Cambodian Civil Society Strengthening Project

Request for Applications (RfA) for "How many ways to say it?" grants

Democracy and Governance Fund

The USAID Cambodian Civil Society Strengthening Project (CCSS) invites Cambodian Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to apply for Democracy and Governance Fund grants for activities that will help them and other CSOs find more effective expression. The aim of the grant is to fund CSOs, including Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and Academic Institutions to undertake activities that serve to expand civic engagement in the political process, with particular attention paid to engaging women and youth, by building capacity and opportunity for effective expression and engagement. The purpose of this round of grant-making is to promote impactful expression, through any number of methods.

The qualities sought in applicants vary across the mechanisms employed by the grants supported; among the targeted themes are: 1) projects focusing on the empowerment of women, youth and vulnerable populations through training on advocacy skills relating to effective expression in a manner of constructive engagement, such as public speaking, Khmer story telling techniques (possibly developed in different media -- video, photography, drawing, cartoons, essays, poetry, etc.) or other modes of expression; 2) projects promoting the engagement of local communities and/or informal groups with national and sub-national authorities, as well as with the private sector, on issues such as environmental protection and other issues; 3) projects promoting evidenced-based policy contributions in sectors where there is receptivity from government counterparts; and 4) projects supporting other forms of expression.

Illustrative activities include but are not limited to:

Saying it by narrating it – a project could examine Khmer story telling techniques, imagery and other cultural aspects such as folk sayings that go into creating an engaging story for Cambodian audiences. Develop a course and course materials that identify these practices as applied in different media; video, photography, drawings, cartoons, essays, poetry, etc. Train on storytelling as a communication tool that can be combined with other forms of expression and advocacy. Organize storytelling events (listen to some "Moth Radio Hour" podcasts for examples and inspiration: https://themoth.org/podcast) where skills are practiced and stories shared. Conduct workshops for artists, advocates, and others that transfer these skills and train trainers to share with communities, academic institutions and others interested in learning these. To ensure that on-line application of storytelling techniques is optimized, applicants should consider the DAI–implemented Development Innovations Project, which offers a range of technology based services which can be found on their website http://www.development-innovations.org/km/, and/or the Open Institute (http://www.open.org.kh) as possible resources. For purposes of sustainability, a proposal advancing this activity should include a plan for its adoption, by an NGO or academic institution, as an ongoing program.

Saying it by the numbers – Produce a training program on statistics and the R programming language (see https://www.r-project.org/about.html) that leverages free, self-paced, on-line courses (e.g., https://lagunita.stanford.edu/courses/OLI/StatReasoning/Open/about and https://www.edx.org/course/introduction-r-data-science-microsoft-dat204x-3?gclid=CJCegvLgt9ECFQ0DvAodhyYHUg), but with supplemental training done in Cambodia live. While keeping participants on track with their self-paced programs on existing online e-learning courses, maintain interest, reinforce key concepts

and illustrate practical real-world applications in the Cambodian context with local training sessions. Such an activity could build the capacity of CSO representatives, academics and government officials. Not all would go through the entire series of courses in one cycle – the objective would be to raise the capacity of each participant in use of data and statistics to the next level, whatever that might be for them. A partner conducting such an activity might consider the DAI–implemented Development Innovations Project, and/or the Open Institute, as possible resources. An additional objective of such a project would be to establish it as a sustainable ongoing program institutionally rooted in a CSO and/or an academic institution, possibly with government and/or private sector sponsorship, so a plan for such adoption should be included in the proposal. This program would give priority to women applying for training in public speaking, as they are under-represented in senior official roles generally.

Saying it Safely – Design and implement a program for CSOs and the on-line Khmer public that identifies and creates safe spaces for expressing and sharing opinions. This program would include the identification of existing tools and platforms that allow for anonymous browsing and posting on the Web, training programs that provide practical and technical guidance (including a series of short Khmer language YouTube videos that describe each tool and how to use them on a range of devices and OSes). It could also include innovation on existing open source tools to generate Khmer language versions, making novel use of existing tools or creating new tools. The key elements are to identify strategies that can be used by the average Khmer Internet user to browse and post securely in visible on-line spaces, make the tools available and accessible that support this strategy, and generate training and easy-to-understand reference materials that would make using the tools doable by anyone. This program will give preference to persons who are human rights defenders or social activists. For purposes of sustainability, a proposal advancing this activity should include a plan for its adoption, by an NGO or academic institution, as an ongoing program. Applicants submitting a proposal under this activity are expected to coordinate with the Open Institute, and the USAID-funded Information Security Coalition (ISC)(through Ty Sok at ty@iscproject.org).

