



NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

TITLE: PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Issuance Date: October 26, 2015
Questions Due: November 9, 2015; 9:00 am local Pretoria Time
Closing Date and Time: November 23, 2015; 9:00 am local Pretoria time

Submit to: HRGSouthernAfrica@usaid.gov

I. Purpose Statement

The Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG), within the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is pleased to announce the availability of \$8 million (subject to the finalization of funding levels) for USAID Missions and Offices for human rights programming and projects. These resources are made available to USAID Missions and Offices who are encouraged to submit applications for projects that will:

- **Respond to urgent or unanticipated human rights challenges;**
- **Respond to emerging windows of opportunity in the protection and promotion of human rights.**

All awards (grants or cooperative agreements) under this request for concept papers will be administered through and managed by USAID/Southern Africa.

Qualified organizations in South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia or Botswana interested in this funding opportunity or those organizations interested in regional programming covering more than one country in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) should submit questions by the due date above to USAID/Southern Africa at usaidsouthernafricadisabilitiesgrant@usaid.gov.

The issuance of this announcement does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government (USG), nor does it commit the USG to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any application. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted and to negotiate separately with an applicant if such an action is considered to be in the interest of the USG. The program is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. Awards shall be made in accordance with 2 CFR

200, ADS 303, and USAID Standard Provisions, including the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Non-Governmental Organizations. Environmental soundness in design and implementation must comply with any 22 CFR 216 determinations.

II. Background

In 2013, the Agency's [Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Strategy](#) elevated the focus on human rights and committed to moving beyond the traditional *promotion* of human rights to expand our focus on human rights *protection*.

III. What the Fund Supports

USAID seeks applications for projects that respond to **urgent or unanticipated human rights challenges or emerging windows of opportunity in the protection and promotion of human rights**. DRG's Human Rights Division generally describes three pillars of programming that can support human rights promotion and protection, which—in conjunction with the time-sensitive requirement of this funding—may be illustrative of the types of programs supported through HRGP:

- **Environment building** focuses on strengthening the normative frameworks (laws and policies) and institutional architecture that help states respect their human rights obligations, as well as building the capacity of non-state actors to promote those rights, monitor compliance and demand accountability. Examples include but are not limited to: (1) drafting and implementing laws, policies, strategies and safeguards that help countries meet international obligations and commitments; (2) strengthening the capacity of National Human Rights Institutions and human rights defenders; (3) supporting formal or informal rights education efforts; (4) efforts to ensure constitutional and legal frameworks do not institutionalize gender inequality or other forms of discrimination; (5) advocating for institutional safeguards that prevent development efforts from violating the rights of the poor, indigenous peoples, and others; and (6) fostering constructive dialogue and reform efforts around Universal Periodic Review(s).
- **Response** refers to short- or medium-term assistance actions that can be taken to help mitigate the immediate impact of widespread and/or systematic violations or abuses, regardless of our ability to end them or “set them right.” Examples include but are not limited to: (1) protecting members of at-risk groups such as political opposition, indigenous peoples, populations vulnerable to human trafficking or forced labor, ethnic, religious or other types of minorities – including those based on sexual orientation or gender identity – through increased monitoring and reporting; (2) assistance for frontline human rights defenders who are under threat; (3) efforts to improve the safe and secure documentation of atrocity crimes and rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence, to potentially support future accountability efforts; and (4) raising awareness and understanding of human rights violations by public and private actors in order to prompt a policy response and prevent further harm.

- **Remedy** includes those actions that assist individual victims to access justice and efforts that help societies recover from past violations or abuses (i.e. transitional justice). Effective remedies may involve both judicial and non-judicial measures to provide redress to individual victims of human rights violations or abuses, and may play a role in broader accountability and transitional justice efforts. Examples include: (1) efforts to assist victims of human trafficking or gender-based violence with prosecution or other legal remedies; (2) support truth and reconciliation efforts in countries that have experienced mass atrocities; (3) support for strategic litigation such as cases seeking to compensate indigenous peoples and others who have been forced from their land; and (4) provide trauma healing for victims of torture and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment.

