

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
Bureau of African Affairs
U.S. Department of State (DOS)

I. AWARD INFORMATION

Announcement Type:	New Announcement
Funding Opportunity Title:	Regional Harmonization to Preventing Violent Extremism in Coastal West Africa
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:	19.222
Award Amount:	\$1,679,012 Proposals that exceed this amount will be deemed NOT competitive
Number of Awards:	1 (One)
Cost Sharing Requirement:	Not Required
Assistance Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Funding Type:	Discretionary
Closing Date for Submission of Applications:	Complete proposal packages must be submitted through www.grants.gov by July 10, 11:59pm EST .
Deadline for Receipt of Questions: (Optional)	July 01, 5:00pm EST
Electronic Requirement:	Yes E-mailed, faxed or mailed proposal packages, or individual submission documents, will <u>NOT</u> be considered.
Eligibility Category:	U.S.-based non-profit/non-governmental organizations subject to section 501(c) (3) of the U.S. tax code; For-Profit Organizations; Overseas non-governmental non-profit organizations; Foreign Public Entities and Public International Organizations

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400 g, it is U.S. Department of State policy **not** to award profit under federal assistance instruments.

Type of Applicant: Organizations. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

Number of Applications: One (1) per applicant organization.

Note: Organizations may form consortia and submit a combined proposal. However, only **one** organization may be designated as the lead applicant. The lead applicant must meet the eligibility criteria listed in this NOFO.

Anticipated Award Date: The successful applicant(s) will receive notification within approximately four-to-five weeks of the closing of this announcement. The U.S. Department of State is under no obligation to fund any of the proposals submitted under this funding opportunity.

Est. Project Start Date: September 2020

Est. Project End Date: September 2022

Project Duration: 24 months

This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov and may be amended. Answers to questions from eligible interested organizations will be posted as attachments to this NOFO. Applicants should regularly check the www.grants.gov for the most recent information pertaining to this funding opportunity.

This NOFO consists of the following sections:

- I. Award Information
- II. Funding Opportunity Description
- III. Application Submission
- IV. Application Evaluation
- V. Award Issuance and Administration
- VI. Agency Contacts

Eligible organizations interested in submitting an application are encouraged to review this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of project sought and the application submission requirements and review process as outlined in this NOFO.

II. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND

The threat of violent extremism continues to pose major security challenges to the U.S. and the global community. As outlined in the most recent version of the [*National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America*](#) (October 2018), “counterterrorism remains a top priority for this Administration.” It emphasizes that “unless we counter terrorist radicalization and recruitment, we will be fighting a never-ending battle against terrorism in the homeland, overseas, and online. Our strategy, therefore, will champion and institutionalize prevention and create a global prevention architecture with the help of civil society, private partners, and the technology industry.”

The countries of Coastal West Africa (in particular, Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo) face increasing security challenges as the violent extremism threat in the Sahel grows, particularly in Burkina Faso. In light of negative trends, these countries have begun efforts to protect their borders, stave off the threat and build resilience. In recognition of these risks, the coastal countries and Burkina Faso established the “Accra Initiative” in September 2017 with the intent to build trust and confidence between governments. The partnership thus far, especially with respect to high-level engagements and military/intelligence cooperation, has been laudable. Government engagement with vulnerable populations, particularly in remote border areas, is critical to countering the regional threat, and without regional coordination, malicious actors can use intercommunal or cross-border grievances to exploit distrust and incite violence. It is especially important for governments to engage with civil society or local communities, including across borders.

The coastal countries of West Africa have an opportunity to take preventative action against violent extremism by building institutions at the local, national, and regional level that engage both government and citizens to build trust and develop joint mechanisms to thwart violent extremist infiltration into society. Such efforts can inform conversations at the national, bilateral, and eventually regional levels such as the Accra Initiative.

PROJECT’S GOALS

The goal of this project is to build ties between communities in remote border regions vulnerable to violent extremism with government to inform national and regional-level Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) policies and response. Countries of focus will be Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Cote d’Ivoire, and should include coordination with Burkina Faso as appropriate in both the local and regional context.

PROJECT’S DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The ‘Regional Harmonization to Preventing Violent Extremism in Coastal West Africa’ project has 3 key objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Identify six border communities (administrative or geographic areas) that are vulnerable to violent extremism and represent a strategic priority for the country/region.

