



# USAID

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## BUILDING STRONG SUB-PARTNERSHIPS

“How to Work with USAID” Training Series

Visit [WorkwithUSAID.org](https://www.WorkwithUSAID.org) to learn more.



# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives of this module are to:

- Understand how to identify potential partners with whom you can implement USAID-funded activities;
- Review steps you can take to become better-known by more effectively marketing your organization; and
- Know what developing a strong partnering agreement entails when forming a team with other organizations.



# WHY USAID PARTNERS WITH ORGANIZATIONS



## **USAID Mission:**

To lead the U.S. Government's international development and disaster assistance efforts.

USAID offers this assistance on behalf of the American people through partnerships and investments that:

- Save lives;
- Reduce poverty;
- Strengthen democratic governance; and
- Help people emerge from humanitarian crises and progress beyond assistance.

# PARTNERING BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS

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Partnering often occurs between organizations to more effectively compete for or implement an Agency award.

- The “prime” partner leads the effort, incorporating one or more sub-partners in the response and budget.
- The prime leverages the expertise, in-country knowledge, and local contacts of the sub-partner.
- Smaller or newer organizations learn about working with USAID.

# SUBAWARDS AND SUBCONTRACTS

Sub-partnerships are related to two types of USAID funding opportunities:

- A **subaward** of financial assistance is made under an Agency grant or cooperative agreement by a recipient organization to an eligible sub-recipient. The subawardee helps implement the award.
- A **subcontract** is created when a lead contractor awards a contract to another organization to assist it with carrying out an Agency acquisition award. The subcontractor provides goods or specialized services to the program.

For more details, see the “[Understanding USAID Awards](#)” module.

A blue-tinted landscape photograph showing a wide river flowing through a valley. The river is surrounded by rocky banks and sparse vegetation. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear sky. The overall scene is serene and natural.

**POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

# POTENTIAL BENEFITS

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**Partnerships improve your chances of success by:**

- Combining complementary expertise and capabilities;
- Enhancing stakeholder and community awareness;
- Providing opportunities to network and share knowledge; and
- Gaining insight into local context.





# POTENTIAL RISKS

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**You need to manage risks carefully to reduce their impact on success.**

Potential risks include:

- Compromise of organizational vision and integrity;
- Competing interests that impede cooperation;
- Confusion or disagreements over roles and responsibilities; and
- Incorrect assumptions of financial benefits.



# CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CHOOSING PARTNERS



## Focus on organizations that have:

- A mission and values similar or complementary to yours;
- Leaders that are open to the partnership;
- Credibility in the community;
- Good relationships with key stakeholders;
- Willingness to comply with Agency requirements;
- Programming that complements your skills and services;
- Strategic geographic focus;
- Financial management experience and sound internal controls; and
- A history of positive performance and potential for future success.

# STEPS FOR EXPLORING POTENTIAL PARTNERS

1. Research organizations through their websites or profiles in the Partner Directory at [WorkwithUSAID.org](https://www.workwithusa.org).
2. Keep tabs on Agency partners by searching [USASpending.gov](https://www.usaspending.gov) for recent prime and subaward recipients.
3. Stay connected via social media and through professional networks and associations.
4. Contact the local aid coordinator or ministry of finance or foreign affairs.





# MARKETING YOUR ORGANIZATION

# ROLES OF PRIMES VS. SUBAWARDEES

## PRIME OR LEAD ORGANIZATIONS

- Direct the development of the application or proposal;
- Identify the strategy to plan and manage the award;
- Select partners; and
- Serve as the point of contact with USAID.

## SUBAWARDEES

- Expand the capacity of the team to achieve objectives;
- Support application or proposal development; and
- Contribute to monitoring, evaluation, learning, and reporting.

# COMMUNICATE YOUR READINESS TO SUB-PARTNER



**Take steps to improve awareness of your organization and its efforts within the development community.**

- Create a company profile in the [WorkWithUSAID.org](https://www.workwithusaid.org) Partner Directory.
- Market your organization with the needs of a prime in mind.
- Check the USAID Business Forecast to know what the Agency is looking for.
- Network with contacts to find out who is applying for a particular award.

# CAPABILITY STATEMENT BASICS

## **Your capability statement:**

- Introduces your organization to potential partners;
- Offers proof of qualifications and past performance; and
- Communicates how your organization benefits a partnership.

## **Your capability statement should be brief but comprehensive:**

- Include all critical information on the first page;
- Provide your contact information;
- Create a PDF document with your organization's name in the filename; and
- Include your organization's branding and logo.


# FOUR ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL CAPABILITY STATEMENTS

- 1. Core competencies:** Provide a short introduction and keywords related to your organization's core expertise.
- 2. Past performance:** List previous work with other organizations, focusing on work that is relevant to the prime's projects and might fill any gaps in its capabilities.
- 3. Differentiators:** Explain the unique benefits you bring to the table and the results you can deliver.
- 4. Organizational data:** Include your history, contact information, website address, social media tags, and pertinent registrations.

