Luis Felipe:

Well, thank you very much Cheyenne and welcome everyone from around the world. My name is Luis Philippe Duchicela, and I'm the senior advisor for indigenous peoples issues at USAID, the US Agency for International Development. I'm based in Washington, DC, and I'm thrilled to have this opportunity to moderate and facilitate this webinar series. So I would like to give you a little bit of background on this webinars series. So the name of this webinar series is Exploring Partnerships and Opportunities between USAID and Indigenous Peoples. Next, please.

Luis Felipe:

So I would like to first start by saying that in March of 2020, the USAID for the first time in its history, approved a Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, so we call it for short PRO-IP. It's a great policy. When I came here to USAID in June 2019, it was already drafted and I think the work that was done by my predecessor Brian Keen and other colleagues at USAID was great in building this policy. It has four key objectives that you can see here. The first objective is to strengthen the engagement between USAID and implementing partners with the indigenous peoples, mainly to safeguard indigenous peoples and also to align their priorities.

Luis Felipe:

The second objective is to integrate the priorities of the indigenous peoples into the mainstream portfolios of USAID missions around the world. And the second part of this objective is to have a more holistic approach for programming, when it refers to indigenous peoples, a more holistic integrated approach for programming. The third objective is to empower and build the capacity of indigenous peoples organizations. I consider this to be perhaps one of the most important objectives because it's through the capacity building that indigenous peoples organizations will be empowered to make decisions and manage their own programs and projects.

Luis Felipe:

The fourth objective is to foster an enabling environment to exercise their rights, this mainly points in the direction of facilitating dialogues, workshops between the indigenous peoples and the national governments, mainly their civil society, the NGOs, so that appropriate public policies, regulatory frameworks, and institutional support is strengthened or created in your country, so that indigenous peoples are able to better exercise their rights and achieve sustainable development.

Luis Felipe:

So these four objectives are interconnected, you have to see them as a whole. And of course there's a lot more details in the policy, I invite you to look at our website, and please read it, review it, and learn about it, but I wanted to show you this because this is an overall framework, this is the overall umbrella under which this webinar series has been designed. Next please.

Luis Felipe:

So this webinar series has three parts and today we will cover the first part which is, how does USAID operate? But let me first tell you the rationale behind the series. So this series is mainly oriented for indigenous peoples' organizations, indigenous peoples' leaders, professionals, representatives from around the world, and the idea is to give you a basic training in how USAID works, how USAID operates, what kind of funding opportunities it has, what kind of technical resources it can offer, and then how

you as indigenous peoples' leaders, representatives and organizations can actually access those resources.

Luis Felipe:

So we've divided this series in three parts. This fist first part today is a basic USAID 101, how it operates. And so you learn the basics of what is USAID, and how the USAID funds the assistance it gives to the different countries. The second webinar which will be on April 20th, it's USAID projects focusing on indigenous people. So we'll showcase a number of projects from around the world funded by USAID, that are already focusing on indigenous peoples. We would like to highlight for you, what USAID is already doing in partnership with indigenous peoples in Africa, in Asia and Latin America.

Luis Felipe:

Of course, we will not be able to present all the examples, this would just be a few examples to illustrate what we're doing. But with your participation, with your collaboration, with your partnership, I'm sure that we can do a lot more of these in the future, once the indigenous peoples organizations are better prepared to understand how USAID works, and how we can partner together. The third webinar is called Partnership Opportunities for Indigenous Peoples and USAID Implementing Partners, and that is planned for May 18th. So once you know more or less how USAID operates, and the policies and regulations, procedures, websites, et cetera, which will be done today, then in the next webinar, you'll get a flavor for how USAID is already engaging with indigenous peoples.

Luis Felipe:

The third webinar addresses the question is, so how do I take some steps in the direction of engaging with USAID and accessing technical and financial resources? And we believe that one of the key ways of doing that is through partnerships, through smart partnerships between indigenous peoples organizations, NGOs, current USAID implementing contractors and organizations and partners. So the third webinar is really an opportunity for networking, for learning how to create these partnerships and my hope is that you can actually benefit from those contacts even beyond this webinar series.

Luis Felipe:

One important thing to keep in mind is that we would love to have your feedback on these webinars, because the idea is not to just leave it at this, but rather to have this become like a starting point, like a first step in a longer term effort to engage with you. So we need your feedback, we need your comments, we need your suggestions, we need your questions on how to continue this effort of reaching out to you in the future. So do not consider that this is a done deal, and that we're done with these webinars, but rather this is just a very first rather small step in that direction. Next please.

Luis Felipe:

So I would like to briefly introduce to you some of the people that have made this possible. So I'm going to start first by introducing ourselves, the USAID Indigenous Peoples Advisors. Some of you may know me, Luis Felipe Duchicela. I used to work at the world bank as global advisor for indigenous peoples, for almost six years. And I'm originally from Ecuador, and my community is in the highlands of Ecuador in the central Andean region of beautiful Ecuador, and my heritage of indigenous communities is very strong. And I used to be, I was many years ago, the first minister for indigenous peoples and Afro-Ecuadorians affairs in Ecuador.

Luis Felipe:

I started in USAID in June 2019, I'm very happy here. We have a great team of people, colleagues, and USAID as you're going to see is an agency that definitely is committed to working and partnering with indigenous people, so we'd love for you to take advantage of that. I would like to have my colleague Vy Lam to introduce himself please, and then we'll continue. Vy, please go ahead.

Vy Lam:

Thank you Luis Felipe. Hello everyone. It is a pleasure to meet you. Unfortunately, we can't meet in person, that would have been much better. As Luis Felipe said, my name is Vy Lam. I am USAID advisor on indigenous peoples. I work with Luis Felipe in the Inclusive Development Hub for USAID, which is a part of the Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation.

