



United States Agency for International Development  
**ROUND 1 CALL FOR CONCEPT PAPERS**  
Under existing People-to-People (P2P) Reconciliation Fund  
Annual Program Statement (APS) No. 7200AA19APS00015

**Issuance Date of Round 1:** September 6, 2019

**Questions Deadline - Round 1:** September 17, 2019 at 3:00 pm ET (Local time in Washington, D.C.)

**Submission Deadline - Round 1:** November 6, 2019 at 2 pm ET (Local time in Washington, D.C.)

**Please note:** This is a Round to an existing USAID APS. All interested organizations should carefully review both this Round AND the full APS, which can be found here: [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Important information contained in the full worldwide APS is not repeated in this specific Round documentation.

**ROUND ONE PARTICIPATING MISSIONS:**

- |                                 |                           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Bangladesh                   | 8. Paraguay               |
| 2. Central African Republic     | 9. Philippines            |
| 3. Democratic Republic of Congo | 10. Republic of the Congo |
| 4. Guinea                       | 11. Rwanda                |
| 5. Jamaica                      | 12. South Sudan           |
| 6. Liberia                      | 13. Timor-Leste           |
| 7. Mozambique                   |                           |

In Round 1 of the P2P APS, USAID is requesting the submission of Concept Papers that employ a People-to-People approach to conflict prevention, mitigation, management and peacebuilding in conflict-affected communities in the above mentioned countries. Please see the country narratives in Annex B below for more detailed context-specific guidance. Please note that Concept Papers/notes are limited to a maximum funding level of \$1,200,000, excluding any cost share or matching funds.

## SECTION I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### A. ROUND 1 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U. S. Agency for International Development’s Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation is pleased to issue Round 1 under the People-To-People (P2P) Reconciliation Fund Annual Program Statement (APS). Under Round 1, USAID/CMM is seeking concept papers that take an innovative approach to helping heal the wounds inflicted upon communities by violence and conflict.

Round 1 encompasses thirteen Missions and strives to meet the peacebuilding and conflict mitigation needs of each unique circumstance with a tailored and innovative P2P approach. Some of the key themes in the country-specific guidelines are elaborated in Annex B below, and serve as a reference only. Organizations should respond specifically to the country-specific language in each USAID Mission(s) for which they are submitting Concept Papers.

#### 1. Coming to Terms with the Past: Reconciliation and Trauma Healing<sup>1</sup>

Academics and practitioners insist on the fact that healing and reconciliation need to go together, “especially when the groups that have engaged in violence against each other continue to live together.” There is an interactive linkage between trauma healing and reconciliation. The beginning of healing is generally considered to enhance the possibility of reconciliation, while reconciliation furthers the possibility of healing. The process of reconciliation and healing actually appear to be cyclical and reinforce each other, from one generation to the next, ultimately contributing to the prevention of future violence.

Individuals need to heal from wounds that result from being harmed, but also from having harmed others, or being a member of a group that has harmed others. Indeed, some analysts stress the fact that for reconciliation to take place, “perpetrators and members of the perpetrator group who may not have engaged in violence also need to heal.” But as reconciliation begins, it can, in turn, contribute to the ‘healing’ process for survivors. Reconciliation activities may help ‘make sense of injuries’ and deal with deep physical and emotional wounds. For instance, public acknowledgement of the events may allow the survivors and victims’ relatives to engage in a mourning process.

Theory of Change: “Trauma Healing”	
If/Then Statement	If individuals and identity groups traumatized by violence are given opportunities and support to express and heal their pain, then the desire for violent revenge will be reduced and unresolved trauma will be removed as a conflict grievance
Description	This theory addresses the "cycle of aggression"--grief, anger, desire for revenge, aggression against the enemy in the name of revenge and justice--that can emerge in post-conflict societies when individuals and identity groups have not sufficiently expressed and healed their trauma. Unresolved trauma can be passed across generations and become a core identify group grievance. Traumatized individuals and identity groups need healing support.
Illustrative Activities	Strengthen local capacity in trauma healing; psychosocial counseling appropriate to the local culture; art, theatre, and physical exercise "therapy"; storytelling programs; trauma healing

<sup>1</sup> Reconciliation & Peacebuilding Processes

[http://www.peacebuildinginitiative.org/index0703.html?fuseaction=cmc\\_printall.print&pageId=1975&printview=true](http://www.peacebuildinginitiative.org/index0703.html?fuseaction=cmc_printall.print&pageId=1975&printview=true)

	information campaign; gender-based violence survivor programs.
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## 2. Inside-Out Peacebuilding: Transforming Beliefs and Attitudes

As Karen Brounéus, psychologist, explains<sup>2</sup>, “violence, fear and hatred during war result in the modernization of old myths and stereotypes to explain one’s own or some other group’s behaviour and thereby justify whatever gruesome atrocities are committed. After the war, the societal and cultural fabric is drenched with these beliefs. They can be seen in how history is described, how the language is used, in education, the media, theatre, etc. In order to live in peace, these beliefs must be questioned and transformed.” Indeed, the transformation of stereotyped beliefs is a crucial objective of many reconciliation initiatives. But this transformation process is also at the heart of all aspects of the peacebuilding agenda as social, political, economic and cultural rules are being transformed and new forms of relationships and social identities are being produced.”

Theory of Change: “Common Complex Identities”	
If/Then Statement	If key actors and/or enough individuals on all sides of the conflict discover shared values and multifaceted complex identities, including constructive in-group self-esteem, then inclusive broader “value identities” that unite groups will form and multiple aspects of identity that provide cross-cutting ties will become salient, which reduces intergroup conflict and provides a basis for constructive conflict engagement.
Description	The theory focuses on the role of inclusive and complex identities across conflict divides. It suggests that groups of individuals celebrate self-esteem and discover values (e.g., peace, justice, ethics) they share, which can generate an inclusive, deep, often spiritual connection and overarching inclusive group identity; and that people revive multifaceted cross-cutting identities that bridge across the conflict divide. These transformations support social change toward constructive conflict engagement and address unconstructive actions by one’s own group.
Illustrative Activities	Inter-faith and inter-ethnic dialogues and encounter groups; intra-group dialogues on values; faith-based initiatives; cultural preservation and celebration; single-identity work; inter-group gatherings; women’s groups, youth groups, sports groups, professional organizations; direct personal experience with “the enemy”; media that portrays individuals and groups experiencing positive shifts from exclusive to more inclusive identities.

## 3. Reconciliation and the (Re)Building of Civic Trust

One key reconciliation anchor highlighted by most of the literature is the building of some kind of trust and confidence, not only in others, in terms of shared norms and values, but also in the state and its institutions. Indeed, “if genuine coexistence is to take place, then the building of trust is indispensable. If trust is absent, citizens will not be prepared to invest their energies in the consolidation of democracy.<sup>3</sup>” In this view, reconciliation is the condition under which citizens can once again trust another as citizens.

<sup>2</sup> Brounéus, K. (2010). The Trauma of Truth Telling: Effects of Witnessing in the Rwandan Gacaca Courts on Psychological Health. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 54(3), 408-437. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27820994>

<sup>3</sup> Peacebuilding Initiative: Reconciliation: Reconciliation & Peacebuilding Processes <http://www.peacebuildinginitiative.org/index0e2.html?pageld=1975>

Theory of Change: “Culture of Peace”	
If/Then Statement	If war-torn societies focus cultural, media, and education resources on changing people's attitudes and social norms to support the peaceful resolution of conflicts, then a culture of peace will emerge that promotes coexistence and resists mobilization to adopt violence.
Description	This theory focuses on fostering a cultural shift from violent to peaceful approaches to handling conflict throughout society. The aim is to generate a "culture of peace" by leveraging education, mass media, arts, and culture resources in that direction. It is a longer-term process of transforming the attitudes and social norms that supported violent conflict resolution in the past.
Illustrative Activities	Peace education; advocacy campaigns that stress tolerance and peaceful resolution of conflict; countering domestic violence and gender-based violence; development of common history texts and teaching; alternative dispute resolution mechanisms; peace media capacity building and content; cultural peacebuilding activities (e.g., theatre, music, art).

**4. Reconciliation and Security: Creating a Sense of Safety for All Citizens<sup>4</sup>**

To come to reconcile, citizens need to feel safe, no longer threatened or intimidated by ‘others’ or even by the State. Security sector reforms, including in the way they affect citizens’ daily lives, are crucial to re-establish that sense of safety. Indeed, “security sector reform is not only limited to changing institutions, ensuring oversight and accountability mechanisms and creating non-corrupt efficient management structures. It is also about ensuring that civil society trusts the new security sector mechanisms, whether they be the police services, military forces, intelligence services, judicial systems or oversight mechanisms.

Theory of Change: “Security Governance”	
If/Then Statement	If security institutions protected everyone and enforced laws equitably, then grievances would be mitigated and more conflict resolved peacefully.
Description	Focuses on improving security institutions’ performance, by improving effectiveness, legitimacy, and/or access.
Illustrative Activities	Security sector reform; community policing; human rights; training of police.

**5. Reconciliation Requires Confronting Economic Injustice in the Society<sup>5</sup>**

Reconciliation requires physical safety and economic and social justice. It requires “not only bringing people together to create a shared understanding, but to succeed, much more. It requires an unflinching confrontation with the underlying, chronic injustices faced by a society and the mobilization of its institutions to address these issues in ways that are distributively and procedurally just, and genuinely inclusive.”

People first need to have their immediate physical needs sufficiently met to be able to be open enough to the reconciliation process. When individuals are reduced to an immediate survival way of living, engaging in complex reconciliation processes may be even more difficult. Once basic needs are met, reconciliation,

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Education and Reconciliation: Exploring Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations. Paulson, J. 9781441153258 <https://books.google.com/books?id=Ge4M4iNK7k4C> 2011Bloomsbury Academic. P.105 accessed 7/20/2019

at the macro level, “requires the credibility that can be established only by implementation of social and economic programs that concretely address the substantive injustices.”

