

Fiscal Year 2022 New Partnerships Initiative (NPI) Report to Congress

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) submits this report pursuant to Sec. 7019(e) of Public Law 117-328, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, which incorporates by reference the requirements of the Joint Explanatory Statement.

"The agreement includes funds at not less than the prior fiscal year to support the New Partnerships Initiative and directs the USAID Administrator to report to the Committees on Appropriations not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Act on funding provided to new, under-utilized, and local partners under such initiative in the prior fiscal year."

Introduction & Background on NPI

USAID's Local, Faith, and Transformative Partnerships Hub (LFT)

The LFT Hub strengthens USAID's ability to collaborate with new, nontraditional, and diverse partners. This involves the Hub in:

- Building bridges: Conduct outreach, provide guidance and connections to work with USAID, and seek to identify and lower barriers to collaboration.
- Strengthening capacity: Provide USAID staff with the resources to engage and support capacity strengthening efforts.
- Advancing policy: Gather and analyze data on the role and impact of nontraditional, diverse partnerships and speak to their unique contributions within USAID and beyond.

The focus of this report is the New Partnerships Initiative (NPI), which serves the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) by: diversifying and enhancing the quality of Agency partnerships; supporting Agency efforts to become a more equitable partner; assisting Missions and Operating Units across the globe and in Washington to increase partnerships with new¹, underutilized², and local partners³; improving external engagement with partners; and promoting innovative practices in pursuit of sustainable, locally led development.

NPI is currently a team of seven people within the Local, Faith, and Transformative Partnerships (LFT) Hub of the Bureau for

¹ A "new partner" means an organization that has not received funding from USAID as a prime partner during the most recently completed 5-year period.

² An organization that has received less than \$25 million in direct or indirect awards from USAID over the past five years.

³ A "local partner" for NPI encompasses both the definition of 'local entity' and 'locally established partners' as defined in the USAID Automated Directives System Chapter 303. Local partners are generally new and underutilized partners.

Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI). NPI seeks to lower the barriers faced by nontraditional partners—including local actors, U.S. small businesses, faith-based organizations, cooperatives, diaspora groups, and civil society organizations—so that the Agency can embrace the diverse potential of the partnering community in pursuit of our shared development and humanitarian goals.

NPI in 2022

In FY 2022, USAID obligated approximately \$1 million of program funds to NPI. In addition to the team lead covered by operating expense funds, the program funds support staff to implement the Initiative and support the Bureaus, Missions, and other operating units that are seeking to diversify their partnerships.

Since its inception, NPI has made progress in embedding program and partnership approaches into the way USAID functions agency wide. Through the NPI annual program statements (APS) and multiple rounds of NPI Action Plans, USAID has increased opportunities for new partners to work with the Agency. NPI Action Plans were first developed for fiscal years FY 2019-2021 and collectively described planned activities aimed at new and local partners across 77 Missions. NPI Action Plans used a broad measure of how the Agency's Missions planned for partnerships with new, underutilized, and local partners even if the activities did not involve NPI awards.

In October 2021, USAID Administrator Samantha Power directed all USAID Missions and Operating Units with overseas programming to create or update their NPI Action Plans. The updated FY 2021 Guidance to Develop NPI Action Plans was designed through a collaborative process between NPI staff and the Agency's Interim Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) Coordinator. The guidance requested new information about how Missions and Operating Units were planning to incorporate DEIA principles⁴ into programming, in addition to information about the use of NPI partnering approaches and standard practices.

The 83 Mission and Operating Unit Action Plans for FY 2023-24 universally reported a commitment to further diversify the range of actors with whom they partner. Analysis of the Action Plans also identified many of the advantages of working with local partners such as operational advantages for access, trust and credibility, and relevant local knowledge. Some partnership constraints surfaced, and NPI continues to provide support directly to Missions and Operating Units to fulfill commitments outlined in Action Plans and work across the Agency to address constraints to partnership that were highlighted through Action Plans.

