



# USAID | GEORGIA

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**Issue Date:** February 24, 2021  
**Deadline for Questions:** March 5, 2021, 10:00 AM Tbilisi Time  
**Closing Date:** March 31, 2021  
**Closing Time:** 10:00 AM Tbilisi Time

**Subject:** Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: 72011421RFA00003

**Program Title:** Civil Society Engagement Activity in Georgia

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 98.001

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking applications for a Cooperative Agreement from qualified entities to implement the Civil Society Engagement Activity in Georgia. Eligibility for this award is not restricted. See Section C of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for eligibility requirements.

USAID intends to make an award to the applicant(s) who best meets the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the merit review criteria described in this NOFO, subject to a risk assessment. Eligible parties interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this NOFO thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements and selection process.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this NOFO and meet eligibility standards in Section C of this NOFO. This funding opportunity is posted on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the NOFO has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process. If you have difficulty registering on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or accessing the NOFO, please contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) for technical assistance.

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements detailed in Section D.6.f. The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration early in the process.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D. The deadline for questions is shown above. Responses to questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Issuance of this notice of funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

/s/

Robert Claussen  
Supervisory Contracting and Agreement Officer  
USAID/Georgia

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## **SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

This funding opportunity is authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961, as amended. The resulting award will be subject to 2 CFR 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, and USAID’s supplement, 2 CFR 700, as well as the additional requirements found in Section F.

### **A. Purpose**

The overall goal of the Civil Society Engagement Activity is to increase citizen engagement, awareness and participation in civic actions and democratic processes. The activity demonstrates a fundamental shift in the way USAID conceptualizes civil society and provides support to it. The civic landscape in Georgia is evolving quickly and new opportunities are emerging. Grass-roots activism is increasing and the public image of civil society is improving as a result of their responses to COVID-19. The definition of civil society under this activity includes a wide range of formal and informal civic actors and will employ a bottom up approach in which local stakeholders are empowered to identify their own development challenges and solutions. Using a flexible and adaptive approach, the activity will address systemic weaknesses within the civil society sector in Georgia, such as lack of legitimacy, weak constituency engagement and poor financial diversification. It will improve the ability and interest of Georgian citizens to mobilize their communities and engage with democratic actors. It will strengthen the capacity and collaboration of a diverse range of civic actors, including formal and informal civil society organizations, civic movements and civic-minded individuals. Specifically, the activity will enhance the capacity of formal and informal civic entities working at the local, regional and national level to address citizen identified issues, thereby building their legitimacy and influence; foster greater trust, connectivity and collaboration between newly emerging grassroots groups and their national and regional level counterparts; and, enhance the long term self-reliance of the civil society sector by developing an ecosystem for sustainability. The activity will meet these objectives by providing a wide range of technical support options and resources that promote inclusive civil society practices and initiatives.

### **B. Background**

Civil society in Georgia has played an instrumental role in advancing the democratic reform process as well as protecting individual citizens rights, promoting tolerance, and speaking out against discrimination. There is excellent capacity among leading CSOs to shape the public agenda and to partner with international donors. These organizations play significant watchdog and advocacy roles; however, several leading CSOs have begun to experience a declining role in the policy implementation process due to deterioration of the relationship between Georgian civil society and the government. CSOs and their leaders are increasingly criticized by high-level government officials attempting to discredit their work and widespread disinformation campaigns have been launched against several leading CSOs and leaders on social media. At the same time, new, less traditional civil society actors are becoming more active and new opportunities are emerging for institutional civil society to build trust and engage with citizens. These developments necessitate new and innovative interventions.

Democratic progress has been impeded by a lack of political pluralism, stalled or ineffective implementation of key reform efforts and the limited participation of opposition in key political processes. Independent civil society is becoming one of the few democratic institutions to actively and constructively call for government accountability and transparency. Civil society continues to serve as a watchdog against government corruption; holds various elected and appointed officials to account; and actively monitors the policy development processes and implementation. The legal operating environment for civil society is generally permissible, however very few incentives are currently in place which would encourage greater domestic resource mobilization. At the same time, recent instances of CSO harassment and antagonism present a concerning trend.

The strong organizational and technical capacities of leading CSOs contribute to Georgia's relatively high 'Civil Society Capacity' score of .93 on USAID's *Journey to Self-Reliance Country Road Map*.<sup>1</sup> However, significant structural problems persist within the sector. Many leading CSOs have impressive domestic and international influence as well as strong technical capacities on issues such as elections, human rights, judicial independence, gender equity and minority inclusion, however, civic participation and citizen involvement in CSO-led activities is exceptionally low. There are several factors that contribute to this. Leading CSOs have not traditionally engaged in issues that are of greatest relevance to citizens, for example healthcare reforms, economic development, social welfare, and education. There is a lack of sectoral expertise in these areas and citizens do not understand the role that CSOs can play in advocating for policy and regulatory reforms that would benefit them. At the same time, even leading CSOs lack effective communication skills that would enable them to translate complex issues such as human rights and government accountability into relatable and impactful messages. The majority of CSOs are financially dependent on Western donors and have tailored their messaging and organizational expertise to be responsive to the donor community. These priorities do not always align with the needs of Georgian citizens or Georgian citizens don't understand how they affect their priorities. Cumulatively, these factors directly contribute to low levels of public trust and perceived relevance in the civil society sector.

Secondary metrics of *USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance Country Roadmap*, including the Freedom of the World, Civil Liberties Index, the CSO Sustainability Index, and Freedom House's Nations in Transit provide a more comprehensive picture of the civil society landscape in Georgia. The Freedom of the World, Civil Liberties Index ranks Georgia as 37<sup>2</sup>, placing it 9 points below the regional average of 47. The CSO Sustainability Index places Georgian civil society development at a 4.0<sup>3</sup> placing it worse off than Armenia, Ukraine and Moldova. These figures present a more nuanced landscape of civil society development in Georgia and reveal the weaknesses and vulnerabilities that exist within the sector.

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<sup>1</sup> USAID Journey to Self-Reliance Country Roadmaps. Countries and sectors are ranked on a scale of on a 0-1, 0 being the worst, 1 being the best. <https://Selfreliance.usaid.gov/country/Georgia>

<sup>2</sup> Freedom in the World, Civil Liberties. Countries are ranked on a scale of 1-60, 1 worse, 60 best. <https://freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world>; <https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores>

<sup>3</sup> CSO Sustainability Index. Countries are ranked on a scale of 1-7, 1 being the best, 7 being the worst. <https://csosi.org/?region=EUROPE>

Recent public opinion polling of Georgian citizens aligns closely with the above-mentioned secondary metrics. For example, according to a 2019 survey carried out by the Caucasus Research Resource Center, only 20 percent of respondents expressed trust towards CSOs, 25 percent expressed distrust, 40 percent neither trust nor distrust CSOs, and 15 percent do not know or refuse to answer. There is an ongoing need for new and pluralistic voices to strengthen CSOs' ability to represent their constituencies, including women and minorities.<sup>4</sup>

A routine IRI Public Opinion Poll conducted in May-June 2019 reported 92% of respondents have not attended a public meeting/town hall; 94% have not attended a rally (political and/or social); 95% have not volunteered; 98% have not signed any petitions, including online; 99% have not donated money to a political party, NGO or CSO<sup>5</sup>. The analytical material and polling data demonstrate that the level of civic engagement and participation in Georgia is remarkably low. A strong majority of citizens do not trust CSOs, are not informed about their activities and are not participating in civic initiatives.

However, new opportunities are emerging in the civil society sector and the landscape is shifting. In the last nine months, civil society has emerged as a leader in the fight against COVID-19, gaining recognition in their communities and working to build trust. Civil society was one of the first stakeholders, outside of official healthcare structures, to mobilize to address COVID-19 and its implications. As activists and civil society organizations provide critical services to their communities, they have been met with new levels of volunteerism, charitable giving and community solidarity.

Additionally, in recent years, the country has experienced a wave of grassroots, issues-based civic activism in the form of civic movements, informal/ unregistered organizations, civic minded individuals, influencers, etc. These initiatives, for the most part, operate in parallel with the more 'formalized' CSO sector and significant skepticism exists between the two groups. These new initiatives often have several strengths that the formalized sector lacks: strong constituency engagement practices and citizen mobilization tactics, citizen trust in activities, and domestic funding/ volunteer support. At the same time, they may lack the technical and organizational skills and relationships to amplify their work. Despite their weaknesses, these new grassroots and informal civic initiatives and movements are shifting the way citizens engage and mobilize around issues.

There is a need to build on this momentum, increase individual activism whether through broad based social movements/ protest actions/ general civic awareness and volunteer/ giving efforts. Strengthening community initiatives that bring together citizens to address concrete concerns is of crucial importance in re-building citizen faith that their actions can in fact make a difference.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://caucasusbarometer.org/en/cb2019ge/downloads/>

<sup>5</sup> IRI Public Opinion Survey, Residents of Georgia, June 2019.  
[https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/georgia\\_poll\\_2.pdf](https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/georgia_poll_2.pdf)

CSOs need to serve as effective channels to translate the energy and momentum from protests/ individualized actions into specific demands for state accountability and/or democratic reforms. At the same time, CSOs need to address the two challenges they continue to face. Grassroots organizations, who have the trust of their communities, must improve their capacity to implement activities and affect policy change and ‘elite’ CSOs need to better understand and respond to the needs and interests of citizens to increase their legitimacy and the weight behind their advocacy initiatives. In addition, new possibilities for financial diversification are also emerging, including crowdfunding platforms, corporate social responsibility initiatives and various models of social entrepreneurship, although many CSOs are still unaware of how best to develop these new revenue streams. Developments in financial diversification are relatively nascent and amounts are small, however even modest donations help to build trust and legitimacy in the sector. While citizens are generally familiar with concepts of charity and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the notion of philanthropy and its importance for development is not well known.<sup>6</sup> Data on giving is unavailable and there is limited understanding of relevant actors, existing resources, legal frameworks and opportunities for advancement in this area.

Under the Civil Society Engagement Activity, the implementing partner will work directly with a wide range of civil society entities to address these challenges and opportunities, and to increase overall levels of citizen engagement, awareness and trust in civic actions and democratic processes. Successful applicants will demonstrate an innovative approach that responds to USAID’s emphasis on locally led development, civil society sustainability and self-reliance.

*Development hypothesis underlying the Civil Society Engagement Activity:*

IF civil society is better connected and responsive to citizens’ needs, and opportunities for civic engagement are supported, and IF cross-sectoral collaboration and financial diversification is enhanced THEN civil society will have greater legitimacy and effectiveness in supporting democratic processes.

### **C. Relationship to Mission Strategy and Agency Priorities**

**Country Development Cooperation Strategy:**<sup>7</sup> The activity will enhance citizen-responsive governance through improved citizen capacity to engage with democratic institutions and oversee the work of government and elected officials. By strengthening the capacity of both citizens and civil society to conduct oversight and hold the government to account it contributes to the new

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<sup>6</sup> In USAID’s PSE Policy, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is defined as: “a company’s initiatives to assess, and take responsibility for, the firm’s effects on environmental and social well-being. These issues typically align to a corporation’s strategy and operations, but are not part of its core business. The term generally applies to efforts that go beyond what regulators might require. CSR is also known as “corporate citizenship,” and can involve incurring short-term costs that do not provide an immediate financial benefit to the company, but instead promote positive social and environmental change. In contrast to CSR, corporate philanthropy is an act of a corporation or business to promote the welfare of others generally through charitable donations of funds or time. (Source: Adapted from USAID and Investopedia)”

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CDCS-Georgia-MAY-2025.pdf>

Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS ) Development Objective 2:Fragile Democratic Gains Consolidated Through Enhanced Citizen Responsive Governance; Intermediate Result (IR) IR 2.1 Civic Participation Catalyzed; and sub-IR2.1.2 Civic Activism and Oversight increased.

The focus of the new CDCS (2020-2025) is on strengthening citizens' capacity to engage with the government and demand that Georgia's institutions and procedures deliver meaningful, responsive results through open and accountable governance and rule of law. As part of the Mission's Redefining the Relationship (RDR) approaches, USAID/Georgia will "...engage with civic movements and CSOs to hold the Georgian government accountable for commitments and policy implementation (building demand for responsive governance)." (CDCS p.17)

With a new focus on civic movements, the partner base will be expanded to those who exhibit strong commitment but need assistance to build capacity. The Mission will amplify the activities of a wide range of new civic actors and connect them with their more established CSO counterparts. (CDCS pp.29-30).

