



LOCAL WORKS

Working with USAID Missions to drive innovation and learning in locally led development.

USAID’s Local Works program, situated in the Local, Faith and Transformative Partnerships Hub, has been at the forefront of locally led development since 2015. In countries around the world, Local Works seeks to empower local actors to lead their own development, helping to shift USAID’s role to be a catalyst for local change efforts and processes. Through Local Works, USAID Missions gain more time and greater freedom to pursue locally led programming and innovative ways of working that advance USAID’s localization vision.

ADVANCING LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT

Local leadership is essential to generating more sustainable, inclusive development outcomes. This process—locally led development—takes time, patience, hard work, creativity, and flexibility. While USAID advances locally led development across its programming, Local Works’ \$80 million budget enables USAID Missions to try new development approaches and facilitate Agency-wide learning with five-year sector-agnostic funding, unique flexibilities, and tailored technical support.

PROGRAM DETAILS

With Local Works funding, among other endeavors to strengthen locally led development approaches, Missions may:

- **Develop, test, and share flexible solutions** to overcome various challenges to advancing locally owned development within USAID
- **Explore and use systems approaches** with local actors to achieve sustainable outcomes
- **Launch new or adapt existing programming** to focus on, test, or scale up approaches to local leadership and ownership of the development process
- **Engage local communities and partners in unique ways**, including *listening tours*, where USAID travels to communities to hold inclusive dialogues with local actors, and *“Whole System in the Room” workshops*, where USAID convenes diverse local actors to identify shared challenges and brainstorm and lead solutions

A GLOBAL FOOTPRINT

To date, Local Works supports locally led development programming through 35 Missions in [Africa](#), [Asia](#), [Europe & Eurasia](#), [Latin America & the Caribbean](#), and the [Middle East](#).

Participating Missions include: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burma, Dominican Republic, Eastern & Southern Caribbean, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, India, Kazakhstan (Central Asia), Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyz Republic, Malawi, Morocco, North Macedonia, Nepal, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Rwanda, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Vietnam, West Africa Regional, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: BURMA

In Burma's Kachin State, community members say about one member in every household uses drugs. Most efforts to address the heroin epidemic tackled health aspects, leaving socioeconomic aspects exacerbated by issues like conflict and cyclical mining labor largely unaddressed. Recognizing the complexity of the situation, USAID's Local Works program seeks to support local actors to lead cross-cutting solutions to challenges caused by drug addiction. USAID spent significant time listening to over 130 organizations and other local actors, forming a local advisory committee of credible, diverse local leaders, and bringing together entire communities to identify common priorities in their own language. This valuable time resulted in USAID's first direct awards to local organizations in Kachin State. Now, local partners are strengthening their own local networks to make sustainable collective impact by taking a holistic, locally led approach to prevent drug use, rehabilitate people who use drugs, and reduce the stigma they face. Even when international organizations were forced to reduce their presence due to COVID-19 and ongoing effects of the February 2021 military coup, these local partners continued to provide critical services to communities, demonstrating why partnering locally matters.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: ZIMBABWE

Youth in Zimbabwe are excluded from the formal economy yet also face barriers to participate within the informal economy, which represents the largest space for economic opportunity in the country. Nonetheless, the young women and men who comprise a majority of Zimbabwe's population are finding innovative ways to become micro and informal entrepreneurs. Through Local Works, USAID puts youth in the driver's seat to identify solutions to enhance youth economic opportunities and set a strong foundation for Zimbabwe's long-term economic growth and stability. USAID partnered with a local youth networking organization to launch a Youth Advisory Board, lead a nationwide listening tour, and convene a "Whole System in the Room" workshop to identify real barriers faced in communities across Zimbabwe. The Youth Advisory Board and other youth stakeholders are taking an active, leading role with USAID to design programs that address their needs and those of their peers.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Through Local Works, USAID Missions support joint learning with local partners. In Fiscal Year 2021, Missions reported that:

- **300** local organizations supported by USAID demonstrated improved performance
- **Over \$3.4M** from non-donor resources was mobilized for sustainable development
- **89%** of the **47** active locally led development activities achieved their yearly intended results

CONTACT US

Email us: 

Subscribe to our newsletter: 

Visit our website: 