USAID/Southern Africa will prioritize applications that explore ways to protect marginalized and vulnerable populations, conduct violence and atrocity prevention and strengthen the rule of law. USAID/Southern Africa is looking for approaches that strengthen the capacity of civil society to demand accountability of government to citizens, particularly through civil society networks and coalition building. USAID/Southern Africa will also prioritize applications that explore integration between different technical sectors and linkages between public and private sectors.

IV. Proposal Funding Limits

This is a world-wide funding opportunity however; USAID/Southern Africa is limited to the submission of grants ranging from \$100,000 up to \$750,000, and spanning from 12 months to 3 years in duration. In rare cases, larger awards will be considered.

Selected submissions will be considered as part of the larger global competition. Therefore, it should be noted that selection by the mission to go forward into the global competition does not guarantee selection for funding.

V. Applicant Eligibility

Applications should be from qualified U.S. or non-U.S. entities, such as private, non-profit organizations (or for-profit companies willing to forego profits), including private voluntary organizations, universities, research organizations, professional associations, and relevant special interest associations working in **South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia or Botswana or organizations interested in working in two or more countries in Southern Africa. Local organizations are strongly encouraged to apply.**

Partners new to USAID are encouraged to submit applications. Prior to award USAID must undertake necessary pre-award reviews of these organizations. This process may significantly delay start up so organizations should take this into account and plan their implementation dates and activities accordingly.

USAID will not accept applications from individuals. All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. PIOs are not eligible to apply for funding under this program.

VI. The Process

A. General Guidance

USAID/Southern Africa has been informed that global funding is available to implement programs inclusive of people with disabilities. Interested and qualified organizations operating in South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia or Botswana or those organizations interested in regional programming covering more than one country in the SADC region should submit their applications to USAID/Southern Africa.

- 1. Contact USAID/Southern Africa** – Interested organizations in South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia or Botswana or those organizations interested in regional programming covering more than one country in the SADC region should contact USAID/Southern Africa with questions or to apply. Other organizations operating in Southern Africa should contact their local mission or the mission responsible for managing activities in the proposed country to assess interest and ability to participate in this funding opportunity.
- 2. Submitting applications** - Organizations should follow the instructions in Attachment A addressing the evaluation criteria listed below. Applications must be submitted to HRGSouthernAfrica@usaid.gov
- 3. Review Process** – USAID/Southern Africa will conduct the first review based on the evaluation criteria listed below. After review USAID/Southern Africa may request clarifications/revisions to applications submitted. Selected applications will be forwarded to DCHA/DRG Washington for further review and final selection. Final determinations will be communicated to applicants by the USAID/Southern Africa. All organizations submitting an application will be notified regarding whether or not they have been selected.
- 4. Award and Compliance with USAID Regulations** – USAID may award either a cooperative agreement or a grant for this opportunity. The determination will be made during negotiation of award and will be based on the technical application proposed. The links below provide more information on USAID award types and compliance requirements. Any cost implications with regard to compliance should be considered when developing your budget:

<http://www.usaid.gov/partnership-opportunities/respond-solicitation>

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf>

<http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>

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B. Submission Deadlines

Applications must be submitted to USAID/Southern Africa by the date and time on the cover page of this announcement. Applications submitted after this deadline may not be considered.

C. Application Format

Applicants must utilize the required application format provided in **Attachment A - Required Application Format** for their Application. Applications must be typed or electronically completed in English on the application form (minimum 11 point font). Handwritten responses will not be accepted. The 8-page limit must be respected. The cover page, annexes to the budget and letters of cooperation between the Applicant and other partners are not subject to the page limit. Be sure to complete all information requested on the application form.

VII. Application Criteria

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by USAID/Southern Africa and (if applicable) by DCHA/DRG. Below are the evaluation criteria that will be considered when reviewing the applications.

1. Applicant Information (20 points)

To receive a full score the organization will have:

- Extensive involvement in human rights or related issues.
- Previous experience in project management or managing activities related to those proposed in the concept paper.
- A clear understanding of the context and related challenges in the country/region of programming.
- A clear mission, set of objectives and orientation that is in line with proposed activities.

