

## PARTNERING WITH USAID

USAID recognizes that non-governmental organizations (NGOs), both U.S.-based and local, are often at the forefront of meeting human need on a local level. USAID funds NGOs both directly and indirectly to fulfill specific country goals in every region and sector. Below are guidelines to determine whether your organization is ready for federal funding and at which level.

- **If you are a U.S.-based group, you must register with USAID as a private voluntary organization (PVO)** to be eligible for federal funding. To begin, go to [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov) and type keyword “PVO.” There are very limited exceptions to this requirement.
- **Focus your efforts.** Choose one need your organization is already meeting and one region where you are already working. Visit the USAID website to find out whether USAID has a presence there. If so, read the USAID strategic goals for that country. Ask “Does our project effectively further these country goals?”
- **Research other NGOs working in the same issue area and region for potential collaboration.** USAID looks to fund projects that show collaboration between small NGOs and also projects which involve sub-partners, or implementing partners. Often the fastest track to USAID funding for an NGO is *through* an existing partner (who would serve as an intermediary) as a sub-grantee. This can happen one of two ways: 1.) By asking a prime partner to sub-grant funding to you from an existing grant or cooperative agreement or 2.) By asking a prime partner to write you into a new proposal to USAID as a sub-grantee.
- **If you haven’t done so, contact the Mission.** Roughly 80 percent of all USAID funding is disseminated through Missions. The Mission contact (on the USAID country website) will help you understand the feasibility of your proposal. You may also want to talk to officials at USAID headquarters in Washington who focus on specific issues (i.e., if you are working in the area of malaria prevention, you may want to talk to someone in the USAID Global Health Bureau who focuses specifically on malaria).

### To Keep in Mind:

- Always ask how you can help the Mission fulfill its strategy, not what the Mission can do for your organization.
- Measure your outcomes long before your funding proposal; USAID funds successful projects with measurable outcomes.
- To be funded, you must have an existing, viable project; USAID does NOT fund ideas or start-ups.
- Realize that there are many other NGOs doing excellent work who are also competing for limited USAID dollars.
- If your organization is faith-based, you must know that the US Government does not fund proselytizing, evangelistic or inherently religious activities of any type. The USG funds “compassion” or direct service delivery, not “conversion.”
- Be sure to look for other potential donor funding; many countries have donor agencies much like USAID. Multilateral donors like the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria provide funding as well.
- Talk with current USAID partners about their work with USAID. This will help ensure you have realistic expectations of U.S. Government regulations when it comes to financial accounting, reporting requirements, etc.

### Other Resources:

- **Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives:** provides up-to-date information for NGOs; weekly newsletter with funding opportunities; [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov), keyword “Faith”
- **Grantstation:** Comprehensive grant database; [Grantstation.com](http://Grantstation.com)
- **Capacity.org:** Capacity-building website
- **Boardsource:** Board strengthening for NGOs; [Boardsource.org](http://Boardsource.org)
- **NGOConnect:** Institutional strengthening and organizational development; [NGOConnect.net](http://NGOConnect.net)
- **Grants.gov:** Comprehensive listing of grant announcements for all federal government agencies.