

**ICH APS Pre-Submission Conference Webinar
Question and Answer Transcript
June 17, 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 17th session can be found at the following link: <https://ghpod.adobeconnect.com/p2h0pnhqaye/>.

Please note: this transcript has been edited for clarity.

1. Can you expand upon an example of a "new insight of data?"

Answered in conjunction with Question #2.

2. Would Elizabeth Fox give a specific example to illustrate using data differently to reduce barriers to equity?

Answer: Ok so, I think what we are talking about is just looking at the available data and thinking if there are new ways to combine that data or new ways to visualize that data that would give us new insights as to how to address lasting programs that reduce inequities. As a broad example, last year we produced a roadmap for action called "Acting on the Call Report." It's available on USAID's website at www.usaid.gov/actingonthecall. We are working currently, on a one-year update to that report. In this year's report, one of the things we have looked at is mapping immunization coverage versus median duration of breastfeeding, on the idea that breastfeeding education and promotion is something that can be easily integrated and promoted with immunization service delivery. When you look at the data and you look at it geographically, there are some interesting findings. It's not automatically always high. Immunization coverage and median duration of breastfeeding does not correlate. Sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. We think that looking at that data that way gives you some insights and advantage because for example if immunization coverage is high but breastfeeding is low, you could take advantage of that immunization program to increase your promotion of breastfeeding. If they are both high and working well, that might be something to look into for benefits or lessons learned that could be applied elsewhere. So, its just taking existing data and looking at in in new ways.

In this APS and Addendum, we have a strong focus on measurement as an overall objective and an area of capacity building at the community, local and national levels in our framework. We give you guiding principles on monitoring and evaluation. We also provide some examples in Annex 2 (p. 47) of the overall ICH-APS, and I will review one of these. We are trying to advance measurement with a focus on equity and with a focus on better documentation of systems. We are interested in quantitative data as well as non-indicator based methods and participatory methods. We are looking to applicants to help us advance documentation of not only local systems and networks, but also equity sensitive based in the systems and our speakers have addressed that we have gaps in terms of information at the community level. We also have gaps in how information is used and flows up within the system. So this is a great opportunity to try to address some of these gaps. Specifically, we are also interested in approaches and

methodologies that can be identified to monitor and target information and services to high burden populations. A specific example we provide you is in an Annex on page 48 of the APS. I'll just go through it because it highlights nicely how this information may be used towards constructive accountability. This is an example of a successful project with a focus on the measurement objective.

“By the end of the project, a grantee focusing on improving *measurement to influence policies and systems* would have *supported district health decision makers and planners to institutionalize a cost-effective and inclusive methodology to enhance an equity focus in the existing district monitoring system and supported national stakeholders to learn from experience and expand the methodology*. Based on past success with a participatory methodology (e.g., community monitoring system using a citizen report card to improve joint monitoring of primary health care facilities by health care providers and community representatives), the grantee integrates community monitoring into multiple USAID- and United Nations Children's Fund- (UNICEF) supported districts in which broader health systems strengthening and equity-focused work is underway. The grantee generates evidence and lessons to support decision-making needs and effectively uses selected implementation sites as “centers of excellence” to inform and train national stakeholders to enable further adaptation and expansion of the methodology.”

So this example focuses on a methodology, which is tailored to bring communities closer to systems and in which data is used jointly by communities and facilities to monitor progress and discuss issues pertaining to equity and accountability. This example contributes to generating and using data in new ways to make services more responsive to vulnerable communities.

3. Do we need to submit for all 24 priority countries simultaneously or can we choose among the countries in which we hope to operate?

Answer: Applicants are encouraged to focus on a country or countries of interest where they are able to respond to the scope of the Annual Program Statement or Addendum and within the resource envelope.

