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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

GENDER AND YOUTH ACTIVITY (GAYA)

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AWARD (PIA)

RFA: SC-GAYA-PIA-RFA-2022-01

Subject: Program improvements to research, pilot, or further develop ways to better collect, analyze and use information collected to improve integration of issues connected to gender and/or strategies focused on youth into emergency and non-emergency programs

Date RFA Issued: November 11, 2022

End of Question Period: December 9, 2022, 5 PM ET

Webinar Date: December 6, 2022, 9 AM ET

Due Date for Applications: January 3 – 16, 2023, 5PM ET

Award Ceiling: US \$240,000 per Award

Issued by: Save the Children Federation, Inc. / GAYA Activity

DISCLAIMER



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ACRONYMS

BHA	USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
FAA	Fixed Amount Award
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
GAYA	Gender and Youth Activity Associate Award
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IRB	Institutional Review Board
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NICRA	Negotiated indirect cost rate agreement
PDM	Post-distribution monitoring
PIA	Program Improvement Award
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
RFA	Request for Applications
RFSA	Resilience Food Security Activity
SAM	System for Award Management
UEI	Unique Entity ID
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollars

INTRODUCTION FROM THE GAYA ACTIVITY DIRECTOR

November 11, 2022

Dear prospective applicants,

We are excited to release this Request for Applications (RFA) under GAYA's Small Grants Program: The Program Improvement Award RFA. Through this award, implementers of emergency and non-emergency food security activities will have the opportunity to generate evidence of promising practices. This will significantly contribute to the improved design, implementation, and overall effectiveness of emergency and non-emergency food security activities funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA).

The Program Improvement Award responds to feedback from implementers of BHA-funded activities indicating a need for practical, program-oriented approaches to integration and use of data to better understand gender norms and youth dynamics. Implementing partners have asked for user-friendly process improvement, innovation, or research that can be used to strengthen capacity for meaningful integration of gender norms and youth data in their activities.

The Gender and Youth (GAYA) Activity is funded by USAID/BHA and unique in its relationship with implementing partners whose priorities drive our efforts. We will seek meaningful inclusion of regional and local organizations across the globe to define, drive, and action our work streams. We look forward to seeing your applications and working with you to share the resulting knowledge.

Sincerely,

Julie Koehler

GAYA Activity Director

A. AUTHORITY AND INTRODUCTION

Save the Children Federation, Inc., the prime implementer of the GAYA Associate Award, is soliciting applications to improve the collection and/or use of gender and/or youth data to design and adapt development and emergency food security, resilience, and emergency response activities. Applications will support the development, testing, packaging, and sharing of process improvements, innovations, and/or research to improve the collection and use of gender and/or youth data. The awards under this RFA will consist of Program Improvement Awards funded up to USD \$240,000 for up to a 24-month period. Save the Children Federation, Inc. will issue up to four Program Improvement Awards under this RFA.

The GAYA team will accept questions on this RFA through December 9, 2022, and responses will be posted on the [GAYA Small Grants webpage](#) of the [Food Security and Nutrition \(FSN\) Network website](#) on December 13, 2022. Relevant questions asked before November 25, 2022 will be answered at the Small Grants Launch webinar on December 6, 2022; others will be posted directly to the grant webpage.

The authority for these awards is found in the Food for Peace Act of 1954 (as amended) and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as amended). It is re-delegated to Save the Children Federation, Inc. (Save the Children) under its Cooperative Agreement No. 720BHA21LA00005 with USAID.

B. AWARD GUIDANCE

B.1 Frequently Asked Questions

Who can apply?

- We accept applications from US or non-US nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), for-profit organizations, research institutions, or higher education institutions (HEIs). Applicants can be from anywhere across the globe, but applications must be implemented in countries where USAID/BHA works or has funded activities in the past three years.
- Organizations must have successfully received and managed USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance funding within the past three years (2020, 2021, 2022). This includes receiving funds as the Prime awardee, or any level of sub awardee.
- Applications from local or regional organizations led by youth up to the age of 29 years are encouraged.
- Applications from local or regional organizations led by or focused on women are encouraged.
- We encourage applications from organizations led by or serving all persons and identities regardless of age, gender, or disability.
- This RFA is geared towards both development and emergency food security, resilience, and emergency response activities.
- Organizations which are sub-recipients or sub-contractors to Save the Children or Mercy Corps in any agreements are allowed to apply.
- Local or regional organizations are particularly encouraged to apply.

Who cannot apply?

- Applications that will be fully or partially implemented in Guatemala, Nicaragua, the West Bank, or the Gaza Strip will not be considered.
- Applications will not be accepted from:
 - Members of the GAYA consortium: Save the Children and Mercy Corps including other country and fundraising offices beyond the US (e.g., Save the Children UK, Mercy Corps Uganda);
 - Individuals and/or sole proprietorships;
 - Government entities, including ministries;
 - Public international organizations;
 - Firms operating as commercial companies or other organizations (including nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations) that are wholly or partially owned by foreign governments or agencies.
- Organizations that have not received USAID/BHA funding in the past three years (2020, 2021, 2022). This includes receiving funds as the Prime awardee, or any level of sub awardee.

What types of projects will be considered for funding?