**Journey to Self-Reliance (J2SR)<sup>8</sup>:** The activity contributes to improvements in Georgia's Country Roadmap scores in Liberal Democracy and Open and Accountable Governance by working with civil society to demand citizen-responsive governance. It also contributes directly to the Civil Society Capacity indicator by strengthening the effectiveness of civil society institutions and new civic actors. The activity will directly contribute to Georgia's overall Journey to Self-Reliance by developing an ecosystem for philanthropy to enhance the long-term sustainability and self-reliance of the sector.

**Alignment with Private Sector Engagement Policy:** USAID's Private Sector Engagement (PSE) Policy<sup>9</sup> calls for USAID staff and partners to actively assess the role of the private sector and use of market-based approaches in approaching development issues for more sustainable development outcomes. Implementing partners play a vital role in advancing the PSE Policy by actively engaging relevant private sector partners, embracing market-based approaches, and integrating the unique capabilities of the private sector in addressing development challenges across sectors.

This Activity will advance collaboration among CSOs and the private sector in addressing citizen-identified issues with an emphasis on the full breadth of financial and non-financial ways to collaborate. It will mobilize private-sector action and resources—including philanthropy and CSR assets. It will convene public and private actors around civic issues in order to build relationships and trust among them. The Activity will engage on issues of shared interest to civil society and multiple private sector actors such as regulatory reform, advocacy, policy, and strengthening the enabling environment.

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<sup>8</sup> For more information on USAID's Journey to Self Reliance, see <https://www.usaid.gov/selfreliance>.

<sup>9</sup> USAID' Private Sector Engagement Policy:

[https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/usaid\\_psepolicy\\_final.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/usaid_psepolicy_final.pdf)

**Alignment with Youth Engagement Policy:** The program will prioritize youth engagement throughout all activities. It will support new civic actors, many of whom are youth and will promote engagement and networking of youth participants across USAID programs.

**USAID’s Effective Partnering and Procurement Reform,**<sup>10</sup> through which USAID seeks to reform how it designs and procures its program. This activity will be working with locally established partners - civil society organizations, civic movements, civic minded individuals; it will focus on financial diversification of civil society—a key driver of self-reliance; it will strengthen engagement and partnerships between private sector and CSOs, and will support collaborative partnerships in the form of co-creation.

#### **D. Activity Purpose, Objective, Illustrative Results and Activities**

The purpose of the Civil Society Engagement Activity is to increase citizen engagement, awareness and participation in civic actions and democratic processes. All interventions taking place under the activity will directly contribute to building the legitimacy and sustainability of the civil society sector. The activity has three objectives:

- (1) Enhance the capacity of CSOs, including new formal and informal civic groups, movements and individuals, to address citizen identified issues at the local, regional and national levels and mobilize domestic resources;
- (2) Foster effective intra-sectoral partnerships among local, regional and national level civil society entities;
- (3) Develop an ecosystem for sustainability and promote long term self-reliance of the civil society sector.

CSOs will be better able to engage in citizen driven/ supported advocacy campaigns (i.e., increasing their capacities to identify/ advocate for issues that are of concern to citizens, to actively involve citizens in advocacy campaigns and to communicate results back to citizens). Citizens will be empowered to engage in activism (i.e., increasing their awareness of various mechanisms for activism-philanthropy, volunteerism and increasing resources to and influence of informal/ new groups that are grounded in community needs). These two levels of activism will be strengthened and will reinforce one another by increasing the linkages between elite/technocratic CSOs and grassroots civil society.

The primary target of the activity will be organizations or initiatives engaged in advocacy and policy initiatives. CSOs that engage in both advocacy and service delivery will also be included (and successful ‘hybrid’ models will be scaled up and shared). CSOs engaged exclusively in service delivery initiatives will not be a primary target of this activity and therefore public trust in these organizations will not be considered as an indicator for activity outcomes.

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<sup>10</sup> USAID’s Effective Partnering and Procurement Reform <https://www.usaid.gov/eppr>

## Implementation principles and approach

As Georgia moves into a new phase of civil society development, USAID has identified several principles and approaches that should drive implementation to ensure more effective programming:

- **Emphasis on experimentation and innovation:** The activity will prioritize experimentation, learning and adaptation, particularly when supporting new actors such as civic movements and newly emerging civic groups, as well as sustainable funding models. For example, what might work well in terms of support to one civic group may not work well for others. Successful applicants will utilize a ‘learning by doing’ approach, and clearly demonstrate how they will experiment with interventions, adapt and seek to expand successful practices.
- **Co-creation and empowerment of local stakeholders:** The activity will employ co-creation practices as a means to empower local stakeholders to promote local ownership of programming. Co-creation in this context refers to the practice of involving a wide range of traditional and non-traditional stakeholders (including local CSOs, private sector, local government representatives, media, artists, educators, cultural leaders/ influencers, youth leaders, etc.) to contribute to the process of defining the development challenges and solutions facing their communities.
- **Evidence-based identification of issues:** The activity will prioritize research and participatory methodologies, such as co-creation, in identifying issues of common concern to citizens. It will also promote partnerships between different types of CSOs to pool expert resources in complex technical areas, which will strengthen their initiatives.
- **Rigorous monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive learning:** The activity will develop a robust monitoring, evaluation and learning plan that will help the project to capture lessons learned from innovative approaches and adapt programming mid-stream. The activity will ensure that it has the capacity to collect, analyze and use data for reporting and decision-making by both the applicant and USAID. Collected data needs to provide evidence for higher level results to be achieved by the activities as well as indicators to be used by the applicant to measure those results. Innovative ideas and approaches should be tested and piloted, subjected to evaluation and scaled up and shared if demonstrating proof-of-concept. The applicant also will support civil society organizations to more effectively measure the impact of their activities to develop evidence-based learning. While USAID will be implementing an independent evaluation of the project, the activity will plan evaluation/s for its own interventions to be used for accountability and learning purposes.
- **Engagement of a diverse group of stakeholders:** The activity will expand and diversify USAID’s civil society partners. The activity will engage civil society activists, government, the private sector, academia and artists/influencers in its activities. However, the program should not set conditions whereby new CSOs would be created to respond to this project. The project should work to create networks and partnerships of existing and promising new civil society initiatives rather than create new entities.
- **Networking of actors and efforts:** The activity will work to increase trust, coordination, collaboration, cooperation: between CSOs and civic groups, media, and the government; between the private and public sectors; and between donors to maximize and synergize efforts.
- **Enhanced communication and greater public understanding:** The activity will work to enhance public knowledge of what citizen engagement is, how it works and how civic movements

and civil society organizations can contribute to raising and solving issues of common concern, as well as communicating the results back to citizens.

### **Expected Activity Level Results (Objectives)**

- Capacity of civil society to address citizen identified issues at the local, regional and national level enhanced.
- Effective intra-sectoral partnerships among local, regional and national level civil society entities promoted.
- Long term sustainability and self-reliance of the sector enhanced.

### **Illustrative Activity Level Indicators**

- Increased percentage of citizens engaged in civil society activities and activism.
- Increased percentage of citizens have trust in CSOs.
- Increased percentage of CSOs engaging in 2-way communications with citizens.
- Increased percentage of civil society advocacy campaigns informed by citizen priorities.
- Increased numbers of intra-sectoral civil society partnerships.
- Increased percentage domestic resource base of Centers for Civic Engagement.
- Value of non-donor resources mobilized for locally-led development.
- Improved knowledge and data about the ecosystem for financial viability (CSR, philanthropy, etc.) in Georgia.
- Increased public awareness and support for philanthropy and Corporate Social Responsibility.
- Increased partnerships between civil society, private sector actors, and government on issues related to advancing the ecosystem for financial viability in Georgia.
- Improved financial viability score in CSO Sustainability Index.

### **Objective 1: Enhance capacity of CSOs, including new formal and informal civic groups, movements and individuals, to address citizen identified issues at local, regional and national. (Approximately 40% of Program Effort)**

**The activity will develop and test new approaches to building the capacity of local civil society.** It will provide highly tailored, flexible and demand driven capacity support to a wide range of civic entities, including newly emerging formal and informal civic groups, civic movements, and civic minded individuals with an emphasis on constituency building, outreach, communications and mobilization of domestic resources. Rather than focusing on traditional capacity building areas such as technical or financial strengthening, the purpose of all capacity building support under this objective is to increase legitimacy and trust of civic entities (organizations, movements, individuals, etc.) as well as the impact of their initiatives, thereby increasing the self-reliance and sustainability of the civil society sector. While the activity will work to build the capacity of some civil society organizations, the purpose of this objective is not to ‘formalize’ grassroots civic initiatives or civic movements, but rather to provide them with tools, techniques and resources to amplify their existing activities, messaging and networks. If new and established (formal and informal) civic actors can provide citizens with more means to address their concerns, this will provide a locally owned set of avenues for identifying,

addressing, and financing citizen initiatives. This will in turn provide a clear way for citizens to improve their local communities, will demonstrate the role that civil society can play in this process, and will build community assets and trust that can contribute to Georgia's overall development process.

*Support to New Civic Actors:* In addition to working with traditional civil society organizations, the activity will place significant emphasis on support to new civic actors (for example, grassroots groups or organizations, informal initiatives, social movements, civic minded individuals and influencers, etc). Support to these actors should be provided through a 'do no harm' lens, should be non-directive, flexible and adaptive to their specific needs. For example, support should not seek to co-opt social movement initiatives or to conform them into more traditional non-governmental structures. Support should seek to amplify their messaging and extend the reach and impact of their activities in an organic manner that is grounded in constituency building. An experimental approach will be taken to support these groups, with several streams of activities being piloted and scaled up in close coordination with USAID including mentoring, challenge grants, asset mapping and networking. Network mapping exercises to identify which initiative areas have the greatest potential or resonate most significantly with citizens could be done prior to providing assistance.

*Co-Creation to Promote Citizen Engagement and Constituency Building:* The activity will prioritize co-creation approaches to building the capacity of CSOs to identify citizen priorities and solutions. Co-creation is an inclusive process in which a wide range of stakeholders come together to jointly define problems and brainstorm solutions. Co-creation approaches help CSOs to develop trust and legitimacy among citizens by ensuring organizations have a shared understanding of the issues that are of greatest relevance to citizens and vesting them in initiatives to address them. Co-creation approaches should be incorporated throughout project activities to promote citizen participation and ensure interventions are demand driven. Other citizen engagement and constituency building activities may include constituency resource management skills, membership/affiliation initiatives, volunteer cultivation, etc. Importantly, the activity will help partner CSOs become more inclusive by encouraging participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups (including persons with disabilities, women, youth, LGBTI, ethnic and religious minorities and others) into civic activities and democratic processes.

*Civil Society Communications Capacity:* The activity will build civil society capacity to proactively publicize their initiatives through a range of social and traditional media outlets in a manner that is easily understandable and relevant to citizens. Many Georgian CSOs are unable to effectively communicate the importance of their work to those outside of the democracy, rights and governance fields, which negatively impacts levels of organizational trust and legitimacy in the eyes of citizens. The activity will support civil society to develop simplified, direct narratives on how they are addressing issues that resonate with citizens. The activity will build the capacity of CSOs to spread positive narratives by documenting and sharing their individual success stories and achievements. At the same time, the activity will work with those organizations working on complex, often abstract concepts such as human rights, governance and accountability to simplify their goals and provide real world examples of how restrictions or impediments impact citizens' everyday lives.

*Individualized Capacity Building Support for thematic/issue-specific CSOs:* The activity will provide individualized capacity building support to select organizations, including grassroots or newly formed CSOs. Selected organizations should have either a demonstrated track record implementing citizen driven initiatives, demonstrated support or trust within their communities, and/or potential to have meaningful impact on specific issue areas. Capacity building support will emphasize organizational self-reliance, sustainability and impact. Support could include financial diversification and domestic resource mobilization techniques, constituency outreach and mobilization support, learning opportunities and coalition building among organizations working on similar issue areas (linked closely with activities under Objective 2), techniques to strengthen relationships and communications with local community members, etc. The objective for all capacity building support is to increase legitimacy and trust of organizations, thereby increasing their self-reliance and sustainability.