Theory of Change: “Social Service Delivery”	
If/Then Statement	If social services, such as health care and education, etc. are delivered in an effective and responsive way for all, grievances would be mitigated.
Description	Focuses on improving formal and informal social service delivery institutions’ performance, by improving effectiveness, legitimacy, and/or access.
Illustrative Activities	Support for reforms to improve access to social services; social service delivery to vulnerable groups, including IDPs, refugees, vulnerable youth, etc; improving health care delivery; expansion of educational access and quality, especially for underserved areas and populations; capacity building of health and education ministries and local level health and education institutions.

## **SECTION II: AWARD INFORMATION**

Please see the P2P APS for award information. Additional information pertinent to Round 1 only is included below.

### **A. Funding**

For Round 1, subject to the availability of funds, USAID anticipates making up to thirteen (13) awards, which will not exceed a cumulative ceiling of \$15,600,000 over the course of the next three (3) years. Please note that a portion of the ceiling may be funded by field support from USAID Missions. As such, the ceiling provides an estimate of the actual total award(s) funding and is not guaranteed; further information will be included in the request for full applications for selected applicants.

### **B. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

For Round 1, the anticipated start date for the award(s) is on or about September 30, 2020.

**SECTION III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

Please see Section III of the P2P APS for eligibility information regarding organizations.

## **SECTION IV: CONCEPT PAPER SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Please see Section IV of the P2P APS for Concept Paper submission information.

### **A. Round 1 Concept Paper Instructions**

For questions on this Round 1 document, please submit all questions via email to USAID at [FY19CMMP2P@usaid.gov](mailto:FY19CMMP2P@usaid.gov) as well as copied to: [joconnor@usaid.gov](mailto:joconnor@usaid.gov) by the deadline specified on the Cover Page.

Applicants are required to follow the Submission Information instructions set forth in Section IV of the P2P APS and this Round 1 document, and submit Concept Papers using the Concept Paper Template in Annex A of this Round 1 document.

For Round 1, interested applicants should submit a concept paper via email to USAID at [FY19CMMP2P@usaid.gov](mailto:FY19CMMP2P@usaid.gov) as well as copied to: [joconnor@usaid.gov](mailto:joconnor@usaid.gov). Under 5 CFR 1320, the Paperwork Reduction Action, only electronic copies of concept papers will be accepted. The concept papers must be received by the deadline on the cover page of this document for Round 1 (demonstrated by the timestamp on the email when received by USAID).

When emailing a concept paper, applicants must include the APS number, Round name and number in the subject line of the email and attachment/file name(s). USAID's email server cannot handle more than 25 MBs of attachments per email. If the applicant must divide the submission into more than one email, please number the emails in the subject line and indicate in the email's subject line the desired sequence of emails (i.e. 7200AA19APS00TBD, Round 1, Email 1 of 3). It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time. In the event of technical difficulties, please contact USAID at the email address above.

All concept papers received by the submission deadline on the Cover Page will be reviewed for responsiveness to the APS, to the Round and the required format. Section V below addresses the technical review procedures for the concept papers. No additions or modifications will be accepted after the submission date. Concept papers that are submitted late or are incomplete may not be considered for the co-creation process or request for full applications (if co-creation is not held). Additional information in the concept paper not requested by the APS and this Round may adversely affect an applicant's evaluation/review.

Clarity and specificity are important; during the merit review process, USAID may reject those Concept Papers that are vague or merely restate language found in the Round.

USAID will determine whether there will be co-creation with USAID internally or a workshop with the successful concept paper applicants (those whose concept papers receive a PASS rating). USAID also reserves the right to not conduct a co-creation phase at all and request full applications from successful concept paper applicants.

### **B. Round 1 Concept Paper Content and Format**

**From the P2P APS: NOTE --** Please note that an organization may not submit more than one concept paper to Round 1. **If an organization submits more than one concept paper, only the first one received by timestamp at USAID will be evaluated.**

This section presents guidance for the structure of the concept paper for Round 1. To facilitate the competitive review of the concept papers, USAID will only consider concept papers conforming to the

format prescribed below. The concept paper must adhere to the template in Annex A of this document (it has been revised from the template in the P2P APS). **Any concept paper not adhering to this format below will not be evaluated.**

Concept Papers must be written in English and submitted electronically via e-mail in Word 2000 or Word 2003 text accessible or Adobe PDF. The concept paper must be written in Times New Roman 12-point font, on standard 8.5" x 11" paper, and be single spaced with no less than one-inch margins and consecutively numbered pages. The concept paper must not exceed five (5) pages, excluding responses to Section A of the template (Cover Page). **Concept Papers more than five (5) pages will not be evaluated.** Figures, graphics, and tables may have less than Times New Roman 12-point font. The required supporting information must not exceed two (2) pages in total as follows: one (1) Cover Page and one (1) Institutional Capacity page. **Any additional reference material pages will be removed prior to evaluation.**

**SECTION V: Round 1 Merit Review Evaluation Criteria**

Concept papers for Round 1 will be reviewed by a Merit Review Committee according to the criteria described below. The purpose of this review is to ensure that prospective partners bring appropriate capabilities, experiences and potential contributions to the co-creation process (if held) and ultimately the implementation of activities. A concept paper is determined to be successful if it receives a PASS overall based on the three criteria below, which are listed in descending order of importance. [Note: The criteria below are for the concept paper only. Additional criteria will be circulated as a part of a full Request for Applications for selected successful concept paper applicants at a future date.]

For Example:

Merit Review Element	Definition
<p>Technical Approach Advances the purpose of P2P Reconciliation Programming</p>	<p>The extent to which the proposed program exemplifies the people-to-people approach by creating opportunities for communities in conflict to build mutual understanding, trust, empathy, and resilient social ties by addressing divisions that may be rooted in group differences such as ethnicity, religion, status, gender, class, or political affiliation. This is established through the following core programming principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The <b>conflict analysis</b> identifies the sources of conflict, impediments to reconciliation, windows of opportunity and potential triggers as it relates to the Applicant’s proposed activities, as well as incorporates gender and key stakeholder considerations and is responsive to the country-specific information in the Round.</li> <li>2. The assumed connections and logic between the conflict analysis, the proposed program’s actions, and the goal of reducing violence and conflict and/or building peace is clearly explained by the <b>theory of change (TOC)</b>.</li> <li>3. The proposed program has a focused and realistic <b>implementation</b> plan, where activities flow from the context analysis and theory of change in a logical and clearly discernible way. Also, a single program is likely unable to realistically address the multidimensional aspects of one conflict, so a clear explicit focus and justification of that focus is part of a successful program design.</li> <li>4. The proposed program ensures the safety of all participants and mitigates the risk of intensifying the drivers of conflict or worsening tensions by applying the <b>Do No Harm</b> principle throughout.</li> </ol>
<p>Institutional Capacity</p>	<p>The proposed program is carried out by and/or promotes and strengthens local organizations. A commitment to engaging local actors is evident in the conflict analysis, activity design, implementation plan, and the monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan.</p>

**Annex A: USAID FY19 Reconciliation Fund: People 2 People (P2P) APS Round One: Concept Paper**

**1. Cover Page Must Include the Following (1 page total)**

- USAID Round Reference;
- Name and address of organization (physical and electronic, as applicable);
- Contact person (lead contact name, telephone number, and e-mail information);
- Period of performance: Minimum is two (2) years and maximum is five (5) years in duration;
- Total program amount (in USD)
- Total amount of funding requested from USAID and total amount leveraged (if applicable), including from what source(s) in the form of a notional budget;
- Type of organization (e.g., US, non-US, multilateral, private, for-profit, nonprofit, etc)
- Title of proposed program; country(ies) and sector(s) being proposed; total dollar amount of funds requested for the proposed period of performance;
- Identify type of applying organization (e.g., local NGO, US NGO, etc.)
- Name and title of the authorized representative of the applicant;
- Brief (one sentence) description of proposed program

**2. Technical Section (Limited to five (5) Pages)**

- Concept Introduction and conflict analysis** (approximately 1 page). Identify the problem your organization will address, linking it to the relevant country information provided in the Round. Identify the sources of conflict, impediments to reconciliation, windows of opportunity and potential triggers as they relate to the proposed activities. Incorporate gender and key stakeholder considerations as well.
- Theory of change** (approximately ½ page). The assumed connections and logic between the conflict analysis, the proposed program’s actions, and the goal of reducing violence and conflict and/or building peace is clearly explained by the theory of change (ToC)
- P2P Approach and Implementation Plan** (approximately 1 ½ pages). Building on the introduction, propose a P2P approach for how this intervention will produce the desired impact in the focus area(s) identified. Briefly describe critical barrier(s) or problem(s) related to the focus area(s) that your organization’s concept addresses. Be sure to include information describing why the approach is creative or innovative, how it is potentially scalable, and evidence to support it as a tested solution or as an intervention likely to have a significant impact, and how it will be sustained.
- Intervention Results** (approximately 1 page). As specifically as possible, describe the anticipated outputs, outcomes, results and/or impact of the proposed intervention. What

are the key, quantifiable metrics related to your organization's project's performance or expected performance? What is the scale needed to achieve results sufficient to address the identified problem? What programs are already providing such or (similar) interventions? Please include a detailed map of the focus area(s) of the intervention.

- ❑ **Risks/Assumptions** (approximately ½ page). Clearly state any assumptions regarding the conditions, behaviors, or critical events outside the control of the program that must hold true for results to be achieved, as well as risks in the program context that could have negative consequences on the achievement of results, which may include those that may result by bringing together conflicting parties. Provide sufficient explanation of risk mitigation measures, including appropriate safeguards to avoid intensifying the conflict or creating harmful situations for participants.
  