- Projects that strengthen innovative localized approaches to gender and/or youth, led by local partners.
- Projects that help BHA implementing partners better collect, analyze, and use information on gender and/or youth issues or strategies.
- Projects that transform negative gender norms, taboos, attitudes, and behaviors, and/or projects that incorporate positive youth development approaches.
- Projects that consult and actively involve diverse perspectives and marginalized populations across the activity lifecycle. An example of this might be using a participatory design process with young people in the lead to design your proposed intervention. Or having a women's community group involved in designing and leading a new data collection effort. Or involving LGBTQI+ people in conversations about how to ask questions about sexuality and gender in a data collection tool.

What types of projects will not be considered for funding?

- These grants will not fund already planned or required activities under an existing BHA award.
- These grants will not fund required or already approved Monitoring & Evaluation activities, including but not limited to annual surveys, post-distribution monitoring (PDM), Refine and Implement (R&I) year studies, and other planned, budgeted, and required research activities.

In which language can I apply?

- GAYA will accept submissions in the following languages: French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Dari, and Bengali. However, only 20 non-English submissions can be considered. After 20 non-English submissions are received, the [FSN Network website](#) will be updated to indicate that GAYA is accepting ONLY English submissions.

I noticed that submissions are rolling. If I apply later in the cycle, will my submission be considered?

- All English submissions and the first 20 non-English submissions will be accepted and thoroughly reviewed after the application deadline closes on January 16. Because of limited translation resources, we can only accept the first 20 non-English submissions. We encourage organizations

who wish to submit a non-English concept note to consider submitting as early as possible in the open application period.

How do I submit my concept note?

- You submit your idea through the GAYA_SmallGrant@savechildren.org email.

What forms can I submit my concept in?

- Only written submissions that follow the guidance outlined in Section E2 will be accepted.

Can I submit more than one concept note/application?

- No, there is a maximum of 1 application per organization.

How much funding is available?

- GAYA expects to award up to four grants of up to USD \$240,000.

I work for a smaller organization that requires funding up front to start working on the grant. How can you help?

- GAYA will work with grantees to ensure that payment milestones are scheduled appropriately throughout the lifecycle of the award to ensure that the project and the grantee can be successful.

What is the application and review process?

- Please consult the timeline in Section B.

How will I know if my application is selected as a finalist?

- All applicants will be contacted by email with a response to their applications (whether they are a finalist or not). The five highest-scoring non-selected applicants will receive optional access to a one-hour feedback conversation in English as to the content of their application.

Who do I contact if I am having trouble with submissions?

- Please contact GAYA_SmallGrant@savechildren.org

Application and Funding Timeline:

Please note that these dates are approximate and subject to change.

- November 11, 2022: RFA released
- **December 6, 2022 at 9 am ET:** Small Grants Launch webinar held
- January 3 – 16, 2023, 5 PM ET: Rolling submissions begin
- Note: All submissions received by January 16, 2023, at 5pm will be reviewed together. The first 20 non-English submissions will be considered, everything AFTER that must be submitted in English.
- **February 14 – March 13:** Q&A calls held with prospective grantees
- **April 17:** Full applications due

- **June 2023:** Selection committee makes final decisions and seeks donor approval to award funds
- **July 2023:** Awards issued
- **September 2023:** Optional feedback calls for up to 5 non-selected applicants

B.2 Background and Objectives

USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) provides assistance before, during, and after crises — from readiness and response to relief and recovery. BHA's [Gender and Youth Activity \(GAYA\)](#) works to improve the quality and impact of development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response activities by addressing the barriers and challenges implementing partners face when adapting activities based on gender norms and age-specific needs and dynamics.

B.3 Focus and Subject Areas

While the [BHA Emergency Guidelines](#) and each Resilience Food Security Activity's (RFSAs) Request for Applications (RFA) and relevant country frameworks note the importance of providing the systems, processes, and resources necessary to adjust program design and implementation, respondents to GAYA's small grants survey expressed the need to more fully analyze and use data on gender and/or youth inclusion and dynamics to adapt programs. Sometimes this is an issue of collecting the right data to be useful in decision-making. Even when the right data is collected, organizational or systemic barriers can prevent this data from being fully used. Other times, data is collected but never fully analyzed into usable, disaggregated findings. Even when disaggregated findings are available, some activities struggle to turn these findings into program adaptations. Thus, improved gender and/or youth data collection, data analysis, and data use is needed to inform program adaptation, with the ultimate goal of creating more inclusive and transformative programming for different gender and age groups.

The purpose of this RFA is thus to strengthen the collection, analysis, and application and use of data on gender and age dynamics in BHA's development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response activities.

Save the Children, which leads the GAYA Award, seeks applications that demonstrate the development, piloting, and subsequent sharing of effective practices for analyzing, using, and adapting, based on data illuminating gender norms and age dynamics to improve the implementation of high-impact emergency food security and multi-sectoral and/or non-emergency food security activities (RFSAs).

The development of these resources and/or processes should strive to address a known resource, knowledge, methodological, or capacity gap within the development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response community, including, but not limited to the following **priority areas**:

- Collecting Data:
- **Sensitive data collection:** Demographic data, especially around intersectional identities (e.g., age, marital status, disability status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) is collected in a manner that ensures safety and sensitivity throughout the process.
- Where data on intersectional identities cannot be collected due to Do No Harm considerations or contextual factors, or where barriers, risks, and challenges to collecting this data are identified

and appropriately justified, proxy data or secondary information around intersectional identities can be collected or used. Where such disaggregation is not possible and/or relevant to the grants awarded, justification as to why it is not possible/relevant should be provided.