Saying It by Seeing It (and letting others see it, too). Recently, there have been several occasions where criminal charges were brought against CSO officials (i.e., a labor union leader in Poipet and human rights monitors with LICADHO) that were subsequently dropped because persons on the scene captured video with their mobile phones that established the innocence of the accused CSO officials, and uploaded that video to social media. These images were subsequently used in court. This evidence gathering promotes both citizen engagement and justice. Under this illustrative activity applicants will develop a program facilitating CSO staff and members of the public in capturing such evidence (video and/or still pictures/sounds), preserving it and posting/sharing it most effectively. Such a program could include training on the basics of how to get the best images/sound from a mobile phone, how to tag the files and send them quickly on to Facebook or other site for secure display/storage. (Persons who capture such evidence are possible witnesses if they are identified, so another part of the program would be to encourage their self-identification to defense lawyers on such cases). This program would include training CSO staff/citizens in using mobile phones as cameras, making creative use of existing software tools (possibly localizing open source apps for Cambodia) or design new applications. Examples of similar/related apps that have been developed in other contexts are described here: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/10/police-abuse-apps_n_7036442.html Applicants submitting proposals under this activity are encouraged to seek background information from Development Innovations and the Open Institute. For purposes of sustainability, a proposal advancing this activity should include a plan for its adoption, by an NGO or academic institution, as an ongoing program.

Saying it when paying it. There are a number of actions that promote "the power of the purse" in expressing, or withholding, support for CSOs/enterprises/activities that advance or set back Cambodia's sustainable development. One of these is by contributing money. TosFund (https://www.tosfund.com/) and other crowdfunding platforms are creating new opportunities for contributions to CSOs, but a greater awareness of these by members of the public and CSOs would increase donations. Another way to support CSOs that have a social enterprise component is to buy

their products, for example, food from the Friends or Hagar restaurants, or Bloom Cafe. Again, greater awareness – by the Khmer public, expatriate residents and visiting tourists – of which enterprises serve charitable purposes and what these are, could lead to increased revenue for these organizations. A third method is to identify value chains/retailers associated with activities on the ground, that affect Cambodia's landscape, noting those that are sourced by socially and environmentally responsible business activities, and which are not. Inclusive Development International (www.inclusivedevelopment.net/category/cambodia/) and some other organizations have called out bad actors with a view toward penalizing their international market value, but relatively little has been done to promote consumer choices domestically as a means for encouraging green and otherwise sustainable business practices, particularly in agriculture. The development of additional information resources – possibly encouraging the establishment of consumer advocacy groups – is one possible way of enhancing this dynamic. With respect to all three elements of the above activity, applicants would be expected to build on existing platforms/information sources, such as Social Enterprise Cambodia, an on-line database run by Impact Hub Phnom Penh (http://socialenterprisecambodia.org/), possibly expanding the concept to include NGOs and noting what they do, what their funding is spent on, how to transfer funds to them and opportunities for donating time/labor; and generate an awareness campaign and other interventions that may useful. Applicants are encouraged to speak with staff at Development Innovations and the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) on elements one (1) and two (2) above. For purposes of sustainability, a proposal advancing this activity should include a plan for its adoption, by an NGO or academic institution, as an ongoing program.

Saying it by speaking it – Develop a public speaking program for CSO, academic and government representatives who are in leadership or other visible positions. Grant would fund a series of workshops that train attendees in public speaking for various contexts (teaching how to organize time and content, as well as honing presentation skills). Would also have as an objective introducing participants to a Toastmasters Club Chapter (www.toastmasters.org) in Cambodia and possibly establishing an additional chapter. A written guide to preparing different types of presentations (including how to use PowerPoint and other leading presentation tools), that references open-source or otherwise free on-line resources, might round out such a program. A further objective would be having this public speaking program adopted institutionally by a CSO or academic institution, perhaps with sponsorship from a government agency or the private sector, and a proposal should include a plan for such. This program would give priority to women applying for training in public speaking, as they are under-represented in senior official roles generally.

