



HEALTH, ECOSYSTEMS AND AGRICULTURE FOR RESILIENT, THRIVING SOCIETIES (HEARTH)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A number of questions are frequently asked by readers of **Health, Ecosystems and Agriculture for Resilient, Thriving Societies (HEARTH)**. We have compiled answers to these questions in one place for ease of reference. We will update this page, as needed, during the open submission period.

For questions regarding the Global Development Alliance (GDA) Annual Program Statement (APS), please consult the [GDA APS FAQs](#) or contact gda@usaid.gov.

If you have a question specific to the HEARTH Addendum, please contact hearthgda@usaid.gov.

DEADLINE UPDATE:

- The HEARTH Addendum has been **extended through February 14, 2021**.
- The six individual Mission deadlines included in the Addendum have passed. As a result, applications for Bangladesh, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, and Zambia are not being accepted at this time.
- As indicated in the Addendum; however, *USAID/W welcomes suggestions for other suitable HEARTH alliances outside of these Missions should an applicant be aware of a suitable landscape, funding opportunity, and transformative idea. Potential geographic regions include USAID partner countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia, Latin America and Caribbean. Please contact the HEARTH team to discuss the country of interest before submitting a concept paper.*

1. Will there be webinars to hear additional information and ask questions?

- a. On December 9, 2019 there was a public-facing event at the Aspen Institute in Washington, DC, from 1-3PM which was live-streamed [here](#).
- b. Informational webinars to review HEARTH and to answer questions from the public and potential applicants will be conducted on **January 22, 2020** at 9:00-10:30 AM EST and 9:00-10:30 PM EST. **Please register [here](#).**
- c. We plan to have a second HEARTH webinar in mid-February. More details to follow.
- d. Please continue to monitor these FAQs for updates.

2. Where is a copy of the slide presentation and link to the webinar held on Jan 22nd?

- a. Here is a [link to a PDF](#) of the slides used during the webinar.
- b. Here is a link to the 9am EST [webinar recording](https://ac.usaid.gov/p4jqgw9tjjea/) (<https://ac.usaid.gov/p4jqgw9tjjea/>).

3. The GDA APS [Concept Paper Template](#) is labeled 2016-2017. Is that the correct link?

- a. Yes, [this](#) template has been used since 2016.

4. If the Mission lists three priority sectors, but my organization is only expert at one of them, should we submit a concept paper?

- a. No, not until an appropriate consortium is formed. Applicants should work with private-sector partners to develop a consortium of implementing partners with expertise to address all core sectors of a proposed HEARTH activity.



5. What can USAID staff discuss with prospective partners or applicants?

- a. If the prospective partner or applicant is likely seeking an award of USAID funding under this addendum, USAID staff must restrict conversations to publicly available information until the applicant submits a concept paper and is contacted by USAID staff to engage in more in-depth discussions. Publicly available information includes but is not limited to relevant technical literature, the results of previous studies, program reports and evaluations, parameters of the GDA APS, and HEARTH expectations. However, with regard to organizations that are likely to seek an award of USAID funding, conversations cannot proceed to in-depth and detailed co-creation of alliance activities until the prospective applicant(s) submits a concept paper and is contacted by USAID staff to engage in more in-depth and specific alliance development discussions.
- b. If the prospective partner or applicant is not seeking an award of USAID funding under this addendum, USAID staff are free to engage in robust and extensive co-creation discussions with the organization prior to the submission of a concept paper and such communication may include detailed design discussions regarding potential alliance activities.

6. How do the rules of the GDA APS ensure free and open competition?

- a. The GDA APS, and any addendum under the GDA APS, is an open solicitation and thereby fulfills the Agency's commitment to broad eligibility and the award of USAID funding through competitive processes. No prospective recipients of USAID funding were aware of the funding opportunity or concept prior to its public release on Dec 3. USAID Missions welcome all ideas consistent with the requirements of HEARTH and the GDA APS and will evaluate them on a rolling basis.
- b. Please note that the GDA APS requires extensive collaboration with the private sector and the leveraging of private-sector capabilities and funding. Any GDAs proposed must demonstrate engagement of and co-creation with the private sector. The nature of the private sector role, and the value that role has to achieving development outcome and results that advance HEARTH and Mission objectives will be key to the review of any proposed GDA.

7. Is there an advantage to submitting a concept paper early?

- a. There is no way to determine whether an earlier submission will or will not provide any advantage. Applicants should focus on developing high quality concept papers and alliances that advance the objectives of HEARTH and meet the requirements of the HEARTH Addendum and the GDA APS. One of those requirements is to facilitate communication between USAID and potential private sector partners before developing and submitting a concept paper. USAID encourages organizations to make those connections as soon as possible so as to provide all partners more time to consider potential ideas and approaches. USAID and the private sector partner generally should reach a preliminary understanding of the GDA opportunity prior to the submission of a concept paper.
- b. As stated in Section V of the HEARTH addendum ("Evaluation Criteria"), concept papers will be evaluated on a number of criteria, and the applicants who submit qualifying concept papers will be invited to continue the co-creation process under the GDA APS.



