

Annual Program Statement

Funding Opportunity Title:	Collaborative Advocacy Projects for Community-based Issues
Announcement Type:	Annual Program Statement
Funding Opportunity Number:	PAR-1081-APS-001
Issuance Date:	9/29/2020
Questions for First Round of Evaluations Due By:	Questions are accepted on a rolling basis
Deadline for Submission of Concept Papers	
First Window- Environmental Pollution:	10/28/2020
Final Closing Date:	09/29/2021
Submit Concept Papers to:	grants.par@counterpart.org

The purpose of this Annual Program Statement (APS) is to solicit concept papers for funding. The Counterpart International-implemented Promoting Advocacy and Rights project (hereafter referred to as CPI/PAR), funded through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Kingdom Agency for International Development (UKaid), is seeking concept papers first, then full applications from prospective applicants to implement activities that are possible within Bangladesh's current national or legal framework and:

- Address community-based issues that cut across geographic locations, horizontally as well as vertically, culminating in addressing issues at the Upazila, regional or national level, using multiple methods of intervention at each appropriate level; and
- Address community-based issues exclusive to one or more aspects of the priority advocacy issue that are common across several sectors. Select a specific range of problems to be addressed and identify key points of engagement;

These activities will contribute to the development of an advocacy consortium that addresses local level issues and/or issues that can culminate in national level interventions with emphasis on a multi-stakeholder approach. Concept papers should justify geographic scope, and PAR will be granting to those organizations looking to implement in the following divisions: Khulna, Barishal, Rajshahi, Dhaka. The environmental pollution grant will be limited to organizations seeking to work only in Dhaka district.

This APS is designed to catalyze, facilitate, and support collaboration. As such, this APS is an invitation to participate in a co-creation process that CPI/PAR will extend to nonprofit organizations who will work in partnership with organizations of varying size, and will create links with the CSOs, the government, the private sector and other key stakeholders as appropriate, to achieve project objectives.

Co-creation is a jointly developed program approach to discuss the issues and to come up with innovative and locally owned solutions. Under this approach, CPI/PAR will review all concept notes and select

concepts to proceed based on the merit of interventions proposed and the expertise provided by the submitting consortium. CPI/PAR will then organize a consultative workshop to review, discuss and provide technical assistances with the selected CSOs to tailor the proposal to best fit the local context, in line with CPI/PAR project objectives.

CPI/PAR anticipates awarding approximately three (3) grants to fund successful applications submitted in response to this APS, and it is anticipated that no more than one (1) grant will be funded per issue area. Competition for this APS will be open for one year from the date of the APS release stated. Concept papers will be reviewed on a rolling basis. It is possible that all of the available funds for this APS may be allocated early on in the program, as concept papers will be evaluated on a rolling basis.

The total amount of funding currently available for this APS is approximately \$298,333 per grant for a project period of up to twenty-four (24) months. CPI/PAR may choose to fully fund, partially fund, or incrementally fund the selected application(s). The number of awards, length of award, and amount of available funding is subject to change and CPI/PAR reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.

This APS is seeking applicants to propose innovative and effective approaches to address identified local development issues as outlined in the Overview section. Applicants may choose among a range of initiatives or scale up small projects that have demonstrated success. Awardees will be expected to share evaluation results and key lessons and disseminate periodic activities and outcomes with the broader community.

Applications outside the geographic focus (Khulna, Barishal, Rajshahi, Dhaka districts) will not be considered. Applicants must demonstrate success in managing cultural and political considerations in the proposed focus country or region as well as success in addressing CPI/PAR's development objectives, which include:

1. Objective 1: Strengthen Civil Society Capacity to Effectively Advocate for Improved Democratic Governance
2. Objective 3: Establish Cross-Sectoral Partnerships to Improve Government Responsiveness to Citizen Needs

SECTION I - FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Description of the Proposed Program

Background

CPI/PAR is a five-year, USAID and UKAid-funded project implemented by Counterpart International, in Bangladesh. CPI/PAR's goal is to strengthen the enabling environment for civil society institutions and to advance democratic governance and citizen participation in Bangladesh. It also broadly contributes to the U.S. Government's Indo Pacific Transparency Initiative (IPTI) in promoting civil society as a cornerstone of democratic governance and stability in restrictive and closing environments, and advances efforts to increase civil society engagement in policymaking.