- ❑ **Beneficiaries** (approximately ½ page). Describe the types of benefits the intervention will produce and the types and range of people who will benefit from this intervention. Has it been, or can it be adapted to reach women and men, indigenous people, ethnic and/or religious minorities, and youth? How can the concept be scaled up to reach more people? What are the baselines that your organization will measure before the project begins?

### 3. Institutional Capacity (Limited to one (1) page)

- ❑ **Applicant Capacity and Partner Roles** (approximately 1 page). Describe organizational capacity--technical, managerial, financial, etc.--to carry out the proposed intervention. What is the business model for your organization's intervention? Have you worked in this sector previously? Please describe your organization's credibility within targeted communities, and a demonstrable commitment to coordinating your organization's efforts within the context. Please note the extent to which the proposed program is supported by local organizations.

## Annex B: COUNTRY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

### 1. Country: Bangladesh

POC: Randall Olson ([rolson@usaid.gov](mailto:rolson@usaid.gov))

POC: Rumana Amin ([ramin@usaid.gov](mailto:ramin@usaid.gov))

**Background and Context:** Cox's Bazar has already been identified as one of the least-developed districts of Bangladesh. The district is located in the south-eastern Bangladesh and shares a border with Myanmar. Difficult terrain, bad roads and insufficient infrastructure contribute to poor living conditions for a community consisting of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and Christians. The villages and communities in Cox's Bazar have been pushed to their limits with the recent influx of over 730,000 Rohingya refugees since August 2017. This latest influx is in addition to the already 300,000-400,000 Rohingya refugees who have entered the area in waves since 1978. With the latest crisis, the total population in the area has almost tripled, imposing significant costs on local communities.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** Since early 2018, incidents of violence and tensions have been observed, both within the camps and between refugees and host communities, driven by multiple factors, including personal conflicts. Extreme congestion and lack of dignity and limited opportunity for refugees are linked to violence and tensions.

- The violence and tension between the Bangladeshi host community and the Rohingya community have continued to increase, and host community members, led by political activists, recently took to the streets to protest and demonstrate perceived inequalities produced by international communities focus on humanitarian aid to the Rohingyas.
- In addition, the area has had a history of interfaith intolerance, and many members of the host community are very conservative and belong to fundamentalist-leaning political parties. These factors, combined with a dissatisfaction with government services, have produced grievances directed at the refugees, INGOs, and government officials.
- On the other side, the Rohingya communities, having experienced massive humanitarian atrocities, are still waiting for justice and accountability and permanent resettlement.
- There are disturbing reports of an increase in gender-based violence against women by more conservative members of the community. Thus, the current governance situation in both host and Rohingya-refugee communities has made youths and women vulnerable to conflict and violence.
- Current research on the crisis suggests significant vulnerabilities among the communities for conflict and a need for immediate engagement and development interventions.

The remoteness of the area restricts government's ability to provide basic services to local communities. Other key challenges include:

- District-level infrastructure, health and water services, which have been extended to the refugees by the district government as a critical part of the humanitarian response, remain under immense pressure.
- The areas have limited access to drinking water, particularly in remote rural areas, and only one third of people have a source of drinking water near their dwelling.
- This factor, combined with low access to improved sanitation facilities, has contributed to high levels of malnutrition.
- Access to health facilities is restricted by distance and limited capacity of facilities to provide services.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** While incidences of intergroup conflict have so far been limited, there is a significant risk that if the situation is not resolved, conflicts could emerge in the region between the youth in the host and Rohingya communities. Youths are particularly vulnerable, as many are unemployed or underemployed and lack opportunities to find

meaningful livelihoods. The capacity of local government to mitigate conflict among the youth is very limited. In Rohingya camps, the traditional maji system of governance is not very inclusive of youth or women.

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** Potential activities should include the following priority elements:

- Better Service Provision to Vulnerable Groups through Local Government Capacity Building;
- Increased Tolerance between Conflicting Groups through Positive Youth Engagement;
- A Culture of Respect, Tolerance and Learning between Communities is Fostered through Training Young Men and Women in Leadership and Prevention of Gender-based Violence.

**Connection to Mission’s Strategy:** The goal of the USAID/Bangladesh Special Development Objective (under development) is to protect the lives of, and foster peace, dignity, health, opportunity and prosperity for those affected by the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh. New strategy documents, including a new CDGS, are now under development. Two expected results of achieving this goal are reduced risk of conflict caused by Rohingya displacement and increases opportunity in affected communities in Cox’s Bazar.

**Location:** While activities can cover both host and refugee communities, interventions should be physically located in areas outside the refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar district.

**Coordination:** Given the sheer scale and complexity of the response, applicants should demonstrate coordination and communication with local actors and implementing organizations to ensure that interventions proposed in the application compliment planned or active initiatives.

**2. Country: Central African Republic**

**POC: Christopher White** ([chrwhite@usaid.gov](mailto:chrwhite@usaid.gov))

**POC: Susan Skolnik** ([sskolnik@usaid.gov](mailto:sskolnik@usaid.gov))

**Background and Context:** In 2012, widespread armed conflict broke out in the Central African Republic (CAR), one of the world’s poorest countries. Political leaders manipulated local tensions and framed the conflict as a struggle between Christians and Muslims, leading to mass atrocities and ethnic cleansing. Today, numerous armed groups continue to fight with one another and attack local populations. In addition to violence between Christians and Muslims, conflicts have arisen between pastoralists and farmers, between ethnic groups, and between communities over competition for natural resources such as minerals and wildlife.

While a measure of stability returned to the capital of Bangui during FY 2018, persistent violence in many parts of the Central African Republic (CAR) continued to disrupt operations to promote a foundation for peace, stability, and development. Despite the completion of a new roadmap for Peace and Reconciliation intended to promote dialogue and establish an agreement to disarm combatants, little progress has been made so far. Sporadic clashes between armed groups have further aggravated tensions between communities and delayed the process of inter-communal reconciliation.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** The conflict has been devastating on local populations. Many of the country’s youth have no livelihood opportunities available to them except to join armed groups. Sexual and gender-based violence is pervasive. The country faces an ongoing humanitarian emergency, as hundreds of thousands remain displaced. The national government has little control over the country outside the capital city of Bangui. Many people of CAR find themselves trapped in a cycle of conflict and extreme poverty, even though the country is richly endowed with natural resources.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** A Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic was signed in Bangui on February 6, 2019

by the Government of the Central African Republic and armed groups. The agreement recognized suffering, deaths and displacement of thousands as a toll of the conflict. Parties agreed on principles of lasting settlement of the conflict. The fulfillment of the agreement is yet to be seen, but the readiness of parties to cooperate creates an opportunity window for settling the conflict.

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** Key drivers of violence include lack of employment / livelihood options for youth, access to services, lack of justice, and lack of state authority and security. USAID programming promotes a broad and inclusive peace by identifying and addressing the root causes of inter-communal conflict. Areas of thematic focus for Concept Notes may support, but are not limited to, activities that address the following:

- **Intercommunal conflict resolution:** Identifying and resolving local-level conflicts before they escalate, using peace committees and other approaches to encourage non-violent solutions.
- **Capacity building for local organizations and leaders to resolve conflicts:** Supporting CAR’s nascent civil society and local leaders with the tools to resolve local-level conflicts.
- **Community protection:** Building communities’ capacity to reduce their exposure to security threats in a non-violent manner using early warning systems, community protection committees, and other approaches.

Where relevant, proposed interventions should leverage existing USAID activities in CAR.

**Location:** While administrative offices may be located in the capital city of Bangui, proposed interventions should take place outside of Bangui. Applications should account for the complex security and logistical challenges of operating in CAR, and interventions should be adaptable to different security scenarios.

**3. Country: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**

**POC: Christopher White ([chrwhite@usaid.gov](mailto:chrwhite@usaid.gov))**

**POC: Susan Skolnik ([sskolnik@usaid.gov](mailto:sskolnik@usaid.gov))**

**Background and Context:** The Democratic Republic of the Congo’s Ituri Province is rich in natural resources, including wildlife, forest products, gold, and oil. Many of these resources are illegally extracted, financing armed groups, fueling violence, and threatening conservation efforts. Government (FARDC) military operations in Mambasa in January 2019 resulted in the death of militia leader “Manu,” successor to notorious Paul Sadala (“Morgan”), killed in 2014. The remnants of these and other armed groups continue to operate in the Ituri Forest region.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** The Okapi Wildlife Reserve was established in 1992 and listed as a World Heritage Site in 1996. It is a potential pillar of stability in the region, but under threat from illicit mining and poaching that sustain armed groups. The Reserve protects the habitat of the okapi and preserves rare plant and animal life, as well as the lifestyle and culture of indigenous people. It contains threatened species of primates and birds and about 5,000 of the estimated 30,000 okapi surviving in the wild. It is inhabited by indigenous pygmy Mbuti and Efe hunters whose traditional livelihoods are similarly threatened.

Mining in the reserve is illegal but common. Migrant workers arrive from towns like Kisangani and Beni to work for subsistence wages. Miners, in turn, threaten wildlife and indigenous livelihoods. They are also vulnerable to recruitment into armed groups, fueling instability and violence. Indigenous peoples and the vast majority of the Ituri population are excluded from the revenues generated from their land.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** USAID welcomes applications that seek to promote peacebuilding and stabilization in and around the Okapi Wildlife Reserve in the DRC. Applications must begin with a plan to synthesize existing political economy

analyses and conduct original research as necessary to illuminate the drivers of conflict and instability around the Reserve. Applications must incorporate USAID’s People-to-People approach and utilize the political economy analysis to focus on one or more of the following areas:

- Training young people in skilled trades in demand within the Okapi Wildlife Reserve and surrounding communities in order to reduce armed group recruitment and promote licit, peaceful economic ties to commercial hubs of Kisanganyi and Bunia.
- Building community resilience to violence, exploitation, and armed group recruitment by creating incentives for licit economic activity and/or strengthening peaceful inter-communal ties in and around the Okapi Wildlife Reserve.

**Location:** While administrative offices may be located in one of Eastern Congo’s population centers, proposed interventions should take place in the Okapi Wildlife Reserve and its surrounding communities. Applications should account for the complex security and logistical challenges of operating in Eastern Congo, and interventions should be adaptable to different security scenarios. Where relevant proposed interventions should leverage existing USAID activities in the DRC, including conservation, responsible minerals trade, and humanitarian response efforts.

**Coordination:** Proposed interventions should also consider and, where relevant, leverage existing interventions by other donor agencies, the United Nations, civil society groups, and faith-based organizations.

**4. Country: Guinea**

**POC: Mark Koenig (mkoening@usaid.gov)**

**Background and Context:** Conflict prevention and resolution is a top U.S. Government priority in West Africa. This subregion has a history of catastrophic conflicts; Guinea, despite its own crises, has managed to play a positive role in supporting humanitarian needs during conflicts in neighboring states. Guinea has hosted over a million refugees from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d’Ivoire, and also sent troops to support U.N. peace-keeping efforts in Mali. While the crisis in Mali did not adversely impact politics or security in Guinea, the economy of Upper Guinea suffered greatly from the disruption of traditional marketing routes through Mali. Informal and formal trade corridors were closed and slowed during the military confrontation and insecurity paralyzed much of the commerce intended to feed rural populations on both sides of the border. Additionally, the ongoing crisis in Guinea-Bissau associated with lawlessness and an increase in illicit drug trafficking, has had adverse spillover effects on transnational trade.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** Recurrent clashes in the forest region, the natural region that encompasses Guinea’s second largest city, N’Zérékoré, and much of the nation’s mineral wealth, have become a deep source of concern over the course of the past several years. The region is home to 25 percent of Guinea’s population, and is critical to the country’s development. As well as fertile agricultural lands, it is home to one of the world’s richest deposits of iron ore. Despite this, the forest region has the highest incidence of poverty in the country. Two-thirds of its residents live below the poverty line. This perceived injustice of living in extreme poverty amidst natural richness drives grievances among many of the region’s residents. In the forest region it is perceived that high unemployment leaves youth vulnerable to conscription both through formal and informal ties, making them simultaneously victims and perpetrators within the violence.

**Connection to Mission’s Strategy:** Conflict prevention is one of the top priorities stipulated in the USAID/Guinea CDCS 2015-2020. The IR 2.2: Conflict Prevention and Mitigation Promoted in the Forest Region is critical for achieving the DO 2: Democratic Governance and Economic Processes

Strengthened.

**Location:** Forest region

## 5. Country: Jamaica

**POC:** Allan Bernard ([abernard@usaid.gov](mailto:abernard@usaid.gov))

**Background and Context:** Consistently since 2000, Jamaica has been among the top five most violent countries in the world, with the primary problem being serious crimes related to inter and intra community violence fueled by gang related activities. All major data sources indicate that youth, primarily boys, are the main perpetrators and victims of violent conflicts with the more violent communities providing greater protection for the violence producers. However, they receive no such shield from legitimate community structures or the state authorities, particularly the police. The overall crime and violence environment contributes to the high rates and widespread societal acceptance of gender-based violence. This escalating rate of violence and increasing citizen insecurity have highlighted the need to build a culture of a cooperative police-citizens/youth working relationship as a means of maintaining peace and enhancing citizen security.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** According to the Latin American Public Opinion Project on the Political Culture of Democracy in Jamaica and the Americas, 2016/17, the majority of Jamaicans report that when the police came into their neighborhood, they came to help. Eighty-three percent of Jamaicans also feel that a closer working relationship between police and the community would reduce crime; with sixty-five percent expressing a willingness to work with the police in their community to combat criminal activities. Paradoxically, the history of police-citizens relations in Jamaica is marred by mistrust even while both sides recognized the centrality of an effective working relationship to build, maintain and sustain safe and peaceful communities.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** USAID/Jamaica welcomes applications that seek to capitalize on existing USAID and Government of Jamaica endeavors, and to create opportunities for promoting community-police partnerships that will prevent violence and build safer communities. Activities should seek to enhance cooperation between communities, particularly youth, and law enforcement in safety and security, as well as peace building processes. Buy-in and coordination with local government and civil society groups should be a key part of any proposal. Applications must incorporate a people-to-people approach and may focus on one or more of the following areas:

- **Trust-building initiatives between communities, particularly youth, and the police** - Police-community relations in Jamaica have typically been problematic where policing has been marked by poor service responsiveness and a disregard for citizens' rights. This problematic relationship has inhibited the police from engaging and working with communities on long-term sustainable peacebuilding strategies. The result of which has been the surrendering by the community of this crucial function to gangs and other illegitimate/nefarious structures.
- **Positive community engagement** - In the absence of a sustained relationship between the police and members of these communities, the interaction becomes one which is characterized by mutual suspicion. This creates apprehension towards the police and a general unwillingness to engage in dialogue. It has also weakened the authority of police, as this distrust has led to community perception of outreach as a front to seeking out gang activity. Strengthening community engagement, on neutral territory, where police members are seen as a part of the community they serve is vital for any sustainable peace and security initiatives.
- **Combat stigmatization** - The fear of being labeled a police informant is a major obstacle in fostering positive police-youth relations and has resulted in ineffective policing and a persistently prevalent feeling of insecurity among Jamaicans. This 'informer fi dead' culture, as expressed in Jamaica, removes the police from almost all community-based processes at resolving disputes

and addressing violence. This has effectively lead to greater inter and intra community violence resulting from reprisals and other self-help approaches.

**Location:** The scope of the application must be limited to the Western region of the country. More specifically the parishes of Trelawny, St. James, Hanover and Westmoreland.

## 6. Country: Liberia

**POC:** April O'Neill ([aconeill@usaid.gov](mailto:aconeill@usaid.gov))

**POC:** Thomatta Cooper ([tccooper@usaid.gov](mailto:tccooper@usaid.gov))

**Background and Context:** Multiple factors continue to undermine the peace Liberians enjoy since the end of the civil conflict in 2003. Deeply rooted ethnic divisions, socio-economic challenges, weak legal systems, and pervasive corruption are major factors threatening to upend Liberia's post-war peace and security. Liberians as a whole recognize the issues that led to civil war; however, impunity and the lack of political will to address these difficult issues will continue to test the country's current state of peace and security.

Liberia's fragility was further compounded following the aftermath of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak (2014-2015). Ebola completely fractured a weak public services system that was still attempting to regain footing following the protracted civil crisis. Liberia's social fabric was tested because the country's poverty levels worsened, triggering issues surrounding food security for the most vulnerable of the population. This combination of factors continue to test Liberia's resolve as it seeks to maintain its hard-earned peace and security.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** The continued prevalence of corruption, growing political divide, high unemployment, steep depreciation of the Liberian dollar, and the uncertainty surrounding the country's economic future continues to pose serious concerns related to violence and conflict in a post-war Liberia.

Approximately 70% of Liberia's total population is under the age of 35. Given the current economic climate and the high level of unemployment, this key demographic continues to struggle to find a sustainable means to earn a livelihood. Most of them have lost hope and so instead of searching for employment or furthering their education, instead seek to provide services to any political groups who are willing to pay for their service. Most times, these services lead to violence/conflict. For example: 1) They are used to protest in the streets against their opponents for political reasons 2) For provocative campaign messaging 3) Enforcers 4) Political destabilization 5) Propaganda and 6) Vote buying.

Substance abuse is another factor that is increasing violence among the youth. Lack of control over pharmaceutical drugs have exposed hundreds of Liberian youth to substance addiction. Tramadol, similar to opioid analgesics, is the current drug that is posing serious social problems to the unemployed youth population. If active measures are not taken in the short-term this key demographic can severely impacted for years to come.

Liberia's economy is currently experiencing double-digit inflation rates. As a result, basic commodities needed for everyday living continues to cost more each day. Naturally, this has caused a rise in public discontentment, particularly within impoverished communities in urban centers. This has resulted in an increase in public protests, particularly in Monrovia, on the country's prevailing economic situation and rampant corruption.

Finally, the issue of land ownership is another area of concern that is creating conflict. More than 50% of civil cases that are on court dockets are related to land issues. This figure was confirmed in a 2016 USAID conflict vulnerability assessment which found land-related issues to be a potential trigger of

violent conflict if not handled with caution. Control over land and natural resources were among the underlying causes of the Liberia civil war that took the lives of more than 250,000 persons. Some of the disastrous consequences of the war remain visible in the form of the struggle over the proper ownership of land especially in Nimba County, where disputes over land are now beginning to unearth long-standing ethnic divides.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** There is a need for more awareness around conflict prevention, conflict mitigation and reconciliation through social cohesion to reconcile Liberians. Youth, traditional leaders, and civil society, including faith-based organizations should play a key role in carrying out these peace messaging.

- Programs could be developed around substance abuse and its effects. Also working with drug-affected youth to address the systemic issues surrounding illicit drug abuse among the youth population;
- Hire youth to carry out conflict prevention messaging which would also create job/life-skills opportunities programs for at-risk, out of school youth;
- Radio talk shows around peacebuilding and reconciliation issues;
- Programs can be developed to engage university student groups that are actively involved in the political process as part of the peace and reconciliation process;
- Continued awareness raising efforts, with a specific focus on traditional leaders as they can be key partners in resolving land issues in rural communities;
- Continued direct youth engagement on conflict issues that affect them and how they could positively impact their communities.