Vy Lam:

I've been with USAID more than eight years. I've always worked with USAID to promote the rights of marginalized communities and integrate their needs and challenges and opportunities into USAID policy strategies programs. And I have also worked to support USAID missions globally to integrate marginalized communities into their work.

Vy Lam:

In the last three years, I have supported the internal indigenous peoples working group at USAID to develop and launch the Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. And I have been working with Luis Felipe to support the rollout and the implementation of the policy to USAID missions. And I, as Luis Felipe said, "We would love it if you could review the policy and the associated tool kits that we've developed to support the missions."

Vy Lam:

You can access all of that information on www.usaid.gov/indigenous-peoples, and that will give you access to all the documents. It's a pleasure to meet you again, thank you. Back to you Luis Felipe.

Luis Felipe:

Thank you. Thank you Vy. Next slide please. So I would like to mention that this webinar and the other ones in April and May, will be greatly supported by our colleagues from the USAID office of acquisition and assistance, OAA. And we owe to them the fact that the webinar today is basically conducted by this team, so I would like Matthew Johnson to briefly introduce himself, and later you will meet the Britney because she will be the main presenter for the presentation today. Matt, over to you.

Mathew Johnson:

Thank you Luis Felipe, and thank you everyone for joining us this morning. My name is Matt Johnson. I'm the communications director for USAID office of acquisition and assistance. It's the office that manages all of USAID grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements. I also serve as the agencies industry liaison, part of that role is to try and create an open door for organizations that are interested in working with USAID. So it's a pleasure to be here with you today, and thank you to Luis Felipe and everyone for organizing this. We are excited to present and share with you some tips and information about how to work with USAID, and are happy to continue to stay engaged with you after this event today. So thank you.

Luis Felipe:

Okay. Thank you very much Matt. And as I said before, Britney Irby will introduce herself once she begins the presentation. Next please. So it's also my pleasure to introduce colleagues from the Indigenous Peoples Alliance for Rights and Development, IPARD. The IPARD is a new program co-funded by USAID, is part of what we call the Global Development Alliance, the GDA, at USAID which allows USAID to partner with the private sector for common goals.

Luis Felipe:

And the IPARD is a program that just started basically in December of 2020 and it's based out of Panama City, Panama. The implementing partner is the Forest Stewardship Council Indigenous Foundation and this partnership is between USAID and the Forest Stewardship Council based in Bonn in Germany, with which we're really happy to be able to partner for this purpose.

Luis Felipe:

I make a special mention of IPARD because in the future, the IPARD team will be able to follow up on this webinars series with other workshops, regional workshops, country workshops, global workshops in several topics. So it's a pleasure for me to introduce to you Alejandro Paredes, who is a program director for IPARD. You will meet him personally or virtually rather later because he'll be facilitating one of the Q&A sessions. And Rita Spadafora, who is a program lead for capacity development and inclusion of IPARD, and she will be also helping us in facilitating one part of the questions and answers session later on. And also Mary Donovan, who is a program and communication officer of IPARD, who has been helping us to put all of this together.

Luis Felipe:

A special thanks of course to Sujin Ku and Cheyenne Evans, and the rest of the team of GROW, who have been so diligent in helping us put this together, and also our efficient simultaneous interpreters who are behind the scenes helping us with this. With this introduction, I invite Britney to please take over and lead us with the presentation. Thank you.

Britney Irby:

Wonderful. Thank you so much Luis Felipe. Can everybody hear me okay? Can I just get a quick confirmation that I'm coming in loud and clear?

Luis Felipe:

Yes. Loud and clear.

Britney Irby:

All right. Wonderful. Perfect. There's nothing worse than starting a presentation and nobody can hear you well. Thank you so much again for having us be a part of this event. We're so happy to be here. Thanks to all the efforts of the organizers thus far. As Luis Felipe mentioned earlier, my name is Britney Irby. I'm a communication specialist with USAID's office of acquisition and assistance, as well as a number of the industry liaison team.

Britney Irby:

And as you guys heard from Matt Johnson, he is USAID's industry liaison, and he will be helping to facilitate and answer questions and answers throughout the presentation. So during today's webinar, we will share information that you need to know to become a partner with USAID. We will be covering a range of topics today, including an overview of USAID, as well as our partnering processes.

Britney Irby:

By the end of this webinar, we want you to have a better understanding of how USAID operates, how your organization can become a partner of the agency, and how you can continue to stay connected with USAID. And then we will be pausing, we'll be taking two 10 minute breaks throughout the presentation to answer questions that you may have. So as was mentioned before, please do feel free to leave questions in the chat box as they arise.

Britney Irby:

In order to become a partner with USAID, it is important to understand USAID's mission, our culture and how we operate. So I would like to start off our discussion, giving you an overview of the agency. USAID like any organization, has its unique history, culture and ways of doing business. This is important information to understand, as you think about becoming a partner of USAID. And this year, USAID will be celebrating a milestone, its 60th birthday.

Britney Irby:

For the past six decades, the agency has improved the lives and well-being of people around the world, while simultaneously working to expand democracy and promote free markets all through partnerships with local organizations such as yours. USAID works with partner organizations across the globe, including indigenous communities to implement our programs.

Britney Irby:

For example, in coordination with the National Organization of Indigenous Peoples of the Colombian Amazon Region, rapid humanitarian assistance was provided to indigenous communities affected by COVID-19 in several departments of the Colombian Amazon. Through our partnerships, we assisted nearly 2,400 families in need of food, water, and non-medical supplies in response to COVID-19.