Having a say in policy and practice, through partnership – an example of an illustrative activity that may be the subject of multiple grants, is reflected in support for CSO collaborative engagement with national and subnational government offices on issues such as environmental protection or the management (or co-management) of natural resources or land, health, public service delivery and gender rights, or other issues where there is substantial openness to such cooperation. CSOs proposing such work should include in their proposals a description of the joint activities planned, accompanied by a letter from the government counterpart confirming the scope of planned collaboration. CSOs may propose additional activities that go beyond, but augment, the scope of collaboration. Partnerships between CSO and private sector that promote rights-based approaches by business, possibly through adoption of CSR practices or increased transparency, may also be funded, and should include a letter confirming intended cooperation.

Saying it by settling it – it has been remarked by some informed observers that there is a gap in the Cambodian CSO skill set when it comes to negotiation. If negotiation is deemed a viable course, and advocacy has brought the other parties to the table, trained negotiators should be on the CSO side, as well as others. A project activity addressing this need would provide a detailed and relevant training program, building on Cambodia's growing capacity for Alternative Dispute Resolution, that prepares CSO lawyers and other professionals for formal and informal negotiation practice. This would include a range of practical issues such as communication with clients before and during negotiation, establishing the range of acceptable solutions, identifying the opposing side's pressure points,

approaches to the negotiation discussions, formalizing agreements so that they lend themselves to judicial acceptance and enforcement, etc. Because negotiation by Cambodian CSOs often involves issues of land rights and the valuation of such property is central to these discussions, training should include knowledge development on issues affecting property values and formulas for calculating this. Moreover, applicants proposing this activity may include a subactivity that would organize expert resources around producing improved property value data and calculation – perhaps including a data bank of property transactions, with details about the transfers that may indicate whether the associated price should be considered at, below or above fair market value. As with some other activities described here, additional deliverables would be the preparation of a handbook or manual, and the institutionalization of the training program at a law faculty or a CSO (such as the Arbitration Council Foundation).

Saying it sustainably – the UN has identified a set of 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) that address the various needs for sustainable human existence on planet Earth. The standards have detailed targets associated with them that measure impact and progress, with 2030 being the end point for their planned achievement. (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs). Cambodia has embraced the standards[1] and donor organizations, public offices and some CSOs have begun to adopt the standards/targets in program objectives and benchmarks. Cambodian CSOs (both service delivery and advocacy groups) may increase the attractiveness of their programs if they start to measure their monitoring of development conditions and delivery of services in terms of the SDG goals/targets (i.e., this may make the CSOs themselves more sustainable). An illustrative activity in this area would track the implementation of the UN's SDG goals and targets, by noting the adoption of any standard indicators or datasets that feed into targets, and by creating a clearing house for SDG reporting in Cambodia. The object of this would be to support and encourage the use of SDG-referenced monitoring and evaluation standards in measuring progress, and providing Cambodian CSOs and government officials with consistent definitions and data standards to use in describing their contributions or in monitoring. Any partner receiving funding for such an activity would be expected to collaborate closely with UNDP (and other UN agencies in Cambodia), as well as CCC, NGO Forum and other groups that are already promoting and coordinating adoption of the SDGs for CSO benchmarking in Cambodia. This activity would also include regular meetings with and mentoring for organizations seeking to align reporting to SDGs (even if as a set of indicators running parallel to previously adopted measures). An additional component might be the on-line aggregation and publication of data being reported under the SDGs by Cambodian organizations.

