



**Collaboration Learning Adapting (CLA) Platform
Addendum #0000002**

to

**Broad Mission Announcement for USAID/Ethiopia for Improved Development Outcomes
72066320BMA00001**

Background: USAID/Ethiopia, USAID/Djibouti and CLA

USAID/Ethiopia's goal is to transition Ethiopia to a more democratic, prosperous, and resilient society, with accountable institutions and private sector-led growth. To achieve this goal, USAID/Ethiopia will partner with Ethiopian stakeholders and donors, the private sector, and civil society across sectors to address challenges in the areas of democracy, demographics, and disasters.

Given the rapidly changing contexts within Ethiopia and the region, USAID needs to take new approaches to learning that allow for programmatic adaptation using reliable data. To achieve this objective, USAID seeks innovative approaches to collaborating and learning to adapt its programming utilizing evidence by partnering with traditional and non-traditional partners to expand Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) utilization within the Mission, implementing partners, and other development partners (such as civil society, think tanks, donors, select public entities, etc.).

Furthermore, the USAID/Djibouti operating unit is expected to benefit from the platform. Djibouti is a critical partner whose cooperation advances United States Government (USG) interests and USAID/Djibouti plays a key role in helping the country achieve its development needs. USAID's work in Djibouti invests in people through education, health, governance, and democracy programs.

Problem Statement: The Need for New Approaches to Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting

USAID/Ethiopia is working towards a Mission-wide systematic and intentional approach to CLA. There is a need for a CLA platform for improved data management, and to support advocacy with external partners based on evidence. The Mission needs data to make timely decisions in our program design and implementation. Decision-making should be guided by data, work with existing systems and ensure timely adaptation and improvement in programming. The programming environment in Ethiopia is dynamic. Intentional and iterative learning throughout activity lifecycles should result in richer analysis to inform this adaptive

management. As such, the CLA Platform will establish feedback loops between and among activities across all Development Objectives (DOs).

Externally, local partners and stakeholders also lack the ability to generate and use data to make evidence-based decisions. There is a need for data to inform the USG's broader foreign policy objectives in Ethiopia. Additionally, programming is often siloed even within sectors, and within sectors, the data can be fragmented within and outside of USAID. Without accurate, right-sized, and timely data that can be applied to decision-making, it is difficult to achieve mutual development objectives and maximize impact and sustainability. Best practices should not only cover preferred practices; rather, best practices should emphasize flexibility to adapt practices to unique geographic, cultural, and temporal contexts.

USAID seeks to partner with organizations whose priorities lie in improving development impact by utilizing improved CLA tools and approaches. This process should consider Connect Online Connect Offline (COCO) applications of digital information collection given the power and internet challenges in Ethiopia and Djibouti, and more so in rural areas. There is a need to create a system that will provide a cross-mission perspective. The Mission's new CLA Platform will establish a feedback loop where such learnings will be made fit for purpose, thereby benefiting activities across USAID/Ethiopia's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) objectives and development outcomes.

USAID/Djibouti and USAID/ Ethiopia program staff recently completed a CLA Mapping Assessment survey to assess current best practices and areas for improvement to help attain the aspirational level of "Institutionalizing" CLA within the office. Based on the key findings from the assessment, specific recommendations were set forth on how USAID/Djibouti and USAID/ Ethiopia can strengthen the incorporation and integration of CLA approaches into projects which will help provide an enabling environment within the organization. It is expected that the platform will be responsive to the changing environments and that funded activities can be subject to change.

For the purposes of this Addendum, USAID seeks new perspectives through co-creation with a diversity of partners who possess a number of the experiences below, both in the development field and private-sector innovations. More importantly, USAID/Ethiopia and USAID/Djibouti are seeking partners who have the ability to transform the way USAID and its external stakeholders understand and respond to the success or failure of their programming utilizing the following approaches:

- Systems-based approach, that is flexible and expandable based on the demands of the stakeholders addressing the objectives listed above.
- Expose stakeholders to non-traditional monitoring, evaluation, and learning methods and cutting-edge analysis as well as support their ability and awareness to engage with non-traditional development actors for learning.
- Support to a subset of the Mission's Learning Themes and Learning Questions:

- Learning themes: Gender, Youth, Private sector engagement, Governance, including civil society and citizen engagement, Conflict, New partnerships, Mission operations. Some are cross-cutting and target sectors. USAID and Implementing Partners need to consider the difference in how we will address cross-cutting in terms of function and focus sector/theme.
- Major learning questions:
 - To what extent, and under what enabling conditions, does multi-sectoral integration lead to improved outcomes?
 - How have particular programmatic or sectoral approaches to systems strengthening been designed and implemented to foster self-reliance, and which are most effective? Why?
- Support one or more of the Ethiopia Mission's sectors and offices:
 - Democracy and Governance/conflict
 - Resilience
 - Disaster Risk Management
 - Emergency Response
 - Education
 - Health
 - Food Security
 - Private Sector Development
 - Youth
 - WASH
 - Nutrition
 - Climate Adaptation and/or Mitigation
 - USAID/Djibouti

Anticipated users of the CLA Platform services are:

- Mission - Internal decision-making on the Mission's development programming in coordination with the Mission's Organization Development Contract implementing partner. Focus areas at the CDCS/DO, Project, and Activity levels.
- Implementing Partners - CLA capacity building for USAID implementing partners and local M&E firms.
- Support and strengthening/building systems to generate and apply data to their own decision-making to promote self-reliance.
- Development Partners (including donors, private sector partners, and civil society organizations)

Solutions Sought

USAID/Ethiopia and USAID/Djibouti seek new approaches to CLA that will enable the Missions to apply predictive analytics to monitoring data to inform programming decisions, including discontinuation of ineffective programs. This platform will enable the wider collective impact of USAID, and other partners, thereby meeting the Development Objectives outlined within the CDCS. USAID/Ethiopia seeks to iteratively examine its theories of change,

development hypotheses, and programming approaches to ensure development challenges are in alignment with solutions. It also seeks to do this by fully internalizing the realities and challenges of the systems within which particular solutions aim to provide impact.

USAID seeks partners to engage in a co-creation process to achieve the following objectives:

- **Learning to drive program results more efficiently and expediently than traditional MEL**

Traditional learning approaches can be effective, but the increasing complexity of the Mission's development context, as well as the integrated 2019-2024 Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), warrants the need to build upon traditional learning approaches. The CDCS will be implemented during the life of this award; it is expected that the platform will play a key role in shaping the next CDCS. USAID and Implementing Partners need an active system and not a passive one that solely collects information submitted by partners. This means embracing innovation and fostering out-of-the-box thinking to meet the new and ever-evolving demands and challenges of the Mission's work. There is a critical need to invest in cost-effective and evidence-revealing research, and learning is critical to both making the case for resources and for leveraging non-USG programming. There is an opportunity to consider external data generation and decision-making tools, data and tool repositories, internal program monitoring data management, and/or a system that will support stronger integration. With this consideration, there is a need to establish a balance between new data and leveraging the data currently being collected.

- **Generate fit-for-purpose data to adapt and improve development programs**

The Mission wants to reorient its approach to data generation with adaptation in mind. Currently, USAID/Ethiopia data generation is often driven by the reporting needs of external stakeholders as opposed to the learning needs of the Mission and host country partners. USAID needs a platform that will work with the current Development Information Solution (DIS) a web-based, Agency-wide portfolio management system designed to capture one cohesive development story - from strategy to results. There is a need for data that adds value to implementers in its core technical areas, as well as for the Ethiopian stakeholders and local communities. Specifically, there are processes that need to be developed to address questions related to what do we need to know, when, and how often to ensure that a project or activity remains on track or needs to adapt/pivot? There is a need for flexibility to commission technical expertise. USAID and Implementing Partners need clarity to support core drivers of success and how do we track that in order to make effective decisions throughout the project or activity life cycle. There is an opportunity to explore new indicators, such as the use of sentinel indicators (a measure for complex systems) and proxy indicators (an indirect measure for achievement/performance that are difficult to measure directly) and expand the use of third-party statistics.

- **Increase the Speed of Collaborating, Learning, and Adaptation**

New interventions increase collaboration between traditional monitoring systems and implementing partners. As we develop the CLA platform, there needs to be a

consideration to enable experimentation. USAID should empower implementers to test theories and iterate development programs. Best practice should not only cover preferred practices; rather, best practices should emphasize flexibility to adapt practices to unique geographic, cultural, and temporal contexts. There is a need to ***organize for Innovation***. USAID/Ethiopia and USAID/Djibouti should emphasize the importance of data and informational feedback systems in accelerating the innovation process. We should institute well-organized data and prototyping simulation systems in order to empower implementers and program officers to rapidly assess, iterate and scale new ideas.