Britney Irby:

Another example is in the agency's global health programs. Through the Amazon Indigenous Rights and Resources Project, USAID is seeking to improve participation of indigenous peoples in the sustainable economic development of the Amazon, ultimately leading to conservation of biodiversity and reduced emissions from forest loft. Furthermore, our programs also incorporate the empowerment of under-represented groups, including indigenous women.

Britney Irby:

The Advancing Rights in Southern Africa program, devotes special attention to indigenous women who face multiple layers of discrimination, by supporting access to counseling, which strengthens their capacity and providing spaces for peer learning. Our global team works in more than a hundred countries around the world, in this map, you will notice that USAID has presence and non presence countries. Presence countries are where USAID has a formal office, or what we call a mission, from which we operate a large number of programs.

Britney Irby:

Non presence country is where USAID may have a limited number of staff physically located in the country, who work on country specific issues with staff based outside of the country to implement programs. USAID has a diverse workforce working around the world, nearly two-thirds of the agency's global workforce of 9,000 people are locally hired staff. The rest of the agency staff is divided between foreign service officers who are US citizens and are posted to a country for two to four years, and headquarter staff who are based in Washington, DC.

Britney Irby:

At the heart of our work is the core belief that each country must lead its own development journey. There are key documents that are important for you to read and understand in order to partner with USAID, the first is the agency's Program Cycle, it highlights an approach to designing, implementing, adapting, and learning from our work. In addition, the agency has a number of policies, strategies, frameworks, and visions, that guide how we work and are incorporated into all of our programs globally.

Britney Irby:

For example, we have a global water strategy that outlines how we will implement water programs around the world, we also have gender policies that outline how we try to incorporate gender into every program and activity we do. One of the most important documents for you to understand, is the Country Development Cooperation Strategy, or CDCS. USAID has a CDCS for each country and region that we work in. These documents outline the goals, objectives, and programs that USAID will focus on, for a three to five-year period.

Britney Irby:

Out of the CDCS, USAID will design activities that we will solicit and seek partners for. It is important to note that even though you may have a great program and are achieving results, if it does not fit within the agency's goals and objectives for that specific country, then your program may not be a good fit for USAID. Finally, another important document is the Automated Directive System, or better known as the ADS, which is the agency's operational policies and procedures. And I believe at this time we are going to pause for our first minute, or I'm sorry, our first 10 minutes session of Q&A. Yes.

Luis Felipe:

Yes. This is Luis Felipe again, and I would like to then just stress the fact, if you look at this slide, you have these very important instruments that USAID uses, the program cycle, the Country Development Cooperation Strategy, Policy Strategies Frameworks and Visions, and the Automated Directive System. So it's very important to realize that the USAID is a government agency, so it's not a non-governmental entity, it's not a non-profit non-governmental organization, also called an NGO, it's a US government agency that usually works with countries under a bilateral agreement or, and framework, so it's important to know.

Luis Felipe:

The USAID regulations, as Britney was saying, are compiled mainly through the ADS that you can see here, the Automated Directive System which contains the organization functions of USAID, along with policies and procedures that guide the agency's programs and operations. It consists of over 200 chapters, organized in six functional areas, legal affairs, programming acquisition and assistance, human

resources, management services, budget and finance, et cetera. Of particular interest to our partners may be ADS series 200 and 300. ADS 200 explains the program cycle, gender equality, principles of non-discrimination, and the environmental procedures.

Luis Felipe:

And ADS 300 lays out of the processes for procurement, partner vetting, and branding and marketing. USAID's, ADS's, is available online, so you can reach them through the website. So you have to be mindful that programmatic areas that are the priority of USAID, may be mandated by the Congress and the taxpayers. So one important thing, one report and recommendation, is to get to know the Country Development Cooperation Strategy, so each country, or mission of a country has a CDCS. It is called the acronym, Country Development Cooperation Strategy, which contains the programmatic plans prepared by USAID missions for the country. This can also be helpful in understanding priorities and programmatic areas.

Luis Felipe:

One important thing to keep in mind is that the new USAID policy in promoting the rights of indigenous peoples as well as other initiatives that you're going to learn about in the next chapters or segments of this presentation, are very important to keep in mind as you engage with USAID, because they show the new priorities and approaches that USAID is considering as it moves forward. So the process to receive funding from USAID might be a bit more difficult than with other organizations, but please do not be discouraged by this.

Luis Felipe:

Working with USAID does require some patience and attention to details, but it is possible to work with USAID. So I'm going to see what questions we may have here. Okay. So here's a question that I see is, "Who determines and how is the CDCS determined?" Well, maybe I should refer this to either Britney or Matt, so please either Matt or Britney, can you answer this? Who determines and how is the CDCS determined?

Britney Irby:

Sure. I can begin, and then I can turn it over to Matt, as he has had more hands-on experience with the CDCS. They are posted publicly online, and I can definitely get that link in there at some point. I believe we are going through a refresh of the agency, but they are continually being updated as we discussed before, every few years, and it's basically the specific missions priorities. Matt, do you want to chime in a bit more about specifics?

Mathew Johnson:

Sure. So CDCSs are a document that brings together all different priorities, both from a US government's perspective, priority is coming from our Congress, from our president, as well as local government, and country priorities. And so for example, if USAID is working in Mozambique, it'll include priorities of the Mozambique government, it'll include priorities of the US government. But it's also a part of the CDCS process, is engaging with local communities, local leaders, local organizations, to determine where USAID wants to be in the next, where we want to invest our resources and funding in the next two to five years.

Mathew Johnson:

And so the CDCS, is a collaborative process that brings together people from all over the world, both technical experts in the US, as well as a local country experts in together to put together the document and resources.