- **Data collection for gender equity or youth empowerment:** Data around specific gender-or youth-transformative outcomes is collected sensitively.
- A transformative outcome is one that aims to shift inequitable norms, systems, and structures. An example of a transformative outcome is young women and young non-binary folks are able to fully and equitably participate in leadership opportunities in water-user associations, as a result of changes in adult and young men’s understanding of harmful gender and age norms around community leadership.
- **Alternative methods of knowing and understanding:** Different ways of knowing and understanding, outside of often imposed academic or scientific data collection methodologies, are incorporated. This could take the form of:
 - Working with participants to understand what data they wish to collect about themselves. An example of this might be initiating a discussion with community leaders about what indicators of a community’s equitable economic development might look like to them, and factoring in this input in the development of indicators and data collection tools.
 - Collecting data based on an assets-based (rather than a deficit-based) framework. An example of this might be, collecting data on the positive gender behaviors or areas in which youth are systematically included in community decision-making.
 - Using non-standard ways of knowing and understanding, such as storytelling or other culturally relevant methods.
- Analyzing Data:
 - **Disaggregating data:** Demographic data (including at minimum, gender, age, and disability status), especially around intersectional identities, are reflected on to arrive at intersectional findings (not just, how does this finding differ for men and women, but how does this finding differ for unmarried, differently abled, women ages 15-18). Data disaggregation is done without compromising the privacy and confidentiality of the respondent.
 - **Data analysis and recommendations:** Data are used to develop evidence-based analysis, findings, and recommendations.
- Applying Data:
 - **Evidence-based reflections:** Data are used in reflection activities to capture and apply lessons learned from ongoing work.
 - **Data usage and usage barriers:** Data are fed back into targeting strategies, activity designs, M&E plans, work plans, and program logical frameworks, among other key program documents and approaches. Technical, management, operational, organizational, and systemic barriers to program adaptation based on these data are addressed.

Notably, GAYA has found through initial research¹ that emergency programs could particularly benefit from innovations or program improvement strategies for the collection and use of gender and age data. Often the opportunity for emergency programs to do in-depth data analysis, data use, and data

¹ GAYA’s initial desk review, key informant interviews found that, in particular, emergency programs often have gaps in understanding how and what to measure around gender, defaulting to disaggregating data captured for indicators by sex only. Further, emergency programs, more so than RFSAs, have gaps in understanding how and what to measure around youth, defaulting to disaggregating data captured for indicators by age. Further, results from GAYA’s survey of implementing partners found that, of emergency IPs, 38% sometimes, rarely, or never factor data about youth needs into their program designs (with 19% saying the same for data on gender equality).

integration occurs during program design or close-out, or in preparation for follow-on funding, while opportunities for adaptation should be intentionally incorporated throughout the life of activity.

B.4 Type and Number of Awards

The award(s) will be a fixed amount sub-award (FAA), which is a type of sub-award that provides a pre-defined level of funding based on a schedule of pre-determined milestones and results rather than reimbursement based on actual costs. By utilizing this awarding mechanism, Save the Children aims to reduce the administrative burden, encourage smaller organizations to apply, and focus efforts on strengthening capacity for qualitative inquiry.

Save the Children plans to award up to four sub-awards under this RFA. The final number of awards will depend on the quality of applications received, demand, and availability of funding. It is anticipated that awards solicited through this RFA will be issued on or about June 2023 and that work will commence within 4-8 months of the closing date of the application cycle (January 16, 2023). Save the Children reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Save the Children or USAID, nor does it commit Save the Children or USAID to pay for the costs incurred in the submission of an application. Save the Children and USAID reserve the right to reject any or all submissions received and to negotiate separately with an applicant, if such action is considered to be in the best interest of Save the Children and the GAYA donor, USAID.

B.5 Award Timeline

The duration of a PIA under this RFA is a maximum of 24 months from the issue date of the award.

B.6 Learning Products

Final award products should be proposed in the application and contribute to the dissemination and utilization of knowledge gained through the grant, including process improvements, innovation, and research products as well as documentation (e.g., case study narrative) of the process and lessons learned. In this way, the award seeks to build the evidence base for promising practices in gender and/or youth data collection and utilization. The modality or format of the final product(s) should be adapted to the intended audiences in a way that maximizes usage and application. Innovative and creative formats are encouraged, such as videos, e-learning modules, interactive PDFs, etc. It is not required that any research grant results be submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. However, this caliber of research is welcomed, and publication is encouraged beyond the 24-month life of the award.

Before deliverables can be considered final or grantees are issued their final milestone payment, all deliverables must be approved by Save the Children for quality, general usability, and for proper branding and marking (according to the GAYA Award Branding and Marking Guidelines). All final products must be compliant with Section 508, meaning they must be accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities. GAYA will provide training and assistance to support awardees to comply with this requirement.

B.7 Dissemination Plan

All awardees are expected to propose and execute a dissemination plan to share their study results, process improvements, or innovations within the life of the award and beyond. The audience for influence efforts should include both internal team members (to the awarded organization) and external BHA implementing partners. The dissemination plan should specify the audience, lead, and type of change (knowledge, attitude, practice, other) intended through each action item listed in the plan.

All resources, including final reports and deliverables generated through GAYA funding, will be shared on the FSN Network and uploaded to USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse, and the Development Data Library for use by USAID, Save the Children, and any organizations implementing development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response activities. More about intellectual property can be found in Section G.