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** USAID/Liberia Democracy, Rights, and Governance Office (DRG) has stand-alone conflict activities that integrates conflict mitigation and peace building into other DRG Activities.

**Connection to Mission's Strategy:** The new Liberia CDCS (approved June 28, 2019) includes language on strengthening the capacity of people and communities for conflict resilience.

**Location:** The priority counties for USAID/Liberia: Montserrado, Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, and Margibi Counties

**Coordination:** Awardee(s) will be expected to coordinate and communicate with other USAID-funded projects, local actors, and relevant Government of Liberia Ministry institutions during implementation.

## 7. Country: Mozambique

POC: Jennifer Adams ([jeadams@usaid.gov](mailto:jeadams@usaid.gov))

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POC: Kristin Ray ([kray@usaid.gov](mailto:kray@usaid.gov))

**Background and Context:** Mozambique stands at a crossroads in its national development trajectory. Long thought of as a post-conflict success story, Mozambique had been one of the fastest growing economies in the world prior to 2015. Since that time, however, a number of factors, including simmering political tensions, persistent armed conflict, seasonal droughts and flooding, entrenched government corruption, creeping inflation, mounting public debt, an overburdened public health sector, and the recent manifestation of violent extremism in the northernmost province, have dramatically curtailed economic growth and fomented instability. While Mozambique is already an important minerals exporter (coal, rubies, graphite, titanium, and tantalum) and is poised to become one of the world's leading exporters of liquefied natural gas (LNG) by 2025, the only way to ensure that its

extractive industry windfall translates into higher levels of human development for all Mozambicans is to address the key drivers of political, social, and economic instability through equitable economic growth, enhanced democratization, and the responsible use of public revenues.

The recent discovery of Africa's largest LNG reserves and the influx of international companies set to explore this resource have created high expectations for job creation, but to date have done little to improve Cabo Delgado's socioeconomic situation, and it remains one of the most underdeveloped regions of the country. The province has been generally characterized as having limited participation in governance structures, in part due to lack of access to information in rural areas. It also serves as a transit hub for trafficking in wildlife, minerals, drugs, and people.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** In addition to implementing the peace process, Mozambique faces challenges of rising violent extremism in its northernmost province of Cabo Delgado, along the porous border with Tanzania--which is also where LNG exploration is concentrated. Since October 5, 2017, the districts of Mocímboa da Praia, Palma, Macomia, Nangade, and Muidumbe, have experienced dozens of separate violent extremist incidents involving suspected Islamist militants. Reports characterize the extremists as an armed group of radicalized individuals with a base in northern Cabo Delgado. Sources state that they started as a religious group, but in late 2015 began to include military "cells." The group has carried out attacks of varying frequency and intensity over the past year and a half, burning houses and government facilities, terrorizing villages, and violently killing civilians, including through beheading. The group's objectives remain vague but appear to include delegitimizing secular governance and undermining security services, while returning local communities to a more pure form of Islam.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** Significant progress was made in the Mozambican peace process over the last year. The government and the main opposition Renamo party, concluded an agreement in February 2018 on the decentralization of government, a long-held Renamo demand that allows for the indirect election of provincial governors, district administrators and mayors of municipalities. The National Assembly subsequently approved, via unanimous vote, the constitutional amendments required to implement the decentralization agreement, opening the door to opposition parties being able to govern the provinces and districts in which they earn a majority of votes.

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** Across Mozambique, but particularly in Cabo Delgado and Sofala provinces, the country's large youth population faces significant challenges--such as low education and skill levels, limited job opportunities, poor health services, and high rates of HIV/AIDS--that make them vulnerable to radicalization and threaten Mozambique's stability.

- In Northern Cabo Delgado province (districts of Mocímboa da Praia, Palma, Macomia, Nangade, and/or Muidumbe), the perceived imbalance of social conditions and lack of employment and basic services in northern Cabo Delgado may motivate disaffection with the state. Individual motivations for joining violent extremist groups have not been well defined but may include a perceived dearth of tangible development benefits for local communities to date from extractive industry projects. The social base of the group are typically marginalized young people, without formal employment and limited schooling.

Potential activities should include, to the extent possible, the following priority elements:

- Better Service Provision to Vulnerable Groups through Local Government Capacity Building;
- Increased Tolerance between Conflicting Groups through Positive Youth Engagement.

**Location:** The scope of the application must be limited to either Cabo Delgado (districts of Mocímboa da Praia, Palma, Macomia, Nangade, and/or Muidumbe) or Sofala provinces (Gorongosa and surrounding districts)

**8. Country: Paraguay**

**POC: Laura McKechnie** ([lmckechnie@usaid.gov](mailto:lmckechnie@usaid.gov))

**POC: Asuncion Solicitations** ([asuncion-solicitations@usaid.gov](mailto:asuncion-solicitations@usaid.gov))

**Background and Context:** The Paraguayan state struggles to provide quality public goods and services to all its citizens. Weak governance and a fragile rule of law restrain economic growth, especially among the poor, and allow corruption and other illegal activities to flourish. Limited policy dialogue among and between politicians and civil society has hindered effective decision making over public goods and services, and prohibits substantive citizen participation in issues of public interest.

The Northern Zone, San Pedro, Amambay, Concepción and Canindeyú, has a high concentration of poverty and rural poverty is an overarching systemic problem that significantly inhibits Paraguay's development. The lack of an effective state presence has fostered social, economic, and political instability, which is compounded by the presence of drug traffickers due to the proximity to the notorious tri-border region with Brazil and Argentina. Three of the four departments of the Northern Zone (Concepción, San Pedro, and Canindeyú) display the highest rates of extreme poverty in the country combined with the lowest population densities outside of the Chaco.

The agricultural sector of the Northern Zone presents political problems in Paraguay. Landless farmers' movements continue to stage demonstrations, which have included land invasions, protests for land ownership reform, as well as other social reforms. At the same time, the powerful lobby of the agribusiness sector limits the government's ability to maneuver on environmental and agricultural policies, leaving the GOP under pressure from various sectors, including the international community. Limited economic opportunity and the lack of local governments' capacity to drive local economic development often results in the proliferation of illicit activities, such as marijuana plantations and illegal logging in Paraguay's Northern Zone.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** Threats to inclusive economic growth include the existence of an insurgent group called the Paraguayan People's Army. This guerrilla-type group, funded by illegal crops, arms dealing and ransoms from kidnappings, benefits from a weak rule of law and widespread impunity combined with the lack of infrastructure and government presence in most areas of the Northern Zone. The Paraguayan People's Army has staged a number of armed operations, including bombings, arson attacks and kidnappings as part of an organized insurgency. The government has moved police and military personnel into this area to provide security; however, this has come at a cost and the results set forth have yet to be achieved.

There are several compounding factors that contribute to an environment that is rich for social conflict and violence, including lack of access to basic services. There is a need for an integrated process of social capital formation, entrepreneurial training and agrarian reform that contemplates a social and economic development plan, including education, health, infrastructure, employment, leadership, productivity and basic services. Many small rural farmers and their families have lost the means to generate legitimate income with the rapid degradation of Paraguay's natural resources, illegal logging of forests and the cultivation of large areas of marijuana production. Yet there are also spoilers who seek personal gain in fomenting social conflict.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** The Northern Zone is politically important to both the Government of Paraguay (GOP) and the U.S. Government (USG). The USG, in partnership with the GOP, has been implementing the Northern Zone Initiative (NZI) program, designed to rapidly demonstrate tangible results in 18 municipalities throughout four departments. That program is intended to not only reduce poverty, but also to extend GOP presence in conflict areas

through infrastructure development, training, and value chain development within that region. While that Initiative has been extended, there continues to be substantial room for value chain improvement within the Northern Zone, and this new project will have a primary focus in that geographic area.

Moving forward, USAID will continue to focus on creating licit and economically viable income opportunities for vulnerable populations, while also working to transfer lessons learned to national and local governments to ensure the sustainability of our interventions.

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** USAID/Paraguay’s goal is to support “a more prosperous, well-governed democracy in Paraguay” by strengthening internal management and governance systems (Development Objective I) and increasing inclusive and sustainable economic development (Development Objective II). By failing to deliver sufficient public goods and to guarantee the rule of law for all citizens, support for democracy is undermined. To pave a clear pathway towards improved responsiveness to citizen needs and demands and a stronger foundation for democracy, under Development Objective 1, USAID/Paraguay will improve the government’s effectiveness by developing its human and institutional capacity (with strong human resources, tools, and processes) and strengthening accountability mechanisms (that shift the incentive structure).

The most excluded historically have been concentrated in Paraguay’s Northern Zone departments. To achieve a more prosperous, well-governed democracy, this marginalized population must participate in and benefit from economic growth. Under Development Objective II, USAID/Paraguay will increase inclusive and sustainable economic development for small producers in the Northern Zone by strengthening the institutional capacity of producer organizations through value chains and market access, and by increasing economic opportunities for vulnerable populations. It will also begin a new program in 2019 or 2020 focusing on grassroots community economic development in rural areas.

With this scenario in mind, USAID will continue to support Paraguay’s Journey to Self-Reliance by working with the new administration to improve areas linked to corruption, including domestic resource mobilization, government spending, effective prosecution of fraud and evasion cases, and provision of public services.

**Location:** The geographic area of interest is limited to the Northern Zone of the Country, specifically districts with greater social conflicts in the Departments of San Pedro, Canindeyú, Concepción and Caaguazú.