Luis Felipe:

Thank you. Thank you very much, Matt and Britney. So there is a question here that I see in regard to the demographics noted in the policy in the outline. It says, "Will there be a revision to represent the research from the UN and particularly ILO, which put a lower bound estimate of 476 million indigenous peoples worldwide, also recognized by the world bank and FAO, with up to 500 million, versus the 307 million currently noted?"

Luis Felipe:

Yes. Broadly speaking, USAID will definitely be totally knowledgeable and up to date on what comes out of United Nations organizational entities, research and data. Yes. And we are at the moment, we are also undertaking an internal survey at USAID of how USAID has been engaging with indigenous peoples in the last few years and currently, so that we can better understand some of these aspects. Let's see another question here.

Luis Felipe:

There's a question here about project models where indigenous peoples NGOs and state agencies partner in climate change mitigation, and by diversity in Asia mainland and Asia islands. I would say that for that, please do attend our webinar on April 20th, which is when we'll showcase various models or various ongoing projects of USAID with indigenous peoples and we will certainly try to include projects in Asia. And hopefully, projects in Asia that address issues of climate change and biodiversity conservation, so we will definitely try to do that. The actual agenda for the April 20 webinars is still in construction, so we don't know exactly which projects we will have. But I can assure you that we will have a good selection of projects that you can take a look at, and get to know better.

Luis Felipe:

Okay. I think this is about all I have for this particular section. We can catch some of these questions towards the end, or in the other segments of Q&A. So I'm going to ask Britney to please continue your presentation. Thank you.

Britney Irby:

Certainly. Thanks so much. Okay. Now that you all have an understanding of the framework of USAID, I'd like to begin talking about partnering with USAID. Last fiscal year, USAID dedicated more than $21 billion in programs worldwide. This slide shows a breakdown of how USAID's funding was allocated by sectors. As you can see, health-related programming accounts for the largest portion, 38% of our overall funding. Humanitarian assistance, including the COVID-19 response example referenced earlier, accounts for 25% of our overall funding. Followed by economic development at 13%.

Britney Irby:

USAID is funded by the American people through taxes that all us citizens pay. USAID does not receive any private donations or funding. The president and Congress work together to establish a budget for all

federal agencies, including USAID. USAID staff works with both Congress and the president to identify the agencies budgeting priorities.

Britney Irby:

To articulate the priorities for each country, USAID missions and offices develop the Country Development Cooperation Strategy discussed earlier, in collaboration with local partners. Out of the CDCS, USAID will identify specific programs that we will implement in the respective country. Partners will then come compete to receive funding to implement these programs.

Britney Irby:

If you are wondering if your organization is eligible to work with USAID, the answer is yes. To achieve its mission, USAID works with all types of organizations, including indigenous groups like yourselves. USAID is passionate about tapping into the expertise, resources, and innovations of a diverse array of organizations across the public, private and non-profit sectors, to find and implement groundbreaking solutions to development challenges. World-wide today, we have almost 3000 partners, and we are continually looking for new partners to join our work.

Britney Irby:

USAID is continually striving to make it easier for partners to compete for our funding and simplify our business processes. In 2018, USAID released an acquisition and assistance strategy, or also referred to as the ANA strategy in short, that outlines guiding principles for how we want to do business. I'll discuss the ANA strategy in more detail in a later slide.

Britney Irby:

However, there are two important principles I want to highlight for our discussion today as part of the ANA strategy. Diversify the partner base, and change how we partner. Regarding the first principle, diversify the partner base, USAID is looking to expand who we partner with, and bring in new partners to our work. We understand that there is a large number of organizations doing business, doing outstanding development work like yourselves, that the agency has not been able to partner with previously. To support the goal of bringing in new partners, our second guiding principle is focused on changing how we partner, by simplifying ways to partner and creating open doors for new partners.

Britney Irby:

One of the primary takeaways of the ANA strategy, is the new partnerships initiative or NPI. NPI addresses how USAID can best bring new organizations into the work that we are doing as an agency, including working with more indigenous organizations. We recognize that working with USAID in the past has not always been easy. We have a lot of rules and requirements, plus we speak our own language that the vast majority of partner organizations don't understand, but we are working to make the agency more accessible. We want you to know that we want to work with you.

Britney Irby:

The New Partnerships Initiative is helping us do this in three main ways. The first is through something called Direct Awards, which are funding opportunities, specifically targeting new and under utilized organizations who may not always be in a position to compete with larger, more established organizations. The second is through a mentorship approach, when an organization that has already

worked with USAID is able to coach or otherwise help a smaller or less experienced organization through the process. The third is through leveraging awards, which is when USAID joins a project that is already established by a private organization, USAID can join in and contribute money to help move the project forward.

Britney Irby:

The New Partnerships Initiative incubator is helping us to amplify and expand our work both internally and externally. The incubator is helping USAID staff be better equipped to work with new organizations, and is helping new partners be better equipped to work with USAID. One way the new partnerships initiative helps make the partnership process simpler, is by only requiring a two to five page concept paper.

Britney Irby:

USAID will have a specific New Partnership Initiative funding opportunity, where we outline goals and objectives of a proposed agency program. And then ask organizations to submit a two to five page concept paper that outlines their goals and objectives for implementing the funding opportunity.

Britney Irby:

If USAID technical experts decide that the concept paper goals and objectives align with those in the funding opportunity, then we began a process called co-creation with you. Co-creation is a process in which USAID works collaboratively with you and possible other partners, to take your concept paper and turn it into a program that the agency can fund. A part of this collaborative process is bringing you into USAID to meet with our technical experts, to expand and strengthen your concept paper. And with that, I think we're going to take our second 10 minute pause for questions now.

Rita Spadafora:

Yes, Brittney. Hello to all the participants. My name is Rita Spadafora, and I am a team member of the IPARD program. We look forward to working with you in the near future. Before we start answering your questions, I would like to highlight a few points of this section on partnering with USAID. It is essential to know, as it was mentioned by Britney, that USAID uses two vehicles to provide funds to organizations, acquisition and assistance.

Rita Spadafora:

Acquisition is through a contract that USAID monitors more closely, and demands specific requirements, and assistance is a grant provide assistance with more limited involvement in the day-to-day operation. The financial and reporting requirements in both cases are different among other things. If you would like to learn more about the differences between these two mechanisms, please check the 300 series of the ABS. And again, visit the webpages of the USAID missions in the different countries.

Rita Spadafora:

We would like to highlight that even though USAID has some windows for unsolicited proposals, the majority of what USAID finances goes through a competitive process to promote wider participation. Another very exciting piece of information shared by Britney in this section, is the New Partnerships Initiative launched by USAID.

Rita Spadafora:

This initiative is precisely as the name says, a strategy for USAID to engage with new partners, partners that have never worked with USAID. This is one very important opportunity for indigenous peoples organizations. The process starts with the submission of a basic concept paper to respond to a funding opportunity. If you have a solid conceptual proposal, you can begin an exchange of ideas with USAID, so that the final concept for this activity is the result of a co-creation process between your organization and USAID prior to submitting a full, more complex proposal.

Rita Spadafora:

If the requirements for partnering with USAID seem somehow complex for your organization, you can always partner with a more experienced organization to develop your skills for future funding opportunities. You can learn more about this possibility during the second and the third webinars, where we will have USAID implementing partners, showcasing their projects with indigenous people's organizations and you will have the opportunity to ask questions directly to them, so don't miss the next two webinars.

Rita Spadafora:

And having mentioned these key highlights of this section, we will go through your questions. Please remember you can post your questions in Spanish, French, or Portuguese. Let me go to the first question. If a country does not have a CDCS, is it possible to engage with USAID there? I would like for the USAID colleagues to answer this question.

Mathew Johnson:

Hi Rita. I can answer this question. So generally speaking, every country that USA operates in, has a CDCS. There are circumstances where we would consider it be a non-presence country, something Britney highlighted earlier, where we may not have a CDCS for that specific country. However we would have something called a Regional Development Cooperation Strategy or RDCS that covers a broader region for the work that we're doing in those countries.

Mathew Johnson:

So I would encourage you to take a look at our website. If you go to usaid.gov, across the top of the website, you'll see a link where we work, and you can find more about each of our programs for each country that we operate in on our website, as well as contact information for each of our missions at the bottom of those page, for each of our countries at the bottom of those pages, for you to connect with them. So over to you, thank you, Rita.

Rita Spadafora:

Thank you Matt. Another question here, are there specific guidelines or corporation strategies for multi-country or global initiatives?

Mathew Johnson:

I can help answer this question as well. So as I just highlighted, we often have Regional Development Cooperation Strategies that'll look at more than one country that we are operating in. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, we have regional offices in South Africa that covers all of the Southern part of Africa.

We have a regional office in Ghana, we also have a regional office in Kenya. And so you'll have these Regional Development Cooperation Strategies that'll cover a larger region.

Mathew Johnson:

In addition, USAID and the US government, also has other larger strategies focused on regions. For example, we have a Indo-Pacific strategy that focuses on the work that we're doing around Indonesia and of the Pacific Islands that focused on a broader region. And so you can look at our website and find out broader strategies that we are working on kind of across countries as well as across global initiatives.

Mathew Johnson:

And I would also note on the global initiatives, we do have a number of global initiatives at USAID. For example, one of our major global initiatives is something called Feed The Future, that's focused on our agriculture programs across the world. We also have an initiative called Power Africa, that's looking at how we can bring electricity to Africa. And so we do have a number of global initiatives like that as well that you can find strategies available on our website. Thanks Rita.

Rita Spadafora:

Thank you Matt. Thank you. Next question, does USAID have a capacity building mechanism to strengthen the capacity of potential applicants to the NPI program? Or is this done exclusively through the mentorship mechanism?

Mathew Johnson:

That's a great question. Britney will be highlighting this in a second, but we will be launching a new website called workwithusaid.org in the next couple of months, that'll be a resource for helping organizations to build and develop their capacity. When we launch the website, one of the first things I would recommend you do is take something called a pre-assessment. This assessment will give you the ability to determine what is your capabilities and capacity or readiness to work with USAID.

Mathew Johnson:

Out of that assessment or survey that you'll take, USAID will have a host of trainings, resources, and additional materials for you to begin to prepare your organization to be more ready to work with USAID. So that's one thing that I think would be great for you to take a look at, and Britney will be covering that more in a second.

Mathew Johnson:

I would also highlight USAID is working on a local capacity development policy, as well as metrics that are specifically looking at, how do we build local capacity across all of our programs? And it's something that USAID is looking at for every program and activity that we're doing for each country. So thank you.

Rita Spadafora:

Thanks. And we have a last question. And for those questions that we won't be able to answer in this section, we will do our best to answer at the very end. In the effort to make the agency more accessible, has there been a focus on reducing the administrative burden in terms of compliance and ensuring adequate support and resources to learn USAID's language?

Mathew Johnson:

So that is a great question as well. As Britney highlighted, specifically with the New Partnerships Initiative process, what we're trying to do is move a lot of the administrative burdens and requirements to the end of the process, into the procurement process. If you've tried to work with USAID previously, you know that you had to provide a lot of information upfront, including past performance, personnel, budgets, financial history, et cetera, as a part of a full proposal request to USAID.