4. You mention National approach - In India, could it be State levels? As these are large areas with huge populations?

Answer: There will be larger countries or countries where there are current challenges such as South Sudan, where you may need to take a slightly different approach due to policy challenges, our large countries with decentralization and significant sub-national populations.. What we would request is that you work within a national framework but you may work at a significant sub-national level or at the most appropriate levels within your country context. I would like to tie that back to India, which has held a call to action, and come up with an action plan associated with that. Any work that is done at a sub-national level should link up with that broader national framework and national-level stakeholders should be engaged in the process at some point in time.

Kelly-What I think we are interested in seeing is that you have thought through how a program could get to a national level. So even if the specific funding for which you are applying is not going to necessarily get you all of the way there, there is a plan or a thought process for how you would go national and that there is evidence that has been thought through.

5. Can an INGO with headquarters in one (non-addendum country) apply for funding for a project working in an addendum country where it also has a presence?

Answer: Yes, and international NGO with headquarters in one non-addendum country can apply for funding for a project working in an addendum country where it also has a presence. As long as it is not incorporated as a local entity in that country where it has a presence, then it would be applying under Category 2 as an international NGO but certainly allowed.

We would just encourage you to review the eligibility criteria that is described in the Addendum and also in the main APS, if that is the opportunity that you are applying under.

6. This is a terrific APS. Congrats. Would we be better served not to hurry with a deadline of June 30?

Answer: Yes, we do have a fixed deadline of June 30th for the Addendum as there is a specific focus on high quality community health worker programs. That is where our investment is. However, the APS has three windows, the overall APS. The first one closes on October 9th, that is much more general and interested applicants can respond to those three windows. For those three windows, if a concept paper is being submitted to the overall APS, we encourage applicants to liaise with USAID missions and UNICEF country offices to discuss overall priorities in country. We encourage the same liaison to inform concept papers for the Addendum.

7. What is the probability that there might be funding for the APS?

Answer: At this time, we are not able to say whether there will be funding or not for the main APS. We encourage you to monitor grants.gov for any additional addenda but understand that the current Addendum is where the funding is located.

8. If there are additional Addendums released, will they have the same 24 country priority focus/restrictions on applications from non focus countries? Thanks.

Answer: The addenda will have specific information either about the country of eligibility or which countries are eligible. So in this case, the first Addendum that we have covers those 24 countries but a future addendum may only be for one country or maybe a different configuration. USAID presented a slide (Kelly Saldana's presentation) which showed the flexibility in the architecture. We indicated in the third box, that future addendum may be country-specific, regional or global in nature and will be determined upon emerging needs. So we are not able to answer any specific questions about future addenda at this moment in time.

9. Do you know now the subjects and timing of future addendums?

Answered above under Question #8.

And I would just like to add there is an appreciation for how the very flexible architecture of the APS and the Addendum respond to emerging and national-level priorities and how we synergize with it. We've been asked what are future questions around the addenda; What are specific countries?; Have we made various decisions?; and we have not. Our focus is on the first Addendum where we have jointly agreed based on government interest as well as various consultations, that community engagement and community health worker programs is a priority area that needs to be addressed for the reasons that were discussed in USAID's CHW focused remarks (Diana Frymus presentation). Everything else is open. We will engage in further dialogue and discussion around what emerging needs are and will release addenda based on that.

10. What about Evaluation? Is an external evaluator required or expected for this proposal.

Answer: Per USAID's evaluation policy, we do encourage evaluation and learning within the context of these projects. We have left decisions on monitoring, evaluation and learning up to the applicants and ask that you be responsive to evidence and information needs of in-country planners and decision makers. We have provided a range of principles and opportunities in terms of methods that could be advanced through these projects. It is really up to applicants to put forward a monitoring, evaluation and learning plan that will help to advance the agenda in-country. So it is up to the applicant to decide the approach to evaluation within the monitoring, evaluation and learning plan they put forward in response to in-country decision maker needs.

11. For concept papers under the addendum, are you looking for totally new programs? Or current programs with the objective of strengthening the role of CHW 's can also apply?