B.8 Reporting Requirements

The type, number, content, etc. of milestones submitted and the timeline for submission shall be based on the successful applicant's proposed deliverables outlined in the application. At a minimum, every recipient will be required to submit or participate in:

- Final Report: Upon completion of the award activities and before final payment can be made, the awardee is required to submit a Final Report. The Final Report is a narrative report of no more than 10 pages, for which awardees will be provided a template. This report is intended to describe activities, lessons learned, and conclusions. Pursuant to standard provision "Submission of Datasets to the Development Data Library," the awardee must also submit all clean datasets and intellectual work generated over the course of this award. The awardee is responsible for removing any Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from the data before submission.
- All the deliverables for each sub-award Milestone as outlined in the signed sub-award agreement.

Before deliverables can be shared or successful applicants can receive payment for achieving a sub-award milestone, all deliverables under the milestone shall be approved by Save the Children as meeting the agreed upon quality standards from the sub-award agreement.

B.9 Payment

Fixed amount payments will be scheduled in the award as milestone payments and will be collaboratively established and based on each organization's work plan. This depends on the selected applicant's negotiated budget amount, the agreed upon amount for each milestone, the definition of each milestone, and the successful completion of the deliverable(s) associated with each milestone. Practically speaking, this means that advances are not an option on this award although the milestone payments can be spaced out such that an organization with any size budget will be able to implement the award successfully.

Payment shall be issued for properly invoiced amounts within 30 days of receiving completed deliverables agreed upon in the grant agreement. The payment currency shall be United States dollars (USD).

B.10 Funding Availability

Final funding levels for each award will depend on content, relevance, quality, and needs, with a ceiling of USD \$240,000 per award (subject to availability of funds). Acceptance of an application under this RFA does not constitute an award, nor does it guarantee that the application (if awarded) will be funded at the full dollar amount requested.

B.11 Authorized Geographic Code

The authorized geographic code under this RFA is 935. However, first preference must be given to geographic code 937 and must document its files whenever geographic code 935 is used to demonstrate that the goods and services are not available in geographic code 937, or it is necessary to procure from geographic code 935 due to emergency nature of the goods and services, or it is more efficient and/or necessary to achieve the project's objectives. Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO through Save the Children, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in this award and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228. Code 937 countries include the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but exclude any country that is a prohibited source listed in USAID's ADS 310.

C. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must be US or non-US nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), for-profit organizations, research institutions, or higher education institutions (HEI) that can contribute to GAYA's strategic objective of promoting systems-level approaches to improving the design, implementation, and overall effectiveness of emergency and non-emergency activities. The Lead Applicant must:

- Have received and successfully managed BHA funding in the last three years. This includes receiving funds as the Prime awardee, or any level of sub awardee;
- Demonstrate the capacity to manage awards of comparable size or above (US \$240,000+); and
- Furnish relevant past performance examples with references.

Applications can incorporate partnerships between more than one organization. If partnering for an application, one organization needs to be selected to lead the application process, award management, and reporting. This Lead Applicant will be required to sign a sub-award agreement with Save the Children and, in turn, will establish a partnership with other collaborating organization(s). The Lead Applicant will be responsible for ensuring that these collaborating organizations comply with all rules and regulations stated in that agreement. The Lead Applicant will be the only organization to communicate directly with Save the Children regarding the application process and during the life of the award, unless otherwise deemed necessary for activity implementation purposes. Thus, the Lead Applicant will be responsible for managing any financial

transactions between the Lead Applicant and collaborating organization(s), and for collating programmatic reporting from all partners during the life of the award. The programmatic roles and responsibilities of each of the proposed partners must be clearly described in the application.

Lead Applicants or collaborating organization(s) must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law of the country where the activity will be implemented. At the time of submission and through the life of the award, Lead Applicants must comply with all applicable Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) requirements. The Lead Applicant must also ensure all collaborating organizations comply with application UEI and [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) Requirements. At the time of awarding, the organization must have satisfied UEI requirements and provide their UEI to Save the Children.

The following are not eligible to apply for grants under this RFA or be a collaborating organization that receives funding through this RFA:

- Members of the GAYA consortium: Save the Children and Mercy Corps including other country and fundraising offices beyond the US (e.g., Save the Children UK, Mercy Corps Uganda)
- Individuals and/or sole proprietorships;
- Government entities, including ministries;
- [Public international organizations](#); or
- Firms operating as commercial companies or other organizations (including nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations) that are wholly or partially owned by foreign governments or agencies.

Organizations which are sub-recipients or subcontractors to Save the Children or Mercy Corps in any agreements are not restricted from applying because of their work with these GAYA consortium members. They should consider applying if they meet the eligibility criteria.

Applications must be implemented in countries where the USAID/BHA works or has funded activities in the past five years. Applications that will be fully or partially implemented in Guatemala, Nicaragua, the West Bank, or the Gaza Strip will not be considered.

Local organizations are particularly encouraged to apply.

In their cost applications, organizations should indicate whether they have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) with any US Government Agency. Organizations or institutions that do not have a NICRA are eligible for grants under this RFA either by using a de-minimis indirect cost rate (if requirements of 2 CFR 200.414(f) are met) or by directly charging all costs using a documented cost allocation methodology. All proposed costs must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable in accordance with applicable cost principles.

Applications by for-profit organizations cannot include profit in the proposed budget. Profit is prohibited per 2 CFR 700.13.

D. AUTHORIZATION FOR RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Where applicable, applicants must comply with institutional review board (IRB) requirements of their own institutions and any national-level IRBs in the country(-ies) where the research will be

conducted. These reviews should be factored into the research plan with the aim of being completed within the first three months of the start of the award. See the [BHA FY21 Annual Report](#) for a map of countries with emergency or non-emergency funding.