During FY 2022, the NPI team directly supported two Missions with in-depth technical assistance. In Nepal, a multi-week in-person temporary duty (TDY) trip assisted the Mission with the development of its localization strategy. In Guatemala, a long-term TDY supported the Mission

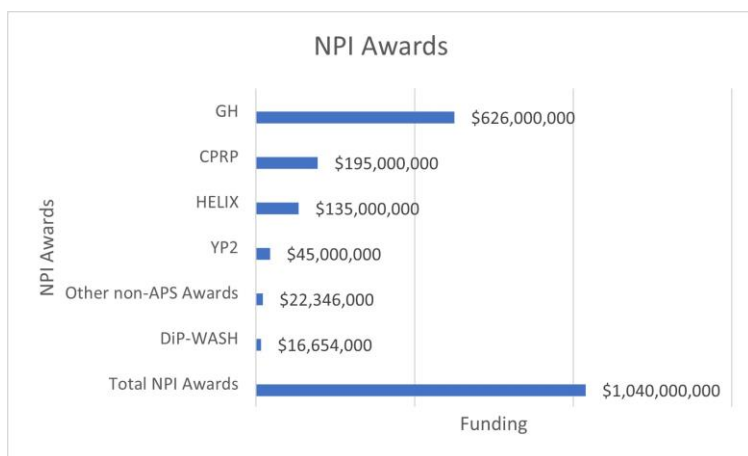
⁴ Guidance issued in October 2021, the new NPI Action Plans incorporated principles from President Biden's Executive Order (E.O.) 13985, "[On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#)." This E.O. and the revised NPI Action Plan guidance demonstrate the Administration's commitment to inclusivity and advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity in all U.S. government programs and partnerships.

with the development of their localization strategy and plan. Throughout the year, the NPI team provided support to at least 80 missions and operating units and at least three dozen external actors.

NPI Awards Across the Agency

NPI does not directly contribute funding to any awards; as such it did not provide any funding directly to partners in FY 2022. However, NPI supports Missions, Bureaus, and Operating Units with the design and development of funding mechanisms to support new, underutilized, and local partners. For instance, NPI supported the creation of five global Annual Program Statements (APS)⁵. In FY 2022, NPI supported the design and promoted several new NPI-branded solicitations⁶. These APS made at least 54 individual awards, representing \$1.04 billion in total estimated funding over the awards’ lifetime for more than 70 partners worldwide since 2019. The majority of the NPI-branded awards derive from one of the five NPI Annual Program Statements⁷ (APS):

Chart 1



- Higher Education (HELIX): 9 awards totaling approximately \$135,000,000
- Global Health: 17 awards totaling approximately \$626,000,000
- Conflict Prevention and Recovery Program (CPRP): 20 awards totaling approximately \$195,000,000
- YouthPower 2 (YP2): 2 awards totaling approximately \$45,000,000

- Diversifying Partnerships in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (DiP-WASH) Program: 1 award \$16,654,000

⁵ An Annual Program Statement (APS) outlines the development objectives that USAID seeks to achieve and is a method to express those objectives that may lead to future funding. The APS can be issued regardless of development sector and can accept concept notes and applications from any type of organization, private or governmental, whether US-based, international, or locally-based.

⁶ In order to be NPI-branded, an award must make use of NPI’s partnering approaches: direct awards to new, underutilized, and local partners; mentoring awards to traditional partners that subaward fifty percent or more of the total award value to local or locally established partners; and leverage awards to organizations that co-fund with cash.

⁷ The Annual Program Statements were issued between 2019-2021 and several of them are being renewed. These figures represent the active and closed awards issued under the APS, not exclusively with FY 2022 funding.

Chart 1 details the total funding under NPI awards, with the top number including all NPI awards, including those that were not made through our five main APS's.

Table 1 below shows the total figures relating to the number of NPI-branded awards in each category and the amount of funding in FY 2022 that was sent directly to an organization in those awards. The table details the total number of active NPI awards in FY 2022 and the category of recipients: new and underutilized; local partners, which functionally are new and underutilized partners; and traditional partners.

Table 1

Award Recipient ("Partner") Type		NPI Awards in FY22	Amount Directly Obligated via NPI Awards in FY22, by Recipient Type
New & Underutilized Partners (including Local and non-Local)		23 awards	\$63,328,049
	New & Underutilized Partners (excluding Local)	11 awards	\$22,264,276
	Local Partners	12 awards	\$41,063,773
Traditional/ Existing Partners		16 awards	\$77,137,306

As shown, total direct awards to new and underutilized partners are \$10 million less than the amount obligated to USAID's traditional partners (approximately \$77 million to traditional versus \$63 million to new and underutilized). However, well over half of the amount of funding going to traditional partners—or approximately \$50 million—is then sub-awarded to new and underutilized partners, nearly all of whom are local (see Table 2). Approximately 84 percent of subawards under NPI awards are to local partners (including locally established partners).

Table 2

Award Recipient ("Partner") Type		Subawards under NPI Awards in FY22	Amount Obligated via Subawards under NPI Awards, by Recipient Type
New & Underutilized Partners (including Local and non-Local)		103 subawards	\$50,511,940
	New & Underutilized Partners (excluding Local)	1 subaward	\$606,143
	Local Partners	102 subawards	\$49,905,798
Traditional/ Existing Partners		10 subawards	\$11,747,238

The significant share of funding under NPI going to traditional partners reflects their role as intermediaries capable of managing large awards in compliance with USAID requirements. For example, the average NPI award size to local partners is approximately \$4.8 million compared to \$11.4 million for traditional partners. Furthermore, it is important to note that sub-awarding can be an important way for traditional partners to shift resources and strengthen local partners. In several awards, local partners are prime award recipients, sub-awarding to other new, underutilized, and local partners.

NPI and Localization

During the past year, NPI also worked to ensure that Agency information, resources, and funding opportunities are more transparent and accessible to all potential partners, including through its active role contributing to the Agency’s localization vision. In addition to supporting external partners to access more information, NPI offers its accumulated partnering expertise to internal USAID localization initiatives and workstreams. NPI is often mentioned in the context of localization, though NPI’s mandate also extends to broader Agency goals such as small business utilization, faith-based organizations, and partners that are simply new to the Agency. New and local partners experience most of the same challenges of learning to work with USAID, the additional challenge faced by many local partners being that English is not their first language. In response, NPI works within the Agency’s localization workstreams, including a burden reduction initiative and a translation working group, to address these challenges.

An important component of the localization agenda that NPI contributed to is the Local Capacity Strengthening (LCS) Policy, which articulates the principles for how best to invest in the capacity of USAID's local partners, a necessary step in making locally led development a reality. The Policy was launched at the end of FY 2022 and NPI was deeply involved in drafting the policy, facilitating internal and external feedback. NPI leads the Agency's LCS Policy Implementation Team with the LFT Hub's Locally Led Development Initiative and the Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL) Bureau's Policy Office.

In addition to direct awards to local partners, NPI's mentor award standard practice—where the prime recipient (whether an international or local partner) must provide at least 50 percent of the award value to local entities or locally established partners, in the form of subawards (including grants and cooperative agreements)—is another key contributor to localization. By creating Accountability and Feedback plans, primes are required to articulate how they will directly engage and be responsive to local communities, an essential localization-related value.

NPI Incubator Support to New, Underutilized and Local Partners in FY 2022

The NPI Partnerships Incubator is a three-year contract managed by the NPI team in Washington with buy-ins from USAID Missions, Bureaus, and Operating Units to provide services designed to expand new and nontraditional partnerships across the Agency. In FY 2022, the Incubator worked to support taking a fresh, objective look at the possibilities, constraints, and risks involved in engaging new partners and identifying practical solutions. The Incubator has been essential in NPI's work expanding and improving the Agency's work with new, underutilized, and local partners. The contract is set to conclude in FY 2023.

The Incubator provided seven Missions with partner landscape assessments to identify new and underutilized partners operating in particular thematic or geographic areas; additionally, 10 Bureaus and Independent Offices received technical support to expand inclusion of new partners. The third year of the contract marked a substantial increase in the number of partners, Missions, and Bureaus with whom the Incubator worked. The Incubator provided capacity-strengthening services to four partner organizations during years one and two. In year three, the Incubator supported, and continues to serve, more than 40 additional partners at the direction of 10 different M/B/OU's (see annex for a visual depiction of where the Incubator worked in FY22).

In addition to working directly with Missions, Bureaus, and Operating Units and partners, the Incubator manages the *WorkWithUSAID.org* platform. Potential partners report that access to clear and relevant information is one of the most significant challenges that they encounter when attempting to engage with USAID, which is why the Agency launched *WorkWithUSAID.org* in November 2021. The Agency is committed to continue to improve how our partners access the Agency. NPI recognizes that information asymmetry is one of the big challenges that new, underutilized, and local partners face in trying to work with the Agency; the traditional partners are familiar with how USAID operates and communicates. The *WorkWithUSAID.org* site helps break down that information asymmetry, which helps level the playing field for all potential partners while bringing forward promising new ideas and solutions. At the time of this report, over 3,700 entities had registered in the *WorkWithUSAID.org* Partner Directory.

WorkWithUSAID.org also has a growing repository of partner resources, including hundreds of answers to common questions, blog posts, training, guides and other resources. This creates a collaborative space for knowledge sharing and resources for partnership success. Knowledge sharing on the site largely takes place in the News & Insights blog, which received more than 97,000 views on 93 blog articles in FY 2022. Blog articles covered topics such as partnering tips, best practices, funding opportunities, events, success stories, and expert insights.

In collaboration with NPI's colleagues in USAID's Management Bureau Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA), the Incubator regularly engaged with Missions, Bureaus, and Operating Units (M/B/OU) throughout the Agency on partnership stories, and the site is becoming a sought-after channel to share news about localization and the partnership process. Features like the LFT Hub's "Localization & Inclusive Development" series demonstrate Agency interest and enthusiasm across a variety of offices to feature their partner outreach efforts on *WorkwithUSAID.org*.

NPI Going Forward

In FY 2023, NPI will continue to support Missions with the implementation of their 2023-2024 NPI Action Plans, developing new and revised central award mechanisms (the various NPI APS's), and working within the Agency to press for innovations in internal practices that will make it easier for new, underutilized, and local partners to work equitably and collaboratively with the Agency. Two important components of this assistance include launching a linguistic services mechanism to support the Agency to function in languages other than English and a Capacity and Compliance for Diversified Partnerships mechanism to support new partners and Mission's efforts to bring on additional partners.

NPI will continue its leadership role on the Implementation Team for the Local Capacity Strengthening Policy, with colleagues from the DDI/LFT Hub and the PPL Bureau, and will contribute to the various work streams that make up the localization efforts, including the localization playbook⁸, the Agency's Acquisition and Assistance Strategy, various burden reduction initiatives, internal communities of practice, among others.

Although the Incubator contract will draw to a close this year, with more than 20 active buy-ins from various Missions and Bureaus, NPI will continue to lead this contract and ensure continued exemplary service through the September end date. The Incubator will set up additional components of the *WorkWithUSAID.org* website, including a page where existing primes can post opportunities to subaward with them on USAID-funded projects and additional translation of resources into multiple languages. NPI will work closely with colleagues in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance Industry Liaison team and the Chief Information Office (CIO) as the website transitions from a .org domain owned by the Incubator to a .gov site owned by USAID to ensure the site remains an inspiring customer experience that demonstrates how much the expertise and perspectives of all organizations in the USAID ecosystem are valued.

⁸ See Congressional Testimony from PPL Bureau: <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/congressional-testimony/mar-8-2022-record-michele-sumilas-a2a-ppl-locally-led-development>

Annex 1:

Examples of NPI Awards using the three standard approaches

1) Direct awards to new, underutilized, or local partners –

- a) The first of NPI's award approaches involves direct awards to new, underutilized, and local partners. One of the original NPI awards was to just that sort of organization—a local partner in Iraq, the Catholic University of Erbil. Over the life of this award, Catholic University of Erbil's local knowledge and connections enabled it to successfully improve youth job training and skill development for populations from religious backgrounds and ethnicities, particularly internally displaced persons (IDPs) affected by ISIS and other violent extremist groups.