**9. Country: Philippines**

**POC: Jeffrey Lehrer (jlehrer@usaid.gov)**

**Background and Context:** With a long history of armed conflict between Government of Philippines and Moro Muslim insurgency, fueled by inter-and-intra clan violence, the conflict environment in Mindanao remains complex and susceptible to outside influences. Vertical conflict has divided communities and positioned Islamic militant organizations and other groups such as the New People’s Army (NPA) against the government. Conflict has been exacerbated by feelings of marginalization and discrimination, lack of representation in government, use of violence as a means to settle disputes, and the aggravating horizontal tensions between religious communities. Increased community divisions, the influence of radical ideologies, the prevalence of the shadow economy such as the illicit weapons and drug trade, kidnap-for-ransom activities and crossborder trade, clan conflict, and a lack of political cohesion within and between the Christian and Muslim communities have contributed to conflict and violence in the region. In May 2017, an ISIS-affiliated extremist group launched a five-month siege of Marawi City that displaced over 350,000 people and severely damaged the city. The whole island of Mindanao was placed under martial law, which was later extended twice to continue to the end of 2019.

On July 26, 2018, President Rodrigo Duterte signed Republic Act 11054, or the Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao after years of negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and deliberations in the legislature. The law is expected to bring peace and development in Mindanao by addressing issues of historical injustice, equitable sharing of resources, legitimate grievances and aspirations for self-determination of the Moros. The 80-man Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) was established after the law was ratified through plebiscite held in January and February 2019. This signals the transition period to the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

- **Violence and Conflict Issues:** Vertical and localized horizontal conflict and violence continue to threaten and affect communities. Martial law has been in effect in Mindanao since May 2017. However, there are at least 7 bombing incidents reported during the period. The latest incidents - the Jolo catholic church bombing that killed 20 people and injured almost 100, and the two explosions that hit the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) camp in Indanan, Sulu that killed 8 people and injured 22 others -- have caused grave concern to the military because the attacks appears to have used suicide-bombers. This tactic, according to security forces officials, goes against local culture. Media reported that the Islamic State (ISIS) has claimed responsibility for the attacks.
- Two years after Marawi City was liberated from the ISIS-affiliated extremist group, the growing discontent of the people with the perceived slow rebuilding of the city presents a new emerging source of conflict in the area.
- The transition phase to the BARMM is set to face bureaucratic challenges and political pressures. The BTA is under strong pressure to deliver tangible dividends to the people of the region--- such as maintaining peace in the midst of a variety of horizontal conflicts that persist and the effective provision of basic services which were inadequate during the regime of the ARMM government.
- The period of transition is expected to result in high level of community vulnerability to conflict. Communities, particularly those that have experienced poverty, displacement, and violence, have high expectations of peace dividends and positive changes. As the new Bangsamoro government struggles to deliver good governance and better services, high expectations may lead to disappointment and mistrust once delays are experienced by the people. This sentiment may instigate conflict at the community level.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** USAID Philippines welcomes applications that seek to address pre-existing, current and emerging conflict dynamics in Mindanao.

In particular, the Mission is interested in programs that scale up and institutionalize people-to-people (P2P) approaches and mechanisms to ensure sustainability and continuity of community resilience to conflict and violence, and further reduce emerging conflict drivers. Lessons from previous conflict management activities show that local mechanisms that include traditional local institutions and actors, civil society and local government units, are more effective in mitigating and preventing local conflicts.

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** Areas of thematic focus for applications may support, but are not limited to, activities that address the following:

- Inter-group dialogues that mitigate religious, ethnic, or other divisions, and strengthen inter-group cohesion.
- Actions of community leaders, including, traditional and religious leaders, women leaders and youth leaders to strengthen and institutionalize community-based approaches to resolve conflict.
- Capacity of provincial and local Peace and Order Councils to mitigate conflict.
- Community driven socio-economic development that integrates vulnerable youth and prevents, mitigates or resolves sources of conflict.

- Collaboration with local government units (LGUs) and communities to map flashpoints and triggers of violence and identify measures/develop mechanisms to prevent conflict.
- Scaling-up and sustaining the P2P linkages created by previous awards.

Given the sensitivity of the issues that will be addressed, a “do-no-harm” (DNH) approach should be included in the proposed interventions. The implementer will work closely with USAID as well as with local stakeholders to avoid interventions that may be deemed culturally inappropriate or counter-productive. The approach must be sensitive to the local social, cultural, and political conditions of the region and should consider the impact of activities on perceptions of equity and the socio-economic welfare of the intended beneficiaries.

**Connection to Mission’s Strategy:** The current USAID/Philippines CDCS’ Development Objective 2 specifically aims to improve the peace and stability in the conflict affected areas in Mindanao by strengthening local governance and ensuring greater civic engagement for peace and development. The activities are aimed at strengthening community capacity to manage and reduce the underlying tensions that might lead to resurgence in violence and a breakdown in law and order. This is critical to attaining the overall goal of fostering a stable and prosperous Philippines. USAID/Philippines is currently in the process of developing its new CDCS. The new CDCS will tackle violence reduction and conflict prevention by building the resilience of conflict affected communities.

**Location:** Mindanao

**Coordination:** The applicant should demonstrate knowledge of the evolving conflict landscape and identify synergies with other USAID- and internationally-funded projects.

**10. Country: Republic of the Congo (ROC)**

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**POC: Susan Skolnik** ([sskolnik@usaid.gov](mailto:sskolnik@usaid.gov))

**Background and Context:** From April 2016 to December 2017, aftermath the March 2016 presidential elections, the Republic of Congo (ROC) experienced a resurgence in armed clashes between government forces and the Ninja/Nsilulu militia in the Pool Department. The conflict displaced more than 160,000 people (roughly 70% of the population of the region), and exposed civilians to serious human rights abuses. The most recent iteration of the conflict broke-out in early 2016 following a contested election in which the opposition accused the government of fraud. The Pool Department has been the scene of numerous internal conflicts since 1993, and has been driven by ethnic divisions and power struggles among the country’s political elite, long-standing grievances, and the perception that the region has been marginalized politically and economically since independence.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** Both parties agreed to a ceasefire on December 23, 2017. While the agreement has largely been respected to date, numerous challenges remain that could imperil the fragile peace process. Roughly 80% of internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned home yet many have found their households destroyed and their productive assets looted. With support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Congolese government has developed a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program to reintegrate an estimated 10,000 ex-combatants back into civilian life. The leader of the Ninja/Nsilulu militia, Pastor Ntumi, received amnesty from the government in August 2018 and has made a series of public appearances supporting weapons collection efforts. Since then DDR efforts have stalled and the expectations of many ex-combatants for assistance have gone unmet. The perceived failure to implement measures from the 1993 and 2003 peace agreements, along with grievances around mistreatment of identity groups and lack of employment opportunities have driven youth to join militias in the past, and there is concern that

another failed peace process could do the same. The next round of elections, scheduled for 2021, represent another potential trigger for renewed conflict in the region.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** In this context, USAID welcomes applications that reinvigorate efforts to advance the process of peace and reconciliation and enhance community resilience in the Pool Department. Applications must incorporate a people-to-people approach and may focus on one or more of the following areas:

- Engagement of youth and women into peace process;
- Strengthening peace through education;

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** Potential activities should include, to the extent possible, the following priority elements:

- **Economic Recovery and Rehabilitation:** The 20-month conflict destroyed productive assets and disrupted farming and trade in a region almost entirely dependent on agricultural production. Activities under this focus area should aim to restore the livelihoods and assets of conflict affected communities and stimulate economic recovery in targeted districts using a people-to-people approach that promotes mutual understanding, trust, empathy and strengthens social ties within conflict affected communities.
- **Reconciliation and Healing:** The latest round of conflict has exacerbated long-standing grievances and intensified inter-communal tensions - potentially increasing the likelihood of future violence. Activities under this focus area should aim to rebuild trust, promote dialogue and enhance social cohesion among and between victims and perpetrators of violence and provide culturally appropriate trauma healing and psycho-social support. Activities should work to complement or expand upon existing dialogue platforms and support the efforts of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action to promote peace.

The proposed interventions should incorporate strong Do No harm and Conflict Sensitivity considerations, not to exacerbate intra or inter-community tensions and issues.

**Location:** The geographic scope of the application must be limited to the Pool Department. The applicant is encouraged to propose activities in the districts most affected by the conflict including Kimba, Kindamba, Vindza and Mayama.

**Coordination:** Close coordination with the current Food for Peace program is essential.

## 11. Country: Rwanda

**POC: Saurabh Naithani (snaithani@usaid.gov)**

**Background and Context:** The emotional and social legacy of the 1994 genocide will remain in Rwandan society for generations. The Government of Rwanda's economic policies and reconciliation efforts have held together a social fabric weakened by a pre-genocide legacy of official ethnic discrimination and violence and post-genocide distrust. The Gacaca courts, using locally elected lay judges, tried over 1.2 million genocide cases over the course of eight years, a staggering achievement in such a short time period. These courts helped address decades of impunity in relation to ethnically motivated killings and concluded in 2012. However, despite their achievements, Gacaca (traditional) courts have left numerous tensions in their wake, which left unaddressed could lead to future problems. In addition, Rwanda's long history of centralized planning and restricted political space have limited the capacity of Rwanda's citizens to take independent initiative and fully participate in creating the vibrant economy and open society imagined by its leaders.

In May and June 2011, USAID/Rwanda and the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) collaborated on a countrywide post-genocide recovery assessment for Rwanda. While grievances do exist, there are no actors with the capacity to mobilize large groups of people towards political violence, especially in a country where state control remains strong. Since then, USAID/Rwanda supported conflict and reconciliation activities that advance social cohesion, peace building and reconciliation, specifically focusing on grievances that have the potential to lead to a resurgence of tensions and violence.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** In the years following the genocide, the Government of Rwanda's (GOR) approach to post-Genocide social healing was based on the conviction that a peaceful country requires the eradication of allegiance to ethnic identities. However, the Mission's conflict assessment suggested that limits on open discussion of peoples' relationships to their Hutu, Tutsi, Twa, or mixed identities, have hindered a deeper process of reconciliation. For citizens, regardless of their backgrounds, to have equal opportunity in co-creating a new Rwanda, a national dialogue is needed in which there is space to speak of multiple wounds, multiple histories, and multiple aspirations.