# CAPABILITY STATEMENT EXAMPLE

## Hope Ethiopia

*Mobilizing Ethiopians to Combat HIV/AIDS*



Hope Ethiopia was among the first local organizations to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ethiopia by engaging the most valuable resource in communities—the people. Since 1996, Hope Ethiopia's programming has centered around spreading HIV awareness/prevention and prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) messaging and providing voluntary counseling and testing services (VCT), with a special focus on engaging men. Hope Ethiopia works primarily in the rural regions of Oromia and Amhara, with some activities in Addis Ababa.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS	PARTNERS AND FUNDERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Sub-granting:</b> Sub-granted \$890,000 to 41 local NGOs providing VCT and prevention services from June 2008 to March 2012.</li><li>• <b>Training:</b> Trained 560 promoters in providing HIV prevention messaging, 330 health educators in mother-to-child HIV transmission education, and 120 clinical staff in performing male circumcisions.</li><li>• <b>Capacity-building:</b> Strengthened institutional capacity of sub-grantees and their partners in areas of operations, financial management and monitoring and evaluation, and facilitated linkages between sub-grantees to create support networks.</li><li>• <b>Community mobilization:</b> Created networks of HIV+ women in local communities to promote PMTCT messaging and provide peer support.</li><li>• <b>Male involvement:</b> Provided male-focused HIV/AIDS education sessions for 790,000 men since February 2006.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• USAID—New Partners Initiative Grantee</li><li>• Ethiopian Ministry of Health—HIV/AIDS Prevention &amp; Control Office</li><li>• Catholic Relief Services</li><li>• PACT</li><li>• Stephen Lewis Foundation</li><li>• IntraHealth</li><li>• Women AID Ethiopia</li></ul>
	OUR APPROACH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus on working in rural, resource-limited areas.</li><li>• Engage local cultural institutions, including traditional male leadership, in HIV prevention activities.</li><li>• Implement innovative, easily replicable &amp; sustainable peer education program model.</li><li>• Enlist community participation through local community and faith-based organizations and community-led support networks.</li></ul>

Hope Ethiopia | Bole Road, Dasset Building near Brass MCH Hospital | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
+251-0911-517-872 | hopeethiopia@yahoo.com  
Registered NGO in Ethiopia

Core Competencies

Past Performance

Differentiators

Organizational Data





# DEVELOPING TEAMING AGREEMENTS

# BENEFITS OF TEAMING AGREEMENTS

## THE SUB-PARTNER IS:

- Introduced to the process of working with USAID;
- Engaged in the creation of solutions to development challenges; and
- Noted for its readiness to work with the Agency.

## THE PRIME IS:

- Given access to specialized knowledge and expertise;
- Able to achieve greater control over cost planning; and
- Better prepared to sustain the results achieved.

# FORMALIZING A TEAMING AGREEMENT

A properly established teaming agreement:

- Reflects the role of each sub-partner and the prime;
- Is negotiated by people with authority and is legally binding;
- Should be signed as early as possible in the application or proposal phase; and
- Is needed before a partner can review confidential material.

**Do not share your organization's creative solutions to developmental challenges before a signed teaming agreement is in place.**



# TYPES OF SUB-PARTNERS



An **exclusive sub-partner** will work only with the prime organization. As outlined in your teaming agreement, a sub-partner may share confidential information with the prime.



A **nonexclusive sub-partner** can work with whichever primes wins. To maintain confidentiality, do not share specific information about the proposal or application with nonexclusive sub-partners.



A **supporting partner** serves as a key collaborator. This type of partner often provides a letter of support for the application or proposal.

# KEY POINTS

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- Carefully consider the **benefits and risks** of partnering.
- Be proactive about **marketing your organization** to entities that align with your mission and strategy.
- **Learn what is required to be eligible to work with USAID** and take the steps necessary to become ready to receive and manage an award.
- Keep your **capability statement updated** and customize it for each potential partner.
- Develop **teaming agreements** that reflect the role of each partner and help protect your organization.
- Use a sub-partnership opportunity to **build your profile with USAID** at a pace that is right for your organization.

# RESOURCES

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- **Research potential partners:**

- [WorkWithUSAID.org](https://www.workwithusaid.org/) Partner Directory listings
- [USASpending.gov](https://www.usaspending.gov/)

- **Search opportunities:**

- [USAID Business Forecast](#)
- [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) (contracts)
- [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) (grants and cooperative agreements)

- **Training modules:**

- [“Understanding USAID Awards”](#)
- [“Exploring USAID Funding Opportunities”](#)
- [“Preparing Budgets for USAID Funding Opportunities”](#)
- [“Preparing Progress Reports”](#)
- [“Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning”](#)
- [“Registering to Work with USAID”](#)





**Thank You**



This module was produced by the United States Agency for International Development. The presentation team includes staff from both USAID and the Partnerships Incubator.

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Email questions and feedback: **[IndustryLiaison@usaid.gov](mailto:IndustryLiaison@usaid.gov)**





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partnership  
starts here.



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