*Flexible Grants Pool:* A flexible grants pool will be established under the activity to support scale-able support for evidence-based advocacy initiatives, amplify context-specific responses of civil society and drive innovative solutions to democratic development challenges. Grant support will prioritize initiatives that have strong citizen backing or the potential to increase the engagement of citizens in democracy and governance processes. Context-specific responses refer to those activities that civil society, including formal and informal groups, engage in response to an unforeseen event. This could include civil society response efforts to situations such as the COVID-19 crisis and its impact, or other events which can represent an opportunity for civil society to fill critical governance gaps that often go unaddressed at both the local and national level. If civil society is able to respond effectively and efficiently to citizen needs during times of crisis, it can help build long term citizen trust in the sector. Finally, grants will be available for civil society organizations with innovative solutions for democratic development challenges. Underlying principles of the flexible grants pool should include the following:

- Promote community self-reliance by advancing locally-led development;
- Build strong relationships and promote collaboration among local actors and across sectors to initiate and lead development efforts;
- Mobilize resources for innovative development purposes; and
- Support local leadership and community ownership of the development process.

**Illustrative Activities:**

- Flexible capacity building support to newly established local organizations (emphasis on organizational/ core support).
- Establishment of an accessible discretionary fund to support informal civic initiatives (could include project-based or organizational/ core-based support).
- Establishment of co-creation mechanisms to support implementation of community identified/ prioritized initiatives.
- Supporting experimentation and scaling up innovative interventions through the innovation grants program.
- Trainings to new civic leaders on leadership, community organization/ mobilization, volunteer promotion, etc.

- Technical capacity building support for CSOs engaged in policy areas that are of interest to citizens (e.g., health care, education, social welfare).
- Trainings and mentoring to CSOs on various digital and traditional platforms to share information, ‘user friendly’ constituent outreach methods and use of data visualization.
- Flexible grants pool to support evidence-based advocacy initiatives and/ or amplification of context-specific responses.

### **Illustrative Results:**

- Citizen-driven civic initiatives empowered and increased.
- Opportunities for co-creation for civic priorities and projects increased.
- Citizen understanding of importance and mechanisms to engage in civic initiatives increased.
- Effective two-way communication of CSO with citizens on key policy issues increased.
- Technical capacities of CSOs working on ‘less-traditional’ policy areas such as health care, education, social welfare, etc. strengthened.
- CSO organizational capacities in governance, management, and advocacy improved.
- Citizen awareness of the role and importance of civil society organizations increased.
- Effective local and national level civic advocacy and oversight campaigns implemented.
- CSO and citizen feedback mechanisms developed at national and local levels.

### **Objective 2: Foster effective intra-sectoral partnerships among local, regional and national level civil society entities (Approximately 30% of Program Effort)**

The activity will increase trust, communication, collaboration and partnerships within the civil society sector with a specific emphasis on bridging the existing divide between national level organizations and grassroots civic groups. The activity will also promote communication, collaboration and learning among civil society groups working in different regions and communities.

*Bridging the Elite versus Grassroots Divide:* Civil society development in Georgia is imbalanced. The national level organizations that have developed over time have and continue to serve as a critical watchdog to government authority. These organizations have been critical in advancing democratic reforms and safeguarding individual rights and freedoms. Despite their strong organizational and technical capacities, these organizations have struggled to effectively communicate with a majority of Georgian citizens or build popular support for their activities. In recent years, Georgia has experienced a wave of grassroots civic activism that has, for the most part, operated in parallel to the more ‘formalized’ non-governmental sector. These newly emerging groups are more likely to have strong constituency engagement practices, resulting in trust and support of their activities. Both subsets of organizations would benefit from greater formal and informal collaboration and partnership opportunities. Grassroots civil society groups would benefit from the political relationships, technical and organizational expertise of national level NGOs. These relationships could enable grassroots organizations to elevate locally identified issues into nation-wide advocacy campaigns. At the same time, national level groups would benefit from exposure to the constituency engagements practices and citizen mobilization

tactics that grassroots civil society groups employ. The activity will test various approaches to foster greater partnerships and collaboration between these two subsets of civil society.

*Communications and Learning Opportunities:* Civil society activities, including best practices and lessons learned, are often siloed across the country. This represents a missed opportunity for organizations, particularly newly emerging groups, to learn from the experiences of one another and to collaborate for broader impact. The activity will support organizations to more effectively measure the impact of their activities to develop evidence-based learning, promote greater information sharing and collaboration among civil society groups throughout the country, including those working at the local, regional and national level. The activity may also consider initiatives that would promote information sharing across borders around specific or logically related themes.

*Partnerships between different types of CSOs.* The capacity of CSOs to identify, advocate and influence policy issues and processes that are of greatest relevance to citizens will benefit from the participation of think tanks, academia and research oriented CSOs. Very few advocacy/ policy CSOs have strong technical competence in areas that are of greatest relevance to citizens (healthcare, education, social welfare reforms, etc.). The recipient should promote partnerships between different types of research and academic organizations and advocacy/ policy CSOs. These partnerships will provide advocacy organizations with expert resources in new and complex technical areas, which will strengthen their initiatives. It will ensure campaigns are grounded in evidence- based research, which can increase their credibility and likelihood for success.

### **Illustrative Activities:**

- Exchange opportunities (internships/ fellowships) for junior and mid-level civil society activists and CSO managers working in Tbilisi-based CSOs and local CSOs/activists.
- Development of thematic grant pools requiring co-application/ implementation by coalitions that include Tbilisi-based and local organizations and/or private sector or academic partners.
- E&E region-wide exchange opportunities (internships/ fellowships).
- Research roundtables.
- Co-creation exercises that bring together stakeholders from civil society, academia, private sector, etc. around topics of interest.

### **Illustrative Results:**

- Horizontal and vertical linkages between national, regional and local CSOs increased.
- Understanding of technical and organizational strengths and experiences of various types of civil society entities increased.
- Thematic coalitions developed and strengthened.

**Objective 3: Develop an ecosystem for sustainability and promote long term self-reliance of the civil society sector (Approximately 30% of Program Effort)**

The activity will support the initial steps necessary to develop an ecosystem for giving and philanthropic activity, to enable the civil society sector to become more sustainable and self-reliant.

*Developing an ecosystem for sustainability:* An ecosystem approach to building sustainability of civil society as a sector recognizes that several interconnected and mutually reinforcing areas must be strengthened. Key elements of the ecosystem - of which philanthropy is a cornerstone - include the following: 1) A legal and regulatory environment that promotes individual and corporate giving (i.e., tax incentives or assignments), incentivizes social investment, and enables social entrepreneurship; 2) Recognition and acceptance of a diversity of resources (i.e., sources of income generation) and monetary and in-kind contributions (i.e., corporate and private giving, social service provision, volunteer support, fee-for-service/ social entrepreneurship, membership dues, state funding, foreign donations, etc.); 3) Citizen engagement and empowered communities (i.e., the ability of citizens to aggregate and direct assets to benefit their own communities); 4) Public trust in civil society to advance collective interests; and, 5) Cross sectoral cooperation (i.e., building relationships and trust among the public and private sectors). Philanthropy and CSR in Georgia are nascent and activities under this objective will support the initial steps necessary to support its advancement. Grounded in evidence-based assumptions and expectations, the activity will strengthen the philanthropy infrastructure, including building knowledge, tools and public understanding of giving.<sup>11</sup> The activity will strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation and trust. The activity will advance the capacities of civil society to self-generate and mobilize a range of resources, both monetary and in-kind.

*Strengthening the financial diversification of existing CSO infrastructure:* In addition, the activity will build on previous USAID investments in civil society infrastructure, including working with the Network of Centers for Civic Engagement (NCCEs) to increase their financial diversification and sustainability. The Network of Centers for Civic Engagement has been operating in Georgia since 2010 and consists of 10 regional centers which offer a range of services to citizens, civil society organizations, businesses and government. The range of services and activities offered by the CCEs has expanded dramatically since their formation and they continue to serve as a valuable resource for the communities in which they operate. Several CCEs have begun exploring domestic funding opportunities such as income generation/ social entrepreneurship initiatives, space rentals, applications to local government funding, etc. This activity will work with the existing CCEs to test new models for income generation, including a potential restructuring of the network. Continued support for CCEs may be conditioned on achievement of modest but annually increasing leverage targets.

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<sup>11</sup> Data should be gathered and analyzed on the current state of philanthropy, CSR and constraints on business to inform appropriate expectations for the Activity.

### **Illustrative Activities:**

- Developing an understanding of philanthropy and CSR, and their importance for Georgia's development among relevant actors.
- Providing recognition to philanthropic and CSR efforts and individuals contributing to Georgia's development (historic and present day).
- Building knowledge of the ecosystem for philanthropy and CSR in Georgia. Mapping of relevant actors, efforts, data on giving, data on CSR and analysis of current legal frameworks to identify opportunities for future advocacy interventions.
- Advocacy initiatives which seek to address key constraints in the enabling environment to incentivize domestic resource mobilization and public funding.
- Strengthening cross-sectoral partnerships between civil society, private and public sector actors, including media through various platforms and initiatives that foster mentoring opportunities; volunteering; community actions, challenge grants etc.
- Support and promote further expansion of CSR efforts and strategies to foster greater cooperation with civil society and strategic community engagement.
- Enhancing skills of civil society to mobilize local resources (financial and human) at the community level through creative and constituency building approaches.
- Support for various creative cross sectoral fundraising activities intended to further promote philanthropy, CSR, locally led development and community engagement (events, giving circles, auctions, walk-athons, crowdfunding).
- CCEs register as separate, locally based entities to promote competitiveness for local funding.
- CCEs develop and test new fee for service and social entrepreneurship models.

### **Illustrative Results:**

- Improved knowledge and data about the ecosystem for civil society's financial viability, philanthropy, and CSR in Georgia.
- Increased public awareness and support for philanthropy and CSR.
- Improved enabling environment for social investment and CSO financial viability.
- Platforms and networks that foster cross sectoral dialogue and collaboration around financial viability issues established and/or strengthened.
- Capacity of selected CSO's for mobilization of resources enhanced.
- Cooperation and trust between civil society and the private sector improved.
- Opportunities and models for future, longer term advocacy interventions to advance the financial viability of the civil society sector identified.
- Financial viability of CCEs improved.

### **E. USAID/ Georgia Democracy and Governance Portfolio and other Relevant Programming**

The recipient should seek out potential synergies with USAID's current democracy and governance portfolio, particularly as it relates to youth engagement, integration and civic education as well as governance initiatives at both the national and local levels. For example, the

activity can build the capacity of civil society organizations working in the area of governance, political processes, media, human rights and other areas of democracy portfolio, to engage in citizen driven advocacy campaigns by providing them with tools, techniques and resources to amplify their existing activities, messaging and networks. Further, USAID/ Georgia and US Embassy/ Georgia have promoted civic engagement among youth both directly and indirectly through a variety of initiatives. Many participants of these programs have gone on to serve as community leaders and influencers, teachers, entrepreneurs, political representatives, etc. This activity will establish tools and mechanisms to build on momentum established by other USG programming and harness the capacity of beneficiaries from programs, such as civic education, elections and political processes, Promoting Integration Tolerance and Awareness (PITA) and others, to enable them to quickly identify and re-engage the widest range of beneficiaries under this activity and continue to support beneficiaries as they develop their skills and commitment to civic activism.

### **Burden Sharing**

Many international donors, both governmental and nongovernmental, support civil society development. Below are some of the efforts supporting civil society organizations through a range of approaches:

- **EU delegation in Georgia:** The EU Delegation's Roadmap for Engagement with Civil Society in Georgia, adopted in December 2018, constitutes a basis for the overall EU engagement with civil society in Georgia. EU support for civil society is focused on five broad areas including: (a) enhancing civil society's enabling environment, capacity, transparency and accountability; (b) contributing to a more favorable ecosystem for social entrepreneurship; (c) increasing CSOs' competency to better perform their roles as reliable actors of governance; (d) reinforcing the role of CSOs in tackling climate change; and (e) supporting CSOs active in the promotion and defense of human rights and democracy.
- **SIDA** provides a multi-year funding to its selected strategic partners – leading Georgian CSOs.
- **Grantmaking organizations**, such as the National Endowment for Democracy, the European Endowment for Democracy, the Black Sea Trust, and the Prague Civil Society Centre, provide small-medium sized grants that help support independent media, civil society organizations, and human rights groups. Local grantmaking organizations include Open Society Georgia Foundation and Europe Foundation
- **US Embassy:** supports local CSOs through its Democracy Small Grants Program. The civil society engagement activity will leverage the resources and opportunities presented by these activities and ensure proper coordination between donor organizations.

**END OF SECTION A**

## **SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

### **1. ESTIMATE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE AND NUMBER OF AWARDS CONTEMPLATED**

USAID intends to award one Cooperative Agreement pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity. Subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the Agency, USAID intends to provide up to \$15,000,000 in total USAID funding over a 5-year period.

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

### **2. START DATE AND PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE FOR FEDERAL AWARDS**

The anticipated period of performance is 5 years from signing of the Cooperative Agreement. The estimated start date will be August 1, 2021.