It aims to increase the influence of citizens in governance to create more effective, accountable, and inclusive governance in Bangladesh. PAR contributes to the overall goal of USAID/Bangladesh's civil

society interventions, by contributing to a more inclusive, resilient, and evidence-driven Bangladeshi civil society (CS). It is Counterpart's experience that a robust civil society contributes to good governance, deepens democracy, and increases national prosperity. To this end, Counterpart will employ a social partnership approach whereby Counterpart facilitates dialogue and forge collaboration among various sector stakeholders - including government, civil society, business, academia, and media – to solve problems in sustainable ways.

During the first stage of CPI/PAR implementation, the project conducted regional Community Engagement Forums across Bangladesh which sought to identify priority issues which the CPI/PAR project could engage to promote alternative advocacy approaches. While there were regional differences in terms of priorities, there were several issues that commonly arose as high priority. CPI/PAR seeks to address a select number of these issues through the issuance of this APS.

Program Objectives

The CPI/PAR project now aims to strengthen cross sectoral links across all categories of stakeholders in key advocacy areas, identified below. Grant applications should consider proposing innovative techniques for addressing local and national level issues arising out of the environmental sector with emphasis on a multi-stakeholder approach. A multi-stakeholder approach should include a variety of NGOs, professional associations, labor organizations, business associations, private enterprises, faith-based groups, women's and youth groups, and organizations representing marginalized constituencies.

Concept papers should include activities which:

- Address community-based issues that cut across geographic locations, horizontally as well as vertically, culminating in addressing issues at the Upazila, regional or national level, using multiple methods of intervention at each appropriate level; and
- Address community-based issues exclusive to one or more aspects of the priority advocacy issue that are common across several sectors. Select a specific range of problems to be addressed and identify key points of engagement;

Each grant proposal should be based on the collaboration of multiple stakeholders in a consortium-based style. PAR would like to see new partnerships formed under this APS and will provide grant funding proportionate to the activities of each organization under each finalized proposal.

The following serves as the overall description of the APS under the CPI/PAR sub-grants program, and specific objectives under each component:

Issue Area 1: Environmental Pollution, Dhaka District Only

The deadline for submitting a concept paper under Issue Area 1 is: October 28, 2020.

Under Issue Area 1, CPI/PAR intends to award funds to a consortium of organizations seeking to **address environmental pollution issues in their community** through advocacy interventions.

Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of environmental pollution in the world. Severe air, water, and noise pollution threaten the health of the local population and economic growth of Bangladesh. Among the causes of environmental pollution include over-population and unplanned urbanization, resulting in

waste management issues, industrial wastewater, and poor sanitation systems. Additionally, a lack of awareness by the broader population has limited the impact of environmental conservation efforts.

There have been numerous Bangladeshi national-level policies and legislation seeking to address water, air, and land pollution. However, much of the implementation is undertaken at the local level, and city corporations and municipalities are often responsible for such functions as sanitation, solid waste management, and regulating water supplies. To greater and lesser degrees, the health of the environmental sector has an impact on every aspect of Bangladeshi society. Therefore, it is critical for the environmental sector advocacy to consider issues at the local, regional, and national level by linking actors on multiple levels for effective advocacy efforts to enact policy reform.

CPI/PAR seeks concept papers that seek to address environmental pollution issue in Dhaka district. Concept papers should justify the need for the intervention in the proposed geographic area. Emphasis will be placed on applicants that incorporate the following parameters in their concept papers:

- Proposed Consortiums that are able to address local level issues, policies and practices but also able to address national-level policy or legislative-level interventions;
- Consortiums include at least two NGOs that represent marginalized populations; and
- Propose creative methods for networking and building strong multi-stakeholder issue-based alliances.

Concept papers should demonstrate knowledge of target areas where USAID environment programs are currently being implemented and demonstrate how a potential project could leverage these USAID programs for increased meaningful impact.

Issue Area 2: TBD

An amendment announcing the Issue Area 2 and submission dates for the next round of Concept Papers is anticipated in December 2020.

Issue Area 3: TBD

An amendment announcing the Issue Area 2 and submission dates for the next round of Concept Papers is anticipated in January 2021.

Administration of Award

Awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 700, USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations. For non-U.S. organizations, USAID Standard Provisions for non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations would apply.