Applicants must fully adapt study activities for a COVID-19 pandemic environment. If primary research is completed, applicants must demonstrate in the Research Design and Methodology section of the application how they will account for COVID-19 restrictions and mitigate any risks of virus transmission among the implementing staff and the community. Award recipients will be expected to follow all COVID-19 regulations in their target country(-ies) of research.

E. SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

E.1 Selection Process: Overview

Applications will be evaluated through a two-stage process (concept note and full application stages) in accordance with the technical criteria set forth in Sections E.2.3.1 and E.3.3.1. Only selected applicants will be invited to attend a half-day virtual meeting with staff from GAYA and BHA. Those who successfully participate in the virtual meeting will be provided a written list of comments/feedback to address and asked to submit the full application package, which includes a written project description with work plan, detailed budget, budget narrative, and past performance information request. After evaluation of the applications, either award(s) will be made or, if deemed necessary or desirable by GAYA, written discussions/negotiations will be conducted with applicants who submit selected applications. GAYA reserves the right to conduct subsequent rounds of discussions/negotiations and/or request a revised application. GAYA may also limit the number of applicants with whom such subsequent discussions/negotiations would be conducted from whom revised applications are requested or to whom awards are made. Applications will be ranked based on the combined scores on their technical and financial components.

All applicants that pass the concept note review stage will be required to complete a standard pre-award assessment to confirm programmatic and administrative/financial capacity to meet all applicable USAID rules and regulations for cost reimbursable grants before the award is issued. This assessment requests information regarding relevant financial policies and systems, recent financial audits, programmatic experience with the project's target population, and the organization's capacity to follow USAID stipulated award conditions. Any identified compliance risks will be incorporated into the capacity and action plan in the sub-award agreement. GAYA reserves the right to terminate the application process for any applicants which do not meet the requirements of a standard pre-award assessment.

The concept note includes a request for written narrative describing the project and a high-level budget that outlines the major cost categories anticipated for the grant.

Applicants who successfully complete the concept note review stage will be asked to complete Save the Children pre-award assessment before being invited to a meeting with GAYA and BHA.

The full application package includes a narrative application, an implementation timeline, detailed budget, budget narrative, a dissemination plan, and past performance information. Applications will be evaluated using the technical and financial criteria set forth in Section E.3.3.1. Applications will be ranked based on the combined scores on their technical and financial components.

After evaluation and ranking of the applications, either award(s) will be recommended to BHA or, if deemed necessary or desirable by GAYA, written discussions/negotiations will be conducted with top-scoring applicants to address reviewer questions and/or negotiate modifications to the technical or financial application.

Save the Children reserves the right to determine the resulting level of funding for the award(s).

E.2 Concept Note Application

To be considered for a PIA, all applicants must submit a concept note before the published deadline, which is the first step in the PIA application. Only selected applicants, and those who pass the pre-award assessment mentioned in Section E.1 will be invited to complete the full application package.

E.2.1 Content of Concept Note and Required Format

Applicants must submit concept notes in compliance with the guidelines under Sections E2.2 and E.2.3.1 of this RFA. Concept notes shall be submitted in accordance with the general content of the Concept Template of this RFA, included as Attachment 1. Concept notes may be submitted in French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Dari or Bengali.

Concept Notes that do not adhere to those guidelines will not be considered for funding.

E.2.2 Concept Note Submission

Concept notes must be submitted electronically to: GAYA_SmallGrant@savechildren.org with GAYA *Program Improvement Award RFA* and the name of the lead applicant as the subject line. Concept note submissions must contain:

- Attachment 1 - Concept note & budget summary and Eligibility criteria checklist

E.2.3 Concept Note Evaluation and Selection

GAYA will establish a Technical Review Committee under the guidelines of section 3.4 for this RFA.

The GAYA Technical Review Committee will evaluate and score all concept notes, based on the selection criteria set forth below. The concept note template also includes a section requesting a brief summary of the project.

Once the Technical Review Committee has reviewed and evaluated the concept notes, selected applicants will be asked to complete Save the Children's pre-award assessment before being invited to a virtual meeting with GAYA and BHA. Those who successfully participate in the virtual meeting will be provided a written list of comments/feedback to address and asked to submit the full application package. The full application package and guidance will be provided at that time.

E.2.3.1 Concept note evaluation criteria (maximum 50 points)

Criteria	Description
<p>Project Goals, Activities, and Expected Results</p> <p>20 Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the existing gender and/or youth integration knowledge, attitude, or practice gap that has been identified in the development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response community. • States the project’s overall goal(s) and objectives, explaining how the objectives contribute to the goal(s) and address the gender and/or youth integration knowledge, attitude, or practice gap identified. • Problem and solution are tied to at least one of the priority areas mentioned in section B3 of this RFA. • Lists major interventions/activities that will be implemented during the project to achieve stated objectives. • Details the proposed organizational benefit to the applicant and the potential benefit to the broader implementing partner community once the project is complete. • Demonstrates multi-stakeholder involvement, especially with local partners, different gender groups, and young people. This involvement may include a single group of stakeholders across multiple countries, more than one implementer, or a combination of implementers and local stakeholders. • Describes how their approach has or will be informed by collaborative or participatory design methods.
<p>Contributions to GAYA Objectives</p> <p>25 Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively contributes to the knowledge base or skill capacity of GAYA’s content focus areas in a manner that is consistent with GAYA’s strategic objectives and principles. • Demonstrates how the application builds on (e.g., cites) and complements existing tools, research, or expertise in food security and resilience. • Contributes knowledge that is applicable to the larger development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response community, including multiple implementers in multiple countries.
<p>Budget</p> <p>5 Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget is realistic for the amount of work proposed and technical goals of the project. • Summary budget takes into account major cost items for the proposed project. • Demonstrates understanding of project accounting, exchange rate accounting, and USAID costs principles.

