

**Notification of Funds Available to USAID Missions/Bureaus/Offices  
For FY14 HUMAN RIGHTS GRANTS PROGRAM**

**I. Purpose Statement**

The Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG), within the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is pleased to announce the availability of \$10-\$13 million for USAID Missions and Offices for human rights programming and projects. (Total available resources are subject to the finalization of funding levels.) These resources are made available to USAID Missions and Offices who are encouraged to submit applications for projects that will:

- **Respond to urgent or unanticipated human rights challenges;**
- **Respond to emerging windows of opportunity in the protection and promotion of human rights.**

Program areas could include, but are not limited to: agriculture and food security; democracy, human rights & governance; economic growth and trade; education; environment and global climate change; sports; gender equality and women's empowerment; and science, technology and innovation, among others. Capacity building programs for local organizations may include organizational capacity, advocacy efforts, cross-disability coalition building, coordination, and leadership and training.

**Proposals for these funds will be written and submitted by USAID field posts to USAID Washington.** All awards (grants or cooperative agreements) under this request for concept papers will be administered through and managed by missions/bureaus/offices. Funding will be provided from DCHA/DRG to missions/bureaus/offices for this purpose and they are responsible for all obligation requirements, award management and project oversight.

**Please note this announcement is NOT a USAID/Washington issued APS or RFA.** Rather USAID Missions, bureaus, and offices have been informed that these funds are available should they wish to participate in applying for them.

**Qualified organizations interested in this funding opportunity should contact their local USAID field mission for more information on this program. Mission contact information can be found at: <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work> or <http://www.usaid.gov/mission-directory>**

**II. Background**

As established in the Agency's [Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Strategy](http://www.usaid.gov/democracy-human-rights-and-governance-strategy) (<http://www.usaid.gov/democracy-human-rights-and-governance-strategy>) of June 2013, human rights programming broadly includes activities that protect against or respond to human rights abuses, provide support to and strengthen local human rights institutions or oversight mechanisms, and advocate for the advancement of human rights norms.

### III. Areas of Interest

USAID seeks applications for projects that respond to **urgent or unanticipated human rights challenges or emerging windows of opportunity in the protection and promotion of human rights.**

Project areas could include, but are not limited to: **strengthening the capacities of and security for local human rights defenders or institutions; monitoring and reporting on human rights violations; preventing targeted violence (including genocide and mass atrocities) against civilians and vulnerable populations; advancing transitional justice; combatting negative human rights impacts of corporate supply chains; protecting and promoting the rights of vulnerable populations such as women and children, the LGBT community, indigenous peoples and other minorities; and countering trafficking in persons (C-TIP) and providing services and support to victims of torture.** Concept notes submitted for proposed C-TIP activities must align with the principles and objectives of the Agency's 2012 C-TIP Policy, which can be found at [www.usaid.gov/trafficking](http://www.usaid.gov/trafficking). Concept notes submitted for proposed activities to assist victims of torture must align with the guidance available here: <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/democracy-human-rights-and-governance/protecting-human-rights/vulnerable-populations>. Please note that a separate application process exists for persons with disabilities exists and that announcement from USAID is pending.

The DRG strategy also recognizes that a key component of human rights is the equality of opportunity and access to public goods and services for vulnerable populations. In this context a highly effective means of building a sustainable foundation for human rights is through integration of human rights into programs across sectors by promoting inclusion and participation of vulnerable populations. Illustrative sectors that are ready entry points include health, education, livelihood, disaster risk-reduction, and civil society capacity strengthening.

Interested organizations are encouraged to engage in dialogue with their local USAID missions to learn of mission priorities.

### IV. Available Funds

Subject to the availability of funds, the total estimated level of funding expected for FY 14 will be between \$10-\$13 million available for awards, **worldwide.**

### V. Proposal Limit

Missions/bureaus/offices are limited to the submission of grants ranging from \$100,000 up to \$750,000, and spanning from 12 months to 3 years in duration. In rare cases, larger awards will be considered.

### VI. Applicant Eligibility

Applications should be from qualified U.S. or non-U.S. entities, such as private, non-profit organizations including private voluntary organizations, universities, research organizations, professional associations, and relevant special interest associations. Partnerships with local government entities working on human rights issues and programs are also encouraged. **Local NGOs are strongly encouraged to apply.**

Partners new to USAID may submit applications. However, resultant award to these organizations may be significantly delayed if USAID must undertake necessary pre-award reviews of these organizations. Organizations should take this into account and plan their implementation dates and activities accordingly.

Participation in this program is at the sole discretion of a Mission, Bureau or Office. To that end, please contact the relevant USAID mission/bureau/office to understand specific eligibility requirements.

**USAID will not accept applications from individuals.** All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. PIOs are not eligible to apply for funding under this program.

## **VIII. Mission/Bureau/Office Eligibility**

All USAID missions/bureaus/offices are eligible under this funding program. However, participation is optional and therefore, interested organizations should contact their local mission or relevant bureau/office prior to submitting applications to verify their participation. Please note DCHA/DRG in Washington does not keep a list of participating missions/bureaus/offices. It is incumbent upon organizations to reach out to missions/bureaus/offices directly.

## **IX. The Process**

### **A. General Guidance**

USAID missions/bureaus/offices have been informed that funding is available to implement human rights programs. Interested and qualified organizations must apply for this funding directly through their local missions. In rare cases where proposed programs are to take place in more than one country, organizations may choose to submit their application to regional or technical bureaus or offices in Washington.