- ***Timing and Resolution***. Informational tools should emphasize the importance of generating and analyzing information at the *timing and resolution of relevance*.
 - ***System***. To provide a cross-mission perspective, the Mission's new CLA Platform will establish a feedback loop where such learnings will be made fit for purpose, thereby benefiting activities across CDCS objectives and development outcomes.
 - ***Actionability***. Information must have a clear purpose and be closely coupled with Mission program and policy actions; Programs should be structured to respond and develop around the information. Implementers should serve important roles in framing questions, proposing possible indicators; and gathering information.
 - ***Reduce Cost***. USAID should maximize and prioritize the use of third-party data sources and passive observational tools; where possible, USAID should explore the use of proxy indicators (e.g., mobile phone data as a measure of economic activity).
 - ***Focus on causal relationships***. Information efforts should clarify the causal relationships between policies and programs and the activity or behavior of target beneficiaries. Target indicators should be selected to emphasize relationships between policies and behavioral outcomes rather than describing population characteristics and should include predictive analytics to inform the path forward.
- **Improve data literacy, including the ability to generate, comprehend, rigorously analyze, and apply data generated by both USAID and broader development actors**

Mission staff members have limited time resources and there is no expectation that everyone becomes a data scientist. However, it is paramount for the general success of the Mission's development projects and activities that planners and managers have analytical skills and create space for learning to understand appropriate learning questions and methods to ascertain answers with adaptation. There is a need for a clear understanding of what data will be used for and within what timeframe--clear anchor points of reference such as data generation and consolidation (i.e., the data ecosystem) and analysis (i.e., analyzation and reconfiguration). More importantly, there is a need for applying different research modeling methods to promote data analysis, data interrogation, and interpretation. To facilitate this, there should be a consideration for human-centered design and the digital design principles in the platform's development and application.

- **Share CLA practices and expand the use of CLA across the Mission's implementing partners, and other Ethiopian and Djibouti partners outside of government.**

The Mission must be able to help other development actors incorporate basic learning and adapting principles. We need to develop a user-friendly platform with a plan for capacity strengthening, sustainability, and microlearning tools.

USAID anticipates a funding of up to \$60M from which we will issue one or multiple awards, depending on the co-creation process.

Submission Instructions

Please submit your Expression of Interest (EOI) indicating the research or development idea which will work towards discovering potential solutions to the above Problem Statement by increasing knowledge and understanding of potential solutions, capitalizing on scientific discoveries or improvements in technology, materials, processes, methods, or techniques, advancing the state of the art, or using scientific and technical knowledge in the design, development, implementation, testing or evaluation of CLA activities. Please describe your idea for innovative approaches for solving the Missions' challenges, and highlight your group's value to the partnership. Organizations are encouraged to consider collaborating with peer organizations that bring differing perspectives and/or comparative advantages.

Submitted EOIs will:

- Not exceed 10 pages, excluding Header, Summary Budget and optional graphic(s)
- Contain a Header with the following information (not included in word count):
 - Respondent Name/Group and Contact Information
 - Response Title
 - BAA Addendum Name/Number
- Be in .pdf or .docx format
- Contain the following:
 - Idea/approach to CLA, including brief identification/summary of supporting evidence
 - Innovate approaches and other resources you are willing to dedicate to this collaboration
 - Your organization's unique perspectives and capabilities, as well as your ability to harness the comparative advantages of other parties (that addresses one or multiple objectives)
- Contain a Summary Budget with the following information (not included in the word count):
 - Table listing major cost categories and showing a total figure to give the Mission an idea of the magnitude of the work effort.
 - A brief (a paragraph or two) discussion of budget line items and structure, as applicable. Details are not necessary at this time.

EOI preparation costs will not be reimbursed by USAID.

Review of Submissions

Eligibility: Unrestricted.

Evaluation Criteria:

Submissions are not evaluated against other submissions, but solely against the criteria below.

The following criteria (in descending order of importance) will be applied to the evaluation of all EOIs:

1. Overall Scientific and Technical Merit of the Idea/Approach: In evaluating the idea/approach, USAID will focus on how the EOI presents fresh, informed and realistic thinking, and how it uses supporting evidence and analysis. The Mission will base its decision on the available evidence, data, and resulting analysis. The Mission seeks targeted solutions that will achieve significant impact on its organization.
2. Management Capability and Key Personnel: The managerial capability of the organization(s) and team of people engaged in the proposed endeavor. The extent to which the proposed management plan of the idea/approach is realistic, efficient and effective.
3. Experience: Strengths of your group as a partner, including past performance and experience, to advance the Mission's objectives. The degree to which the partner(s) has successfully executed similar innovative work in the recent past.
4. Cost Realism and Reasonableness: Note that cost realism and reasonableness shall also be considered to the extent appropriate, although the selection of proposals is primarily a technical decision. This criterion will be considered only when evaluating Full Proposals and Full Applications.