E.3 Full Application

Those applicants who successfully submit a concept note, pass a pre-award assessment, and pass through the virtual meeting with GAYA, will be issued a written list of comments/feedback to address and asked to submit a full application. The application includes a written narrative, work plan with activity schedule, detailed budget, budget narrative, past performance reference form and dissemination plan.

E.3.1 Content of Application and Required Format

Applicants must submit applications in compliance with the guidelines under Sections E.3.2 and E.3.3.1 of this RFA. Applications that do not adhere to those guidelines will not be considered for funding.

Applications may be submitted in French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Dari or Bengali.

Full application packages, including templates and guidance, will be issued at the time of invitation to those applicants who have been asked to submit a full application.

E.3.2 Application Submission

Applications must be submitted electronically to: GAYA_SmallGrant@savechildren.org with *GAYA Program Improvement Award Full Application* and the name of the lead applicant as the subject line. Applications must contain the following materials:

- Technical Narrative – not to exceed 9 pages
- Work plan with activity schedule – not to exceed 2 pages
- Detailed Budget – no page limit
- Budget Narrative –not to exceed 10 pages
- Past Performance Information – not to exceed 2 pages
- Dissemination Plan

E.3.3 Application Evaluation and Selection

The GAYA Technical Review Committee will evaluate and score all applications based on the selection criteria set forth below. Once the Technical Review Committee has reviewed and evaluated the applications, applications will be ranked based on the combined scores on their technical and financial components.

After ranking of the applications, either award(s) will be recommended to BHA or, if deemed necessary or desirable by GAYA, written discussions/negotiations will be conducted with top-scoring applicants to address reviewer questions and/or negotiate modifications to the technical or financial application.

E.3.3.1 Application evaluation criteria (maximum 100 points)

The maximum points possible between the technical and financial criteria is 100 points.

Criteria	Description
<p>Activity Objectives</p> <p>20 Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity objectives and/or study questions are clearly stated. • Demonstrates clear understanding of the gender and/or youth data use problem to be addressed by the proposed process improvement, innovation, and research. • Describes the gender and/or youth data use knowledge, attitude, practice, process, tool, and/or resource gap (the purpose) that has been identified in the implementing community that this project will address. • Demonstrates the significant need for the proposed solution. • Describes how their approach has or will be informed by collaborative or participatory design methods.
<p>Design and Implementation Plan, and Implementation Timeline</p> <p>20 Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall design, methodology, and implementation plan are well reasoned, well organized, and based on sound rationale. • If the proposal involves collection of primary data, the methodological approach, sampling strategy, tools, and analysis plan align with the purpose, objectives, and research questions. • Feasibility of work plan (especially with regards to time required for each step).
<p>Deliverables and Plan for Utilization and Socialization</p> <p>25 Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly describes the nature and format of the deliverables/learning product(s). • Clearly demonstrates how the deliverables/learning products from this award will be packaged and disseminated to reach the maximum number of development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response activity implementers and motivate uptake. • If a research award: demonstrates that proposed study findings have a high likelihood of being translated into or scaled up as improved food security and resilience processes, practices, policy, or products. • The application describes how the deliverables are envisioned to be utilized by the implementing partner community, relevant communities of practice, and other key development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response stakeholders. • Describe how the final results and products will be utilized by the staff involved in this project, how it will be further rolled out within the organization, and the expected organizational benefits once the project is complete.
<p>Contribution to GAYA Objectives</p> <p>15 Points</p>	<p><i>For reference, see GAYA’s background and RFA focus in Section B3.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed activity substantively addresses at least one priority area as described in Section B3 of this RFA.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positively contributes to the knowledge base or skill capacity in a manner that is consistent with GAYA’s strategic objectives and principles (see 2-pager here).
Applicants’ Roles and Background 10 Points	<p><i>This criterion applies to the combined experience of the Lead Applicant, collaborating organization(s), and any other partners/collaborators.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Names and roles of the Lead Applicant, each collaborating organization(s), and any other partners are clearly defined in a table format. Experience working in food security and resilience in emergency and/or non-emergency contexts. Relevant experience within the past three years and capacity to carry out proposed study. Demonstrated capacity of Lead Applicant to lead, manage, and execute research or related activities of similar magnitude and scope. Demonstrates multi-stakeholder involvement, especially with local partners, different gender groups, and young people. This involvement may include a single group of stakeholders across multiple countries, more than one implementer, or a combination of implementers and local stakeholders.
Budget and Budget Narrative 5 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget is sufficient, allowable, and realistic for the proposed activity. The budget takes into account major cost items for the proposed activity and demonstrates there are adequate resources for the awardees to carry out the proposed activity.
Developing Country Preference 5 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application is led by and/or includes equitable partnership with research institutions, HEIs, or NGOs headquartered in developing countries, as defined by USAID’s List of Developing Countries.

E.3.4 Technical Review Committee

GAYA will establish the Technical Review Committee for this RFA. Collectively, the technical experts will have academic, professional, and implementation experience relevant to the specific application. The technical review committee will make the final selection of successful applicants. BHA will provide final approval.

Technical review committee members will be required to disclose any potential or actual conflict of interest regarding the assessment of any specific application.

Applicants are encouraged to use plain language in their submissions as not all readers will have deep technical knowledge of the research topic.

