

**Notification of Funds Available to USAID Missions**  
**FY18 DISABILITY PROGRAM FUNDING**  
**Public Announcement**

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 inviting all interested USAID Missions to apply for FY18 Disability Funding to support programming in the area of **Living Independently and Being Included in the Community (LIBC)**.

Approximately \$6 million in funding is available for this Mission-wide, competitive program. Submissions will be considered within the following two funding ranges: from \$300,000 to \$500,000 and from \$500,001 to \$1,000,000.

Projects may be stand-alone, targeted programs or they can be mainstreamed within larger Mission programs. Within the LIBC framework, projects should reflect the most pressing needs in the country and align with the Mission's development priorities. All proposals must be guided by the values and provisions set forth by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

All awards (grants or cooperative agreements) under this request for concept papers will be administered through and managed by Missions. Funding will be provided from USAID/Washington to Missions 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 Annual Program Statement (APS) or Request for Proposals (RFA). Rather USAID Missions 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>**

## I. BACKGROUND

According to the World Health Organization, approximately 15% of any population has some form of disability, with a higher incidence of disability in countries that are post conflict or affected by natural disasters. The prevalence of disability is expected to rise in coming years due to an ageing global population and an increase in chronic health conditions. Of the estimated 1 billion people throughout the world with a disability, 80% live in less resourced nations.

People with disabilities are more likely to experience poverty. Women and girls with disabilities often experience heightened discrimination on account of gender and disability. Due to stigma, discrimination and inaccessibility, persons with disabilities are less likely to be able to access basic services such as education, employment and healthcare. The lack of access to vital services and programs contributes to their marginalization and exclusion, perpetuating a cycle of poverty.

Societies that are inclusive of their diverse populations are more likely to be democratic, participatory and equitable. They are more likely to meet their development goals. In spite of this, and although disability is a cross-cutting development issue, persons with disabilities often remain invisible in the global development agenda.

USAID's Disability Policy states that USAID will not discriminate against persons with disabilities and will work to ensure the inclusion and active participation of persons with disabilities in USAID-funded programs and activities. To this end, USAID has mainstreamed disability in many of its key policies and sector strategies. The Policy also calls on Missions to reach out to partners, host country counterparts and other donors to lead a collaborative effort to end discrimination against and promote equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. Increasingly, Missions are including disability in their Country Development Cooperation Strategies and other foundational documents.

Disability rights are human rights. As the Agency's Strategy on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance outlines, a deliberate human rights lens should be applied across USAID's portfolio to ensure that the Agency is not inadvertently contributing to marginalization or inequality. By using a human rights lens, potential beneficiaries who are most at risk of having their rights neglected or abused – such as persons with disabilities – will be better recognized and included in programming.

In July 2009, the U.S. signed the CRPD affirming its commitment to the human rights of persons with disabilities around the world. To date, most of the countries in which USAID operates have also signed and ratified the Convention signaling a global movement towards the full realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and their role in the international development community.

For more information about USAID and Disability Inclusive Development, visit: <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/democracy-human-rights-and-governance/protecting-human-rights/disability>.

## II. LIVING INDEPENDENTLY AND BEING INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNITY

DCHA/DRG seeks concepts that foster the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in the community, in accordance with [CRPD Article 19](#), ensuring that:

- a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;
- b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community; and
- c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.<sup>1</sup>

Within the LIBC framework, DCHA/DRG will prioritize submissions that demonstrate robust participation and involvement of disabled persons organizations (DPOs).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on Article 19 see [General Comment No. 5](#)

<sup>2</sup> Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs)- Civil society organizations run by and for persons with disabilities. DPOs exist at local, national, regional and global levels. They may focus on specific issues (i.e., elections, women's rights), specific disability types (i.e., association of the blind, association of the deaf) or be national umbrella groups (i.e., national association of persons with disabilities).

Illustrative activities are included below, however other innovative ideas are welcome.

- Development and effective implementation of deinstitutionalization strategies and plans to transition away from institutional care settings for persons with disabilities;
- Provision of accessible, affordable, and sustainable community-based supports and services to facilitate persons with disabilities living independently and being included in the community;
- Development and/or effective implementation of laws, policies, and practices that support persons with disabilities exercising their legal capacity, freedom of choice, and control over decisions affecting their lives with the maximum level of self-determination and interdependence in society (e.g. through supported vs. substituted decision-making);
- Establishment and/or strengthening of consumer-controlled disability resource centers (often referred to as “independent living centers” in the U.S.) that promote the full independence and participation of persons with disabilities in society, including through advocacy related to the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Adoption and/or effective implementation of monitoring mechanisms related to living independently and being included in the community, including ensuring such mechanisms prioritize DPO participation.

Proposed projects should complement and be reflected in Missions Country Development Cooperation Strategies and/or other strategy documents and be guided by the values and provisions set forth by the CRPD.

Projects that address targeted needs of persons with disabilities may be considered. Projects that highlight the needs of marginalized groups, such as women and girls, individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, those with developmental or psychosocial disabilities, and members of the LGBTI community are encouraged. All programs, regardless of implementing partner, must verify significant involvement of persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

### III. REVIEW CRITERIA

Eligible projects submitted under this call will be reviewed based on the criteria listed below.

1. **Within the LIBC framework, represents a pressing need in country and demonstrates a clear linkage with USAID Mission priorities:** The proposed project responds to a pressing LIBC need in country that has yet to be adequately addressed and demonstrates a clear linkage with existing Mission priorities.
2. **Sound technical approach and likely to contribute to sustainable and institutional change:** The proposed project demonstrates a sound technical approach based on promising practices, lessons learned and/or international standards in LIBC; and demonstrates how and to what extent it will contribute to sustainable and institutional change either at the person-, community-, or country-level. The project goes beyond addressing the symptom of a problem and seeks to identify and mitigate the root causes of inequality and persistent exclusion.
3. **Substantial involvement of and direct benefit to persons with disabilities:** The proposed project demonstrates meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project. The overall direct benefit to individuals with disabilities and DPOs offers the best value for the amount of funding requested.
4. **Thoughtful integration of gender equality and women's empowerment:** The promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment must be thoughtfully integrated into the main objectives, activities, and monitoring and evaluation plans of all applications, in accordance with USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and USAID ADS 205. If the application is successful, gender considerations must likewise be integrated into the resulting program design.
5. **Sound monitoring, evaluation and opportunities for learning:** In addition to required F Framework indicators, the proposed project includes relevant and meaningful indicators to measure success in meeting the stated objectives, and realistic targets. At least 3 illustrative indicators should be provided. The proposed project should also demonstrate how project learning will be captured and shared with a broad audience, including USAID.

In addition to the criteria above, applications will also be reviewed for geographic diversity and meeting the Congressional intent of the Disability funds.

#### IV. ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS EXCLUDED

The following activities and programs will **not** be considered for funding:

- Programs with significant infrastructure or construction activities. Minor refurbishment of existing facilities (i.e. making toilets accessible, installing ramps) may be considered and must comply with USAID Policy on Standards for Accessibility for the Disabled in USAID-Financed Construction ([http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pdacg011.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pdacg011.pdf)).
- Programs focused on the provision of assistive devices or physical rehabilitation.
- Programs supporting institutionalization of or institutions for children or adults with disabilities.
- Employment programs promoting sheltered workshops or income generating activities that perpetuate negative stereotypes of persons with disabilities and that do not provide for meaningful employment.
- Programs with a primary focus on awareness raising.
- Due to the availability of significant funding through PEPFAR, disability funding may not be used to support HIV/AIDS-related activities.
- In recent years, there has been significant disability funding for inclusive education. These investments continue, however inclusive education activities will not be supported through this call.

#### V. AVAILABLE FUNDS

Subject to the availability of funds, the total estimated level of funding available for awards under this **worldwide** request is up to \$6,000,000 over a 24-36 month period. DCHA/DRG may fund individual programs in two categories:

1. Programs ranging from \$300,000 to \$500,000 (up to \$3 million); and
2. Programs ranging from \$500,001 - \$1,000,000 (up to \$3 million)

Missions can use this funding for the procurement of new awards or use it to modify existing grant agreements.

## VI. PROPOSAL LIMIT

Missions may submit up to two proposals, one in each funding range.

## VII. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applications should be from qualified U.S. or non-U.S. entities, such as private, non-profit organizations (or for-profit companies willing to forego profits), including private voluntary organizations, universities, research organizations, professional associations, and relevant special interest associations. **Local DPOs are strongly encouraged to apply.** Preference will be given to qualified local DPOs and/or any of the above organization types that directly collaborate with and/or award sub-grants to DPOs while meeting the requirements for funding.

Mainstream (non-DPO) organizations applying for funds must include in their application letter(s) of signed support from local DPOs they wish to partner with for the purpose of the project.

PIOs are not eligible to apply for funding under this program.

## VIII. MISSION ELIGIBILITY

All interested USAID Missions are invited to apply for DRG Disability Program funds.

## IX. THE PROCESS

### **A. General Guidance**

USAID Missions have been informed that this funding is available to implement programs that foster the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in the community. Interested and qualified organizations must apply for this funding directly through their local Missions.

- 1. Contact local Mission (or relevant bureau/office)** – interested organizations should contact their local Mission or the Mission representative who is responsible for managing activities in the proposed country to assess interest and ability to participate in this funding opportunity. USAID/Washington does not maintain a list of participating Missions. It is incumbent upon interested organizations to engage directly with Missions. **Mission contact information can be found at:** <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work> or <http://www.usaid.gov/mission-directory>

2. **Submitting applications** - Organizations should follow appropriate Mission instructions for application submission. Please note it may take Missions one month or more 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 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.

## **B. Submission Deadlines**

The deadline for Missions to submit applications to DCHA/DRG in Washington is no later than **July 12, 2019. Applications must be submitted by USAID Missions only. DCHA/DRG will NOT accept applications submitted directly by organizations.** Missions will establish their own internal deadline to receive applications under this call. Prospective applicants must check with their local USAID Mission to verify additional deadlines and plan accordingly.

## **C. Application Format**

Applicants must utilize the required application format provided in **Attachment A - Required Application Format**. Be sure to complete all information requested on the application form. The 8-page limit must be respected. The cover page, annexes to the budget and letters of cooperation between the Applicant and other partners are not subject to the page limit.

## **X. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Reporting on the project is required. The exact format for, preparation of, and timing for submission of all reports will be determined by the Mission. Recipients will be required to report on standard indicators required by Washington and additional indicators as determined by Missions. Though not required, Recipients are encouraged to submit photographs, success stories and/or other media as part of their progress reports.

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**Attachment:**

Attachment A - Required Application Format