



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Subject: **REQUEST FOR CONCEPT PAPERS under RFA NUMBER: RFA-165-16-000002**

Title: **Expanding Participation of People with Disabilities Program – 2015 Disability Funding**

RFA Issuance Date: January 08, 2016

Deadline for Questions/Clarifications: January 13, 2016

Pre-Bidders Conference January 15, 2016, 12:00-14:00 Skopje Time

at Hotel PORTA, Bul. Jane Sandanski 1A, 1000 Skopje

Concept Papers Closing Date: February 08, 2016 by 12:00 (noon) Skopje Time

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Macedonia would like to bring to the attention of prospective Macedonian and U.S. organizations and existing USAID recipients and contractors an exciting funding opportunity to increase the participation of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in USAID programs/activities and strengthen the capacity and services of Disabled Persons Organizations – DPOs.

USAID/Macedonia seeks concept papers from eligible prospective Macedonian or U.S. organizations and from its implementing partners of ongoing projects to propose innovative and effective approaches that increase participation of PWDs in Macedonia and strengthen the capacity of local DPOs. Projects may be stand-alone, targeted programs to benefit persons with disabilities, or they can be projects/activities that seek to mainstream persons with disabilities within larger USAID/Macedonia programs. Projects should reflect the most pressing needs in Macedonia and/or align with the Mission's strategic development priorities. All proposals must be guided by the values and provisions set forth by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID expects to fund individual programs in the category of “small fund programs” ranging from \$150,000 to \$300,000 and “large fund programs” ranging from \$300,000 - \$600,000 (per individual award). The duration of the proposed program(s)/activity(ies) should be within 12-36 months.

In order to promote consistency and for ease of review, all applicants must use the **Standard Application Form** which is included as **Attachment 1**. Submissions made using other formats will not be considered. Applications must be **no longer than fifteen (15) pages (not including**

cover letter (1 pg.)), single spacing, normal margins (1" from top and bottom, left and right).

The strict deadline for submission of the concept papers is no later than **12:00 o'clock (noon) Skopje Time on February 8, 2016**. The concept papers must be submitted electronically to Mr. Rade Knezevic at rknezevic@usaid.gov and to Mr. Albert Rexhepi at arexhepi@usaid.gov.

Any questions concerning the Request for Concept Papers should be submitted in writing to Mr. Rade Knezevic at rknezevic@usaid.gov and to Mr. Albert Rexhepi at arexhepi@usaid.gov. The deadline for submission of questions is **January 13, 2016**.

I hope you will take advantage of the opportunities this request provides to expand and extend the work that USAID/Macedonia is doing to reduce barriers and provide full participation of PWDs in Macedonia. I strongly encourage you to invest time and energy in developing your project idea and submitting your application.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,



Michael Capobianco
Agreement Officer

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SECTION I: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

1) Background

According to the World Health Organization, approximately 15% of any population has some form of disability, with a higher incidence of disability in countries that are post conflict or affected by natural disasters. The prevalence of disability is expected to rise in coming years due to an ageing global population and an increase in chronic health conditions. Of the estimated 1 billion people throughout the world with a disability, 80% live in less resourced nations.

People with disabilities are more likely to experience poverty. Women and girls with disabilities often experience heightened discrimination on account of gender and disability. Due to stigma, discrimination and inaccessibility, people with disabilities are less likely to access basic services such as education, employment and healthcare. The lack of access to vital services and programs contributes to their marginalization and exclusion, perpetuating a cycle of poverty.

Societies that are inclusive of their diverse populations are more likely to be democratic, participatory and equitable. They are more likely to meet their development goals. In spite of this, and although disability is a crosscutting development issue, people with disabilities often remain invisible in the global development agenda.

USAID is committed to disability inclusive development. Its Disability Policy advances a clear vision and framework for the Agency's efforts towards disability inclusion. The policy states that USAID will not discriminate against people with disabilities and will work to ensure the inclusion and active participation of people with disabilities in USAID-funded programs and activities. To this end, USAID has mainstreamed disability in several of its key policies and sector strategies, such as the Education Strategy (2011), Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (2012) and Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (2013).

In July 2009, the U.S. signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities affirming its commitment to the human rights of people with disabilities around the world. To date, most of the countries in which USAID operates have also signed and ratified the Convention signaling a global movement towards the full realization of the rights of people with disabilities and their role in the international development community.

For more information about USAID and Disability Inclusive Development, visit: <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/democracy-human-rights-and-governance/protecting-human-rights/disability>

2) Areas of Interest

The two main objectives are to increase participation of PWDs in USAID programming and strengthen the capacity of DPOs. Ideally, activities should complement USAID/Macedonia's strategic objectives that can be found in the document attached to this RFA.

