

Local Evaluation and Evidence Support Mechanism

Bureau for Planning, Learning, and Resource Management

In September 2023, USAID awarded the Local Evaluation and Evidence Support (LEES) activity, a \$5.1 million, 4-year contract mechanism, to the LINC Consortium. LINC, an organization specialized in working alongside local actors, is working with The Cloudburst Group and The University of Pennsylvania Development Research Initiative (DevLab) to provide technical and advisory services to strengthen the organizational and evaluation capacity of local research organizations, starting in selected countries in Africa. This represents one of USAID's commitments to support and complement joint efforts outlined in the USAID, Center for Global Development, and Hewlett Memorandum of Understanding on Elevating and Leveraging Local Evidence and Evaluations for Decision-Making in Africa. USAID endeavors to foster evaluation practices that are geared towards strengthening local and indigenous capabilities in conducting and leveraging evaluations, thereby reinforcing local ownership in the evaluations.

Presently, in-country partners are largely involved in evaluating USAID programs as secondary contractors who provide qualitative information, work as enumerators, or provide data collection services only. Fewer are involved in higher-level tasks such as research design and final report writing. To improve the evidence and data ecosystem and capitalize on the expertise offered by local organizations in Africa, in its initial phase LEES will:

- Identify and catalog promising national partners
- Conduct screenings and assessments of each organizations institutional capacity through interviews
- Register qualifying organizations in the US Government's SAM procurement system
- Train local organizations on USAID's evaluation and procurement policies, systems, and processes and the legal requirements for reporting and disclosure.

In the program's second phase, LINC and its partners will develop consortia and networks of local evaluators to serve as communities of practice. Through these communities, organizations will be empowered to:

- Market to one another and engage with potential partners
- These partnerships can bolster the technical or geographic reach of organizations which could then cover greater scopes of work
- Have increased competitiveness in the selection process by executing teaming agreements and jointly submitting proposals

Currently, the LINC Consortium is identifying 4-6 countries in Africa where they will identify local research and evaluation organizations to work with. Please reach out to the Contracting Officer's Representative Shilpa Modi Clift at smodi@usaid.gov with any questions.