- **Objective 2:** Building off established government-civil society linkages, enable selected communities to articulate local grievances and existing resiliencies to violent extremism to government representatives to inform national discussions on violent extremism prevention strategies.
- **Objective 3:** Support governmental and civil society regional engagement between Benin, Togo, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire to develop a shared P/CVE strategy, to be coordinated with the Accra Initiative as possible.

The proposal narrative should be organized into the following components

1) Introduction

2) Conflict/Context Analysis

Successful applicants under this funding opportunity will describe an approach based on a context and conflict analysis of the violent extremist threat and existing resiliencies in the Coastal West African countries. Please provide background on the conflict/context in which the proposed project will be operating.

3) Theory of Change

Provide a theory of change for your project that describes the connections between the project's activities, key intermediate outcomes, objectives, and the long-term goal.

4) Planned Activities/Implementation Plan

Applicant should address the following points:

- Project Goal and Objectives:* Fully explain the project's goal and objectives. The overarching goal should outline what the overall activities and objectives should be building towards. The objectives of the project should describe where you expect to be by the end of your project. The objectives should be measurable, results-focused, and achievable within the timeframe of the project.
- Activities:* All activities should be clearly developed and sufficiently detailed to understand the resource and time requirements, and how they contribute to the objectives and goals. Please identify: target areas for activities; target participant groups or selection criteria for participants; how the project will engage relevant stakeholders; and local partners as appropriate.
- Identified Border Communities:* This project is intended to work with six border communities that are vulnerable to violent extremism. The proposal should address how the project will identify and engage the relevant communities.
- Resources and Timeline for Activities:* Demonstrate how the proposed activities build upon one another and are logically sequenced to achieve the desired outcomes. The applicant

must submit a plan that sets out a realistic outline of tasks and deliverables, anticipated time frames, challenges, opportunities and due dates, and persons responsible for achieving each task. This should be a narrative description.

- e. *Do No Harm*: List any significant risks of harm to implementers, participants, beneficiaries or their communities, or of exacerbating conflict or creating new conflicts, which may result from this project. Include specific risks to women and girls. Consider how resources or skills provided might be misused, create grievances among non-recipients, or cause key actors to react in harmful ways. Explain how these risks will be minimized.
- f. *Coordination with ongoing P/CVE initiatives*: Applicant should identify existing P/CVE initiatives in the region and address how they will coordinate with and build off of these efforts.

5) Sustainability of Impact

Clearly indicate how U.S. Government financing for this project will result in long-term capacity building for P/CVE in Coastal West Africa. Outline the possibilities for institutionalization of capacity building functions as well as the other donors who may be able to lend support after the project is completed.

6) Past Performance

Provide a description of the applicant organization, including a proven record of successful projects and past performance in Africa, preferably West Africa, in the areas of capacity building assistance and CVE. Describe past performance and experience in working with host governments, local organizations, and communities, particularly on, and preferably in, West Africa. The roles and responsibilities of primary staff under this project should be defined, and the proposal should demonstrate how the project will engage or obtain support from relevant stakeholders.

7) Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan should include the following:

- Narrative explaining how M&E will be carried out and who will be responsible for M&E activities;
- Logical Framework (use provided template) listing by project objectives the output- and outcome-based performance indicators with baselines (if available) and quarterly and cumulative targets; data collection tools; data sources; types of data disaggregation, if applicable; and frequency of data collection.

III. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application package has been received by www.grants.gov in its **entirety**. Incomplete applications will be considered **ineligible**. Applicants are urged to begin the application process well before the submission deadline. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps.

Please refer to the **Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)** for additional application

submission instructions, including information on required documents and format. Please follow both, the PSI and the NOFO, to ensure that the proposal package submission is in full compliance with the requirements. Proposal submissions that do not meet all of the requirements outlined in this NOFO and PSI will **not** be considered.

Department of State bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions via www.grants.gov. Incomplete application packages will not be considered.

Applicants, including U.S. affiliates of international organizations must provide a valid Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), and **completed www.sam.gov registration** when submitting application on www.grants.gov in response to this NOFO. **Applicants that do not have a valid DUNS number and completed www.sam.gov registration will NOT be eligible for consideration.** Implementing partners/sub-recipient organizations are required to have a valid DUNS number.