Projects that address targeted needs of people with disabilities may be considered. Projects that highlight the needs of marginalized groups, such as Roma, women and girls, individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, those with developmental or psychosocial disabilities, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community are encouraged. All programs, regardless of implementing partner, must verify significant involvement of men and women with disabilities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Following is a list of illustrative areas of programming that could be considered - other innovative ideas are welcome.

1. Increase participation of people with disabilities in new or existing USAID programs

Examples:

- Promote the participation of persons with disabilities in democratic processes and elections as voters and political candidates.
- Improve national laws and policies to better reflect international human rights standards.
- Support disabled persons organizations, human rights institutions and national bodies to respond to disability rights needs and to monitor implementation of legal frameworks.
- Promote quality, inclusive education for learners with disabilities.
- Integrate youth and adults with disabilities in the workforce.

2. Strengthen and support Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs)

Examples:

- Improve the organizational capacity, financial management, human/material resources, strategic planning, fundraising, leadership and coordination of DPOs.
- Support the development and/or strengthening of national and regional cross-disability networks and coalitions.
- Support linkages between DPOs and local women's groups, human rights institutions and mainstream NGOs.

- Support the establishment and/or strengthening of consumer-controlled disability resource centers (often referred to as “Independent Living Centers” in the U.S.) that promote the full independence and participation of people with disabilities in society.

The following activities and programs will not be considered for funding:

- Programs with a significant budget requested for infrastructure or construction activities.
- Programs focused on the provision of assistive devices or physical rehabilitation (note, other funding sources have been established for this purpose).
- Programs supporting institutionalization of or segregated, residential institutions for children or adults with disabilities.
- Employment programs promoting sheltered workshops or income generating activities that perpetuate negative stereotypes of people with disabilities and that do not provide for meaningful employment.
- Programs with a primary focus on awareness raising.

3) This award is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act 4) The award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 depending on the type of organization awarded funding.

END of SECTION I

SECTION II: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

The award(s) under this request for concept papers will be administered through and managed by USAID/Macedonia.

1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

Subject to the availability of funds, USAID/Macedonia anticipates awarding (or modifying existing awards) one or more grant(s) / cooperative agreement(s) in the range from \$150,000 to \$300,000 for small fund programs and from \$300,000 - \$600,000 for large fund programs per individual grant / cooperative agreement.

2. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards

The duration of the proposed program(s)/activity(ies) should be within 12-36 months. The anticipated start date for this activity is on or about **July 31, 2016**.

3. Information Conferences

Pre-Bidders Conference: USAID intends to hold a conference allowing anyone interested in applying to the RFA to ask questions about the application process.

The conference will be on **January 15, 2016, from 12:00-14:00 at Hotel PORTA** (at Jane Sandanski 1A, 1000 Skopje.) All interested applicants are welcome to attend and should RSVP to rknezevic@usaid.gov by **January 13, 2016** to ensure space availability.

4. Type of Award

Awards under this RFA may be either a grant or cooperative agreement.

5. Authorized Geographic Code

The geographic code for this program is **937** which assume the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source.

For accurate identification of prohibited sources, please refer to 22 CFR 228 and Automated Directive System (ADS) 310 entitled “Source and Nationality Requirements for Procurement of Commodities and Services Financed by USAID.

END of SECTION II

SECTION III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Applications should be from qualified U.S. or Macedonian 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. **Local DPOs are strongly encouraged to apply.**

Non-DPO organizations applying for funds must include in their application letter(s) of signed support from local DPOs they wish to partner with for the purpose of the project.

Projects may be stand-alone, targeted programs to benefit persons with disabilities, or they can be projects/activities that seek to mainstream persons with disabilities within larger Mission programs. Projects should reflect the most pressing needs in the country and/or align with the Mission’s development priorities: Strengthened Participation of all Citizens, CSOs & Private Sector; Improved Inter-Ethnic Integration; Unconstrained Media and Freedom of Information; and More Competitive Political Processes. All proposals must be guided by the values and provisions set forth by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Partners new to USAID may submit applications. However, resultant award to these organizations may be significantly delayed if USAID must undertake necessary pre-award

reviews of these organizations. 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. Public International Organizations are not eligible to apply for funding under this program.

Cost Sharing is not required under this RFA. All applications must be submitted in accordance with ADS 303.

Applicants may only submit one application.