2) “Mentoring” awards with traditional partners

- a) USAID's Expanding Health Partnerships (EXPAND) award is an example of an NPI mentoring award to Palladium International, a partner that is not new or local, but that has committed via its award to sub-grant more than 50% of the total award value to local partners. EXPAND integrates capacity strengthening to empower local organizations to improve their performance to better contribute to health, education, and economic outcomes in the communities where they work. USAID aims to obligate 60 percent of the total EXPAND funding to subawards for local and regional partners in more than nine countries across Africa and Latin America.

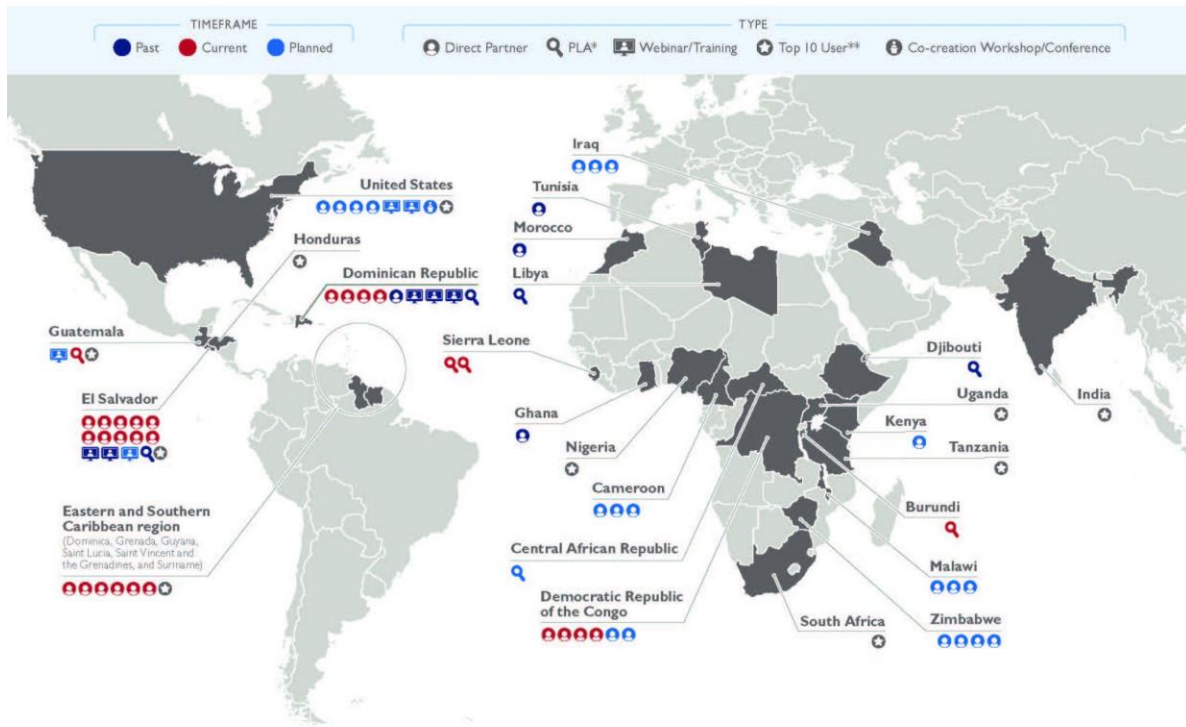
3) Leverage awards

- a) Leverage awards are a mechanism supported by NPI to diversify partnerships with any kind of partner that can mobilize alternative, non-US government funds to support a jointly reached development priority. In the case of the NPI's collaboration with Kenya and East Africa, the Mission issued an award to WildlifeDirect, a Kenya-based local partner, in collaboration with funding from the Walt Disney Company that exceeded a 1:1 match. This funding supported the development of Team Sayari, a 20-episode series that features themes highlighting conservation innovations and experts across the continent related to wildlife, forests, oceans. Team Sayari is *National Geographic's* first pan-African children's production and is filmed with an all-African cast with video production from an African film company in consultation with Disney Incubator footprint.

Annex 2

FY22 Technical assistance provided to USAID Missions by the Partnerships Incubator, a contract managed by the New Partnerships Initiative with the Kaizen Company, a Tetra Tech Company. See full report [here](#).

INCUBATOR INFLUENCE AROUND THE WORLD



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*Partner Landscape Assessment
 **Top 10 locations of users accessing WorkwithUSAID.org