Applicants may obtain copies of the referenced material at the following websites:

- 2CFR200:

http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl

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

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

SECTION II- AWARD INFORMATION

A. Estimated Funding Level

Under this APS, each grant will be estimated at approximately \$ 298,333 for a period of up to twenty-four (24) months. CPI/PAR may choose to fully fund or incrementally fund the selected application(s). CPI/PAR expects to award one (1) agreement per organization in the consortium under each proposal. The number of awards and amount of available funding is subject to change. **Anticipated Start Date of this Award and Performance Period**

CPI/PAR anticipates the start date upon award of December 15, 2020 with a performance period of up to twenty-four (24) months for the first award issued under this APS.

B. Award Type

CPI/PAR anticipates awarding approximately three (3) grants (hereafter called Agreement) to fund successful applications submitted in response to this APS. **SECTION III- ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

A. Types of Entities that May Apply

Registered non-U.S. non-governmental organizations and for-profit organizations willing to forego profit may apply.

This APS is issued as a public notice to ensure that all interested and qualified organizations have a fair opportunity to submit applications for funding. Eligible organizations could include, for example, foundations, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations (FBOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), host country organizations, private organizations affiliated with public academic institutions and international non-governmental organizations, private companies, professional associations and consortiums of the above. CPI/PAR encourages an approach that establishes partnerships with several partner organizations and builds them into legacy institutions capable of sustaining development projects in the future.

In order to be eligible, applicants must not have been debarred from receiving USG funding and/or listed in the USG Excluded Parties List and the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List.

B. Potential New Partners

C. CPI/PAR strongly encourages applications from potential new partners, including small organizations or organizations which have not received USG funding previously. **Cost Share**

Fifteen (15%) cost share is required; applicants are encouraged to contribute resources from their own private or local sources for the implementation of this program where feasible. This cost share will be divided proportionally between consortium partners and will be finalized during the proposal stage.

SECTION IV- APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Application Process

This APS is not a Request for Applications (RFA) or a Request for Proposals (RFP). Rather, this APS requests Concept Papers. Based on those Concept Papers, CPI/PAR will determine whether to request a full application from an appropriate partner in a proposed partnership alliance in a co-creation process.

CPI/PAR will review proposals using a two-stage process. Applicants must first submit a concept paper of no more than 2 pages (excluding budget) to CPI/PAR before submitting a full proposal. Concept papers must meet the identified needs of this solicitation. Do not submit a full proposal unless requested by CPI/PAR. Only upon receipt of CPI/PAR feedback on the concept paper is the applicant requested to develop a full proposal for consideration, using the criteria below.

The concept paper must be submitted in accordance with the instructions in SECTIONS IV B below.

B. Concept Paper

In the first stage, all interested applicants are required to submit a short technical concept paper no longer than 2 pages that is specific, complete, and concise. The concept paper should demonstrate the applicant's (consortium's) capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program. The instructions for developing the concept paper should take into account the instructions listed in the next section.

Concept papers will be reviewed in terms of responsiveness to the APS, appropriateness of subject matter, and creativity. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed work will contribute to CPI/PAR objectives and within Dhaka district.

Concept Paper Instructions

The concept paper must be submitted in Arial 11 pt. font and must include page numbers. Each page must be marked with the APS title.

Prepare the application for the concept paper according to the structural format set forth below:

1-Cover Page (no more than one (1) page, not included in page count): The cover page must include:

- a. the APS number Name
- b. Address of organizations proposed to be included in the consortium;
- c. Type of organization (e.g., for-profit, non-profit, university, etc.);
- d. Contact point (lead contact name; relevant telephone, fax, e-mail information);
- e. Names of other organizations (federal and non-federal as well as any other USAID offices) to whom you are submitting and/or have submitted the application and/or who are funding the proposed activity; and
- f. Signature of authorized representative of the applicant.

2-Technical approach (no more than two (2) pages): This section should address the program summary and selected objectives from Section I of this document and should include:

- a. Concise title and objectives of proposed activity;
- b. Discussion of the objectives, the method of approach, the amount of effort to be employed, the anticipated results, and how the work will help accomplish CPI/PAR's objectives; and
- c. Type of support the applicant requests from CPI/PAR (e.g., funds, facilities, equipment, materials, personnel resources, etc.).

3-Supporting information (no more than one (1) page, not included in page count):

Proposed total estimated cost; Brief cost breakdown by category (e.g., salaries, travel, etc.); proposed optional amount of the applicant's financial as well as in-kind participation if applicable; proposed amount

of prospective or existing partner(s) financial as well as in-kind participation if applicable; proposed duration of the activity; and brief description of applicant's, as well as prospective or existing partner(s') previous work or experience. CPI/PAR will contact selected applicants to request a full proposal based on the information provided in the concept paper.