- 8. When is the deadline to submit concept papers? The deadline says June 15, 2020, but different dates are listed in Appendix A.**
 - a. The APS will remain open until June 15, to potentially accommodate additional missions. We can receive concept papers for any USAID partner country until June 15. However, the 6 Missions who participated in the Dec 3 release (Bangladesh, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, and Zambia) have listed earlier deadlines for concept papers. Concept papers for these 6 missions must be submitted by the date listed for each country in Appendix A.

- 9. What are some ways to meet the 1:1 leverage requirement?**
 - a. The GDA APS requires that applicants leverage USAID funding on at least a 1:1 basis. That is, the value of the various private sector resources (cash and in-kind) contributed to an alliance must equal and, in general, should significantly exceed the value of resources provided by the U.S Government. The GDA APS describes the different means by which partners can meet this requirement. Generally, a minimum of 25% of the private sector resources and contributions should be in the form of cash.
 - b. Different private-sector partners can combine resources to meet the 1:1 leverage requirement.
 - c. Other donors (e.g. DFID, World Bank) do NOT count toward the 1:1 leverage requirement. However, their activities in relevant landscapes should be considered and leveraged, and brought into the co-creation discussion where appropriate.

- 10. What indicators might be used for cross-sectoral monitoring and evaluation (M&E)?**
 - a. The indicators to ensure rigorous and efficient M&E at each site will be co-designed with all partners as part of co-creation. M&E will serve many purposes, including to generate evidence of impact and ensure active management that the project is on track to meet goals. Indicators will vary based on landscape and inputs, but each site should ultimately be able to report on 4 high-level outcomes (biodiversity conservation, human well-being, local prosperity, and governance). USAID does not have pre-determined indicators for each site, but will build on previous decades of work in indicator development, alongside partners. It may be helpful if applicants indicate candidate indicators for their specific HEARTH proposals in their 5-page concept paper, in the M&E approach section.

- 11. Does the private sector partner have to be the lead for concepts submitted via HEARTH or can an NGO be the lead?**
 - a. No, the private sector partner does not have to be the lead on concept notes submitted, and an NGO can play that role. However, the private sector partner's 1:1 leverage must be part of the concept note, and the submitting NGO must put their private sector partner in contact with the USAID/W HEARTH team prior to submitting the concept paper.

- 12. When a prospective private sector partner has been identified, should the applicant first put them in touch with your team (hearthgda@usaid.gov) or should they be put in touch with the USAID Mission?**
 - a. While the GDA Applicant Checklist form indicates that the USAID Mission should be notified of your private sector partner, we request that, as part of the HEARTH GDA, you notify both the Mission and USAID/W at hearthgda@usaid.gov.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

13. I am interested to submit a concept, but the geography is beyond the scope listed in the addendum, it's for another country. Can I still submit it? What about a regional program that includes both a listed country and others?

- a. For a country outside of the those listed, you have two options. Although that Missions did not submit a specific country section for Appendix A of the HEARTH grants notice, we do mention under “Initial Participating Countries include“ that USAID/W welcomes suggestions for other suitable HEARTH alliances outside of the currently participating Missions should an applicant be aware of a suitable landscape, funding opportunity, and transformative idea. As such, you are welcome to follow the guidelines and criteria of the HEARTH notice and discuss with private-sector partners what a HEARTH activity might look like and submit a concept paper to hearthgda@usaid.gov anytime before June 15, 2020.
- b. If you intend to submit a concept paper, please put us in touch with the proposed private-sector partner prior to submission so that we may discuss potential collaboration in greater detail, as described in the notice. After evaluating the concept paper, we may share it with the Mission for their consideration. Although the Mission may not have been interested in participating in HEARTH initially, the presentation of a good concept paper sometimes (but not always!) helps motivate reconsideration.
- c. Alternatively, you can wait and see if the relevant Missions decide to participate in HEARTH in the future, in which case we would release a specific call for concept papers as an amendment to the grants notice.
- d. For a regional program that is inclusive of a listed participating country, the Mission may be interested to support the program or only portions of the program that match with their targeted geographies. You are welcome to submit a concept paper that includes other landscapes; however, the 1:1 leverage requirement may be calculated to include only costs incurred to benefit the specific geographic zone of interest, subject to negotiations with USAID.

