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Partnerships For Enhanced Engagement In Research (PEER)

PEER is an international program that funds researchers in USAID partner countries who collaborate with U.S. government-funded researchers to address global development challenges.

OVERVIEW





The PEER program is managed by the USAID Innovation, Technology, and Research (ITR) Hub's Research Division. It directly supports researchers in USAID partner countries through institutional research awards of up to \$300,000. Research projects are used to fill critical evidence gaps or use implementation research to test how to scale processes that result in improved development programming or more informed policies.

U.S. government-funded researchers work with PEER-funded scientists in partner countries through mutually beneficial collaborations that produce scientific breakthroughs, train future scientists, build scientific capacity at local higher education institutions, and translate evidence into policy.

Since its launch in 2011, PEER has awarded more than \$100 million to more than 400 projects in 57 countries. The program is implemented by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.


PEER leverages the technical excellence and research funding of these U.S. scientific agencies:

-  National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
-  National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
-  Dept of Agriculture's (USDA) Agriculture Research Service
-  USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
-  U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

-  National Institutes of Health (NIH)
-  National Science Foundation (NSF)
-  Smithsonian Institution
-  USDA Forest Service

USAID Innovation, Technology & Research Hub

  @GlobalDevLab #PEERUSAID

 <https://www.usaid.gov/research/peer>



IMPACTS and SPECIAL PROJECTS

PEER keeps the Agency on the forefront of science and technology by incorporating breakthrough innovations and applying the best tools to emerging priorities

IMPACTS

BARCODING IN KENYA & TANZANIA

Endangered wildlife traffickers try to obscure the identity of bushmeat to successfully evade inspectors in Africa. Inspectors lack the evidence needed to prosecute the offenders despite suspicions of illegal activity. Three PEER teams across East Africa sequenced, cataloged, and documented the DNA of endangered wildlife and converted those sequences into easy to test “barcodes.” The database of DNA barcodes is now used by law enforcement agencies to prosecute traffickers using DNA evidence. This work is done in collaboration with the Kenya & East Africa Mission, the Kenya Wildlife Services, the Smithsonian Institution, and a sister team in Tanzania.

FIRE MANAGEMENT IN COLOMBIA

Tropical forest ecosystems host high levels of biodiversity and some of the greatest carbon stocks on the planet, but wildfires destroy biodiversity, and release massive amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. PEER researchers used remote sensing to develop models to predict how different types of forest structures respond to fire, and are disseminating their findings to

help develop science-based policies that ensure resilient and sustainable tropical forest ecosystems. This work is conducted by researchers at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia partnered with the University of Colorado, Boulder.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

CERVICAL CANCER

In 2019, the PEER Cervical Cancer Screening and Preventive Therapy was launched to generate evidence to inform sustainable scale-up of cervical cancer control programs. In Malawi and Mozambique, partners are working to determine the most effective and affordable approaches to integrating cervical cancer screening and treatment with voluntary family planning. Partners include the University of Malawi, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, University of North Carolina, and University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

WOMEN IN SCIENCE

In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), women often face challenges remaining in the scientific workforce, due to discrimination, a lack of available opportunities, or various

household obligations. The Women in Science Mentoring Program supports cohorts of women faculty at higher education institutions in USAID partner countries to provide skills, support networks, and seed funding to allow them to remain and thrive in science. Over one year, the mentoring program provides opportunities for cohorts to build personal and professional skills in topics such as work-life balance, networking, proposal writing, and publishing research papers. At the conclusion of the program, mentees are eligible to apply for funding for them to conduct a pilot research project.

CHALLENGES RELATED TO COVID-19

In 2022, PEER announced 15 new sub-awards under the COVID-19 Research Grant Cycle. Researchers from partner countries a) deepen our understanding of how shocks like COVID-19 affect key sectors in LMICs; and b) test approaches to help communities and sectors respond to and mitigate the effects of COVID-19 or similar future shocks. Winning researchers focus on issues related to COVID-19 vaccine uptake, wastewater pathogen monitoring, food system resilience to shocks, and the effects of COVID-19 on women and youth, among others.

PEER BY THE NUMBERS

- Currently, 1,456 students are working on PEER research teams, and 58 percent are women
- PEER researchers have contributed to over 1,000 journal articles, publishing 90 peer-reviewed articles in 2022 alone
- More than 74 percent of PEER awardees secure further funding to continue their research