Answer: Basically, this investment is intended to be catalytic and integrate into existing platforms if there is an opportunity. We are not looking to invest in small-scale projects that are testing new innovations and demonstrating the effectiveness of innovations. We would like to build on the experience of applicants and other in-country partners to improve existing platforms and to consider strategies for sustaining, scaling and improving on existing platforms. So, as we referred to earlier, the project pathways to sustainability that you propose may vary. All countries across the 24 priority areas have different country contexts. Ethiopia is very different from DRC and Liberia for example. It is up to you to decide what is the best project strategy to influence scale and sustainability within the very diverse systems and current needs that currently exist and can be met through this investment. We hope that you will be able to work with existing platforms (such as broader health system strengthening or other investments that have been made by countries) and improve these platforms to achieve momentum and a catalytic effect through your project.

12. Please describe the difference between cost-share and leverage.

Answer: This question has been asked before. We have a question and answer document that has been posted to grants.gov in which you can find a variety of questions on leverage and responses.

There are a couple differences in cost share and leverage in different dimensions. A clearer answer is that there are differences in the APS and the Addendum as to what's required or recommended. I'll just go through that quickly and I know that question is also asking about what cost share and leverage are. First in the APS, cost share is required at 25% and leverage is only recommended, but not required. In the Addendum, in Category 1, cost share is required at 25%, but resource leverage is recommended in that category. In the second Category in the Addendum, cost share is required at 25% and resource leverage is required at 1:1.

I'm pulling from the question and answers document referenced on grants.gov. In this case, cost share is governed by the CFR and this is under Question #2, under "Budget/Cost Share/Leverage" in those questions and responses that were already posted. It's also governed by USAID Cost Share Standard Provisions for U.S. and Non-U.S. NGOs. That's really the case and in-kind materials that you are putting towards the project and it can be audited. Resource leverage is a little bit broader and includes more things you are leveraging, your other platforms. It includes non-USG resources. There is more detail again in the questions and responses that are already posted. I would direct you first to Question #6, under "Budget/Cost Share/Leverage" and we will also be posting some additional questions later this week based on our discussion at yesterday's webinar. But, illustrative resource leveraging examples include, program platforms, partnerships and local and national policy engagement activities and/or decision-making processes supported with non-USG funds.

Cost share counts as leverage so for Category 2 under the Addendum, your 25% cost share can count towards the 1:1 leverage requirement.

13. Does Mozambique and Malawi already have a framework?

Answer: I think this question is asking about countries that may have had Call to Action or A Promise Renewed events and subsequently released calls to action or made commitments towards achieving specific goals and targets. You can find in our Acting on the Call Report, a list of all countries and additional information on countries that have held these events.

Additionally, UNICEF runs the "A Promise Renewed" website that has additional information on which countries have signed the pledge and what countries have done in response to the call to action.

One other point on the countries that have had a call to action. We encourage you to reach out to USAID missions and UNICEF country offices in Malawi, Mozambique and other countries that you are interested in and discuss priorities because we are all aligning with these acceleration plans.

14. Is Niger eligible for submissions under the main APS as it does not have an official USAID mission and is not listed in the specific 24 priority countries list?

Answer: Yes, Niger is eligible under the main APS and we will post this information. There is a regional mission that provides oversight to Niger and there is a USAID regional presence.

15. May an INGO with headquarters in one country but with a presence in another countries apply under the APS?

Answer: The important thing is to review the eligibility criteria for both the APS and the Addendum. For the Addendum, note that there are two categories that are different and I'll speak specifically to the Addendum first. For the first category in the Addendum there is a definition of a local organization that you must meet in order to apply under Category 1. In Category 2, it is all eligible applicants. So not knowing the specifics of your organization or the arrangement that you are mentioning, you would want to review both the Category 1 with the local definition. It sounds like you may be eligible to apply under Category 2 and also under the main APS.

16. Would Philippines also be eligible under the main APS?

Answer: Yes.