- 1. Contact local mission (or relevant bureau/office)** – interested organizations should contact their local mission or the mission responsible for managing activities in the proposed country to assess interest and ability to participate in this funding opportunity. The same process is recommended in rare cases where proposed projects are to take place in more than one country; in this case, applicants should contact the relevant Washington-based technical or regional bureau/office.
- 2. Consultation and Submitting applications** - Organizations should follow appropriate mission/bureau/office instructions for scheduling consultations, application submission and format. Please note it may take missions/bureaus/offices a couple weeks to review applications before forwarding them to DCHA/DRG in Washington. Please allow

adequate time and submit your application early, well in advance of the DCHA/DRG Washington deadline listed below. Applications submitted after this deadline may not be considered.

- 3. Review Process** –Missions/bureaus/offices will conduct the first review based on their established procedures. Selected applications will be forwarded to DCHA/DRG Washington for further review. Final determinations will be communicated to applicants by the local mission/bureau/office.

## **B. Submission Deadlines**

Concept papers must be submitted by USAID missions/bureaus/offices only. DCHA/DRG will NOT accept applications submitted directly by organizations. Missions/bureaus/offices will establish their own internal deadline to receive applications under this call.

### **The USAID/Southern Africa Mission deadline for submissions is October 24, 2014.**

Concept notes can be sent to [hrgsouthernafrica@usaid.gov](mailto:hrgsouthernafrica@usaid.gov). Please use the template provided by USAID/Southern Africa and adhere to the character limits. USAID/Southern Africa will review the proposals submitted to USAID/Southern Africa and determine which will go forward to DCHA/DRG to compete in the global competition.

## **C. Application Format**

Missions/bureaus/offices will establish their own internal application format to receive applications under this call. Prospective applicants must check with their local USAID mission/bureau/office to verify application format and local deadlines. Please see the attached format.

## **D. Looking forward**

The Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) encourages missions that are not ready to apply for FY14 funding to start planning for FY15, however funding levels for FY 15 are not confirmed at this time.

<b>X. Application Criteria</b>
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Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by participating USAID missions/bureaus/offices and (if applicable) by DCHA/DRG. Missions/bureaus/offices may structure the solicitation and review as they see fit but should use the evaluation criteria listed below. Additional evaluation criteria may be added.

- Award Mechanisms: This announcement is a notification of funds being made available to Missions. All awards will be administered through and managed by the Missions. Once their concept is accepted, Missions will be responsible for procurement of all awards (through an RFA, APS, RFP, or other competitive process, or, when appropriate, amendment of existing awards), all obligation requirements, award management and project oversight. Missions are responsible for identifying the best available mechanism for programming these funds. Applications that provide direct support to local human rights organizations are particularly welcome.

- Award Duration: Typical HRGP applications are for one year. However, recognizing that it is not always possible to achieve meaningful results in a single year, and that the HRGP can often be “seed funding” that helps Missions embrace Human Rights programming as a central component of their development strategy (in line with the QDDR, the President’s National Security Strategy, and the new DRG Strategy), multi-year proposals up to 3 years will be considered on two conditions: that the Mission offer a meaningful matching contribution (not less than 50% of HRGP grant amount) and that the Mission commit to including a rigorous learning component as part of its eventual activity (survey, impact evaluation, qualitative study, etc.).
- Reporting: Awardees must comply with ADS 203 requirements including establishing indicators, targets, baseline, and assessing data quality. Awardees must submit brief quarterly progress reports and at least one brief “case study” or “learned lesson” demonstrating either a success or a failure with explanations for why objectives were or were not met. Past awardees are eligible to re-apply contingent on their having met past reporting requirements. Missions can provide applicants with the USAID required indicators for reporting.
- Learning: In addition to the partners’ M & E activities for the project, applications are expected to include a specific plan for an external evaluation and report on impact, lessons learned, and/or best practices.
- Gender Considerations: The promotion of gender equality and female empowerment should be thoughtfully integrated into the main objectives and activities of all applications, in accordance with USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy.

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**>>>>> Please use Attachment B – Application Template on the next page**

## Attachment B – Application Template

### FY14 USAID/DCHA/DRG Human Rights Grants Program Application

**Country:**

**Requested Amount (USD):**

**Program Title:**

**Implementing Partner(s):**

**Proposed Start and End Date:**

**Contact information:**

1. Please provide a brief diagnosis of the human rights challenges in the country. *(2000 characters max)*
2. Explain how this proposal addresses an urgent or unanticipated human rights need or challenge, or an emerging window of opportunity in the protection and promotion of human rights. *(2000 characters max)*
3. Provide a brief summary of the proposed project. Include specific objectives, proposed activities, deliverables, and operational parameters (ex. location, expected number of beneficiaries, etc.) *(2500 characters max)*
4. Describe the monitoring and evaluation plan for the project. Include indicators, targets, data collection and control plans, and evaluation schedule. Describe how an external impact evaluation, distinctive from the M & E plan, will be included to learn from this project and capture best practices. *(1500 characters max)*
5. Explain how the promotion of gender equality and female empowerment is integrated into the main objectives and activities of the proposal, in accordance with USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy. *(500 characters max)*
6. Please provide an illustrative budget
7. Briefly describe the work of your organization and any proposed partner(s). *(1000 characters max)*