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) has actively worked to facilitate the process of daily reconciliation and help Rwandans to 'rediscover the pre-colonial harmony that colonization had destroyed'. These programs include educational programs encouraging patriotism, positive values, responsibility and selfless service." (NURC 2007: 108); Since 2013, the GOR introduced a new program that directly addresses questions of identity through dialogue in relation to the past. This is the Ndi Umunyarwanda or 'I am Rwandan' program. According to the NURC, and it is worth quoting in full, Ndi Umunyarwanda "provides a forum or space for Rwandans in various social groups to discuss issues related to national unity, reconciliation and development. The program encompasses both the atrocities of the divisive past and the hope for a peaceful, reconciled and reunited country. Not all Rwandans need settle on a single interpretation, but the task is to work toward mutually acceptable accommodation. While few scholarly studies on Ndi Umunyarwanda or on the impact of the program have been done, it has already faced substantial criticism for calling on Hutus to issue public apologies (The Rwandan 2013; Blackie and Hitchcott 2018). In an argument similar to that made about the silencing of the Hutu experience, it is claimed that the Twa are invisible in the reconciliation process. Persistent tensions from the 1994 Genocide, new grievances created by the end of community courts or a transitional justice system known as "gacaca" and the lack of a follow-on strategy, and competing interpretations of Rwanda's history have the potential to undermine the GOR's success in maintaining peace.

Long-standing issues around land, identity, and reconciliation persist, and have the potential to undercut medium- to long-term economic growth and political stability. Problems of gender-equity gaps and gender-based violence are also detrimental to the continued growth of the country.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** Findings from the most recent Rwanda Reconciliation Barometer (2015) indicated that wounds resulting from the divisive past, and the genocide in Rwanda, are not yet fully healed. The report calls for programs that provide psychological and tangible support to communities. The findings also indicate that informal educational programs that promote reconciliation, notably those involving regular contact and/or interactions among Rwandans, need scaling up. In discussions with officials at the NURC, USAID/Rwanda has learned that the commission is now even more cognizant of the persisting challenges to genuine reconciliation. While physical security is assured to all Rwandans, it is still fragile because the wounds remain and the message of peace and forgiveness has not yet reached millions of Rwandans.

USAID/Rwanda would like to respond to these emerging opportunities by building on the successes of two existing programs that can now be scaled up nationally. The 'Healing our Communities: Promoting Social Cohesion in Rwanda' activity is aimed at improving government responsiveness and adaptability

to post-genocide community needs by establishing links between communities and government officials. This activity is being implemented in 16 communities across 8 districts where intergroup tensions are high. It uses a comprehensive, inter-generational approach that integrates trauma healing, community dialogue, joint problem-solving and volunteer projects to help the most vulnerable.

The second activity, Duhuze (Bringing Together), worked with the NURC to support societal healing in 1260 communities across seven districts by enabling Rwandans to effectively manage individual and collective wounds and differences, improve trust and cooperation, and celebrate their diversity. This is done through capacity building for nine project staff and 126 community facilitators to enable them to provide psychosocial support services and use a narrative theater approach to enhance dialogue. The activity also launched a Peace Caravan (traveling theater and music) that attracted over 1,200 people, primarily youth. Thus far, the project has established 111 therapy groups that provide psychosocial support services. Additionally, there are 685 Duhuze forums in this first year involving 20,000 people that provide space for dialogue for youth to discuss issues affecting reconciliation in their own communities and identify solutions to addressing the problems.

USAID/Rwanda would like to initiate a new program that would build on and scale up these interventions that allow for a more open dialogue on issues of identity, economic and rural/urban gaps, land, and other key issues that Rwandan communities face today. This should happen at all levels: in villages, secondary and high schools, universities, civil society forums, and in national debates.

USAID/Rwanda will continue to support diverse approaches that build on existing efforts to encourage critical thinking around reconciliation. The mission will also support programs focusing on reintegration activities and mental health services, particularly those capable of addressing trauma-healing, taking into consideration the fact that women, men, and youth might have been differently affected by the Genocide. These programs will be gender-sensitive, particularly given that most perpetrators and ex-combatants are men, while most survivors are women.

USAID/Rwanda proposes a new activity that would cover all 30 districts with activities that address the following windows of opportunity:

**Scale up peace education with special attention to young people:** Almost 70% percent of Rwandans are under the age of 30. Recent studies on these youth show that if nurtured through generation-sensitive peace education, good leadership and continued structural reforms, this new generation has the potential to propel Rwanda into a more peaceful and prosperous country. Yet, because they were born in the immediate aftermath of the genocide in a deeply divided society, members of the new generation indicate signs of intergenerational wounds. These wounds need to be further addressed. , Integrating youth into reconciliation activities would help them to break free from intergenerational wounds and build a more tolerant and less violent society.

**Scale up the work of dialogue clubs** to bring together former genocide perpetrators and genocide survivors for an honest reconciliation dialogue as well as joint income-generation activities.

**Scale up trauma healing activities** to provide psychosocial rehabilitation to the most vulnerable, including survivors of genocide, prisoners and ex-prisoners.

**Connection to Mission's Strategy:** The 2018 Integrated Country Strategy recognizes the need to improve social cohesion through continued peace-building and reconciliation efforts that foster a more adaptable and stable society in which citizens can freely engage with government on a wide range of issues. The proposed activities would also advance USAID/Rwanda's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) 2014-2018, DO2 Intermediate Result 2.2: "improved social cohesion." The current CDCS states that "Rwandans need to work through unresolved conflicts and differences that could lead to instability. Long-standing issues around land, identity, and reconciliation persist, and have the potential to undercut medium- to long-term economic growth and political stability. Problems of gender-equity gaps and gender-based violence are also detrimental to the continued growth of the

country. Therefore, supporting the peaceful resolution of complex challenges in a culturally relevant and sensitive way is necessary.” As USAID/Rwanda works on its new CDCS for 2020-2025, empowering citizens to take advantage of space opening up for greater responsiveness to their concerns, targeting inclusive justice, reconciliation, and quality service delivery has already been flagged as a top priority. Therefore the proposed activities fully align to the mission’s strategic direction.

**Location:** These successful pilot activities could be expanded to include all districts in Rwanda.

## 12. Country: South Sudan

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**Background and Context:** South Sudan is a fragile state with complex conflict dynamics and mired in cycles of ethnic violence, human rights atrocities, and humanitarian disasters of devastating scale. Despite political agreements put in place in the lead-up to independence in 2011, a civil war broke out in 2013, and internal conflict continued and grievances were not resolved. In 2018, a peace agreement was reached, but the conflict drivers that have led South Sudan to be embroiled in conflict for decades will take many years of concerted effort to resolve, providing many opportunities for P2P programming.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** Protracted civil war has torn the fabric of South Sudan society and created one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises. One third of the population is displaced, half are food insecure, and the economy has collapsed. Gender-based violence is widespread. Political and military leadership from both the government and the opposition show little interest in, or ability to govern for the benefit of all South Sudanese. The political environment has become increasingly zero-sum. As a result, South Sudan’s political, economic and service delivery systems barely function. It is ranked the world’s most fragile country in the 2018 Fund for Peace Fragile States Index.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** The signing of the Revitalized Agreement of Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) on September 12, 2018 provides a window of opportunity for violence reduction and conflict prevention. The R-ARCSS has brought a welcome reduction in violence in most parts of the country; but civilians are bearing the brunt of continued fighting, and a troubling pattern of sexual violence persists. The Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM)-led government and major opposition parties, however, have failed to meet key benchmarks to form South Sudan’s Transitional Government of National Unity by May 12, 2019 as required in the R-ARCSS. Consequently, the pre-transitional period has been extended until November 2019. The R-ARCSS contains an ambitious reform agenda addressing highly contentious issues such as governance, financial transparency, anti-corruption, security, resource control and transitional justice. In particular, the transitional justice section (Chapter V) of the R-ARCSS, provides a window of opportunity for work in this sector.

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** USAID/South Sudan welcomes applications that seek to capitalize on existing USAID programming to create opportunities for promoting peace and reconciliation at the community level in South Sudan. Activities at the project level must incorporate a people-to-people approach and empower citizen actors across a wide range of contexts and populations in South Sudan to advance peace, stability, and dialogue through local solutions, civic participation, and increased access to information. Activities that build on recent successes of civil society coalitions and umbrella organizations are especially welcome. Applications may address the following thematic areas:

**Enable local actors to build cross-line interdependence and intra-community cohesion to promote peace processes, reconciliation, and peaceful co-existence.** Activities supporting this objective will mitigate conflicts from escalating by providing targeted support to peace actors, community-level leaders/groups and influencers, and constituent-responsive authorities who are

engaged in, or wish to be engaged in, peace-building, conflict mitigation, and reconciliation. Activities should identify opportunities within and across communities to manage disputes non-violently, promote peace messages, and strengthen the tools and resources needed to build trust and find solutions to problems. Activities should (1) support emerging local, regional, and/or national political processes and conflict resolution and mitigation activities, economic development in support of reconciliation and conflict mitigation activities, or (2) advance conditions for improved citizen participation, accountability, and long-term stability through capacity building of actors working on such issues.

**Support civil society actors advocating for peace, justice, reconciliation, and reform; and participating in political and civic processes.** As the civil war continues in South Sudan, civil society actors are increasingly undertaking peace messaging, peacebuilding, and reconciliation activities. They have also become key participants in and observers of a range of peace processes, including formal ones organized by the East African region and international community. Furthermore, civil society focuses on activities that resonate with South Sudanese from all communities, particularly youth, women, and traditionally marginalized groups. USAID considers faith-based organizations (FBOs) -- at both local and national levels -- to be part of civil society, and recognizes they have often played an integral part in peacebuilding, advocacy, and citizen. Activities can range from peacebuilding efforts in response to emergencies to civic education campaigns.

