resource leverage is not. However, we need to understand what your leverage is and it does need to be presented to us as a monetary value.

13. Can you explain the difference between "cost share" and "resource leverage"? Is cost share an element of resource leverage?

Answer: So we've had that question a couple of times now in both of these webinars and I think we have also addressed it some in the questions and answers that have already been posted to grants.gov. And so, we would recommend that you review the question and answer that was posted already and then we will also be posting, as we've said, the webinar as well as the question and answer transcripts from the past few days. So I want to reinforce that there are differences in the Addendum and the APS and we've said this a few times in terms of what is required. In the APS, 25% cost share is required, whereas leverage is recommended but not required. In the Addendum, there are two categories. In the first category, cost share is also required at 25% and leverage is recommended. And in the second category in the Addendum, cost share is required at 25% and resource leverage is also required at 1:1.

And so the question is really what is the difference in cost share and leverage. The cost share is really your cash and in-kind amounts that you are applying to this award and again, they are not USG funded. It is auditable and governed by USAID Cost Share Standard Provisions for U.S. and non-U.S. NGOs. And this is under Question #2 that is in the questions and answers that is already posted to grants.gov. Resource leverage is broader and includes the things that you are leveraging and other platforms. Some examples are listed under Question #6 under "Budget/Cost Share/Leverage" in the questions and answers including program platforms, partnerships, local and national policy engagement activities and other processes. Again supported with non-USG funds. The 25% cost share can count towards your 1:1 leverage.

14. If concept notes have technical merit but the applicant might have limitations in capacity or 'leveraging' because local organization, will USAID/UNICEF consider/recommend integration with other applicants?

Answer: In response to this question, it should be clarified that as a local organization, you have a choice and can apply to either Category 1, which only has a 25% cost share requirement or Category 2, if you can contribute to the 1:1 leverage requirement (as a part of a consortium).. We are trying to partner with local organizations who can effectively contribute to the purpose and goal of the Integrating Community Health/CHW Addendum investment. We therefore have afforded flexibility in terms of resource contribution (cost share only in category 1 or leverage in category 1) and will conduct a pre-award survey to determine financial capabilities and identify appropriate solutions if there are any challenges identified. Please note that as a local organization you may apply in either Category 1 or Category 2 based on the types of resources that you are able to put forward either in a cost share requirement or broader leveraging requirement.

15. Will a list of webinar participants by organization will be made available so that partnerships can be explored?

We will not be posting a list of webinar participants.

16. Will Category 1 have priority over Category 2 applications?

Answer: No, at this point in time, we are looking for the best applications that respond to the scope of our procurement where funding is available.

I would just add to that, that the only difference really in Category 1 and 2, is that they are competed separately. So if you apply under Category 1, you are not competing with the same groups that are applying under Category 2. But there is no preference between the two.

17. In the concept stage, is "buy in" from the MOH, the USAID Mission, and/or the local UNICEF office important to demonstrate?

Answer: I would like to point you back to our evaluation criteria, which is what we are going to be using to evaluate the concept notes. In the evaluation criteria for the concept notes, we have a section, which focuses on the potential to contribute to national influence and impact. We encourage you to review the guidance and criteria for this section as it requires applicants to demonstrate alignment and reference dialogue with in-county stakeholders. The strategic fit of proposals and the project designs based on the consultations that applicants have conducted in-country to determine project priorities at the beginning are important considerations.

18. When looking at proven approaches, is there an opportunity to test their spread/scale to inform "key elements" for scale up? Or, in other words, approaches included under operations research?

Answer: Yes. The basic premise of the Addendum is to identify ways to spread or scale-up proven approaches. We sort of leave it flexible for the applicants to determine methods (such as implementation or operations research) they would incorporate into their proposal or at what level (of spread and scale up) they would take their proposal to. So, one of the things we are interested in is this spread and scale-up and integration with the national system, but we recognize that proposals may not get all the way there and we want to see that there is a thought process in how you might get there and a rationale for the particular end point chosen within the resources available. Again, it's flexible.

We do ask applicants to discuss their plan/pathway for sustaining and/or scaling approaches and put forward clearly defined end points in terms of what you are able to achieve within the context of this funding (or resource envelope). What we are looking for is that you are able to take a country-level scenario and advance community health approaches meaningfully from point A to point B in a logical pathway and progression to spread and scale. The other point here is that we have indicated that your monitoring, evaluation and learning plan should be responsive to the needs of in-county stakeholders. So instead of, for example, laying out predetermined questions, instead of giving very firm parameters for M&E, we have placed a great deal of focus on responsiveness to in-country stakeholders to achieve what was alluded to earlier. We encourage applicants to use the guidance on monitoring, evaluation and learning on what methodologies you chose and clearly state the pathway and end points you are contributing to in order to integrate and scale up community health approaches.

19. Are the 24 priority countries more prioritized?

Answer: So under the CHW Addendum, the 24 countries are the only countries that are eligible for funding. A list of these countries is provided in Annex 2 (page 40) of the Addendum and Annex and Annex 4 of the ICH-APS.

In the 24 priority countries, there are acceleration plans, sharpened national plans that have been developed or are in the process of being developed and we want to position this investment to leverage community health approaches within this broader context of national acceleration plans in these 24 priority countries.

Under the overall ICH APS, I think we have stated several times, there are no resources available under the APS at this time. As proposals come in within the windows, we will see if they have merit and if there are available resources. The 24 priority countries are the priority countries across USAID's programming in everything that we do related to ending preventable maternal and child death. So in that sense, they are always prioritized, but under the APS we are just looking at the proposals that come in and whether or not resources are available to fund them if they have merit (in priority countries as well as other countries with a USAID country or regional presence) .

20. Can UNICEF human resource/LOE be counted as cost share?

Answer: We have decided that because UNICEF is a partner, their resources then cannot count towards cost share or leverage. So you would have to count something else.

I would like to just add to that. Alignment with UNICEF priorities, potential integration into UNICEF health system platforms etc. is encouraged if that is relevant and/or feasible within the country scenarios that you are exploring. UNICEF, as a collaborator on this investment cannot contribute towards cost share, but other UN organizations beyond UNICEF, their platforms and/or resources may be counted towards this investment. What you need to be careful about is that if the U.S. government is providing funding to chosen UN entities, then it may have to be prorated. We can deal with these types of situations through additional questions after the concept paper is submitted and considered meritorious for submission of a full application.

21. To demonstrate MOH collaboration, is it sufficient to demonstrate 1) a national directive and 2) how the applicant will fill a gap in the local execution of that directive? Or is a letter of collaboration specific to this application required from the MOH?

Answer: So we would encourage a letter of collaboration specific to the application from the Ministry of Health, but you do not have to submit it at the concept paper stage. You can mention it in your concept paper narrative. To demonstrate you are operating within a national framework, you may also provide narrative only that highlights specific documentation to demonstrate national commitment for the applicant's concept. We leave it up to you to decide how you communicate your evidence or documentation of national commitment and buy-in and your collaboration and dialogue with in-country partners to develop your concept paper. But we do encourage letters of collaboration with the full application and any reference to any letters you may be submitting at the concept paper stage. We have had this question before and recognize that in some cases it may be difficult to get letters of collaboration, hence we are flexible to other types of documentation or narrative that you can provide to show us that you

held the in-country consultations and discussions, with an explanation of any challenges around obtaining a formal letter.

22. A current sub-recipient participant in a country's MSCP program needs additional funding to expand services within that program, does the MSCP program agreement suffice as demonstration of collaboration?

Answer: So I'm not sure what the MSCP program is. If it is referring to the MCSP program that is funded by USAID, you are certainly welcome to propose something that builds on platforms and collaborates with them but just to note that program itself would not be eligible for either cost share or leverage because it is a USAID funded program. If you mean something different, if MSCP is something different than MCSP, then please let us know in the comments and we can answer more specifically.

23. Even though there is no funding currently available for the APS, is there a resource limit or cap that applicants should work within?

Answer: No, we have not provided any resource limit or cap for the ICH- APS.

24. Are you going to publish the presentation as well?

Answer: Yes, the presentation will be available on grants.gov. We are ensuring that we get these materials uploaded as quickly as possible. You can see the slides in the posting of the webinar as well.

And I just wanted to add one final comment. There have been a lot of questions about collaboration and buy-in. We have laid out our overall intention around trying to position the advancement of community health approaches within broader national frameworks and plans. There are evaluation criteria that have been developed for the concept paper stage to assess how well you are contributing to that. So we are looking for responsiveness to the evaluation criteria and your best efforts on how applications support this intention. If you encounter any limitations in documentation (e.g. formal agreements or buy-in) due to challenges in-country please provide an explanation and we will take that into account.