### **3. SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT**

Substantial involvement during the implementation of this Agreement must be limited to approval of the elements listed below. An Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will substantially be involved in the administration of a cooperative agreement to help the implementer achieve the agreement objectives in the following areas in accordance with ADS 303.3.11:

- Review and Approval of Recipient's Work Plans and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL) by the AOR;
  - Review and Approval of key personnel by the Agreement Officer (AO) following technical concurrence of the AOR;
  - Approval of sub-awards/subcontracts, and/or the substantive technical /programmatic provisions of the sub-awards by the Agreement Officer following technical concurrence of the AOR;
- USAID and recipient collaboration or joint participation: USAID monitoring to authorize direction or redirection during the project's implementation to enhance the interrelationships with other projects and partners.

### **4. KEY PERSONNEL**

Key personnel positions for this Cooperative Agreement are Chief of Party, Deputy Chief of Party, Capacity Building Manager and Specialist in Domestic Resource Mobilization. Minimum Qualifications for the Key Personnel are as follows:

**The Chief of Party (COP)** should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the issues surrounding civil society development in transitional countries, including opportunities for civic engagement and cross-sectoral collaboration. Experience working with CSOs to diversify funding sources would be preferred, but not required. At least 10 years of professional experience in managing civil society strengthening programs and demonstrated ability to effectively manage a diverse team of employees, including expatriate and local staff is required. Experience in Europe

and Eurasia region is preferred. Experience in Georgia will be an advantage but is not required. The COP should also have experience with co-creation exercises, fostering experimentation and encouraging programmatic risks where warranted; the COP should also have strong interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to network and maintain effective working relationships with diverse sets of actors, including CSOs and civic groups, constituents, media, the government, private and public sectors and donors. A Master's or higher degree in Political Science, Public Policy, International Studies, or other relevant field is required. Two additional years of experience in a relevant subject area can be considered as equivalent to an advanced degree; however, the experience must be justified as equivalent.

**The Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP)** should have thorough knowledge and understanding of civil society development issues in Georgia, and experience of working on donor-funded programs. In addition, the DCOP should have strong interpersonal skills necessary to maintain good relations with formal and informal civic groups, constituents, partners, media, political parties, members from academia, legislators, government officials, USAID, and other personnel associated with this program. The DCOP must have at least seven years of professional experience in managing and implementing multi-component programs and demonstrated ability to effectively manage staff. A Master's degree in Political Science, International Studies, or other relevant field is required. Two additional years of experience in a relevant subject area can be considered as equivalent to an advanced degree; however, the experience must be justified as equivalent.

**The Capacity Building Manager** will focus on supporting a core group of civil society groups by facilitating overall training activities and improving their financial and technical capacities. Minimum requirements for the Capacity Building Manager are: 7 years of experience in managing and implementing capacity building activities for civil society organizations in Europe and Eurasia; demonstrated ability and capacity to analyze training and mentoring needs and to prepare, organize and conduct training, workshops and/or mentoring activities; experience in adapting capacity building to the fluid environment to meet emerging opportunities and needs. Strong prior experience in locally led development approaches such as constituency engagement, co-creation, and adaptive management practices. A university degree in a related field is required.

**The Domestic Resource Mobilization Specialist** will work to advance the capacities of civil society to self-generate and mobilize a range of resources, both monetary and in-kind. Minimum requirements are: 7 years of experience in domestic resource mobilization practices, including working with CSOs to diversify domestic funding sources and fundraising for social, developmental purposes; ability to bring in cross-regional examples and apply best practices. Demonstrated experience in building and applying knowledge, tools and understanding of constituency resource management, philanthropy and Corporate Social Responsibility is preferred. Preference will be given to candidates who have the capacity to analyze and make recommendations related to a wide range of strategies to enhance domestic giving, including analysis of a legal and regulatory environment that promotes individual and corporate giving (i.e., tax incentives or assignments), incentivizes social investment, and enables social entrepreneurship. Experience in developing public private partnerships, private sector engagement is preferred. Demonstrated experience in the Europe and Eurasia region is preferred but not required. A university degree in a related field is required.

## **5. AUTHORIZED GEOGRAPHIC CODE**

The authorized geographic codes for procurement of goods and services under this award are 937 (the United States, the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source) and 110 (the United States, the independent states of the former Soviet Union, or a developing country, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source).

## **6. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE**

The activity will be implemented in Georgia.

## **7. TITLE TO PROPERTY**

Property title under the resultant agreement shall vest with the recipient in accordance with the requirements of 2 CFR 200 regarding use, accountability, and disposition of such property.

## **8. NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USAID AND THE RECIPIENT**

The principal purpose of the relationship with the Recipient and under the subject program is to transfer funds to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation of the Civil Society Engagement Activity which is authorized by Federal statute. The successful Recipient will be responsible for ensuring the achievement of the program objectives and the efficient and effective administration of the award through the application of sound management practices. The Recipient will assume responsibility for administering Federal funds in a manner consistent with underlying agreements, program objectives, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

## **9. SELECTION OF INSTRUMENT**

In September 2019, representatives of USAID E&E Bureau and USAID/Georgia's DRG Office conducted a joint assessment of the activities of Georgian non-state actors - CSOs, formal and informal groups and new grassroots civic movements. The outcome of the assessment was the development of the concept for the new Civil Society Engagement Activity. The overall goal of the program is to increase citizen engagement, awareness and participation in civic actions and democratic processes. The program will enhance the capacity of formal and informal civic entities working at the local, regional and national level to address citizen identified issues; foster greater connectivity and collaboration between newly emerging grassroots groups and their national and regional level counterparts; and create opportunities for domestic resource mobilization through philanthropy advancement. The activity will meet these objectives by providing a wide range of technical support options and resources that promote an inclusive civil society practices and initiatives.

The activity will require a flexible approach, as it will prioritize experimentation, particularly when supporting new actors such as civic movements and newly emerging civic groups as well as sustainable funding models. Critical to the activity's success will be co-creation approaches and bringing together a wide range of stakeholders to jointly define problems and brainstorm

solutions. Given the nature of proposed technical approach and sensitivity of working with informal entities and civic movements, USAID support should be provided through an assistance mechanism. USAID intends to provide funds to an eligible organization that has experience and already implements its own projects in the area of Civil Society.

USAID has conducted market research in support of the Activity design which has confirmed the relevance and focus of the Activity's technical areas, and availability of qualified implementers to perform the work.

#### **10. SPECIAL AWARD REQUIREMENT RELATING TO THE PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN TELECOMMUNICATION AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE SERVICES OR EQUIPMENT (AUGUST 2020)**

a. The mandatory standard provision “Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (AUGUST 2020)” implements Pub. L. 115-232, Section 889.

b. USAID has been granted a temporary, limited waiver under Section 889(d)(2) that will allow the recipient to use award funds for the duration of this award to procure internet, cellular and landline services from communication service-providers who use covered telecommunications. All other costs incurred for covered telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment, such as phones, video surveillance, and cloud servers specified in the standard provision in paragraph a. above remain unallowable in accordance with the mandatory standard provision “Allowable Costs” and 2 CFR 200.471.

#### **11. PROCUREMENT OF “COVERED MATERIAL”**

1. Except as provided in paragraph 2 below, and notwithstanding anything in this Cooperative Agreement to the contrary, no funds under this Cooperative Agreement may be used for the procurement of “Covered Material” as listed below without the prior written consent of the Agreement Officer. For purposes of this provision, “Covered Material” shall consist of the following:

- Surgical N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators, including devices that are disposable half-face-piece non-powered air-purifying particulate respirators intended for use to cover the nose and mouth of the wearer to help reduce wearer exposure to pathogenic biological airborne particulates;
- PPE surgical masks, including masks that cover the user’s nose and mouth and provide a physical barrier to fluids and particulate materials;
- PPE nitrile gloves, including those defined at 21 CFR 880.6250 (exam gloves) and 878.4460 (surgical gloves) and such nitrile gloves intended for the same purposes; and

- Level 3 and 4 Surgical Gowns and Surgical Isolation Gowns that meet all of the requirements in ANSI/AAMI PB70 and ASTM F2407-06 and are classified by Surgical Gown Barrier Performance based on AAMI PB70.

For clarity, non-medical grade masks, including cloth masks, are not included in the list of Covered Material above. Further, USAID may modify the list of Covered Material from time-to-time, in writing; any such changes to the list shall apply prospectively.

2. The restrictions set forth in paragraph 1 above shall not apply to the procurement of Covered Material:

(a) for the protection of and use by the recipient's or sub-recipient's or contractor's] staff; or

(b) for the safe and effective continuity of USAID-funded programs, including for the protection of beneficiaries, provided that such items are manufactured locally or in the same geographical region as the country in which USAID is providing assistance, as defined by the U.S. Department of State's regional system ( Africa , East Asia and the Pacific , Europe and Eurasia , Near East , South and Central Asia , and Western Hemisphere ), and provided that such items are not, and could not reasonably be expected to be, meant for the United States market.

The AO may change the exemptions set forth in this paragraph in writing; any such changes shall apply prospectively.

3. "Staff" for the purposes of the Exception in 2(a) is defined as any individuals receiving financial compensation from the recipient or contractor or sub-recipient or subcontractor.

4. For each purchase of Covered Material under Exception 2(b), the recipient or contractor must provide the AO/CO with contemporaneously dated documentation that the order of Covered Material is not meant for, and could not reasonably be meant for, the U.S. market. The AO/CO will then upload the statement into ASIST. This documentation can take the form of a simple email verification from a vendor or a brief, contemporaneously dated, written statement or e-mail from the recipient or contractor confirming its conversation with the vendor.

**END OF SECTION B**

## **SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Eligibility for this NOFO is not restricted.

U.S. and non-US organizations may participate under this NOFO.

USAID welcomes applications from organizations which have not previously received financial assistance from USAID. USAID will not accept applications from individuals.

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and policies and procedures that comply with established U.S. Government standards, laws, and regulations. The successful applicant(s) may be subject to a responsibility determination assessment (Pre-award Survey) by the Agreement Officer (AO).

The Recipient must be a responsible entity. The AO may determine a pre-award survey is required to conduct an examination that will determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award

USAID welcomes applications from organizations that have not previously received financial assistance from USAID.

### **2. COST SHARING OR MATCHING**

Cost sharing is suggested, but not required. Such funds may be provided directly by the recipient; other multilateral, bilateral, and foundation donors; host governments; and local organizations, communities and private businesses that contribute financially and in-kind to implementation of activities at the country level. This may include contribution of staff level of effort, office space or other facilities or equipment which may be used for the program, provided by the recipient. For guidance on cost sharing in grants and cooperative agreements see 2 CFR 200.306.

### **3. OTHER**

In support of the Agency’s interest in fostering a larger assistance base and expanding the number and sustainability of development partners, USAID encourages applications from potential new partners.

When considering making an award to a potential partner with limited or no previous USAID experience, USAID will undertake necessary pre-award reviews to determine the organization’s “responsibility” as discussed below. The resultant award to this organization may take some time. The applicant should take this into account and plan their implementation dates and activities accordingly.

“Responsibility” of Applicant:

In order for an award to be made, the Agreement Officer must make an affirmative determination that the applicant is “responsible.” A positive responsibility determination means that the applicant possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management and technical competence to plan and carry out the program to be funded, and that the applicant will practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided by USAID.

**END OF SECTION C**

## **SECTION D: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **1. AGENCY POINT OF CONTACT:**

Name: Maya Chelidze

Title: Sr. Acquisition and Assistance Specialist

Email: [mchelidze@usaid.gov](mailto:mchelidze@usaid.gov) AND [rcocaucasus@usaid.gov](mailto:rcocaucasus@usaid.gov)

Mail Address: Regional Contracting Office, 29, Georgian American Friendship Avenue, Tbilisi 0131 Georgia

### **2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted in writing to Maya Chelidze via email at [mchelidze@usaid.gov](mailto:mchelidze@usaid.gov) AND [rcocaucasus@usaid.gov](mailto:rcocaucasus@usaid.gov), no later than the date and time indicated on the cover letter. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective Applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary for submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicant.

### **3. PREPARATION OF APPLICATIONS**

Each Applicant must furnish the information required by this NOFO. Applications must be submitted in two separate parts: The Technical Application and the Business (Cost) Application. This subsection addresses general content requirements applying to the full application. Please see subsections 5 and 6, below, for information on the content specific to the Technical and Business (Cost) applications. The Technical application must address technical aspects only while the Business (Cost) Application must present the costs, and address risk and other related issues.