C. Application Process

If a concept paper is approved, CPI/PAR will contact applicants and provide instructions and templates to complete an application.

Do not submit a full proposal unless requested by CPI/PAR. Only upon receipt of positive feedback on the concept paper is the applicant requested to put together a full proposal for CPI/PAR's consideration, based on instructions provided by CPI/PAR.

SECTION V – CONCEPT PAPER REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Evaluation Criteria for Concept Papers : The concept papers will be evaluated with specific consideration of the following areas: SMART objectives, rationale of approach, organizational capacity and experience, methodology, proposed key activities, anticipated results, and total estimated budget and cost share amount.

CPI/PAR will select the qualified concept notes first and then, will seek full proposals from selected applicants. After completion of the evaluation of the full proposals, co-creation process will be initiated and again, revised proposal will be solicited from the selected applicant.

Concept papers will be reviewed in terms of responsiveness to the APS, appropriateness of subject matter, appropriateness of named NGOs to the consortium, and innovation. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed work will contribute to:

- Addressing community-based issues that cut across locations, horizontally as well as culminate in a Upazila, regional or national issue, to use multiple methods of intervention at the appropriate level. In doing so, consider sector specific issues that would allow for a specific problem to be addressed, and identify the key points of entry.
- Identify activities that are possible within Bangladesh's current national or legal framework.

All concept papers are required to include a multi-stakeholder approach and define specific advocacy tools, as detailed below:

Multi-Stakeholder Advocacy Approach

PAR's framework envisions supporting a robust platform of collaborative advocacy interventions. Efforts to bring about meaningful reform have often failed to bring together the relevant stakeholders to introduce multi-stakeholder dialogue, buy-in and problem-solving approaches. PAR proposes to shift the paradigm by supporting a diversity of actors that share an interest in resolving issues emanating from the environmental sector.

The issues PAR plans to address through advocacy interventions often impact other critical sectors such as health, education, labor. These issues impact every aspect of Bangladeshi society and therefore, it is critical for issue-based advocacy to consider issues at the local, regional, and national level. Creating both horizontal links (between actors across geographies or sectors) and vertical links (from the Upazila to the

national level) are critical to effect change. Effective policy or regulatory reform occurs more readily when collective stakeholders create both horizontal and vertical links and are able to identify and adopt common solutions.

In designing grant applications, applicants should consider the added value of building multi-stakeholder approaches that include both vertical and horizontal links. Applicants should consider proposing innovative and creative advocacy techniques that go beyond standard civil society activities, which are often viewed as adversarial, to address issues in the environmental sector.

Building an Advocacy Approach

It is critical that applicants clearly define the advocacy tools they propose to use to address identified issues. These will vary depending on the most reasonable entry point (at either the local or national level). For example, while awareness-raising campaigns can provide critical information to citizens, they are more effective when coupled with other strategies such as:

- Town hall meetings,
- Letter writing campaigns (when trying to influence decision makers),
- Private roundtable mediation,
- Establishing a multi-stakeholder task force to analyze the root causes of the issue(s) and propose solutions, and
- Establishing oversight committees composed of community leaders, citizen activists, county level government and/ or legislative representation to serve as a dispute resolution body.

These are not mandatory approaches or an exhaustive list, only examples.

Applicants should utilize an advocacy approach that is multi-pronged and multi layered (horizontal and vertical), targeting and utilizing all key stakeholders in the process. Horizontal links involve building coalitions that include environmental sector partners but also non-environmental sector partners, on issues of common interest. Vertically aligned stakeholder groups involve coalitions that represent community, county, regional and national level partners. Multi stakeholder coalitions should also consider the inclusion of non-traditional actors such as government and private sector interests. Each entry point may require a slightly different approach depending on the problem and stakeholders involved.

SECTION VI - PROJECT CONTACTS

The points of contact for this APS and any questions during the APS process are: [PAR Grants Office, grants.par@counterpart.org](mailto:grants.par@counterpart.org).

Any prospective applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this APS must request it in writing by the date listed on the cover letter to allow a reply to reach all prospective applicants before the submission of their applications. Oral explanations or instructions given before award of a grant will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this APS will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment of this APS, if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicants.

SECTION VII - OTHER INFORMATION

Issuance of this APS does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of CPI, nor does it commit CPI/PAR to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.

CPI reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Further, CPI reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.