E.5 Amendments to RFA

This Program Improvement Award RFA may be amended at any time and will be posted on the [FSN Network website](#). GAYA, Save the Children, and/or USAID reserve the right to cancel this RFA at any time.

E.6 Questions

The point of contact for this RFA is Ms. Bethany Leech, GAYA Small Grants Lead Associate, GAYA_SmallGrant@savechildren.org. Questions on this RFA may be submitted to Ms. Leech in writing no later than December 9, 2022 at 5 PM ET with *GAYA Program Improvement Award RFA* and the name of the Lead Applicant as the subject line. Answers to the questions will be posted by Tuesday, December 13, 2023, 5 PM ET on the GAYA [Small Grants Program webpage](#) on the FSN Network. Common questions will be addressed during the RFA Webinar on December 6, 2022, 9 AM ET. This webinar will be recorded and shared on the FSN Network by December 13, 2022.

E.7 Non-Scored Requirements

Applications must comply with the following non-scored requirements:

- Applicants for the Program Improvement Award must submit concept notes with all required attachments before January 16, 2023, at 5pm ET
- Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements described in Section C.
- The proposed budget must not exceed USD \$240,000 and demonstrate an understanding of project activity accounting and USAID costs principles.
- Applicants invited to submit a Full Application must follow the formatting requirements found in the Full Application Package.
- Concept Notes and Applications, including all attachments and appendices, must be in French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Dari, or Bengali.

Applications that do not comply with the above requirements will not be considered for funding.

E.8 Required if Applicable Appendices

Document	Details
Letter of Support (1 Page per collaborator)	Non-binding documentation of collaborators' intent, willingness, and ability to commit to conducting research together if the proposed team receives the award.

E.9 Budget Preparation

The activity budget must be submitted using the Detailed Budget Template in Excel and Budget Narrative Template. Both templates will be proved as part of the Full Application package to applicants who are invited to submit a full application. Please follow directions in the workbook when entering numbers.

The budget should include the total cost of implementation for the activity proposed as well as any planned cost share (if any). No cost share is required.

Save the Children will not allow funding for the following categories of items:

- Procurement of commodities listed below:
 - Agricultural Commodities
 - Motor Vehicles
 - Pharmaceuticals
 - Pesticides
 - Used Equipment
 - US Government-owner excess property
 - Fertilizer
 - Military equipment
 - Surveillance equipment
 - Commodities and services for support of police or other law enforcement activities
 - Abortion equipment and services
 - Luxury goods and gambling equipment
 - Weather modification equipment
 - Construction (e.g., alteration or repair, including dredging and excavation of buildings, structures, or other real property and includes, without limitation, improvements, renovation, alteration, and refurbishment). The term includes, without limitation, roads, power plants, buildings, bridges, water treatment facilities, and vertical structures.
 - Capital Assets (e.g., land, buildings, equipment, and intellectual property).
 - Exceptions: equipment with cumulative value less than US \$5,000 and purchases of computer software will be allowed in budgets if they are essential to activity implementation.

Save the Children may request additional detailed budget information following notification to an applicant that it is under consideration for an award. If necessary, Save the Children may arrange meetings to evaluate specific elements of costs, and examine data to determine the necessity, reasonableness, and allowability of the costs reflected in the budget and their allowability per the applicable USG cost principles.

E.10 Additional Considerations

Among applications that are highly and closely ranked based on the scoring criteria in Sections E.2.3.1 and E.3.3.1, preference will be given to applicants that are registered as local entities in the country where the project or research is being implemented.

E.11 FSN Network Newsletter Enrollment

By applying for a Program Improvement Award, the Applicant's primary point of contact will be automatically enrolled in the FSN Network Bi-weekly Newsletter. Standard organizational information (e.g., email addresses, points of contact, operating country, technical expertise, etc.) for the Applicant and contributing organizations will be stored in GAYA's internal partner database and may be contacted about targeted funding and event opportunities, which are not publicized in the bi-weekly newsletter. No confidential or sensitive organizational or programmatic information will

be stored in this system. If an organization does not wish to be signed up for the newsletter or have organizational information stored in GAYA's partner database please notify Save the Children when applying. Organizations can also opt-out of receiving the newsletter or having contact information in GAYA's systems when applying or at any time during the life of the GAYA Activity by emailing GAYA_SmallGrant@savechildren.org.

F. GAYA AWARD BRANDING AND MARKING GUIDELINES

As a condition of receipt of the GAYA Program Improvement Award, adherence to the GAYA Award Branding and Marking Guidelines is required. The guidelines will be sent to applicants whose applications are selected for further review or at the time of the award.

G. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Any materials developed under this award relating to intangible property, such as intellectual property or patents, are subject to applicable rules under 2 CFR 200.315, "Intangible Property."² If applicants have intangible property developed previously under non-federal awards and are planning to use the intangible property in this award, clearly identify the intangible property and its anticipated use in the project. Applicants must also specify if the applications include any proprietary information and mark it as proprietary, if applicable.

H. OTHER APPLICABLE USAID REGULATIONS

As Save the Children is providing a sub-award under United States law, the Lead Applicant is, therefore, subject to the laws and regulations of the United States pertaining to sub-awards, including but not limited to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in the Prime Award, and USAID's Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards **Attachment X**. Where appropriate "USAID" shall mean Save the Children and "recipient" shall mean "Lead Applicant."

Awards to non-U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with the cost principles contained in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E, A Audit Requirements Subpart F and USAID Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards refer to **Attachment X** for applicable USAID Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards for both US and Non-US organizations.