The following activities and programs will **not** be considered for funding:

- Programs with a significant budget for infrastructure or construction activities
- Programs focused on the provision of assistive devices or physical rehabilitation
- Programs supporting institutionalization of or institutions for children or adults with disabilities
- Employment programs promoting sheltered workshops or income generating activities that perpetuate negative stereotypes of people with disabilities and that do not provide for meaningful employment
- Programs with a primary focus on awareness raising.

In addition, due to the availability of significant funding through PEPFAR, the DCHA/DRG disability funding may not be used to support HIV/AIDS-related activities.

USAID will utilize a multi-tiered review as described in Section V of this RFA.

END of SECTION III

SECTION IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

In order to promote consistency and for ease of review, all applicants must use the standard application form which is included as Attachment 1. Submissions made using other formats will not be considered. Applications must be **_no longer than fifteen (15) pages (not including cover letter (1 pg.)), single spacing, normal margins (1" from top and bottom, left and right).** Applicants that are selected from the concept paper stage to proceed to the full application stage, will then receive instructions on what other documents and forms must be submitted.

The strict deadline for submission of the Required Application Format is **no later than 12:00 Skopje Time on February 08, 2016** and must be submitted electronically (e-mail) to both, Rade

Knezevic at rknezevic@usaid.gov and Albert Rexhepi at arexhepi@usaid.gov. Applications not received by the date listed on the cover letter will not be considered.

All concepts must fit within at least one of the program areas outlined above. Further, the proposed activity must have an estimated value and performance period that is within the parameters described in RFA Section entitled Federal Award Information (Section II). USAID/Macedonia may opt to exclude from further consideration any submission which is not within these parameters. Applications and all supporting material must be submitted in English.

Any questions concerning the Request for Concept Papers should be submitted in writing to Rade Knezevic at rknezevic@usaid.gov and to Albert Rexhepi at arexhepi@usaid.gov. The deadline for submission of questions is **January 13, 2016**. The mission will organize a pre-bidders conference on **January 15, 2016**, when the questions will be addressed.

There are numerous firms and organizations that offer to provide assistance in preparing grant applications. The utilization of such services is at the sole discretion of the applicant. USAID does not endorse any of these or require their use with respect to this RFA. Further, any costs incurred for such services are not reimbursable by USAID.

It is possible that an application recommended for funding does not result in an award. Reasons for this include, but are not limited to, insufficient availability of funding, insufficient capability to manage the proposed project, or for other reason(s) which will be provided to the applicant.

IMPORTANT:

Non-conforming concept papers will not be reviewed. Due to the volume of anticipated concept papers, the standard application form must be used. Concept papers longer than 15 pages in length (not including cover page) will not be accepted.

Direct submissions of concept papers or applications from applicants to USAID/Washington will not be considered.

Please note that the issuance of this Request for Applications does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. The applications are submitted at the risk of the submitter. All preparation and submission costs are at the submitter's expense. In addition, final award of any resultant grant or cooperative agreement cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award.

A decision not to fund a program may occur at any phase of the evaluation process. No program expenditures will be paid by USAID/Macedonia except those covered in an award signed by the

USAID Agreement Officer. USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.

Phase 2 review, additional documents for shortlisted applicants:

- Dun and BradStreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each Applicant is required to provide a valid DUNS number and be registered in SAM before submitting the full application if solicited for Phase 2 review. USAID will not make an award to applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements.

Additional information at: <https://fedgov.dnb.com> and www.sam.gov

- Certifications, Assurances, and Solicitation Provisions

Each Applicant is required to provide the following Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements:

- 1. Assurance of Compliance with Laws and Regulations Governing Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs** (This assurance applies to Non-U.S. organizations, if any part of the program will be undertaken in the U.S.);
- 2. Certification Regarding Lobbying** (22 CFR 227);
- 3. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals** (ADS 206, Prohibition of Assistance to Drug Traffickers);
- 4. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing;**
- 5. Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons; and**
- 6. Certification of Recipient**

END of SECTION IV

SECTION V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The selection process will be conducted in two phases.

Phase 1: Applicants submit their concept paper by completing the Required Application Format (Attachment 1).

Based on the evaluation criteria outlined below, USAID/Macedonia will conduct an initial screening of all concept papers received by the deadline based on the criteria outlined further below in this request. Selected applications will be forwarded to USAID/Washington for a final

review. Notices will be sent to both the unsuccessful applicants and shortlisted applicants of the status of their applications.

USAID will inform unsuccessful applicants in writing, explaining briefly why the concept paper was not selected for further consideration.

Phase 2: If accepted for funding by USAID/Washington, shortlisted applicants will be requested to submit full applications (guidance on application process will be provided at the time of selection). Please do not submit a full proposal unless specifically invited to do so by the Agreement Officer.