14. Zambia Specific Clarifications:

- a. How many awards does USAID anticipate awarding in Zambia?
 - i. The Zambia Mission prefers having a larger award rather than smaller awards. It is felt that smaller awards water down impact.
- b. Are there any preferences in amount of funding with respect to target geographies (Kafue or Luangwa)?
 - i. Biodiversity, Feed the Future and WASH funding can cover both geographies. The health office commitment (most likely MCH funds) is only available to cover the the Kafue landscape.
- c. What are the geographic limits that define Luangwa ecosystem?
 - i. The Zambia Mission considers the core Luangwa Landscape as comprising the Luambe, North and South Luangwa National Parks, Mukungule, Musalangu, Lumimba, Lupande, Sandwe, Chisomo, West Petauke Game Management Areas and the forests and open areas immediately surrounding these areas. However, they would not discourage entities to submit concepts based on this definition. Interested entities should submit concepts designed to have a positive impact on the Luangwa landscape or significant portions of it.

15. What is USAID's risk appetite?

- a. Please refer to: [Risk-Appetite Statement](#)



16. Can a partner submit a concept paper for more than one Mission?

- a. Yes. Each Mission is acting independently. If a consortium believes it could do good work in more than one country, they should submit concept numbers for each, and could potentially receive awards in more than one country.

17. Are Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Kenya limiting projects to only one year?

- a. No. While the funding levels are only known for year 1, it is reasonable to believe that excellent proposals could result in similar or increased funding in future years for the same project. Applicants should submit ideas that suit their core business models with length of approximately 5 years. That will be refined in co-creation.

18. Madagascar Specific Clarifications:

- a. What are the modalities of submitting a proposal to the Madagascar Mission?
 - i. Concept notes submitted under HEARTH must have a positive biodiversity impact, with private sector partners meeting (and preferably exceeding) the 1:1 leverage requirement. The GDA APS outlines the rules and regulations for meeting the requirements related to private sector leverage. Concept notes need to show not only positive biodiversity impacts but we are also looking for improvements in livelihoods and incomes to deter people from degrading the environment around them in a way that is sustainable in the long term. If additional development objectives are achieved in other sectors such as electricity access, health, WASH, and access to financing, among other key development sectors, then that is preferred. Concept notes are due March 31st, 2020 and can be submitted by sending to the email address in the GDA APS.
- b. How does USAID/Madagascar choose the intervention areas considering the need for areas with high biodiversity and the geographic area that the private sector wants to work in?
 - i. USAID/Madagascar chose many areas that have high biodiversity values to allow for multiple opportunities for private sector actors to submit concept notes in geographies that make sense for their businesses.
- c. Can governments receive funding for capacity building under this activity?
 - i. USAID cannot give funding directly to governments currently in Madagascar. However, our implementing partners can provide capacity building to institutions and government staff.
- d. Can a conglomerate submit a concept note? For example, a fund or platform that invests in multiple sectors and multiple landscapes in one landscape?
 - i. Yes! That is an idea that is appealing to the Mission in order to achieve scale and include responsible businesses with an interest in providing products and services in a way that has social and environmental benefits. This could be the "umbrella organization" mentioned in the APS that invests in multiple activities. USAID has a limited ability to manage many partnerships so having an organization that can develop activities, conduct due diligence and structure investments and partnerships could be an efficient model. However, we are open to multiple models that can achieve improved well-being and biodiversity conservation outcomes at scale.
- e. Can the Private Sector bring in financing as part of their proposal?



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

- i. Yes! Mobilizing private capital, in addition to meeting the 1:1 leverage requirement, is encouraged by USAID/Madagascar. For example, a business or investor could bring in additional philanthropic type funding or investment financing that USAID funding can de-risk by providing first loss capital. USAID has experience working with funds by financing technical assistance in a variety of ways to both investors and producers such as by providing business development services to small- and medium-size enterprises, helping to create business plans and working with businesses to have audited financial records which improves their investor/credit-readiness.

19. HEARTH-Okavango Specific Clarifications:

- a. USAID's Southern Africa Regional mission held a public webinar to share information about this opportunity and to answer questions. The webinar took place on January 14, 2021 at 13:00 GMT (8:00 am EST, 2:00 pm Angola, 3:00 pm South Africa). A link to the webinar recording is [here](#). The PowerPoint slides are [here](#) and [here](#) in Portuguese.

20. Does voluntary carbon market finance count towards the 1:1 leverage requirement?

Some costs and revenue associated with voluntary carbon market finance are eligible as leverage in a GDA, others are not eligible. As a rule:

- a. Cash flow from the sale of carbon credits may be considered private sector leverage when this income is used to fund activities under the GDA.
- b. Cash flow that is distributed directly to resident communities or households but not reinvested in activities under the GDA would not be considered as leverage, but rather a project outcome.
- c. Private sector support to pay for the expenses of certification and/or measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) needed to sell carbon credits can be counted as private sector leverage, so long as the company(ies) weren't already going to make such expenditures regardless of engagement with USAID. Leverage only refers to resources that are contributed as a consequence of and in order to advance the GDA.

21. Should applicants refer to the USAID/Southern Africa RDCS (2020-2025) or USAID/Angola CDCS (2014-2019) to determine USAID development objectives alignment?

- a. Please refer to the [USAID/Southern Africa RDCS](#).