I. ATTACHMENTS

² In 2 CFR 200.315, "The applicant may copyright any work subject to a copyright that was developed under a Federal award. The federal government has the right to: (1) obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data under a Federal award; and (2) Authorize other to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes." For more details, see 2 CFR 200.315 and e-CFR 401 "Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights."

Attachment 1: Concept Note Template/Content Guidance (Required for Concept Note)

This concept is the first step in applying for up to \$240,000 in funding through a GAYA Program Improvement Award. The concept should be clear, complete, and presented concisely to allow the GAYA review committee to understand your vision for the project. The concept does not need to be a written document, but it must include the following components.

Page Limitations

- The complete concept note should not exceed five (5) pages (not including this instructions page and the required USAID Disclaimer). Longer applications will not be reviewed.

Basic Formatting Requirements for Written Submissions

All concept notes must be presented in the format below and may be submitted in French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Dari or Bengali.

- Concept notes must have one-inch (or 2.5 centimetre) margins on all sides of the paper, be written on A4 or 8 ½ x 11 inch paper, single spaced and maintain the Ubuntu font. No text smaller than size 10 font should be used.

Submitted concept notes should present all sections in the order they appear in this template. More details for each section can be found in the RFA.

Concept Paper Evaluation Criteria (Maximum 50 Points)

Criteria	Description
Project Goals, Activities, and Expected Results 20 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the existing gender and/or youth integration knowledge, attitude, or practice gap that has been identified in the development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response community. • States the project's overall goal(s) and objectives, explaining how the objectives contribute to the goal(s) and address the gender and/or youth integration knowledge, attitude, or practice gap identified. • Problem and solution are tied to at least one of the priority areas mentioned in section B3 of this RFA. • Lists major interventions/activities that will be implemented during the project to achieve stated objectives. • Details the proposed organizational benefit to the applicant and the potential benefit to the broader implementing partner community once the project is complete. • Demonstrates multi-stakeholder involvement, especially with local partners, different gender groups, and young people. This involvement may include a single group of stakeholders across multiple countries, more than one implementer, or a combination of implementers and local stakeholders.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes how their approach has or will be informed by collaborative or participatory design methods.
<p>Contributions to GAYA Objectives</p> <p>25 Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positively contributes to the knowledge base or skill capacity of GAYA's content focus areas in a manner that is consistent with GAYA's strategic objectives and principles. • Demonstrates how the application builds on (e.g., cites) and complements existing tools, research, or expertise in food security and resilience. • Contributes knowledge that is applicable to the larger development and emergency food security, resilience and emergency response community, including multiple implementers in multiple countries.
<p>Budget</p> <p>5 Points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget is realistic for the amount of work proposed and technical goals of the project. • Summary budget takes into account major cost items for the proposed project. • Demonstrates understanding of project accounting, exchange rate accounting, and USAID costs principles.

General Information

Date of Submission (MM/DD/YY):

Full Legal Name of Organization:

UEI Number:

Name and Title of Point of Contact:

Telephone:

Email:

Project Title:

Full Address in Country of Implementation:

Legal Registration or Recognition Status in Country of Implementation:

Summary of Mission Statement of Organization:

Anticipated Project Start Date* (MM/DD/YY):

Anticipated Project End Date (MM/DD/YY):

Total Project Budget:

Total Funds Requested from GAYA:

Total Cost Share/Funds Leveraged (optional):

**Note that the anticipated start date should be no less than 4 months but no more than 8 months from the closing date of the relevant application cycle.*

Project Description (Brief Summary)**Concept Note Narrative**

1. PROJECT GOALS, ACTIVITIES, AND EXPECTED RESULTS

2. CONTRIBUTIONS TO GAYA OBJECTIVES (*SEE RFA FOR DETAILS*)

Budget Summary and Description

<i>Line Item</i>	<i>Amount (USD)</i>
Salary/Wages	
Fringe Benefits (If Applicable)	
Consultants/Contractual	
Travel/Local Transportation	
Trainings/Workshops/Events	
Other Direct Costs	
Indirect Costs (If Applicable)	
TOTAL:	
Cost share (optional)	

Brief Description of Major Costs under Each Line Item

<i>Line Item</i>	<i>Brief Description</i>
Salary/Wages	
Fringe Benefits (If Applicable)	

Consultants/Contractual	
Travel/Local Transportation	
Trainings/Workshops/Events	
Other Direct Costs	
Indirect Costs (If Applicable)	
Cost share (optional)	

Eligibility Criteria Checklist:

In order to process your application, please confirm that your organization:

1. Is one of the following (please specify):

- US nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
- Non-US nongovernmental organization
- For-profit organizations
- Research institutions
- Higher education institution

2. Please also confirm the following:

- Your organization is based in a country where USAID/BHA works or has funded activities in the past three years.
- Your organization has successfully received and managed USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance funding within the past three years (2020, 2021, 2022). This includes receiving funds as the Prime awardee, or any level of sub awardee.
- Your organization will be able to demonstrate the capacity to manage awards of comparable size or above (US \$240,000+)?
- If your application involves multiple organizations/entities, a Lead Applicant has been selected.
- Your organization a legally recognized organizational entity under applicable law of the country where the activity will be implemented?

- Your organization is registered with the US government and has a Unique Entity Identifier number, or can get one by the time of award?
- Your organization can comply with [SAM.gov requirements](#)?

Attachment 2: USAID Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards

[Click here to access the document](#)