**Facilitate the ability of print, radio, and other media to promote peace and reconciliation within and between groups, especially at state and local levels.** Access to accurate, fair, and trustworthy information is critical to mitigate political manipulation, hate speech and misinformation that could lead to further tensions and conflict. It can also support burgeoning peace and reconciliation initiatives. Information can be disseminated through both traditional and non-traditional media, the latter including informal citizen journalism efforts and initiatives that bring civil society organizations, concerned citizens, and independent media outlets together in the interest of peace and reform.

**Connection to Mission’s Strategy:** At the strategic level, USAID/South Sudan recognizes that long term change and resolution of conflict in South Sudan will be driven in part by actors at the sub-national level. Programming that supports civil society and credible actors to enable peace and reconciliation processes is therefore critical, and USAID/South Sudan’s Operational Framework aims to improve prospects for peace in South Sudan by strengthening resilient and conflict-resistant communities.

**13. Country: Timor-Leste**

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**Background and Context:** Timor-Leste is a small, half-island nation with about 1.2 million people, with more than 40 percent who live below the poverty line. About 39 percent of the population was born after 2000 and oil revenues are about 90 percent of the national budget. Timor-Leste has an unfortunate history of conflict and incidents of mass violence. Those that received the greatest media coverage were perpetrated during the Indonesian occupation from 1975 to 1999, when 20-25 percent of the country’s population of 700,000 died.

Today, Timor-Leste faces the medium- and long-term challenge of taking its health development agenda into its own hands against the backdrop of dwindling donor funding, declining oil and gas revenues, and identifying conflict mitigation options.

For example, violence against women and marginalized groups (e.g. youth, disabled, LGBTI) is too often normalized. At 40 percent, Timor-Leste has the highest prevalence of spousal or sexual violence in the region and acceptance for wife beating is higher in women than men. A 2016 study found in one municipality (Covalima) that 39 percent of women think a woman should tolerate any form of violence –

domestic, physical, sexual, and other – to keep the family together. Another study in 2016 of hospitals show high levels of blame and shame attitude on the part of healthcare providers, particularly toward marginalized groups.

**Violence and Conflict Issues:** The post conflict period of Timor-Leste to 2018 is compounded with collusion and nepotism much based on provision of privileges (scholarships, employment, bypassing entry requirements and examinations) for certain groups at the express exclusion of others. This continues to have critical consequences (including non-respect for formal regulations, emergence of informal practices of patronage, discretion, and past hierarchies) in a country that is still building institutions.<sup>6</sup>

Following 400 years of colonial rule by Portugal, Timorese society endured a 24-year occupation by Indonesia. The occupation was characterized by widespread violence and human rights abuses, including “state-sanctioned sexual abuse” wielded as a political weapon against women who were suspected, or whose partners were suspected, of association with pro-independence forces.(4,p.4) Militarization continued afterwards with the arrival of United Nations peacekeeping forces, which was followed by internal violence in 2006-2007.

Trauma and recurrent violence have been harmful to the Timorese population. Hall points out that “***The terminology of ‘post-conflict’ is problematic as it hides the reality of conflict for many East Timorese women who endure domestic violence.***”<sup>7</sup>

This history of violence contributes to ongoing violence in Timor-Leste, including widespread violence against women and girls and domestic violence. In fact, some men who survived detention and torture admitted to having “fallen into a pattern of violent behavior.”With international support, local NGOs have “collectively challenge[d] traditional norms that facilitate domestic violence.”

The women’s movement has made substantial victories, including successfully lobbying the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor to draft a policy paper on domestic violence and to solicit contributions from rural women for the draft. However, “true transformation of gendered social, political and economic relations” in Timor-Leste has not yet come to fruition. Furthermore, abusive partners may prevent women from getting proper prenatal or postnatal care.

**Today, violence against women and marginalized groups is too often normalized.** Generally throughout the country there is a culture of violence at the family, household, and community level that is the legacy of a traditional conquer-and- control political system, colonialism, the independence struggle, and overarching patriarchal social structures. Violence is used as a tool to force behavior change to avoid shaming the family. It is used primarily against women, children, LGBTI people, and people with disabilities.

A 2016 Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) study conducted in Covalima, target municipality for USAID’s Reinforce Basic Health Services Project, revealed that 39 percent of women think a woman should tolerate any form of violence – domestic, physical, and other – to keep the family together. This may indicate high social acceptance of violence towards women. Furthermore, violence against women can become normalized in a society with very high levels of violence, which further perpetuates the problem.

- Men, and especially male partners, are the primary perpetrators of violence against women. The

<sup>6</sup> <https://human-resources-health.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12960-018-0325-5>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.hhrjournal.org/2018/12/domestic-and-family-violence-in-post-conflict-communities-international-human-rights-law-and-the-states-obligation-to-protect-women-and-children/#\\_edn41](https://www.hhrjournal.org/2018/12/domestic-and-family-violence-in-post-conflict-communities-international-human-rights-law-and-the-states-obligation-to-protect-women-and-children/#_edn41)

prevalence of male violence against women reflects narratives of masculinity that rationalize and celebrate male strength, the use of violence, and men's power over women.

- Without widespread community condemnation of domestic and family violence (DFV), victims fear that reporting violence may place them at greater risk.
- A further issue in Timor-Leste is a lack of support services available to assist victims.
- There are few safe houses, shelters and other support services available, and those that do exist are run by civil society organizations (supported by donors) rather than the state.
- The UNDP report recommends the government prioritize the funding of emergency and DFV shelters, and to fund training and microfinance programs within shelters to assist victims in achieving financial independence.
- Rape perpetration (partner and nonpartner) was reported by one in five men in Dili, and one in three men in Manufahi. Gang rape perpetration was also relatively high (6 percent in Dili and 12 percent in Manufahi) The most common motivations that men reported for perpetrating rape were sexual entitlement and for entertainment or out of boredom.
- Women reported experiencing physical violence during pregnancy, and half of women with children who had experienced physical intimate partner violence reported that their children had been present on at least one occasion of violence. Women who had experienced such violence were also more likely to report unintended pregnancies, irregular contraceptive use, and a lack of power in decisions about birth spacing.<sup>8</sup>

Government action on gender based violence has been stymied by a continuing political stalemate that resulted in no budget or ministerial capacity to provide citizen services and has impeded implementation of the government's National Action Plan Against Gender Based Violence, launched in 2017.

**Windows of Opportunity for Violence Reduction and Conflict Prevention:** USAID is strengthening the government's provision of health services, improving governance within the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the National Institute of Health. USAID assists the MOH to increase transparency and accountability while providing quality health services, as called for under the government's National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2011-2030.

USAID collaborates with the MOH to strengthen the health system, encourage stronger ministerial leadership and decision-making, boost strategic planning capacity, and improve monitoring and evaluation. This enhances Timorese ownership and responsibility for health service provision.

**Portfolio Integration for Peace:** USAID seeks Concept Notes from local and/or international entities, and/or partnerships between local and international organizations. Partnerships must include a deliberate effort to strengthen the local organization(s) to effectively serve as agents of change for dialogue, reconciliation, and conflict mitigation. Proposing sub-awards to local organization(s) without articulating how the partnership will benefit the local organization is not adequate. Applications may focus on but need not be limited to the following:

- Identify points of entry with universities, training institutes, community groups, local NGOs, and others to serve as safe spaces to bring together groups with conflicting perspectives to voice grievances and promote intellectual discussions around issues which often cause conflict which may or may not appear related to the healthcare sector but which are likely impacting wellness.
- Increase the public's awareness of (i.e. using evidence based decision making), and options to address stereotyping and divides at home, school, workplace, halls of government, and throughout the community.
- Improve intergenerational dialogue and promote leaders and citizens to discuss community

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.hhrjournal.org/2018/12/domestic-and-family-violence-in-post-conflict-communities-international-human-rights-law-and-the-states-obligation-to-protect-women-and-children/#\\_edn41](https://www.hhrjournal.org/2018/12/domestic-and-family-violence-in-post-conflict-communities-international-human-rights-law-and-the-states-obligation-to-protect-women-and-children/#_edn41)

issues including but not limited to nutrition, domestic violence, and sexual orientation; while these are often framed as women’s issues, applications should address the issues as community centric.

In partnership with the government of Timor-Leste and in compliance with national policies assist healthcare providers and managers build a trusting relationship within their healthcare team(s) and create a safe place for promoting behavior change messages. Healthcare workers can be advocates of behavior change as well as resistant to changes in their own organizations and own behavior, however.

**Connection to Mission’s Strategy:** USAID is helping Timor-Leste become more self-reliant as it builds a more prosperous, healthy, and an even more democratic country by fostering inclusive and sustainable economic growth focused in the agriculture sector; improve the health of the Timorese people, particularly women and children; and strengthen the foundations of good governance. USAID works closely with the Government of Timor-Leste and partners to align assistance with the government’s Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030 and as outlined in USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy for Timor-Leste.<sup>9</sup>

**Location:** Applications must complement USAID assistance,<sup>10</sup> comply with government of Timor-Leste policies and standards, and empower individuals, organizations, and communities to craft solutions to mitigate tensions in and around health facilities, including but not limited to the USAID health activity in Covalima.<sup>11</sup> Applications must be in partnership with the government of Timor-Leste and may suggest other target geographic area(s). Applications must clearly indicate the theory(ies) of change for proposed interventions.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/planning/country-strategies-cdcs>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.usaid.gov/business-forecast/search>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.usaid.gov/timor-leste/project-descriptions/usaid-reinforce-basic-health-services-project>