

**Answers to questions and comments received on USAID/Armenia Draft Program Description of  
Advanced Civil Society for Accountable Governance Program**

| <b>Questions/Comments</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Answers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| <p>Do you envision that each consortium will be doing similar work just tailored to their respective fields of application: transparency &amp; accountability, decentralization and social reform?</p> <p>Do we understand correctly that all civil society consortia will have to address intermediate results IR.2.1. only?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>Yes, each consortium will be achieving the same results, as described in Program Description (PD) in respective reform area.</p> <p>Yes, that is correct.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p>Can the same organization take part in more than one consortium?</p> <p>Does applying to one of the programs of this Call exclude the possibility to apply for other USAID Calls?</p> <p>What is the maximum/minimum number of organizations to be included in one consortium?</p> <p>What role and what importance does the Call attach to the media and media NGOs. There are several references to media and information dissemination; however we would appreciate clarification on whether a media NGO can play a leading, or one of leading, roles in a consortium.</p> <p>Is it possible to engage within the consortia non-formal civic groups (e.g. various groups of civic activists that focus on</p> | <p>Yes, it definitely can. Please see the “Consortium Approach Section” of the PD.</p> <p>No, it does not.</p> <p>The number of organizations in the consortium is not defined and depends on applicant's programmatic/technical approach.</p> <p>In case media organizations meet the criteria established by the RFA they can lead the consortium and/or be a part of the consortium.</p> <p>Yes, that is possible: they can be involved as a part of steering committees, volunteers or individual consultants.</p> |

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| <p>certain issues such as urban landscape, transportation, etc.), and if yes, in what capacity?</p> <p>Can suggested activities include cooperation with NGOs and individuals from other countries, whether from the EaP countries, other post-Soviet countries and EU countries and USA, and can NGOs and individuals from these countries receive funding within this framework? Also can travel to and from other countries (e.g. study visits, participation in trainings, conferences, etc.) be funded within this framework?</p> <p>The Call attaches special importance to the M&amp;E plans to be drafted by the grantee, nevertheless it gives no information as to whether the grantee should implement a formative or summative monitoring, which should be the preferred form of the monitoring for organizations applying?</p> | <p>Such cooperation is possible provided that it is in conformity with the federal regulations on source and nationality requirements -22 CFR 228.</p> <p>The authorized geographic code for USAID programs is 937 and 110 to cover procurement of goods and services of source and nationality from the U.S., the host country, and any developing country. Waivers permitting procurement outside of code 937 or 110 must be based on a case by case determination that the provision of assistance requires commodities or services of the type that are not produced in and available for purchase in Code 937 or 110 sources.</p> <p>That has to be decided by the applicant depending on technical approach and the proposed PMEP: the M&amp;E plan is one of the evaluation criteria.</p> |
| <p>The Draft Results Framework does not contain Sub IR 2.1.4 – addressing the Result Area 4 – “Civil society enabling environment improved” referred in other parts of the program which might cause confusion.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>As stated in the PD, USAID expects that all consortia will work together in achieving results under Results Area 4.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

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| <p>What is USAID's rationale/vision/expectations for the program, particularly in the areas of decentralization and anti-corruption? To what degree is this vision impacted by expectations for the Armenian central government to reach agreement with the U.S. government on U.S. support for decentralization and anti-corruption efforts?</p> <p>If pending commitments with the U.S. government are not agreed upon, will the USAID/Armenia "Advanced Civil Society for Accountable Governance Program" still go forward as designed?</p> <p>Should the pilot efforts for decentralizations fail to garner the support of citizens or the continuation of further decentralization efforts by the government, how might this impact the program if at all?</p> <p>The draft program description refers to a CSO sector that is heavily donor dependent and expectations for improving the enabling environment for CSOs in a manner that would increase financial viability, NGO independence, and overall sustainability. What does USAID have in mind for improving the enabling environment? Does this assume legislation that would enable CSOs to engage in for-profit services and/or provide tax exemptions?</p> <p>The draft program description seems to contain considerable activities for consortia to undertake for a limited budget if implemented over five years. On top of expectations for programs to foster "more participatory, effective and</p> | <p>USAID/Armenia has developed Country Development Cooperation Strategy for 2013-2017 which is attached to the RFA for reference. The strategy, as well as the subject PD, provides background and rationale for Civil Society activities to be funded. All planned interventions are in areas where the Government of Armenia (GOAM) committed for change.</p> <p>USAID/Armenia signed the Agreement with the GOAM at the end of September (pending ratification), so the program will go forward as designed.</p> <p>USAID plans to evaluate the reform progress and the program implementation progress and made an informed decision on the implementation period. Please see section "Performance Period" in the PD.</p> <p>USAID will continue supporting NGOs in their ongoing efforts to improve NGO related legislation. Please refer to RFA for information on program objectives and results. In addition, the government of Armenia has committed, by signing the Development Assistance Cooperation Agreement with USAID, to submit a package of legislative bills for passage by the National Assembly to improve the enabling environment for Civil Society by June 30, 2014.</p> <p>USAID may consider applications for a shorter timeframe. However please note that all program objectives and requirements should be met even when planning a shorter implementation period.</p> |
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| <p>accountable governance,” the draft PD includes anticipated results for impacting the civil society sector. The broad array of program activities and expected results may necessitate several coalition partners of varying expertise. Given the limited resources anticipated compared with considerable expected results, would USAID consider applications for a shorter timeframe (three to four years) as opposed to five?</p> <p>Does USAID have any geographic requirements or expectations for implementation of program activities?</p> <p>The draft program description aims to award “these programs directly to Armenian civil society organizations.” Has the Draft Program Description for Comments been released in the Armenian language in order to facilitate comments and questions from Armenian civil society organizations?</p> | <p>The PD states that the program will be implemented on local and national levels: the applicant should propose its own approach to successful program implementation.</p> <p>This was an advance notice and solicitation for comments for upcoming RFA. The actual RFA is issued in English and will be widely advertised locally. USAID/Armenia will solicit applications in English only. To facilitate questions and comments from local NGOs USAID will organize bidders’ conference following the issuance of the RFA.</p> |
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| <p>Can you please confirm that USAID intends to make awards to different prime recipients?</p> <p>Does USAID have any guidance on the amount of funding that is to go towards sub-grants under each of the three consortia?</p> <p>Taking into consideration the complexity of the programming and the amount of funding that is to be sub-granted to local and international organizations, would USAID consider allowing international organizations to compete to be prime recipients in your proposed program, as they may be better-positioned to provide the capacity building support that local Armenian organizations need to prosper?</p> | <p>Yes, USAID plans to make awards to different prime recipients, each award varying from 1.7 to 3.5 million USD.</p> <p>That has to be decided by the applicant depending on technical approach.</p> <p>The Mission made a strategic decision to work directly with local organizations (see the 2013-2017 Country Development Cooperation Strategy attached), but the consortia may include international organizations as sub-recipients ("Consortium Approach" section of the RFA). Preference will be given to proposals in which international partners provide a technical assistance, rather than play a substantial implementation or management role.</p> |
| <p>Will my organization be eligible to apply for this program, if we have already submitted an application for another recent USAID call?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>Yes, your organization is eligible.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |