

October 2022

WORKSHOP IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE
Preliminary Terms of Reference
Fall 2022 – Spring 2023

Project Title:	Fostering the Next Generation of Global Researchers: How USAID's PEER Program Promotes Mentorship and Learning Opportunities
Client/Host Agency:	United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation (DDI) Innovation, Technology, and Research Hub (ITR) Research Division (ITR/R) https://www.usaid.gov/research/peer
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Background:	<p>The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) leads the U.S. Government's international development and disaster assistance through partnerships and investments to save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises and progress beyond assistance.</p> <p>The Research Division in USAID's Innovation, Technology, and Research (ITR) Hub advances research across all sectors to benefit international development. The Research Division works to achieve four main goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance USAID's own research capacity and culture; 2. Harness expertise and generate evidence to develop breakthrough solutions to development challenges; 3. Apply those research-based solutions to improve lives, policies, and economies, locally and globally; and 4. Strengthen the science and technology (S&T) capacity of partner countries, particularly through collaboration with higher education and research institutions. <p>To meet these goals, the Research Division catalyzes diverse partnerships at home and abroad; helps guide USAID policies for research; and provides cross-Agency services to ensure the quality, integrity, open sharing, and best use of USAID research.</p> <p>The Research Division invests in partnerships between higher education institutions (HEIs) in the United States and countries around</p>

	<p>the world. Scientific expertise in universities have long generated astounding breakthroughs across societies. Additionally, HEIs around the world nurture expert researchers with a rich understanding of local and national development challenges.</p> <p>The Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) program is managed by the Research Division. It directly supports researchers in USAID partner countries through institutional research awards up to \$300,000. Research projects are used to fill critical evidence gaps or use implementation research to test how best to scale processes that result in improved development programming or can inform local and international policies.</p> <p>U.S.-government (USG) funded researchers at U.S. government agencies and U.S. higher education institutions work with PEER-funded scientists in partner countries in mutually beneficial collaborations that produce scientific breakthroughs, train future scientists, build scientific capacity at local HEIs, and translate evidence into policy. Since its launch in 2011, PEER has awarded more than \$100 million to over 400 projects in 57 countries. The program is implemented by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM). The primary investigators (PIs) in partner countries directly receive funding and are then paired with USG-funded partners. These research teams are encouraged to incorporate students as research assistants or co-PIs.</p> <p>The latest cycle of PEER-funded research included several projects studying COVID-19 impacts, including the links between COVID-19 and gender-based violence in South Africa and youth acceptance of COVID-19 vaccines in Indonesia. PEER also includes a Women in Science Mentoring Program to support female researchers in STEM fields in USAID partner countries.</p> <p>The PEER program will conclude in 2024 after 13 years of research, innovation, and policy dialogue and change. As the program closes, the PEER management team is keen to identify how PEER contributed to USAID priorities, Research Division goals, and partner countries' development. The first retrospective review will focus on the inclusion of students in PEER research teams (a strong emphasis of the PEER program).</p> <p>Resources: USAID PEER website NASEM PEER website Full List of PEER Funded Projects USAID Research Division website</p>
Objective:	<p>The Research Division's PEER management team seeks the assistance of a SIPA workshop team to analyze the extent to which PEER PIs and research teams incorporated students and the next generation of researchers into their work and provided mentorship, learning opportunities, and career advancement assistance.</p>

	<p>The primary research question is: By promoting/advocating for the inclusion of students on research teams, to what extent has the PEER program been successful in fostering and/or impacting the next generation of scientists, engineers, and researchers?</p> <p>The analysis should incorporate a gender lens, given the U.S. Government's prioritization of gender equality and equity as exemplified by President Biden's Executive Order establishing the White House Gender Policy Council in March 2021, the doubling of gender attributions across USAID and the State Department for FY 2023, and the first National Strategy for Gender Equity and Equality.</p> <p>The analysis will contribute to the Research Division's Results Framework and Learning Agenda. The recommendations and lessons learned can be shared across the Agency as a case study that explores inclusion and capacity-building within local research projects and its effect on development outcomes. The SIPA team's findings and recommendations will also inform USAID's future support for research programs in its partner countries.</p>
Tasks:	<p>The expected tasks under the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desk review of relevant USAID data and documents; ▪ Key informant interviews with USAID staff and PEER research partners; ▪ Analysis of data; ▪ Synthesis and report writing, including development of recommendations for USAID; and ▪ Presentation(s) at SIPA and possibly for USAID staff.
Deliverables:	<p>The deliverables for the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A detailed workplan; ▪ Mid-point briefing (short presentation in February 2023); ▪ Draft report; ▪ Final report; ▪ Presentation of key findings and recommendations (SIPA); and ▪ Potential presentation of key findings and recommendations (ITR/R).
Requirements:	<p>The SIPA team (including around six members) should have the following interests, skills and experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Familiarity with research methods; ▪ Interpersonal and relationship management; ▪ Organizational and writing skills; ▪ Language and regional experience in any USAID partner countries is preferred (PEER grantees are located in Southeast Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean); and ▪ Monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) experience is also preferred but not required.

Logistics:	<p>The SIPA student team will conduct desk research and informational interviews from New York City beginning in November 2022. USAID will arrange for the team to receive relevant background documents and information, will provide guidance and feedback on draft deliverables, and will provide logistical support for the team's country visits.</p> <p>All potential travel for this project would occur in March 2023. At this time, the opportunity to travel internationally is not confirmed. However, if permission is granted by USAID and the host country, the SIPA team would confirm location(s) with the client. If international travel is not feasible, the SIPA team may travel to Washington, DC to USAID headquarters and visit the PEER implementing partner, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.</p>