Both the Technical and Business (Cost) Applications must include a cover page containing the following information:

- Name of the organization(s) submitting the application;
- Identification and signature of the primary contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address) and the identification of the alternate contact person (by name, title, organization, mailing address, telephone number and email address);
- Program name;
- Notice of Funding Opportunity number;
- Name of any proposed sub-recipients or partnerships (identify if any of the organizations are local organizations, per USAID's definition of 'local entity' under ADS 303);
- Organization DUNS number.

Any erasures or other changes to the application must be initialed by the person signing the application. Applications signed by an agent on behalf of the Applicant must be accompanied by

evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

Applicants may choose to submit a cover letter in addition to the cover pages, but it will serve only as a transmittal letter to the Agreement Officer. The cover letter will not be reviewed as part of the merit review criteria.

Applications must comply with the following:

- USAID will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the subsequent sections. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations.
- Written in English.
- Use standard 8 ½" x 11", single sided, single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page with consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and Applicant's name.
- 10 point font can be used for graphs, charts and text boxes. Tables must comply with the 12 point Times New Roman requirement.
- Submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats, except budget files which must be submitted in unlocked Microsoft Excel format.
- The estimated start date identified in Section B of this NOFO must be used in the cost application.
- The technical application must be a searchable and editable Word or PDF format as appropriate.
- The cost application must include an Excel spreadsheet with all cells unlocked and no hidden formulas or sheets. A PDF version of the Excel spreadsheet may be submitted in addition to the Excel version at the applicant's discretion, however, the official cost application submission is the unlocked Excel version.

Applicants must review, understand, and comply with all aspects of this NOFO. Failure to do so may be considered as being non-responsive and may be evaluated accordingly. Applicants should retain a copy of the application and all enclosures for their records.

Excluding the cover page, table of contents, past performance, budget and annexes, the Technical Application must not exceed 25 pages.

The Cost/Business Application is to be submitted under separate cover from the technical application. The Applicant is requested to submit a budget broken down by program years (in MS Excel with formulas unlocked) with an accompanying detailed budget narrative (in Word or PDF text accessible) which provides in detail the total costs for implementation of the program.

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purpose should mark the title page with the following legend:

"This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate

this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this Applicant as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government’s right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers}.”

and mark each sheet of data it wished to restrict with the following legend:

“Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application.”

#### **4. GENERAL CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION**

Applications in response to this NOFO must be submitted by email to Maya Chelidze, Sr. Acquisition and Assistance Specialist at [mchelidze@usaid.gov](mailto:mchelidze@usaid.gov) and [rcocaucasus@usaid.gov](mailto:rcocaucasus@usaid.gov). Email submissions must include the NOFO number and applicant’s name in the subject line heading. In addition, for an application sent by multiple emails, the subject line must also indicate whether the email relates to the technical or cost application, and the desired sequence of the emails and their attachments (e.g. “No. 1 of 4,” etc.). For example, if your cost application is being sent in two emails, the first email should have a subject line that states: “[NOFO number], [organization name], Cost Application, Part 1 of 2.”

If you have not received confirmation of USAID receipt of your application within two days of sending it, please contact Ms. Chelidze at [mchelidze@usaid.gov](mailto:mchelidze@usaid.gov) and [rcocaucasus@usaid.gov](mailto:rcocaucasus@usaid.gov) to inquire if your application was received. You must provide evidence of timely sending of the application.

USAID’s preference is that the technical application and the cost application each be submitted as consolidated email attachments, e.g. that you consolidate the various parts of a technical application into a single document before sending it. If this is not possible, please provide instructions on how to collate the attachments. USAID will not be responsible for errors in compiling electronic applications if no instructions are provided or are unclear.

After submitting an application electronically, applicants should immediately check their own email to confirm that the attachments were indeed sent. If an applicant discovers an error in transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email or indicate in the file name if submitted via grants.gov that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

Applicants are reminded that e-mail is NOT instantaneous, and in some cases delays of several hours occur from transmission to receipt. Therefore, applicants are requested to send the application in sufficient time ahead of the deadline. For this NOFO, the initial point of entry to the government infrastructure is the USAID mail server.

Size limit for e-mail with one attachment is 25MB compatible with MS Word (.doc), Excel (.xls), Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) in a MS Windows environment. If several files are attached to the e-mail submission, the total size of all attachments per e-mail shall not exceed 25MB compatible with MS Word (.doc), Excel (.xls), Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) in a MS Windows environment.

There may be a problem with the receipt of \*.zip files due to anti-virus software. Therefore, applicants are discouraged from sending files in this format as USAID/Georgia cannot guarantee their acceptance by the internet server.

## **5. TECHNICAL APPLICATION FORMAT**

The technical application will be the most important factor for consideration in selection for award of the proposed Cooperative Agreement. The technical application should be specific, complete and presented concisely and should address how the Applicant intends to carry out the Program Description contained in Section B. The application should take into account the requirements of the program and evaluation criteria found in this NOFO.

Technical applications shall be organized by the technical evaluation criteria listed in Section E. The technical application is limited to 25 pages, as clarified below. Any pages beyond these twenty five (25) will NOT be evaluated. However, required Annexes specified below will not be counted towards the page limit.

Required Order of the Technical Application:

1. Cover page: The cover page must not exceed one page and must contain information as specified in Section D.3 for cover page of Technical and Business (Cost) Applications. (not included in the 25-page limit)
2. Table of Contents (not included in the 25-page limit)
3. Abbreviation list (not included in the 25-page limit)
4. Executive summary (not included in the 25-page limit): must provide a maximum two-page high-level overview of key elements of the Technical Application.
5. Technical Approach (15-page limit)
6. Staffing Approach and Key Personnel (5-page limit)
7. Approach to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (5-page limit)
8. Required Annexes (not included in the 25-page limit)
  - a. Illustrative First Year Work Plan (not to exceed 3 pages)
  - b. Organizational Chart
  - c. Résumés for Key Personnel (CVs/Resumes may not exceed 3 pages each)
  - d. Letters of Commitment for Key Personnel (exclusive commitments are not recommended).
9. Other annexes, as applicable:
  - e. Commitment letters from sub-partners (exclusive commitments are not recommended)

### **1.1. Technical Approach**

This section must detail the technical approach in a narrative section not to exceed fifteen (15) pages. **The applicant's technical approach must include a clear description of and consistent logical progression between the general strategy, methodology and activities being proposed for the implementation of the program.**

In this narrative, the applicant will propose an overall approach to objectives, including an approach to strengthening the capacity of formal and informal civic entities working at the local, regional and national level to address citizen identified issues; approach to increasing the linkages between elite/technocratic CSOs and grassroots civil society; and the development of an ecosystem for sustainability, including the advancement of philanthropy and CSR. The applicant will describe why its approach to the objectives is appropriate in the Georgian context given civil society's current stage of development.

The applicant will also describe its approach to empowerment of local stakeholders to identify their own development challenges and solutions; and enhancing public knowledge of what citizen engagement is and how civic movements and civil society organizations can contribute to raising and solving issues of common concern. The applicant will propose an approach to domestic resource mobilization and developing the capacities of civil society to self-generate and mobilize a range of resources, both monetary and in-kind.

The applicant will also propose an approach to networking and fostering collaboration among different stakeholders, including partnerships between CSOs and civic groups, media, and the government; between the private and public sectors; and between donors to maximize and synergize efforts.

The applicant will describe how the application relates to USAID/Georgia's Country Development Cooperation Strategy<sup>12</sup>, and USAID's Private Sector Engagement (PSE) Policy<sup>13</sup>. The applicant will also describe the strategy to address gender issues associated with this activity.

As part of the methodology the applicant must detail its approach to experimentation, learning and adaptation, particularly when supporting new actors such as civic movements and newly emerging civic groups, as well as new experimental and sustainable funding models. The applicant will describe its approach to co-creation and grants programs. The applicant will also describe support to civil society organizations to more effectively measure the impact of their activities to develop evidence-based learning.

In the implementation plan, which should cover the life of the project, the applicant must demonstrate how the proposed activities build upon one another and are logically sequenced in order to achieve the desired outcome based on the proposed strategy and methodology. The

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CDCS-Georgia-MAY-2025.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/usaid\\_psepolicy\\_final.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/usaid_psepolicy_final.pdf)

applicant should address all external factors that may affect the success of the project including political, legal, CoVID 19 and other related considerations.

The applicant will also provide an illustrative first year work plan as a Gantt chart or similar type of chart that illustrates schedules for different activity areas and dependency relationships. This chart should not exceed 3 pages and should be included as an annex to the technical application. This illustrative work plan should be based on the implementation plan and describe at a more detailed level the planned activities and sequencing during the first year. The work plan will not count towards the fifteen-page narrative limit.

## **1.2. Staffing Approach and Key Personnel**

This section must detail the overall organizational structure for the project, the staffing approach, and qualifications and capacities of the Key Personnel, in a narrative section not to exceed five (5) pages.

The applicant will describe the composition and organizational structure of the entire project team, including the roles and responsibilities for proposed key technical positions. Also, as part of their response, applicants will discuss teaming, partners, and their respective roles and responsibilities, place within the reporting structure, technical expertise and experience and methods that the applicant will use to manage performance of partners.

Within the narrative, applicants will describe how their proposed Chief of Party, Deputy Chief of Party, Capacity Building Manager and Specialist in Domestic Resource Mobilization meet the requirements in Section B.5 Key Personnel.

In support of the staffing approach narrative section, the applicant will also provide resumes/CVs of key personnel and an organizational chart in an annex. Resumes/CVs for key personnel may not exceed 3 pages in length and must demonstrate the communication skills, managerial capabilities, and technical capacities of key personnel, among other relevant factors as determined by the applicant. Each key personnel resume/CV will include at least 3 references within the last 3 years, along with an email address and phone number for each reference.

The applicant must propose candidates for the four required positions, and may also propose one additional key personnel, for a total of up to five, including the required four positions.

The applicant should submit letters of commitments for key personnel in an Annex.

## **1.3. Approach to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

The applicant will propose an approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning that will help the project to capture lessons learned from innovative approaches and adapt programming mid-stream. This section, not to exceed five (5) pages, will describe the major objectives of the Program's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning approach with specific indicators and targets, and how the application's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is designed for learning; and what resources are required for collaboration and learning to take place from results and

achievements of all activities. The applicant will also discuss plans for identifying learning gaps and adjusting the MEL plan.

## 2. Business (Cost) Application Format

The Business (Cost) Application must be submitted separately from the Technical Application. While there is no page limit for the full cost application, applicants are encouraged to be as concise as possible while still providing the necessary details. The business (cost) application must illustrate the entire period of performance, using the budget format shown in the SF-424A.

Prior to award, applicants may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for the Agreement Officer to assess the applicant’s risk in accordance with 2 CFR 200.206. Applicants should not submit any additional information with their initial application.

The Cost Application must contain the following sections (which are further elaborated below this listing with the letters for each requirement):

- a) **Cover Page (See Section D.3 above for requirements)**
- b) **SF 424 Form(s)**

The applicant must sign and submit the cost application using the SF-424 series. Standard Forms can be accessed electronically at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or using the following links:

<b>Instructions for SF-424</b>	<a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424-instructions.html</a>
<b>Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)</b>	<a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html</a>
<b>Instructions for SF-424A</b>	<a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424a-instructions.html</a>
<b>Budget Information (SF-424A)</b>	<a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html</a>
<b>Instructions for SF-424B</b>	<a href="http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html">http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions/sf-424b-instructions.html</a>
<b>Assurances (SF-424B)</b>	<a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html</a>

Failure to accurately complete these forms could result in the rejection of the application.

### c) Required Certifications and Assurances

The applicant must complete the following documents and submit a signed copy with their application:

- (1) “Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient” document found at <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>

- (2) Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
- (3) Certificate of Compliance: Please submit a copy of your Certificate of Compliance if your organization's systems have been certified by USAID/Washington's Office of Acquisition and Assistance (M/OAA).

**d) Budget and Budget Narrative**

The Budget must be submitted as one unprotected Excel file (MS Office 2000 or later versions) with visible formulas and references and must be broken out by project year, including itemization of the federal and non-federal (cost share) amount. Files must not contain any hidden or otherwise inaccessible cells. Budgets with hidden cells lengthen the cost analysis time required to make the award and may result in a rejection of the cost application. The Budget Narrative must contain sufficient detail to allow USAID to understand the proposed costs. The applicant must ensure the budgeted costs address any additional requirements identified in Section F, such as Branding and Marking. The Budget Narrative must be thorough, including sources for costs to support USAID's determination that the proposed costs are fair and reasonable.