If USAID's review results in a recommendation for funding, then the organization and USAID/Macedonia will enter final discussions to ensure all pre-award requirements are met and significant grant terms are negotiated and agreed. The exact details of this phase will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to each application.

A pre-award survey or assessment may be conducted. The areas covered by a pre-award survey or assessment will vary according to circumstances, but may include reviews to ensure the organization meets the necessary standards for financial management, program management, property, procurement, reports and records, internal controls, is in good financial standing, and has the technical capacity to conduct the proposed program.

USAID anticipates making an award on or about July 31, 2016.

EVALUATION OF APPLICATION(S)/CONCEPT PAPER(S)

USAID/Macedonia will evaluate the concept papers/applications on the following evaluation criteria:

- 1. How likely the concept paper/application will be chosen to receive funding considering the USAID/Washington review criteria.**
- 2. How realistic are the preliminary proposed costs to implement the concept.**

USAID/Washington will review applications based on the following criteria:

- 1. Represents a pressing need in country and/or demonstrates a clear linkage with USAID Mission priorities:** The proposed project responds to a pressing need in country that has yet to be adequately addressed; and/or demonstrates a clear linkage with an existing Mission initiative. For more information on USAID Mission priorities, please refer to the attached document – USAID Macedonia Strategic Framework 2016-2020.
- 2. Sound technical approach and likely to contribute to sustainable and institutional change:** The proposed project demonstrates a sound technical approach based on promising practices, lessons learned and/or international standards in the relevant project area; and

demonstrates how and to what extent it will contribute to sustainable and institutional change either at the person-level or country-level. The project goes beyond addressing the symptom of a problem and seeks to identify and mitigate the root causes of inequality and persistent exclusion.

3. **Substantial involvement of and direct benefit to persons with disabilities:** The proposed project demonstrates meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project. The overall direct benefit to individuals with disabilities and disabled persons organizations offers the best value for the amount of funding requested.

4. **Thoughtful integration of gender equality and women's empowerment:** The promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment must be thoughtfully integrated into the main objectives, activities, and monitoring and evaluation plans of all applications, in accordance with USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and USAID ADS 205. If the application is successful, gender considerations must likewise be integrated into the resulting program design.

5. **Sound monitoring, evaluation and opportunities for learning:** The proposed project includes relevant and meaningful indicators to measure success in meeting the stated objectives, and realistic targets. At the very least, 3-5 illustrative indicators should be provided. The proposed project should also demonstrate how project learning will be captured and shared with a broad audience, including USAID.

The relative importance of the above criteria is aligned in descending order, i.e. criterion 1 being the most important and criterion 5 being the less important.

END of SECTION V

SECTION VI: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Award: The award made through this RFA will be administered by USAID.

Authority to Obligate the Government: The Agreement Officer is the only individual authorized to commit the U.S. Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Award may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Award or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

USAID Management of Activities: The Agreement Officer (AO) shall serve as the primary agreement contact between USAID and the Recipient. The Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will serve as the primary technical contact between USAID and the Recipient.

Award Administration: For U.S. organizations, 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700, and USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations, <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf> are applicable.

For non-U.S. organizations, USAID Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations, <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf> are applicable.

Environmental Protection and Compliance: The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 <https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-200>, which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities

Program Income: Program income is not expected to be generated by the Recipient implementing the Award. However, any program income that is generated under the resulting award shall be in accordance with ADS 303, 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700, USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations, and USAID Standards Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations.

Funding Restrictions: USAID policy is not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations, M1 - Allowable Costs, may be paid under the anticipated award.

Reporting Requirements

Final reporting requirements will be included in the request for full application.

END of SECTION VI

SECTION VII: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

Agency Point of Contact

- A. USAID Agreement Office – Michael Capobianco, mcapobianco@usaid.gov
- B. Negotiator - Rade Knezevic, rknezevic@usaid.gov
- C. Negotiator - Albert Rexhepi, arexhepi@usaid.gov

END of SECTION VII

SECTION VIII: OTHER INFORMATION

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

Applicable Regulations & References

- ADS 200 Series - Programming

- ADS Series 300 Acquisition and Assistance

<http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/>

- Mandatory Standard Provisions for U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients

<http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/303maa.pdf>

- Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients:

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

- 2 CFR 200.306

www.gpo.govOMB Circular A-122

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122.html>

- OMB Circular A-110

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a110/a110.html>

- SF-424 Downloads

http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp

END of SECTION VIII

END of RFA