Information Protection

USAID's goal is to facilitate the research that is required to lead to innovative and potentially commercially viable solutions. Understanding the sensitive nature of submitters' information, when it is a possible concern, USAID will work with organizations to protect intellectual property.

Expressions of interest should be free of any intellectual property that the submitter wishes to protect, as the expressions of interest will be shared with USAID partners as part of the selection process. However, once submitters have been invited to engage in further discussions, submitters will work with USAID to identify proprietary information that requires protection.

Therefore, organizations making submissions under this Addendum hereby grant USAID a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to use, disclose, reproduce, and prepare derivative works, and to have or permit others to do so to any information contained in the

expressions of interest submitted under the Addendum. If USAID engages with the organization regarding its submission, the parties can negotiate further intellectual property protection for the organization's intellectual property. Organizations must ensure that any submissions under the Addendum are free of any third party proprietary data rights that would impact the license granted to USAID herein.

Selection Process

USAID will review and select EOIs submitted in accordance with the guidelines and criteria set forth in this Addendum. USAID reserves the right to disregard any EOIs that do not meet the guidelines.

Stage 1: All EOIs will be reviewed by an Internal Review Board (Board) which may include but not limited to USAID experts, partners, outside development or other experts. For EOIs that are deemed to have merit by USAID and pass the criteria/eligibility stated above, USAID will issue an invitation to collaborate to the potential partner(s) in a (very likely virtual) co-creation workshop/session. Post co-creation, potential partner(s) will develop a Concept Paper(s). It is during this time that the parties will determine additional partners and resources to complement their proposed activity. The Concept Paper(s), generally 10-15 pages, will further outline the concrete programmatic plan, focus areas, goals, timelines, etc. The Concept Paper(s) will also include a more detailed budget (not included in the 10-15 page count). Neither co-creation participation costs nor Concept Paper preparation costs will be reimbursed by USAID.

Stage 2: All Concept Papers will be reviewed by an Internal Review Board (Board). The Board will recommend which Concept Paper(s) should be considered for Full Proposal(s) or Full Application(s). In accordance with the specified evaluation criteria, the Board will recommend whether to move forward with the activity including any revisions/additions, and potential partners and resources. Please note that being identified to submit a Full proposal or Full Application is not a guarantee of award or funding from USAID.

Stage 3: The Contracting/Agreement Officer (CO/AO) will review the Board's recommendations. The CO/AO may determine the anticipated instrument type to facilitate activity design and/or may advise the co-design team on possible instruments and relationship types, and/or may determine the instrument at a later time in the co-design process.

Stage 4: USAID will work with the Apparent Potential Partner(s) to clarify the activity and will assist the Apparent Potential Partner(s) in preparing a Full Proposal or Full Application, which will be approximately 45 pages in length. The Full Proposal(s) or Full Application(s) will fully describe the Potential Partner's(s') technical approach, management approach, organizational capacity, past performance, fully-costed budget, as well as representations and certifications. Note that the addition of new partners in the co-design phase will require the approval of the CO/AO. Full Proposal/Full Application preparation costs will not be reimbursed by USAID.

Stage 5: All Full Proposal(s)/Full Applications will be reviewed by the Board. Using its technical expertise and in accordance with the specified evaluation criteria, the Board will recommend

whether to move forward with the Full Proposal(s)/Full Application(s). The CO/AO will consider this recommendation and make a final decision whether to move forward to negotiations. The CO/AO will make an Apparent Potential Partner(s) determination. The CO/AO will determine instrument type and responsibility, analyze cost reasonableness, etc. and craft an award instrument with the Apparent Potential Partner(s). If the Apparent Potential Partner(s) and USAID cannot arrive at a mutually agreeable arrangement, the CO/AO will cancel the activity at no cost to the Government.

USAID is not obligated to issue a financial instrument or award as a result of this Addendum.

Response Date

Please submit your expression of interest in English to Liam Garvey at lgarvey@usaid.gov with a copy to caddis@usaid.gov **no later than 17:00 Ethiopian Time, October 4, 2021.**

Questions?

Please submit your questions (if any) via email to Liam Garvey at lgarvey@usaid.gov with a copy to caddis@usaid.gov **no later than 17:00 Ethiopian Time, September 7, 2021.** Responses to all timely questions will be posted as an amendment to this Addendum.