The Budget must include the following worksheets or tabs, and contents, at a minimum:

- Summary Budget, inclusive of all program costs (federal and non-federal), broken out by major budget category and by year for activities implemented by the applicant and any potential sub-applicants for the entire period of the program. See Section H, Annex 1 for Summary Budget Template
- Detailed Budget, including a breakdown by year, sufficient to allow the Agency to determine that the costs represent a realistic and efficient use of funding to implement the applicant's program and are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.
- Detailed Budgets for each sub-recipient, for all federal funding and cost share, broken out by budget category and by year, for the entire implementation period of the project.

The Detailed Budget must contain the following budget categories and information, at a minimum:

- 1) **Salaries and Allowances** – Must be proposed consistent with 2 CFR 200.430. The applicant's budget must include position title, salary rate, level of effort, and salary escalation factors for each position. Allowances, when proposed, must be broken down by specific type and by position. Applicants must explain all assumptions in the Budget Narrative. The Budget Narrative must demonstrate that the proposed compensation is reasonable for the services rendered and consistent with what is paid for similar work in other activities of the applicant. Applicants must provide their established written policies on personnel compensation. If the applicant's written policies do not address a specific element of compensation that is being proposed, the Budget Narrative must describe the rationale used and supporting market research.
- 2) **Fringe Benefits – (if applicable)** If the applicant has a fringe benefit rate approved by an agency of the U.S. Government, the applicant must use such rate and provide evidence of its approval. If an applicant does not have a fringe benefit rate approved, the applicant must propose

a rate and explain how the applicant determined the rate. In this case, the Budget Narrative must include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits (e.g., superannuation, gratuity, etc.) and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

3) **Travel and Transportation** – Provide details to explain the purpose of the trips, the number of trips, the origin and destination, the number of individuals traveling, and the duration of the trips. Per Diem and associated travel costs must be based on the applicant’s normal travel policies. When appropriate please provide supporting documentation as an attachment, such as company travel policy, and explain assumptions in the Budget Narrative.

4) **Procurement or Rental of Goods (Equipment & Supplies), Services, and Real Property** – Must include information on estimated types of equipment, models, supplies and the cost per unit and quantity. The Budget Narrative must include the purpose of the equipment and supplies and the basis for the estimates. The Budget Narrative must support the necessity of any rental costs and reasonableness in light of such factors as: rental costs of comparable property, if any; market conditions in the area; alternatives available; and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property leased.

5) **Subawards** – Specify the budget for the portion of the program to be passed through to any subrecipients. See 2 CFR 200 for assistance in determining whether the sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor. The subrecipient budgets must align with the same requirements as the applicant’s budget, including those related to fringe and indirect costs.

6) **Construction** – not applicable

7) **Other Direct Costs** – This may include other costs not elsewhere specified, such as report preparation costs, passports and visas fees, medical exams and inoculations, as well as any other miscellaneous costs which directly benefit the program proposed by the applicant. The applicant should indicate the subject, venue and duration of any proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs. Otherwise, the narrative should be minimal.

8) **Indirect Costs** – Applicants must indicate whether they are proposing indirect costs or will charge all costs directly. In order to better understand indirect costs please see Subpart E of 2 CFR 200. The application must identify which approach they are requesting and provide the applicable supporting information. Below are the most commonly used Indirect Cost Rate methods:

Method 1 - Direct Charge Only

Eligibility: Any applicant

Initial Application Requirements: See above on direct costs

Method 2 - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

Eligibility: Any applicant with a NICRA issued by a USG Agency must use that NICRA.

Initial Application Requirements: If the applicant has a current NICRA, submit your approved NICRA and the associated disclosed practices. If your NICRA was issued by an Agency other than USAID, provide the contact information for the approving Agency. Additionally, at the

Agency's discretion, a provisional rate may be set forth in the award subject to audit and finalization. See [USAID's Indirect Cost Rate Guide for Non Profit Organizations](#) for further guidance.

Method 3 - De minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC)

Eligibility: Any applicant that does not have a current NICRA

Initial Application Requirements: Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate an indirect rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The applicant must describe which cost elements it charges indirectly vs. directly. See 2 CFR 200 for further information.

Method 4 - Indirect Costs Charged As A Fixed Amount

Eligibility: Non U.S. non-profit organizations without a NICRA may request, but approval is at the discretion of the AO.

Initial Application Requirements: Provide the proposed fixed amount and a worksheet that includes the following:

- Total costs incurred by the organization for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year.
- Indirect costs (common costs that benefit the day-to-day operations of the organization, including categories such as salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting, or that benefit and are identifiable to more than one program or activity, such as depreciation, rental costs, operations and maintenance of facilities, and telephone expenses) for the previous fiscal year and estimates for the current year
- Proposed method for prorating the indirect costs equitably and consistently across all programs and activities of using a base that measures the benefits of that particular cost to each program or activity to which the cost applies.

If the applicant does not have an approved NICRA and does not elect to utilize the 10% de minimis rate, the Agreement Officer will provide further instructions and may request additional supporting information, including financial statements and audits, should the application still be under consideration after the merit review. USAID is under no obligation to approve the applicant's requested method.

9) **Cost Sharing** – The applicant should estimate the amount of cost-sharing resources to be provided over the life of the agreement and specify the sources of such resources, and the basis of calculation in the budget narrative. Applicants should also provide a breakdown of the cost share (financial and in-kind contributions) of all organizations involved in implementing the resulting award.

**3. Prior Approvals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.407**

Inclusion of an item of cost in the detailed application budget does not satisfy any requirements for prior approval by the Agency. If the applicant would like the award to reflect approval of any

cost elements for which prior written approval is specifically required for allowability, the applicant must specify and justify that cost. See 2 CFR 200.407 for information regarding which cost elements require prior written approval.

#### **4. Approval of Subawards**

The applicant must submit information for all subawards that it wishes to have approved at the time of award. For each proposed subaward the applicant must provide the following:

- Name of organization
- DUNS Number
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not appear on the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient does not have active exclusions in the System for Award Management (SAM)
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not listed in the United Nations Security designation list
- Confirmation that the subrecipient is not suspended or debarred
- Confirmation that the applicant has completed a risk assessment of the subrecipient, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.332(b)
- Any negative findings as a result of the risk assessment and the applicant's plan for mitigation.

#### **5. Dun and Bradstreet and SAM Requirements**

USAID may not award to an applicant unless the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier (DUNS number) and System for Award Management (SAM) requirements. Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempted from requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

1. Provide a valid DUNS number for the applicant and all proposed sub-recipients;
2. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application. SAM is streamlining processes, eliminating the need to enter the same data multiple times, and consolidating hosting to make the process of doing business with the government more efficient ([www.beta.sam.gov](http://www.beta.sam.gov)).
3. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The registration process may take many weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin the process early. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements above by the time USAID is ready to make an award, USAID may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

DUNS number: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

SAM registration: <http://www.beta.sam.gov>

Non-U.S. applicants can find additional resources for registering in SAM, including a Quick Start Guide and a video on how to obtain an NCAGE code, on [www.beta.sam.gov](http://www.beta.sam.gov), navigate to Help, then to International Registrants.

## 6. History of Performance

In this section the Applicant (including all partners of a joint venture) must provide information regarding its recent history of performance for all of its cost-reimbursement contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs, not to exceed seven (7) awards during the last five (5) years using the attached Past Performance Information (PPI) form (Annex 2). The Applicant should provide information about a combined total of up to seven awards for itself and each major sub-applicant (defined as a sub-applicant whose proposed cost exceeds 10% of the applicant's total proposed cost) in accordance with the following:

- Name of the Awarding Organization;
- Award Number;
- Activity Title;
- A brief description of the activity including scope of work or complexity/diversity of tasks;
- Period of Performance and primary location (s) of work;
- Award Amount;
- Reports and findings from any audits performed in the last 3 years; and
- Name of at least two (2) updated professional contacts who most directly observed the work at the organization for which the service was performed with complete current contact information including telephone number, and e-mail address for each proposed individual.

PPI must be submitted as an Annex to the Business (Cost) Application.

USAID recommends that applicants alert the contacts that their names have been submitted and that they are authorized to provide performance information concerning the listed contracts if and when USAID requests it.

If the applicant encountered problems on any of the referenced Awards, it may provide a short explanation and the corrective action taken. The applicant should not provide general information on its performance. USAID reserves the right to obtain relevant information concerning an applicant's history of performance from any sources and may consider such information in its review of the applicant's risk. The Agency may request additional information and conduct a pre-award survey if it determines that it is necessary to inform the risk assessment.

**Past Performance is not an evaluation factor under this solicitation; however, PPI will be reviewed as part of a Pre-Award Risk Assessment of the apparently successful Applicant.**

## 7. Branding Strategy & Marking Plan

The apparently successful applicant will be asked to provide a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer and incorporated into any resulting award.

### **7.1 Branding Strategy Pre-Award Term**

- a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Branding Strategy," describing how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, and how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and host country citizens.
- b. The request for a Branding Strategy, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.
- c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Branding Strategy within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.
- d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.
- e. The Branding Strategy must include, at a minimum, all of the following:
  - (1) All estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth.
  - (2) The intended name of the program, project, or activity.
    - (i) USAID requires the applicant to use the "USAID Identity," comprised of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "from the American people" as found on the USAID Web site at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding>, unless Section VI of the RFA or APS states that the USAID Administrator has approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.
    - (ii) USAID prefers local language translations of the phrase "made possible by (or with) the generous support of the American People" next to the USAID Identity when acknowledging contributions.
    - (iii) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.
    - (iv) If branding in the above manner is inappropriate or not possible, the applicant must explain how USAID's involvement will be showcased during publicity for the program or project.
    - (v) USAID prefers to fund projects that do not have a separate logo or identity that competes with the USAID Identity. If there is a plan to develop a separate logo to consistently identify this program, the applicant must attach a copy of the proposed logos. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

(3) The intended primary and secondary audiences for this project or program, including direct beneficiaries and any special target segments.

(4) Planned communication or program materials used to explain or market the program to beneficiaries.

(i) Describe the main program message.

(ii) Provide plans for training materials, posters, pamphlets, public service announcement, billboards, Web sites, and so forth, as appropriate.

(iii) Provide any plans to announce and promote publicly this program or project to host country citizens, such as media releases, press conferences, public events, and so forth. Applicant must incorporate the USAID Identity and the message, "USAID is from the American People."

(iv) Provide any additional ideas to increase awareness that the American people support this project or program.

(5) Information on any direct involvement from host-country government or ministry, including any planned acknowledgement of the host-country government.

(6) Any other groups whose logo or identity the applicant will use on program materials and related materials. Indicate if they are a donor or why they will be visibly acknowledged, and if they will receive the same prominence as USAID.

e. The Agreement Officer will review the Branding Strategy to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan.

f. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Branding Strategy will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement

## **7.2 Marking Plan Pre-Award Term**

a. Applicants recommended for an assistance award must submit and negotiate a "Marking Plan," detailing the public communications, commodities, and program materials, and other items that will visibly bear the "USAID Identity," which comprises of the USAID logo and brandmark, with the tagline "from the American people." The USAID Identity is the official marking for the Agency, and is found on the USAID Web site at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding>. Section VI of the RFA or APS will state if an Administrator approved the use of an additional or substitute logo, seal, or tagline.

b. The request for a Marking Plan, by the Agreement Officer from the applicant, confers no rights to the applicant and constitutes no USAID commitment to an award.

c. Failure to submit and negotiate a Marking Plan within the time frame specified by the Agreement Officer will make the applicant ineligible for an award.

d. The applicant must include all estimated costs associated with branding and marking USAID programs, such as plaques, stickers, banners, press events, materials, and so forth, in the budget portion of the application. These costs are subject to the revision and negotiation with the Agreement Officer and will be incorporated into the Total Estimated Amount of the grant, cooperative agreement or other assistance instrument.

e. The Marking Plan must include all of the following:

(1) A description of the public communications, commodities, and program materials that the applicant plans to produce and which will bear the USAID Identity as part of the award, including:

(i) Program, project, or activity sites funded by USAID, including visible infrastructure projects or other sites physical in nature;

(ii) Technical assistance, studies, reports, papers, publications, audiovisual productions, public service announcements, Web sites/Internet activities, promotional, informational, media, or communications products funded by USAID;

(iii) Commodities, equipment, supplies, and other materials funded by USAID, including commodities or equipment provided under humanitarian assistance or disaster relief programs; and

(iv) It is acceptable to cobrand the title with the USAID Identity and the applicant's identity.