Mathew Johnson:

Oftentimes a proposal to USAID would be 50, 60 pages long with materials and resources. As part of the New Partnerships Initiative process, all we're asking upfront is for a simple two to five page concept note. Unfortunately, there are specific requirements that as a US government, we have to ask organizations to do. But as a part of the NPI process, we're not doing that until the very end. Once we decide we want to work with an organization and we can support you and work kind of hand in hand with you to develop those materials and resources.

Mathew Johnson:

And as I highlighted the new workwithusaid.org website that we'll be launching shortly, wIll also have a host of resources and information to help you in that process. So thank you very much.

Rita Spadafora:

Thank you Matt. Thanks for answering the questions, and to the participants for your questions. And now, we'll proceed with the third section of the presentation.

Britney Irby:

Great. Thank you so much Rita and Matt. And as they both discussed some of the topics, I will be in my formal presentation, will be going over again. So you'll get to hear the information again. So at this point, we are going to discuss additional helpful websites and other resources to learn more about funding opportunities at USAID.

Britney Irby:

USAID is helping new organizations be prepared to work with USAID through a new free website that Matt was just talking about, called workwithusaid.org. Part of this process includes a pre-engagement assessment, to determine how ready you are to work with USAID. And again, that's what Matt was just referring to. Another important feature, is the Partner Directory, which lets USAID and other organizations know who you are.

Britney Irby:

The website will serve as a repository to help partners access tools, and resources to help them work with USAID, this includes everything from administrative services, like human resources and finance, to program management, monitoring, evaluation, and learning. The website has not officially launched yet, but if you go to workwithusaid.org right now, there is a splash page that is live, where you can sign up to receive the latest updates about the official launch.

Britney Irby:

In addition to workwithusaid.org, one of the most important sites for you to visit, is the USAID business forecast page. The business forecast provides an advanced look at funding and partnership opportunities at USAID, and offers partners the opportunity to engage early in their procurement process. The forecast is updated daily on USAID.gov, pulling directly from the acquisition and assistance plan, and allows partners to sort and search by specific program categories.

Britney Irby:

Each quarter, USAID holds a webinar to review questions submitted by partners and highlight other important acquisition and assistance updates. Once USAID knows it will be going forward with a specific program, we then post a solicitation on one of two websites, depending on how we plan to fund the idea. It's either through acquisition or assistance. Acquisition is a contract. And again, this was discussed a little bit in the Q&A.

Britney Irby:

Under a contract USAID tells an organization what needs to be done. As a partner, you are able to receive a profit for your work. Assistance is grants or cooperative agreements. Under a grant or cooperative agreement, USAID is providing funds to support an activity or organization is doing. As a partner, you are not able to receive any profit for your work. And the websites are grants.gov for assistance and beta.sam.gov for acquisition. These are the official sites to receive USAID funding. And an important thing to note, is that USAID will never collect a fee to submit a concept paper.

Britney Irby:

If another website, other than grants.gov or beta.sam.gov claims that they are accepting applications for a USAID project, but require a fee to submit the concept paper, do not submit payment. This is not a legitimate USAID product.

Britney Irby:

Now, I'd like to go over some important tips to keep in mind when submitting a proposal on grants.gov or beta.sam.gov. First and foremost, read the directions carefully and follow all instructions, that's very important to understand. If you have questions about a specific funding opportunity, you can submit questions during a designated period of time, called the open question period. The directions included in the specific funding opportunity, will list the contact information and any additional instructions to submit questions, but just know that there is that opportunity, if you're unclear about how to proceed with a specific funding opportunity.

Britney Irby:

If you already have experience in the subject matter of a specific USAID funding opportunity, tell us about it. That's what we want to know, that's definitely will help you strengthen your chances of moving forward in the process. If you don't have previous experience, then consider finding another organization that does, and partner with them on your concept paper idea.

Britney Irby:

The last important thing to know, is that there are some basic requirements that must be completed to receive funding from any government agency, including USAID. These involve registering on a site called SAM, or System Award Management and creating DUNS, CAGE and NCAGE registration. These are

requirements all organizations must comply with in order to receive funding from any federal agency, not just USAID.

Britney Irby:

And there's no specific time in the process that this has to happen, it's just completed along as you move forward. There are these separate other requirements, and we have a helpful video that goes into a little bit more detail about these requirements, it's called Registration Expectation, and we will have a link to that on one of the last slides where we list additional resources.

Britney Irby:

Lastly, I'd like to share some ways that you can stay connected with the industry liaison team at USAID. We want you to know that we are here for you, so you can contact us in a variety of ways, directly at industryliaison@usaid.gov or npi@usaid.gov. You can also follow us on Twitter @USAIDBizOpps. And then here it is, we do want to share, I believe they will be dropping in some links, we've got the registration expectation video.

Britney Irby:

Again, we encourage you to sign up on our workwithusaid.org splash page. We also have a new LinkedIn, Work with USAID group that we're really excited about, that was launched late last year, and that's been growing capacity and people are really engaging on that platform. And finally, we have an acquisitions and assistance list serve that you can sign up for to receive the latest updates in policies. So that concludes the formal presentation, Matt and I will be around for this last opportunity for questions, but that concludes the formal presentation. So thank you so much for your attention.

Alejandro Paredes:

Thank you very much Britney, and we're reaching our last section, as Britney is saying. So before the questions, I want to provide some takeaway from these last two sections. The most important takeaway from these two last section, is that USAID has several windows and approaches and [inaudible 00:58:44] to the [inaudible 00:58:44] for organizations to work with USAID. Some of these examples of partnership will be showcased in the second and third webinars, so you want to be there in those second and third webinars.