In accordance with applicable Federal awarding agency's policy, applicants must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity.

It is Department of State policy that English is the official language and U.S. dollar is the controlling currency. Proposal and related supporting documents must be English and accompanying budget in U.S. dollars.

IV. APPLICATION EVALUATION

Department of State/Bureau of African Affairs will issue an award to the applicant whose proposal represents the best value to the U.S. Government on the basis of technical merit, efficient use of U.S. Government funds, and satisfactory organizational capacity. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability to be measured by a responsibility determination. Applications should contain the applicants' best terms from both cost and technical standpoints. The implementing partners (sub-recipients) of the primary recipient will be subject to Department of State approval.

Eligible applications will be evaluated by an independent review panel consisting of subject matter experts from other DOS bureaus/or offices, U.S. Embassies, and/or other USG agencies. Final approval resides with the DOS Grants Officer.

The following criteria will serve as a standard which all **eligible** applications will be evaluated against. Each eligible application will be evaluated and scored on the review criteria using a 100-point scale.

The review panel will apply the following criteria when rating proposals:

1. Quality of Project Idea – 20 Points

- The proposal is responsive to a call for programming designed to build local, national, and regional capacity and coordination as it relates to P/CVE in the context of Coastal

West Africa – and identifies relevant local and international dynamics and drivers against which programming will be designed;

- The proposal clearly states a theory of change;
- The proposal outlines a vision for a “whole of society” approach – meaning the key sectors and actors (e.g. women, religious leaders, youth) who will be the project’s key beneficiaries and protagonists;
- The proposal directly connects proposed activities with the desired outcomes, tying back to the project objectives.

2. Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 20 Points

- The proposal provides a detailed work plan of proposed project activities and includes a clear articulation of how these activities will contribute to the overall project’s goals and objectives;
- The proposal demonstrates a willingness to be flexible and an ability to adjust to the situation on the ground;
- The proposal considers risk of harm which may result from this project and explains how it will be minimized;
- The proposal articulates activities that are placed in a reasonable time frame, relevant to the project, and attainable.

3. Organizational Capability and Record of Performance – 20 Points

- The proposal demonstrates a proven record of successful projects and past performance in Africa, preferably West Africa, in the areas of P/CVE, capacity building assistance and regional coordination;
- The proposal articulates past performance and experience in working with host governments, local organizations, and communities, particularly on, and preferably in West Africa;
- The proposal clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of primary staff under this project;
- The proposal addresses how the project will engage or obtain support from relevant stakeholders.

4. Cost Effectiveness – 10 Points

- All budget items are allocable, reasonable and **necessary**, and linked to project objectives and demonstrate efficient use of U.S. Government funds;
- All costs, including the administration of the proposal budget, including salaries and honoraria, are explained and justified for the work involved.

Note: If your organization has a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include your latest NICRA as a pdf file. Organizations that have previously established indirect cost rates must submit timely indirect cost proposals to the cognizant agency as required by Appendix III & IV of 2 CFR 200. If indirect cost proposals have not been submitted for re-negotiation as required, out-of-date NICRAs may not be considered.

NOTE: This NOFO does not require cost-share. Applicants may voluntarily offer cost share; however, it will not be factored in during proposal review.

5. Project Monitoring and Evaluation – 20 Points

- The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan includes:
 - Narrative explaining how M&E will be carried out and who will be responsible for M&E activities;
 - Logical Framework listing by project objectives the output- and outcome-based performance indicators with baselines (if available) and quarterly and cumulative targets; data collection tools; data sources; types of data disaggregation, if applicable; and frequency of data collection.

6. Sustainability of Impact – 10 Points

- Clearly indicates how U.S. Government funding will result in long-term capacity building and coordination for P/CVE in Coastal West Africa;
- Outlines possibilities for institutionalization of the capacity building functions with a local organization, university, etc.;
- Reference other donors who may be able to lend support after the end of the life of the project.