(v) Events financed by USAID, such as training courses, conferences, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, workshops, press conferences and other public activities. If the USAID Identity cannot be displayed, the recipient is encouraged to otherwise acknowledge USAID and the support of the American people.

(2) A table on the program deliverables with the following details:

(i) The program deliverables that the applicant plans to mark with the USAID Identity;

(ii) The type of marking and what materials the applicant will use to mark the program deliverables;

(iii) When in the performance period the applicant will mark the program deliverables, and where the applicant will place the marking;

(iv) What program deliverables the applicant does not plan to mark with the USAID Identity, and

(v) The rationale for not marking program deliverables.

(3) Any requests for an exemption from USAID marking requirements, and an explanation of why the exemption would apply. The applicant may request an exemption if USAID marking requirements would:

(i) Compromise the intrinsic independence or neutrality of a program or materials where independence or neutrality is an inherent aspect of the program and materials. The applicant must identify the USAID Development Objective, Interim Result, or program goal furthered by an appearance of neutrality, or state why an aspect of the award is presumptively neutral. Identify by category or deliverable item, examples of material for which an exemption is sought.

- (ii) Diminish the credibility of audits, reports, analyses, studies, or policy recommendations whose data or findings must be seen as independent. The applicant must explain why each particular deliverable must be seen as credible.
- (iii) Undercut host-country government “ownership” of constitutions, laws, regulations, policies, studies, assessments, reports, publications, surveys or audits, public service announcements, or other communications. The applicant must explain why each particular item or product is better positioned as host-country government item or product.
- (iv) Impair the functionality of an item. The applicant must explain how marking the item or commodity would impair its functionality.
- (v) Incur substantial costs or be impractical. The applicant must explain why marking would not be cost beneficial or practical.
- (vi) Offend local cultural or social norms, or be considered inappropriate. The applicant must identify the relevant norm, and explain why marking would violate that norm or otherwise be inappropriate.
- (vii) Conflict with international law. The applicant must identify the applicable international law violated by the marking.

f. The Agreement Officer will consider the Marking Plan's adequacy and reasonableness and will approve or disapprove any exemption requests. The Marking Plan will be reviewed to ensure the above information is adequately included and consistent with the stated objectives of the award, the applicant's cost data submissions, and the performance plan. g. If the applicant receives an assistance award, the Marking Plan, including any approved exemptions, will be included in and made part of the resulting grant or cooperative agreement, and will apply for the term of the award unless provided otherwise.

## **8. Funding Restrictions**

Profit is not allowable for recipients or subrecipients under this award. See 2 CFR 200.331 for assistance in determining whether a sub-tier entity is a subrecipient or contractor.

Construction will not be authorized under this award.

USAID will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs under this award without the explicit written approval of the Agreement Officer.

Except as may be specifically approved in advance by the AO, all commodities and services that will be reimbursed by USAID under this award must be from the authorized geographic code specified in Section B.4 of this NOFO and must meet the source and nationality requirements set forth in 22 CFR 228.

## **9. Conflict of Interest Pre-Award Term**

a. Personal Conflict of Interest

1. An actual or appearance of a conflict of interest exists when an applicant organization or an employee of the organization has a relationship with an Agency official involved in the competitive award decision-making process that could affect that Agency official's impartiality. The term "conflict of interest" includes situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, the obligations and duties of a USAID employee or recipient employee.
2. The applicant must provide conflict of interest disclosures when it submits an SF-424. Should the applicant discover a previously undisclosed conflict of interest after submitting the application, the applicant must disclose the conflict of interest to the AO no later than ten (10) calendar days following discovery.

b. Organizational Conflict of Interest

The applicant must notify USAID of any actual or potential conflict of interest that they are aware of that may provide the applicant with an unfair competitive advantage in competing for this financial assistance award. Examples of an unfair competitive advantage include but are not limited to situations in which an applicant or the applicant's employee gained access to non-public information regarding a federal assistance funding opportunity, or an applicant or applicant's employee was substantially involved in the preparation of a federal assistance funding opportunity. USAID will promptly take appropriate action upon receiving any such notification from the applicant.

**END OF SECTION D**

## SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### 1. TECHNICAL EVALUATION

The application should represent the applicant’s best ideas and efforts, and clearly respond to the subject Program Description. USAID reserves right, but is not under obligation, to enter into discussions with one or more applicants in order to obtain clarifications, additional details, or to suggest refinements in the proposed technical approach, budget, or other aspects of application, if doing so is determined to be in the best interest of the U.S. Government.

Applicants must note that these factors serve as the standard against which all technical information will be evaluated and serve to identify the significant matters which applications must address. Soundness of Technical Approach, Soundness of Staffing Approach and Key Personnel, and Soundness of MEL Plan will be evaluated, in that order of importance, as described herein and prescribed by the Technical Application format.

#### Merit Review

The merit review criteria prescribed here are tailored to the requirements of this particular NOFO. Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters which the applicants should address in their applications, and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated. Technical and other factors will be evaluated relative to each other, as described here and prescribed by the Technical Application Format. The Technical Application will be scored by a Selection Committee (SC) using the criteria described in this section.

USAID will conduct a merit review of all applications received that comply with the instructions in this NOFO. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in accordance with the following criteria shown below.

The criteria are presented by major category in the **descending order of importance**. Soundness of Technical Approach, Soundness of Staffing Approach and Key Personnel, and Soundness of MEL Plan will be evaluated, in that order of importance, as described herein and prescribed by the Technical Application format.

Technical applications will be evaluated on the extent to which they are complete, presented concisely, and responsive to the instructions and the criteria shown below.

CRITERION	CRITERION NAME
Criterion 1	Soundness of Technical Approach 50%
Criterion 2	Soundness of Staffing Approach and Qualification of Key Personnel 30%
Criterion 3	Soundness of MEL Plan 20%

<b>CRITERION 1</b>	<b>CRITERION NAME:</b>	<b>Soundness of Technical Approach</b>	<b>IMPORTANCE or WEIGHT:</b>	<i>The Most Important (50%)</i>
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There are no sub-criteria listed under this criterion.

The applicant’s technical approach, including proposed strategy, methodology and implementation plan, will be evaluated on the clarity, consistency, quality, appropriateness to the Georgian context, and likelihood of the proposed technical approach and proposed activities to achieve the objectives and intended results of this activity within the implementation period, including:

- Clarity and feasibility of the applicant’s approach(es) to experimentation, learning and adaptation, particularly when supporting new actors such as civic movements and newly emerging civic groups in Georgia, including the experimental and other sustainable funding models.
- Clarity, feasibility, and appropriateness of applicant’s approach to the development of an ecosystem for sustainability, including the advancement of philanthropy and CSR in Georgia.
- Feasibility, sustainability and innovation in proposed approach and activities in support of establishing partnerships and/or networks of CSOs in Georgia, and
- Clarity and appropriateness of proposed relationships to USAID/Georgia’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy and USAID’s Private Sector Engagement (PSE) Policy as well as of the strategy to address gender issues associated with this activity.

<b>CRITERION 2</b>	<b>CRITERION NAME:</b>	<b>Soundness of Staffing Approach and Key Personnel</b>	<b>IMPORTANCE or WEIGHT:</b>	<i>Important (30%)</i>
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There are no sub-criteria listed under this criterion:

The applicant’s staffing approach will be evaluated on:

- Clarity and appropriateness of roles and responsibilities for each key technical position, including partner personnel proposed to implement the agreement.
- Clarity and appropriateness of the organizational structure of the entire project team, including partner organizations, and
- Extent to which the proposed key personnel show the capacity to carry out the proposed technical and management actions, including how well they meet the minimum qualifications. This includes evaluation of key personnel past performance through reference checks.

<b>CRITERIO N 3</b>	<b>CRITERION NAME:</b>	<b>Soundness of MEL Approach</b>	<b>IMPORTANCE or WEIGHT:</b>	<i>Important (20%)</i>
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There are no sub-criteria listed under this criterion

The soundness of the MEL plan will be evaluated on:

- Clarity, feasibility, and comprehensiveness of applicant's approach to the MEL plan, and
- Extent to which it clearly articulates and corresponds to the stated goals and objectives outlined in the technical approach, including the learning objectives outlined in the technical approach.

## **2. BUSINESS REVIEW**

While Cost is less important than technical and is not rated, the cost applications of the apparently successful technical applications will be evaluated for cost completeness, realism, reasonability and allocability.

The Agency will evaluate the cost application of the applicant(s) under consideration for an award as a result of the merit criteria review to determine whether the costs are allowable in accordance with the cost principles found in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E.

The Agency will also consider (1) the extent of the applicant's understanding of the financial aspects of the program and the applicant's ability to perform the activities within the amount requested; (2) whether the applicant's plans will achieve the program objectives with reasonable economy and efficiency; and (3) whether any special conditions relating to costs should be included in the award.

Proposed cost share, (as suggested at minimum of 5% of the projected award amount) will be reviewed for compliance with the standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.306, 2 CFR 700.10, and the Standard Provision "Cost Sharing (Matching)" for U.S. entities, or the Standard Provision "Cost Share" for non-U.S. entities.

The AO will perform a risk assessment (2 CFR 200.206). The AO may determine that a pre-award survey is required to inform the risk assessment in determining whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organizational, experience, accounting and operational controls, financial resources, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – in order to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award. Depending on the result of the risk assessment, the AO will decide to execute the award, not execute the award, or award with “specific conditions” (2 CFR 200.208).

**END OF SECTION E**

## **SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **1. Federal Award Notices**

Award of the agreement contemplated by this NOFO cannot be made until funds have been appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While USAID anticipates that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for the award. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Agreement or a specific, written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

### **2. Administrative & National Policy Requirements**

The resulting award from this NOFO will be administered in accordance with the following policies and regulations.

For US organizations: [ADS 303](#), [2 CFR 700](#), [2 CFR 200](#), and [Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-governmental organizations](#).

For Non US organizations: [Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations](#).

Please see USAID's ADS Sections 303.4 and 303.5. The actual Standard Provisions included in the award will be dependent on the organization that is selected. The award will include the latest Mandatory Provisions for either U.S. or non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations. The award will also contain the following "required as applicable" Standard Provisions:

**Please note that the resulting award will include all standard provisions (both mandatory and required as applicable) in full text.**

### **3. Reporting Requirements**

#### **3.1 Financial Reporting:**

Financial Reports must be submitted in accordance with 2 CFR 200.327 for U.S. organizations, and for Non-U.S. organizations financial reports will be required at a frequency depending on method of payment, but at least quarterly. Reporting requirements, such as the format, number of copies, information to be included, due dates and distribution will be finalized in consultation with the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) after the issuance of the award.

(1) The recipient must submit the Federal Financial Form (SF-425) on a quarterly basis via electronic format to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (<http://www.dpm.psc.gov>). The recipient must submit a copy of the FFR at the same time to the Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) and to the Agreement Officer.

The recipient must submit quarterly financial reports no later than 30 calendar days after the end of each reporting period. **The following reporting period end dates shall be used for interim reports: 3/31, 6/30, 9/30, or 12/31.**

(2) The recipient must submit the original and two copies of all final financial reports to USAID/Washington, M/CFO/CMPLOC Unit, the AOR and to the Agreement Officer. The recipient must submit an electronic version of the final Federal Financial Form (SF-425) to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in accordance with paragraph (1) above.

The recipient must submit the final financial report no later than 90 calendar days from the end of the agreement.

The quarterly financial reports must contain a summary page which shows spending by category for the quarter, cumulative spending to date by line item, available funding for the remainder of the activity and any variances from planned expenditures. If there are significant accrued expenditures for the quarter being reported upon which for some reason have not yet been billed to the agreement, the recipient must include a brief note to that effect, with the specific amount involved, thus enabling the AOR to accurately track the expenditure rate.

## **3.2 Performance Reporting**

### **3.2.1. Annual Work Plans**

Annual work plans (AWP) are developed yearly and include proposed activities for the given year, time-frame, implementation of activities, budget, review of the previous year's accomplishments (if applicable), problems and challenges encountered in achieving specified results, proposed annual outputs, and progress towards achieving results

The USAID Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will approve work plans and any revisions to them that entail a change in or additional activities. The first work plan will be due thirty days after the signing of the award and should cover the time from the date of the award through the end of USG Fiscal Year Q4. Subsequent annual work plans will be due to USAID 60 days prior to start of USG Fiscal Year Q1 unless an alternative schedule is agreed to by both USAID and the recipient.

### **3.2.2. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan:**

The recipient must submit an Activity Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) plan within sixty calendar days of the award date.