Alejandro Paredes:

But in addition to the New Partnership Initiative and the USAID divisions which have their own funding opportunities to implement their programs, is USAID is always open to creative ideas, which can be presented as unsolicited proposals, meaning that they do not have to respond to specific calls for proposal, but they should match USAID programmatic areas. This is a huge opportunity to co-create with USAID, you have TVTs and there are some windows of opportunities for these kinds of soliciting proposals, which are open all year round.

Alejandro Paredes:

Please check on the links right now provided and visit regularly these websites to find out about funding opportunities. There's also many tutorials to guide you through some of the registration processes, which can be cumbersome, very important, but there will always be somebody in the agency to provide you with this support. And this webinar series expects to create a space for continuous process of

getting to know the agency, its processes, and potential partnerships, and for USAID and sub-USAID implementers, also partners to get to know indigenous peoples organization to partner with them.

Alejandro Paredes:

So let's go to the questions and answers, and we have one over here from Reina Absoluta from Mexico. She's asking, "In Mexico, there are indigenous peoples that are not recognized by the government, they're organized internally autonomously, can they be USAID partners?" And then also, Nydia [Postillo 01:00:37] is asking, "Can there be support to an indigenous led fund?" Britney or Matthew, go ahead please.

Mathew Johnson:

So I can answer the first part of the question about whether or not those organizations would be able to work with USAID, and I think the answer is definitely yes. USAID is open to working with any type of organization in the work that we do and so I would definitely encourage you to take a look at funding opportunities, and take a look at some of the resources that we have, because we are open to partnering with your organization. Thank you.

Alejandro Paredes:

Thank you Matt. Britney, you want to add something there or are you okay with that?

Britney Irby:

That was great. Thank you though. Appreciate it.

Alejandro Paredes:

Okay, perfect. We have another question over here, in terms of development assistance, what are the compliance tools? And how is the new PRO-IP policy triggered? For example, if a renewable power project is initiated on indigenous people's lands, but the state does not recognize them as indigenous peoples. For instance, or example Kenya and the Lake Turkana Wind Power project, how will the community seek readiness or trigger the policy, if USAID has been donor supporter in the investment? Britney or Matt? Or even Luis Felipe, please, or anybody else from USAID, please go ahead.

Britney Irby:

I would defer to Matt on that one, if you can chime in, or yeah...

Mathew Johnson:

Okay. Yeah. I would also defer to Luis Philippe on that one.

Alejandro Paredes:

[crosstalk 01:02:19]. Luis Felipe, go ahead.

Luis Felipe:

Yeah. There are several questions that asked whether if an indigenous peoples in a certain country may not be recognized as indigenous people by the government of that country, whether USAID would consider them indigenous people. So the answer to that is that our new USAID Policy on Promoting the

Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we have an operating principle called identify or identification of indigenous peoples. And in that section USAID provides seven criteria in order to identify indigenous peoples in a given country. So as I think most of us know, especially the indigenous peoples' representatives, there is no universal definition for indigenous peoples. The United nations has established that there is a way to identify indigenous peoples, and more or less that's what USAID follows in its seven criteria.

Luis Felipe:

So through the policy what we're directing the missions to do, is to carry out proper assessments and studies with specialized experts, in order to come up with the information in order to determine whether a group could be identified as indigenous peoples. Now having said that, I would also like to ask you to keep in mind what Matt just said, that from the standpoint of a civil society organization, whether you may be recognized as indigenous peoples or not by the government, you're still eligible, you're still an organization that can access resources of USAID.

Luis Felipe:

But I know that it's important for you to be recognized as indigenous peoples, and as I said, USAID does have its own set of criteria to do that. Over to you Alejandro.

Alejandro Paredes:

Thank you very much Luis Felipe. We have another question over here, Britney or Matt, are there funding ceilings under the New Partnerships Initiative?"

Mathew Johnson:

Thanks for the question. So there are not funding ceilings under the New Partnerships Initiative. What we've seen today is a variety of different size of amounts of funding as a part of the New Partnerships Initiative. Not every organization can manage $25 million, some organizations, maybe they are able to or need, looking to manage around 500,000 US dollars. And so it's very greatly from country-to-country and organization-to-organization, depending on their capacity and ability to manage US government funding. Thanks.

Alejandro Paredes:

Okay. Perfect. Thank you very much Matt. We have more questions over here, Afro-descendants[inaudible 01:05:29] organization in Latin America who apply to work with this program? Yes, Luis Felipe. Please, go ahead.

Luis Felipe:

So the Afro-descendants in Latin America, as far as I know, in most of the countries in Latin America, have almost the same rights as indigenous peoples. So constitutionally and based on the legal frameworks, the collective rights to land for instance of Afro-descendants is recognized by many governments like Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil I think Honduras, Nicaragua and other countries.

Luis Felipe:

So if that's the case, then you would definitely be considered as indigenous peoples for the purpose of this policy, because I refer back to the criteria that we have in the policy that fulfills at least two or three

of the criteria of the policy, like this collective attachment to land and natural resources, having your own culture, and moreover if the country legally recognized those groups, so yeah. The answer would be yes.

Luis Felipe:

And by the way, Columbia for instance is a country where the USAID mission in Colombia, has had already several programs directed to both the indigenous peoples and the Afro descendants, under the same umbrella program, so that's a good example of what we can do. Thank you, over to you.

Alejandro Paredes:

Thank you Luis Felipe. Another one for you Luis Felipe, I would like to know if apart from the indigenous community of the Amazon, they have supported or done any work with the Wayuu community in the North of Columbia?