Saying it by "spraying it"[2] – (mural paintings that depict CSO-related themes)
At its core, this illustrative activity presents a competition for youth artists (30 and under) to design murals/wall art that express positive themes about civil society activities that support people and/or engage with government. Applying artists would submit an A2-size color sketch, to be judged by a panel that would hopefully include CSO leaders, university level art instructors and a government ministry representative. The grant recipient would need to recruit a pool of businesses that rely on public foot traffic (restaurants, bars and others) and have suitable wall space, that agree to host the art (to have a wall painted, and leave it up for at least a month. To encourage their participation, business operators might be given the right to reject particular mural designs.) The number of contest winners would be capped at the number of agreeable business operators (or at some fixed percentage – perhaps 50% – of entrants, whichever number is lower). The selected artists would be provided training at a workshop on how to scale a sketch to a wall mural and methods associated with this medium, and receive a set stipend covering the standard costs of the materials necessary to paint the wall. The activity would also include creating a Facebook page (or other on-line resource with good mapping tools) that guides the public to the different venues sponsoring the art, and how to make a tour of it. Themes of paintings could include work by health and agriculture CSOs, as well as advocacy and other groups.

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[1] And added an 18th, which relates to progress in clearing mines and UXOs from Cambodia's landscape.
[2] And by other methods of painting wall murals.

The successful applicants will have a demonstrated capacity to (i) envision intensive engagement with citizens, paying particular attention to women and youth, and targeted government institutions; (ii) make use of Cambodia's, regional, and international best practices; (iii) complement or leverage ongoing USAID activities; (iii) plan for effective use of the media, including social media, and (iv) provide sound monitoring and evaluation process.

CCSS will not review applications that include the following activities:

- Support for or lobbying on behalf of a particular political party;
- Religious activities;
- Humanitarian activities;
- Theoretical research;
- Any construction activities.

GRANT AWARDS

CCSS plans to award grants under this RfA. The grant funds may be used for activities related to support USAID objectives. After selection, an orientation session is planned for early April,, 2017 to allow for questions and clarification.

The period that grants will run is negotiable but will not exceed the term from April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2021.

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

FUNDING PRIORITIES

CCSS will give priority to applications that:

1. Are submitted by actors with a reputation for integrity, professionalism, and independence.
2. Reflect expertise in substantive experience in working with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and community people affected by issues addressed in the application;
3. Reflect good collaboration with local NGOs, CBOs, community networks, and grassroots communities;
4. Are submitted by CSOs who have worked on projects engaging youth, women, children and disadvantaged communities, including indigenous, LGBT community and other grassroots communities;
5. Are submitted by CSOs who make use of teamwork, and have formed coalitions that seek to address issues of mutual concern across communities and regions, and/or issues that are relevant on both local and national levels;
6. Include innovative uses of technology in engaging citizens, such as through SMS surveys or internet-based activities; and/or
7. Are submitted by actors who apply sound financial and administrative procedures, and a demonstrable commitment to its own organizational development.

ELIGIBILTY CRITERIA

CSOs legally registered in Cambodia are eligible to submit proposals for the Grant Program.

Applicant organizations should meet the following criteria:

- Have at least one year of operational experience. As a rule, CCSS will not provide "start-up" funding, although CCSS may make a rare exception if sufficient evidence is presented to show that the organization's leadership has adequate prior experience and the organization is capable of filling a niche that has been underserved in the past.
- Have a governance structure that ensures proper rotation of leadership and delegation of power, including at least, a Board of Directors, a Chairperson, and an Executive Director. The same individual should not hold the position of the Board Chairperson and Executive Director

unless the size of the organization precludes this separation. If the above criteria are not met, the applicant must submit a proposed reform process that will work towards meeting these standards.

- Be willing to participate in a program of organizational capacity development, including the administration of a participatory Organizational and Advocacy Capacity Assessments (OACA), and the development and implementation of a Capacity Development Plan (CDP). The OACA and CDP will be facilitated by the CCSS in close collaboration with each grant recipient.
- Have a transparent system of bookkeeping that complies with the Cambodian legislation and International Accounting Standards (IAS). If such a system is not in place, the grantee must work closely with CCSS office to ensure that accurate financial management and transparent bookkeeping systems are developed.
- Must not be a debtor and must have cancelled any debt to the state or arranged for debt collection prior to receiving the first disbursement of CCSS grant funds.
- Must operate as an independent non-politically affiliated organization.
- Must not be debarred, suspended, excluded or otherwise ineligible to receive US Federal funding.

Civil servants, political appointees, members of the current parliament, staff of public broadcasting companies, and/or leaders of political parties cannot participate in a grant project as a director or as grant-remunerated participant.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

In its proposal, the applicant shall provide the following:

Related experience. The applicant should describe its proposed activity experience.

Organization, Size, Structure, and Areas of Practice. The applicant should describe its organization, size, structure, areas of proposed activities, and office location(s).

Qualifications. The applicant should describe the qualifications of staff implementers likely to be assigned to the proposed work. Descriptions should include: a) work experience and education background of each key staff; b) overall supervision to be exercised; c) prior experience of the individual staff.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

CCSS will accept proposals only in English. *Annex A. Grant Application Form template* should be utilized when developing the application. Applications can be mailed, emailed or hand-delivered to the CCSS office in Phnom Penh using the contact information provided below in this section. Faxed applications will not be accepted.

Grant Application Form: To download the Grant Application Form, please see the RFA announcement on the following website address http://www.ewmi.org/CCSS. Alternatively, please contact CCSS Grants Director – Ms. Sin Kimsean at ksean@ewmi.org for an application form. Please reference RFA DGF-2017-002 in your request.

Clarifications: Applicants should submit clarification requests by the deadline listed in the Timeline section below via mail address #43, Rd. 208, Boeung Raing, Phnom Daun Penh to CCSS Chief of Party, Andy Boname or via email at CCSSgrants@ewmi.org. Email correspondences **must** reference RFA DGF-2017-002 in the subject line. CCSS will issue clarification to all interested organizations via email.

Information session meetings: An information session meetings for all interested applicants will be held prior to application submission deadline. Details of the information session meetings are as follows:

<div align="center">**Phnom Penh   February 24, 2017 at 9:00 am – 12:00 pm**</div>

Address: East-West Management Institute, #43, Road 208, Beung Raing, Daun Penh, Phnom Penh

Contact Person: Sin Kimsean at email: ksean@ewmi.org, Tel : 012 333 757

<div align="center">**Steung Treng   February 28, 2017 at 9:00 – 12:00 am**</div>

Address: ADHOC Office, Behind Wat Leu, Leu Village, Sras Russey Sangkat, Steung Treng Town

Contact Persons: Sin Kimsean at email: ksean@ewmi.org, Tel : 012 333 757 or Mr. Ho Sam Ol, Tel: 088 647 4168

<div align="center">**Siem Reap   March 1, 2017 at 9:00 - 12:00 am**</div>

Address: ADHOC Office, #H.273, Natiaonal Road #6A, Banteay Chas Village, Slor Kram Sangkat, Siem Reap Town

Contact Person: Sin Kimsean at email: ksean@ewmi.org, Tel : 012 333 757 or Ms. Mao Yun, Tel: 012 944 606

Proposals: Applicants should submit their application and required documents either (i) in a sealed envelope to East-West Management Institute office, Chief of Party, Andy Boname at #43, Rd. 208, Boeung Raing, Phnom Daun Penh OR via email at CCSSgrants@ewmi.org. Email correspondences must reference RFA LDF-2016-001 in the subject line.

Applications will be accepted no later than 16:30hrs/4:30pm Phnom Penh time on March 20, 17. Late or unresponsive applications will not be considered.The CCSS Project will issue a note either via email or mail to certify acknowledgement of receipt to all interested organizations.

Applicants must submit the following documents:
- Grant Application Form and Budget Form; (attachment of templates)
- A copy of the organization's Annual Report, both financial and technical (if available) or indicate an internet link where these documents can be found;

Applicants selected for awards will be subject to a pre-award risk assessment conducted by CCSS, to ascertain whether the applicant has the minimum management capabilities required to handle US Government funds. Therefore, before making the final decision, CCSS may request additional documentation such as, but not limited to:
- A copy of the organization's most recent registration document;
- Auditor's report;
- Financial statements (Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss, Cash Flow); and
- The organization's policies and financial manual.