The MEL Plan will include sections with the following elements:

- A description of the theory of change, with a results framework or other visualization, that clearly articulates the causal relationship between activity outputs and outcomes/expected results.

- A set of performance indicators that measures each output and outcome/expected result.
- Identification of key assumptions in the theory of change and a description of how those will be monitored.
- Performance Indicators Reference Sheets (PIRs), which include a definition and detailed description of the performance indicators to be tracked including: unit of measure; data source; method of data collection; justification/management utility; baseline values; annual targets; annual actual data; frequency and schedule for data collection; individual responsibility for data collection and availability of data; and detailed plans for data analysis, review and reporting.
- Tracking table for all indicators.
- A detailed description of how data will be collected (including baselines), managed, analyzed (e.g. vis-à-vis targets), and utilized in decision-making on a routine basis by management;
- Plans for collaborating with any external evaluations planned by the Mission;
- Any proposed internal evaluations;
- Learning activities, including knowledge capture at activity close out;
- Estimated resources for these monitoring, evaluation and learning activities that are a part of the implementing partner's budget; and
- Roles and responsibilities for all proposed monitoring, evaluation and learning actions.

The Activity MEL Plan should be revised as needed in response to changes in the activity or context that occur during the life of the activity.

The Recipient and USAID must agree upon the final choice of performance indicators useful for timely management decisions and credibly reflecting the actual performance of the project. MEL data must meet USAID's quality standards of validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity, and should be disaggregated by sex and geographic location as appropriate and feasible.

The recipient must prepare monitoring reports and related documentation for all activities under this agreement, as directed by the AOR. This documentation must include routine periodic reports on indicator status. Annual monitoring reports must align to the U.S. fiscal year ending on September 30. The format of the reports and documentation may change from year-to-year and will be provided by the AOR. Verification of specific data calculations for all indicators must be conducted annually. Major M&E activities (e.g. annual internal Data Quality Assessments, routine surveys, quarterly data entry into USAID's management information system, etc.) should also appear in the annual Work Plan

### **3.2.3. Quarterly Performance Reports**

Within 30 days after the end of each quarter of the USG Fiscal Year, the Recipient shall provide a quarterly performance report which will document overall progress towards the sub-purposes of the project, activities completed during the reporting period, any problems and challenges encountered during implementation (including financial issues) and how they were mitigated, data on all indicators established in the MEL Plan, and specific activities planned for the next

quarterly reporting period. The format of the progress reports will be determined in consultation with the AOR.

### **3.2.4. Annual Reports:**

The fourth quarterly report serves as the annual report to USAID – thus, it is more extensive and contains more information than a quarterly report. Annual Reports should reflect the structure of the annual work plan. Annual is defined according to the U.S. Government’s Fiscal Year: October 1st to September 30th. The Annual Report must be submitted to the USAID by October 31 of each year. In addition to the requirements of the Quarterly Report, the Annual Report must also:

- Describe overall performance against targets and goals during the fiscal year, and why targets and goals were not achieved or why they were exceeded. Discuss problems and challenges and how they may affect out-year planning.
- Provide a table displaying the indicators the Recipient is responsible for reporting on and the indicator values for the year, along with prior year values and future year targets. It should also include explanations for any indicator values falling above or below target.
- Provide illustrative activities to demonstrate whether the overall goals of the project are being achieved.
- Identify prospects for achieving longer term impact where applicable.

### **3.2.5. Final Report**

The recipient shall prepare a final report on the award in lieu of the final quarterly performance report. The final report must be submitted no later than 90 days after the end of the award.

The final report will clearly describe major accomplishments and results achieved attributable to activities under this award, an account of the sustainability of these efforts and/or results, final data for indicators in the performance management plan, an account of any problems encountered during implementation (including financial issues), and lessons learned and/or best practices identified during implementation.

The final report must be submitted to the Agreement Officer’s Representative, to the Agreement Officer, and to USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) electronically.

### **3.2.6. Close-out Plans**

Three (3) months prior to the completion of activities and/or the award end date, the recipient must submit a close-out plan for the award.

## **3.3 Development Experience Clearinghouse Requirements**

a) Submissions to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).

1) The recipient must provide the Agreement Officer’s Representative one copy of any Intellectual Work that is published, and a list of any Intellectual Work that is not published.

2) In addition, the recipient must submit Intellectual Work, whether published or not, to the DEC on-line. The recipient must review the DEC Web site for submission instructions, including document formatting and the types of documents to submit. Submission instructions can be found at: <http://dec.usaid.gov>.

3) For purposes of submissions to the DEC, Intellectual Work includes all works that document the implementation, evaluation, and results of international development assistance activities developed or acquired under this award, which may include program and communications materials, evaluations and assessments, information products, research and technical reports, progress and performance reports required under this award (excluding administrative financial information), and other reports, articles and papers prepared by the recipient under the award, whether published or not. The term does not include the recipient's information that is incidental to award administration, such as financial, administrative, cost or pricing, or management information.

4) Each document submitted should contain essential bibliographic information, such as (1) descriptive title; (2) author(s) name; (3) award number; (4) sponsoring USAID office; (5) development objective; and (6) date of publication.

5) The recipient must not submit to the DEC any financially sensitive information or personally identifiable information, such as social security numbers, home addresses and dates of birth. Such information must be removed prior to submission. The recipient must not submit classified documents to the DEC.

b. In the event award funds are used to underwrite the cost of publishing, in lieu of the publisher assuming this cost as is the normal practice, any profits or royalties up to the amount of such cost must be credited to the award unless the schedule of the award has identified the profits or royalties as program income.

### **3.4. Gender Reporting**

As part of its regular reports, the recipient must collect, analyze and submit sex disaggregated data and propose actions that will address any gender-related challenges that might arise from that data. The recipient will report any challenges to the AOR who, in turn, will work with the USAID Mission's gender specialist to find reasonable solutions.

### **3.5. Geographic Information System (GIS) Reporting**

1. Activity Location Data: The recipient must provide the AOR and Mission GIS Specialist with Activity Location Data semi-annually on April 15 and October 15. For this purpose, the recipient must fill in the appropriate Excel Spreadsheet "Activity Location Data GIS Report Template." This template will be provided by the USAID/Caucasus Program Office.

2. Performance Indicators: The recipient must submit annually data for several key Performance Indicators that measure the most significant results (outcomes and outputs/deliverables) of the

activity by region, municipality, town or village. This data must be submitted no later than November 15 each year and must reflect the results for the previous fiscal year disaggregated by geographic location. The recipient must work closely with the AOR to review the activity-level Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan to identify jointly key Performance Indicators that reflect and convey the most important results achieved or to be achieved. USAID is interested in Performance Indicators in the M&E plan that can be meaningfully disaggregated by geographic location. The number of these indicators will depend upon the complexity of the activity and could range in number approximately from 1 to 10. For this purpose, the recipient must fill in the appropriate Excel Spreadsheet “Performance Indicators GIS Report Template.” This template will be provided by the USAID/Caucasus Program Office.

3. Geographic Data: If created or acquired under this award, the recipient must provide annually on October 15 to the AOR and mission GIS Specialist any of the following types of Geographic Data:

- thematic data such as social and economic statistics at municipality level, poverty data, demographic and health indicators, land use, land cover, hydrology, and transportation infrastructure; USAID prefers to receive this data in GIS standard formats, however standard database formats are also allowed (e.g. poverty data can be submitted as an Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.);
- activity specific geographic data such as the analytical output of a geographic analysis that is conducted while implementing the activity and is useful to USAID’s development planning and project design purposes; or
- any other geographic data, such as cartographic products (e.g. maps, geographic data visualizations), aerial and satellite imagery created or acquired under this award. Cartographic products submitted to USAID must be in industry standard Esri Map Document .mxd format and in high resolution .jpg or .pdf formats. All data contained in the .mxd must be submitted according to the Geographic Data standards outlined in next paragraph.

Geographic Data submitted to USAID under this paragraph must be in industry standard formats such as Shapefile (.shp) or in a File Geodatabase and include metadata. Metadata is a summary document providing content, quality, type, creation, and spatial information about a data set. It represents who, what, when, where, why and how of the resource. Metadata can be stored in any format such as a text file, Extensible Markup Language (XML), or database record. Metadata records include core library catalog elements such as Title, Abstract, and Publication Data; geographic elements such as Geographic Extent and Projection Information; and database elements such as Attribute Label Definitions and Attribute Domain Values. Geographic Data must be projected to the Geographic Coordinate System World Geodetic System 1984 (GCS WGS 1984). All data must use the World Geodetic System 1984 (WGS 1984) datum.

#### **4. Program Income**

Program income, if any, will be generated under the award, will be treated under the award in accordance with 2 CFR 200.307 or, for non-U.S. organizations, see the standard provision “Program Income.”

## **5. Environmental Compliance**

1a) The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts 201.5.10g and 204 (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/>), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. Contractor environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this contract.

1b) In addition, the contractor must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between host country and USAID regulations, the latter will govern.

1c) No activity funded under this contract will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). (Hereinafter, such documents are described as "Regulation 216 environmental documentation.")

2) An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) describing the successful activity's purpose, location, duration and intensity; considering alternatives; and assessing impacts, including cumulative impacts, in light of existing and proposed activities will be prepared as a part of review and approval process in accordance with USAID Environmental Procedures. The Environmental Compliance requirements will be developed and incorporated into the award based on the IEE.

## **6. Other Requirements**

The successful Applicant will use the standard form Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR) to report performance progress for the program under the award when the program exceeds \$100,000 or more per project/grant period.

## **7. Branding & Marking:**

It is a federal statutory and regulatory requirement (see Section 641, Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 2 CFR 700.16 and 22 CFR 226.91) that all USAID programs, projects, activities, public communications, and commodities that USAID partially or fully funds under a USAID grant or cooperative agreement or other assistance award or sub-award must be marked appropriately overseas with the USAID identity. In accordance with ADS 320.3.3 Branding and Marking Requirements for Assistance Awards USAID's policy is that programs, projects, activities, public communications, or commodities implemented or delivered under co-funded instruments – such as grants, cooperative agreements, or other assistance awards that usually require a cost share – generally are "co-branded and co-marked."

The successful applicant will be required to submit a branding strategy and marking plan. The Applicant may request a presumptive exemption to marking requirements established in 22 CFR 226.91 and 2 CFR 700.16. More information on Branding strategy and Marking plan are available at <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/branding/assistance-awards> .

The branding strategy and marking plan will become a material element of the cooperative agreement. Information on USAID’s branding “assistance” applies to this RFA. ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning “acquisition” do not apply to this RFA. ADS Chapter 320 can be found on USAID website: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf> .

**END OF SECTION F**

## **SECTION G: FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)**

### **1. NOFO Points of Contact**

See Section D, Paragraph 1.

### **2. Acquisition and Assistance Ombudsman**

The A&A Ombudsman helps ensure equitable treatment of all parties who participate in USAID's acquisition and assistance process. The A&A Ombudsman serves as a resource for all organizations who are doing or wish to do business with USAID. Please visit this page for additional information: <https://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/acquisition-assistance-ombudsman>

[The A&A Ombudsman may be contacted via: Ombudsman@usaid.gov](mailto:Ombudsman@usaid.gov)

**END OF SECTION G**

## **SECTION H: OTHER INFORMATION**

USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. The Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to Agency programming.

**END OF SECTION H**

**ANNEX 1 - SUMMARY BUDGET TEMPLATE**

The applicant is required to submit the SF-424A. In addition the applicant must submit a detail and summary budget in Section D.2.d., according to the following suggested format:

Support to CSOs and other entities or civic movements provided through grants or other mechanisms should be at minimum \$5,000,000.

Budget Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total USAID	Cost Share (if proposed)	Total Project
Personnel (Salaries and Allowances)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Travel	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Equipment	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Supplies	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Contractual/Subagreements	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Other Direct Cost	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Indirect Costs	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

**ANNEX 2 – PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION (PPI)**

**(To be completed by the applicant)**

<b>1. Award Number:</b>
<b>2. Contractor/Recipient (Name and Address):</b>
<b>3. Type of Award:</b>
<b>4. Complexity of Work: Difficult ___ Routine _____</b>
<b>5. Description, location, and relevancy of work:</b>
<b>6. Dollar Value of Work : _____ Status: Active __ Completed ___</b>
<b>7. Date of Award: _____ Award Completion Date (including extensions): _____</b>
<b>8. Type and Extent of Subawards:</b>
<b>9. Name, Address, Telephone Number, and E-mail Address of the Awarding Contracting/Agreement Officer and/or the Contracting/Agreement Officer 's Representative (and other references as applicable):</b>