Luis Felipe:

Yes. USAID has done work with Wayuu people in La Guajira. I cannot tell you exactly the details of those projects, but actually I visited Wayuu region through La Guajira in October 2019, and I know for a fact that USAID is working there. Right now, there is a capacity building program for the youth in La Guajira that is very much oriented for indigenous peoples, as the La Guajira enters a process of reconversion of its economy base from coal, to renewable energy and USAID is working with the Colombian government, government entities, universities, and other institutions in order to carry out this capacity development program, especially for youth in La Guajira, with the Wayuu. Over.

Alejandro Paredes:

Perfect. Thank you very much Luis Felipe. Matt or Britney, we have another question over here, our organization already has done some registration because we receive USAID funds, do we need another registration to access additional USAID funds?

Mathew Johnson:

No. There is no other registration that you would have to do in order to get USAID funding, those are the only systems that are required. I would note that our registration that we have on workwithusaid.org, is not a formal registration or required registration, but more of a registration just to let organizations know that you're available and working, as well as letting USAID know that you're available and working. But there are no other formal registration systems required to work with USAID. Thank you.

Alejandro Paredes:

Thank you very much, Matt. We have another question over here for you, Luis Felipe. "Are there specific indigenous communities you have a focus on each country? Are the majority of indigenous group a main focus, or are you also interested in minorities communities among indigenous peoples? Or for example, rural versus urban like the various communities?

Luis Felipe:

Yeah. Very good question. So the USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it recognizes the fact that indigenous peoples have been mostly marginalized from the benefits of their

state or the governmental action in their countries. This is a fact in practically all of the countries where there is indigenous peoples.

Luis Felipe:

And also, it recognizes that in many cases, the indigenous peoples maybe are minority in that country, and within those groups, there may be people who are especially vulnerable, elders, children, women in some cases, indigenous peoples with disabilities, et cetera. So yes, absolutely, the USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, is very much interested in looking at those issues, looking at those problems, and helping to design programs that address the needs, the specific needs of those groups.

Luis Felipe:

So yes. The answer is yes to that. But again, I would encourage the indigenous peoples representative organizations to engage with USAID to establish this communication channels, we're interested in getting to know more about for instance, indigenous peoples with disabilities, indigenous peoples in LGBTQ groups. All those groups we're interested in learning more about what you're doing, so that we can hopefully partner at some point. Thank you, over.

Alejandro Paredes:

Thank you very much Luis Felipe. We're running out of time, there's more questions, but we're not going to be able to answer. Remember that ipard@fsc.org, will be able also to provide answers, and to support in the next weeks and months. And then also don't miss the two next webinars. Over to you Luis Felipe for the last wrapping up of the webinar. Thank you very much.

Luis Felipe:

Okay. Thank you, Alejandro. So I'm sorry for those questions that we may not have been able to answer. Now, we will look at them and see if we can be ready to answer those in one of the future webinars, or directly to the persons or participants who asked the question. I would like to encourage all participants to attend the next webinar, which will be on April 20th.

Luis Felipe:

It's also a Tuesday I believe at the same time as this one. Even if you have colleagues who were not able to participate in this webinar, please encourage them to participate in the next one. Because the next one, we're going to bring some specific projects in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, that USAID is currently funding. And we're going to bring the actual USAID colleagues, the implementing partner representatives, the indigenous peoples partners, and they will present their project as it's been implemented in a practical way.

Luis Felipe:

And that, the idea is for you to learn more about how is USAID engaging and partnering with indigenous peoples, what kind of sectoral approaches, what kind of problems, what kind of issues, with which organizations, how are the organizations working together with USAID. So it's going to be very interesting, and my hope is that you can participate and ask questions directly to the implementing partners, to the USAID colleagues and to the indigenous peoples organizations that are implementing

those projects. And keep in mind that for the final webinar on May 18th, the idea is more like a networking opportunity.

Luis Felipe:

So in that particular webinar, it's not going to be so much about presentations, but it's going to be more about sharing ideas on how to create these partnerships between indigenous peoples organizations, NGO's, current USAID contractors, United Nations entities, private sector. So the idea is to bring a host of organizations that are already working with indigenous peoples or for indigenous peoples, and bring them together. And the purpose of that webinar is going to... the question is going to be, how can we create more effective partnerships, so that indigenous peoples can better access the resources, technical and financial of USAID?

Luis Felipe:

With this, well, I have to thank all of the participants for joining in. Thank you so much. Special thanks to our colleagues from OAA, Britney for your presentation, Matthew for helping honestly in answering those questions that some of them are very difficult and need specialized knowledge at USAID to answer those questions. And of course, Alejandro and Rita for helping to conduct the Q&A. Mary Donovan who has been also helping. And of course, our great team from GROW, Sujin and Cheyenne, my colleague Vy Lam, who has been also supportive.

Luis Felipe:

Other USAID colleagues who have been helping me with this, I have to be very grateful to them, from missions and bureaus and the Washington DC office. This is a work of many people at USAID, that we're all interested in ensuring that the indigenous peoples of the world feel that USAID could be a great partner to you. Keep in mind also that the IPARD program, the Indigenous Peoples Alliance for Rights and Development, IPARD based in Panama city, of which Alejandro Paredes is the director, and Rita is the lead for the capacity development, under their own program, they'll be following up on many of these ideas and suggestions and recommendations that have come up here, so they will be also a source or a resource rather for capacity development, for engagement.

Luis Felipe:

So keep an eye on the IPARD, who will be reaching out to you in the future. Thanks to our wonderful interpreters. I have not been able to listen to you now, but I'm sure you've done a great job. And so with that...