Submitted applications must be the original and sole work of the applicant organization. Plagiarism will result in disqualification from the grant competition. CCSS will retain all materials and documents submitted by applicants. It will not use this information for purposes other than application review and will not share it with other persons or institutions, except when required by Cambodian law or requested by USAID. Please note that in line with our donor coordination efforts, we will share the names of the applicants and a short description of their respective projects with other Cambodian and international programs that support CSOs in Cambodia.

EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The selection process will be administered by a Grants Review Committee (GRC) established by CCSS for the purpose of this RfA. If an application is short-listed for potential funding, the respective applicant may be requested to provide additional information.

CCSS will assess proposals based on the following criteria, each weighted as indicated:

   I.   Proposed approach to the legal representation [total weighting of 40%]

a. *Design and Feasibility [20%]*
- The degree to which the application is responsive to the request for applications and adequately addresses CCSS's overall programmatic goals and objectives;
- The potential of the applicant to successfully and efficiently achieve the objectives outlined in the RfA;
- The extent to which the legal representation reflects the highest standards of Cambodian legal practice and introduces innovative and potentially replicable approaches;

b. *Geography [10%]:*
- Project focus is on supporting and generating public interest in CSO activities in Cambodia's regions;
- Extent to which the project proposes to engage remote or underserved communities.

c. *Collaborative Posture [10%]*
- Cooperation with CSOs, government, media, and citizens to better achieve the project goal;
- Level of collaboration with CSOs in sharing expertise and resources to implement innovative advocacy, civic engagement, and technology approaches in fulfilling project goals.

II. **Organizational, Technical and Management Capability and Past Performance (total weighting of 60%]**

a. *Level of experience of the applicants to work on this matter (30%)*

- The proposed staffs' educational background, years and quality of experience, and reputation in the legal and CSO community

b. *The applicant's experience with similar proposed work dealing with the matters (15%)*

- The number of similar beneficiaries, and the results and perceived quality of these experiences.

c. *Organizational Capability [10%]*
- The general financial strength of the applicant;
- The organizational structure and good governance practices of the applicant;

d. *Management Capacity[5%]*

The managerial capacity of the applicant to successfully work implementation on a timely basis, and to produce the targeted results. This includes an evaluation of:
- The track record and demonstrated commitment of the applicant to implement proposed activities and demonstrated ability to work well with other organizations and partners;
- The experience and expertise of the management team;
- The applicant's practices for monitoring and evaluating the work of its attorneys; and
- The applicant's legal case management system.

III. **Cost Effectiveness** *(will be reviewed for consistency and allowability but will not be an evaluation factor)*
- All proposed expenditures must be reasonable, allowable and allocable to the project.
- A Global Budget must be submitted.

TIMELINE

RfA release date	February 20, 2017
Date of orientation meeting (Phnom Penh)	February 24, 2017
Date of orientation meeting (Steung Treng province)	February 28, 2017
Date of orientation meeting (Siem Reap province)	March 1, 2017
Deadline for submitting clarification requests to CCSS	March 4, 2017
Date when CCSS will issue clarifications	March 07, 2017
DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS	**16:30, March 20, 2017**
Evaluation of proposals	March 28, 2017
Grant award notification to successful applicants	March 30, 2017
Grant agreement signing	March 31, 2017
Please note that evaluation and award dates are subject to change	

AUTHORITY/GOVERNING REGULATIONS

Awards made to Non US Organizations will adhere to guidance provided under ADS Chapter 303, "Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non –Governmental Organizations" and will be within the terms of the USAID Standard Provisions for Non-US Non-Governmental Organizations, as well as the procedures under the USAID CCSS project, "Grants Under Contract" manual. In addition, ADS 303 references the following additional regulatory documents issued by the US Government' Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and USAID:

- 2 CFR200 Subpart E, Cost Principles
- 2 CFR700 USAID's implementation of 2CFR200

CCSS is required to ensure that all organizations receiving USAID grant funds comply with the guidance found in the regulations refenced above, as applicable to the respective terms and conditions of their grant awards.

This grant program is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID.) The contents of this RfA are the sole responsibility of East-West Management Institute, Inc. and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.