V. AWARD ISSUANCE AND ADMINISTRATION:

Issuance of this NOFO does **not** constitute a commitment on the part of the Department of State to issue an award nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Furthermore, award cannot be issued until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal DOS procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Department of State reserves the right to fund any or none of the proposals submitted and reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase the budget in accordance with the needs of the project and the availability of funds.

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400 g, it is U.S. Department of State policy **not** to award profit under federal assistance instruments.

The decision for the award determination rests with the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is a USG official delegated the authority by the DOS Procurement Executive to award and administer the award.

The award Agreement is the only authorizing document and will be issued electronically through the State Assistance Management System (SAMS Domestic).

This award is intended to be a Cooperative Agreement (CA) with substantial involvement from the awarding bureau (specify) in the implementation of this project. Successful applicant will be expected to coordinate closely with the DC-based awarding bureau (bureau acronym). Areas of substantial involvement will be outlined in the award's terms and conditions.

Leahy Vetting Requirement: Leahy vetting is required when training or assistance is provided to foreign security forces, including when such assistance is provided under a grant or cooperative agreement. Leahy Vetting requirements will be fully outlined in the final award Agreement. However, as noted below, training or assistance to any military or paramilitary forces or members is not permitted under this award.

Military: In developing proposals, programming should not involve any military or paramilitary forces or members.

Pending availability of funds and satisfactory performance, including compliance with the DOS' and subject award's terms and conditions, (bureau) may consider extending the period of performance and increasing funding to the subject award.

2 CFR §200.501 requires domestic/US & foreign non-federal entities that expend \$750,000, or more, in federal assistance during organization's fiscal year to have a single or project-specific audit conducted for that year. In addition, the entity must report the collected audit data elements on the form SF-SAC and submit it to the FAC. Any findings such as material weaknesses, significant deficiencies, or material non-compliance are reported on the SF-SAC.

COVID-19: Recognizing that COVID-19 has limited where and when speakers and participants can travel, the applicant must also include a COVID19 adaptation plan which addresses how project objectives can be accomplished should restricted travel remain through some portion of the period of performance. The AF region may experience longer impact. Adaptation plans could include remote or virtual training tools or other solutions proposed by the applicant. Adaptation plans should demonstrate flexibility and be illustrative to indicate how the project activities could be altered. Note that some changes from the DOS-approved Scope of Work may require prior approval from the Grants Officer if enacted.

Reporting Requirements:

Recipient will be required to submit **Quarterly** Progress and Quarterly Financial Reports (SF-425), unless special conditions apply, describing key activities undertaken during the reporting period towards accomplishment of the stated objectives. Financial Reports provide a means of monitoring expenditures. More detailed reporting requirements will be outlined in the Award Agreement.

If reports or any other supporting documents are provided in both English and a foreign language, it must be stated in each version that the **English language version is the controlling version. U.S. dollar is the controlling currency.** Financial reports must be submitted in U.S. dollars.

Other Information:

Mandatory disclosures (2 CFR 200.113)

Non-federal entity, recipient or applicant for a federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of federal criminal

law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. Non-federal entities that have received a Federal award including the term and condition outlined in Appendix XII of the 2 CFR 200 -- Award Terms and Conditions for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters -- are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to www.sam.gov .

Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in §200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment.

Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)

A federal awarding agency, prior to making a federal award, will review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through www.sam.gov (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). Applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through www.sam.gov and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through www.sam.gov. Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system. Applicant organizations must demonstrate adherence to equal opportunity employment practices and commitment to non-discrimination with respect to beneficiaries. Non-discrimination includes equal treatment without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and political affiliation. Applicants are reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits transactions with or support to individuals or organizations associated with terrorism.

Proposals that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative or a designate to terrorist organization or narcotics trafficker, including elected members of government, will NOT be considered. This provision must be included in any sub-awards/sub-contracts issued under this award.

VI. AGENCY CONTACTS

Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this NOFO must request it in writing by the deadline for questions specified on page 1, cover page. Information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as a 'Questions and Answers' attachment to this NOFO.

Any questions concerning this NOFO should be submitted in writing, by email, to the Department of State's Bureau of African Affairs/Regional Peace and Security (ShoreyMA@state.gov **and** CasparKA@state.gov) along with the project's title as outlined in the NOFO; the funding opportunity number; and applicant's legal name and organizational status.