2. Project description (50 points)

To receive a full score the project must:

- Show a clear link between the described need and the proposed activities.
- Describe the impact of the proposed project on existing USAID programs, activities or strategies.
- Define who will benefit from the project (children, youth, adults; people with disabilities; marginalized populations; government institutions; local community; schools, etc.; disaggregated by sex and type of disability if possible).
- Provide an activity schedule that is well defined and realistic.
- Clearly demonstrate how change will be affected.

- Describe measurable indicators that will be used to show the project impact and success.

3. Sustainability (15 points)

To receive a full score the organization will:

- Show evidence of linkages with existing programs or organizations in the country where activities are being proposed.
- Demonstrate how activities or results will continue beyond the life of the project.

4. Gender Considerations (15 points)

To receive a full score the organization will

- The promotion of gender equality and female empowerment should be thoughtfully integrated into the main objectives and activities of all applications, in accordance with USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy.

IX. Reporting Requirements

Reporting on the program is required. Awardees must comply with ADS 203 requirements including establishing indicators, targets, baseline, and assessing data quality. The exact format for, preparation of, and timing for submission of all reports will be determined by USAID/Southern Africa at the time of award. In addition to the partners' M & E activities for the project, applications are encouraged to include a specific evaluation plan and report on impact, lessons learned, and/or best practices.

Applicants are encouraged to propose indicators in the application.

Attachment A – Application Template

Please note that the application submitted should not exceed 5 pages.

Country:

Requested Amount (USD):

Program Title:

Proposed Start and End Date:

Contact information:

1. **Problem Statement.** Provide a brief overview of the human rights challenges in the country. (ideally drawing on the Mission’s rapid human rights “landscape analysis”) *(1000 characters max)*
2. **Purpose.** Provide a brief summary of the proposed project. Include a statement of purpose of a goal statement (ie what do you hope to achieve with this activity), specific objectives to meet that goal, proposed activities, deliverables, and operational parameters (ex. location, expected number of beneficiaries, timeframe for implementation, etc.). Setting a reasonable goal and objectives for the scope, funding, and timeframe of the proposed activity is important to understand the brief context of what is planned. *(1500 characters max)*
3. **Human Rights Context.** What specific right(s) does this activity promote or protect (e.g. freedom from slavery, freedom from arbitrary detention, freedom of assembly, etc.). Is the country a signatory to a relevant international (e.g. CEDAW) or regional human rights instrument that commits the country to these obligations? Does their national legal framework support that commitment (e.g. as expressed in constitutions, domestic laws or national action plans)? *(1500 characters max)*
4. **Gender Dynamics.** Explain how gender equality and female empowerment is considered in terms of the problem to be addressed by this activity in accordance with USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy. If the gender dynamics are not well understood in the context of what is proposed explain briefly how the activity will examine gender dynamics. *(500 characters max)*
5. **Urgent or Emerging Need.** Explain how this proposal addresses an urgent or emerging human rights need, or represents a window of opportunity in the protection and promotion of human rights in your country context. *(1000 characters max)*
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation.** Briefly describe the monitoring and evaluation plan for the project. Include a maximum of 3 illustrative indicators and targets designed to measure progress against the stated objectives of the program included in section 2 of the proposal (preferably a mix of output and impact indicators), relevant baseline data to be tracked/reported that provides context for measurement and implementation, and methods for data collection. At least one of the indicators should be a relevant Standard Foreign Assistance Framework Indicator (“F” Indicator) (

<http://www.state.gov/f/indicators>). Relevant indicators from the framework may be found in one of the following areas:

- 1.3.5 Immediate Protection of Civilians in Conflict
- 1.5.3 Trafficking in Persons
- 2.4 Civil Society
 - 2.1.1 Constitutional, Laws and Legal Systems
 - 2.1.4 Human Rights
 - 2.4.1 Civic Participation
 - 2.4.2 Media Freedom
- 4.7.4 Inclusive Economic Law and Property Rights

7. Briefly describe the work of your organization and any proposed partner(s). (*500 characters max*)
8. Please Provide an illustrative budget