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Ziviler Friedensdienst
Civil Peace Service

With Technical Support of

Welthungerhilfe/German Agro-Action

Capacity Development Program for Local and grassroots Civil Society Organizations

(CDP-Lg CSOs)

Clarification Questions¹ and Answers² (Q&A) on Call for Expression of Interest

Purpose of this document

This Question and Answer (Q&A) document is published after a call for Expression of Interest (EOI) announcement. It serves as a collection of questions and answers that allows potential sub grant applicants to refer for clarification on any aspect of the EOI requirements and other details. This helps ensure all participants understand what is expected, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

Therefore, these responses to questions are typically documented and shared with all potential applicants dated on 30 Jan. 2024 by posting to WHH website communicated during the call announcement.

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¹ The full list of questions in this document was received through a dedicated email account and mobile phone number communicated at the time of the EOI Call announcement for the public to submit questions. Additional questions were also collected from CSO and local government representatives during the national and regional call promotion workshops (5 workshops in total) organized by WHH, CoSAP and DEC prior to the EOI submission deadline.

² Individual answers to all questions were provided at the time of submission via the sender's email account and at the time of the telephone call. Explanatory answers were provided for all groups of workshop participants during the face-to-face Q&A sessions.



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A. General Questions

1. In your presentation, you have mentioned that the project has considered the current context under which the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are working. Which context have you considered specifically? Were the contexts mentioned in the presentation today (11.01.2024) by the CSO Consultant, such as geographical, financial and others considered? The current (2023) socio-political situation of the county is very complicated and characterized by a frequently changing political, economic, and social environment. The project operates under these circumstances; therefore, it takes into account all the political, social and economic situations that have shaped the structure and operation of CSOs. Furthermore, for clarification refer to the Call's Lot and Thematic Areas to relate the project's proposed intervention to the country context.
2. For example, let say, there is a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Jinka-Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR) and wants to apply in Jinka area and one other NGO based in Addis Ababa which plans to implement project in Jinka; which one is preferable based on your project objective? No preference is given to either of the CSOs. The eligible CSOs will be selected based on the defined eligible and selection criterion (geographic and thematic) in Annex II of the EOI application. And selection of the Expression of Interest (EOI) will all depend on the objectives and relevance of the activities of proposal's alignment with the program objectives. You can clearly find criterions to encourage local and grassroots CSO.
3. In the guidelines for call for EOI, it is mentioned that CSOs should consider their capacity while applying for a call. Do you have the plan to assess their capacity to avoid or minimize possible risks in the future? The EOI guidelines and the EOI application form encouraged potential applicants to self-identify and categories their organizational type/level according to the CSO eligibility criterion, which is well explained in terms of organizational capacity elements. However, this self-identification will only be used for the purpose of forming CSO thematic groups and not for the purpose of CSO capacity building interventions. The program will carry out an independent due diligence assessment in order to avoid high potential risks.
4. The number of eligible CSOs is 70 for the 4 project geographical areas. Is there a quota for each project geographical area? Yes, each eligible geographic regions have a pre-set quota for sub grant. Section 2 of Annex II guideline of the EOI application clearly stated this information.
5. As the name of the project (Capacity Development Program for Local and Grassroots CSOs) implies, are CSOs with internal organizational systems strengthening project ideas acceptable to the program? We believe that CSOs might come with specific internal organization system strengthening while implementing project with the call's objective. The acceptance of such projects will depend on the objective assessment criteria stated under Annex II of the EOI application guideline.



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6. Can you confirm the EOI submission deadline? The due date for the submission of the EOI is 12. February 2024 before 18:00 hours.
7. How many of the CSOs in the pool will receive a grant? With the current agreed plan 54 out of 70 will receive 99 grants.
8. When will a Q&A document be published and made available to potential applicants? The tentative schedule communicated in the Call's announcement is Jan. 22, 2024, considering the other channels of call and project announcement will be finalized by then. However, this schedule is subject to completing the other call promotion channels. The Q&A document will be shared with CSO which has been sent their question and made available WHH's and Partners website.
9. We welcome the establishment of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). Who are the members of the PAC? Is FDRE Authority of Civil Society Organizations (ACSO) part of the interim PAC? The project established an interim PAC committee with a total of 8 members i.e. 2 representatives from the target regions government and CSO sector, ACSO, Ethiopian Civil Society Organizations Council (ECSOC), 3 CSO network representatives, and WHH.
10. Would you give preferential treatment or additional sub-grant support to CSOs applying for geographically hard-to-reach communities, compared to CSOs applying for projects to be implemented where facilities and infrastructure exist? No, this project does not have any preferential or additional support provisions for CSOs working in geographically remote areas. This is an open call, and all treatment will be based on the Financial Support to Third Party (FSTP) core principles of excellence, transparency, impartiality, and equal treatment of all applicants.
11. The call for EOI encouraged women-led organizations, women's rights organizations, organizations for people with disabilities and marginalized groups. What is the advantage of CSOs in the above categories? These type of CSOs encouraged to apply for EOI will all necessary requirements. The treatment will be an administrative issue during the EOI assessment stage.

B. Questions on Eligibility Criteria

12. Would you tell the difference b/n smaller and emerging CSOs, and Less mature CSOs? Smaller and emerging CSOs and less mature CSOs are eligible target groups for CDP-Lg CSOs, which have different characteristics based on legal status, financial management/income capacity, human capital, years of operational experience and plan/strategy development. For a detailed reference, please refer to Annex II Guidelines for the EOI Application Document, Section 12.1. Operational definition of eligible CSOs.
13. The guidelines state that in order to apply for this call for expressions of interest, small and emerging civil society organizations need demonstrated experience in managing grants of up to EUR 10,000 in the last 3 years. But in the application template, it says



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that experience in managing grants and explaining potential or Top Organization donors/funders/ in the last three years is not applicable for new CSOs. So, how do new CSOs or CSOs who have not an experience in managing grants apply or eligible in this call for EOI? **Yes, your question is correct. However, in the same document that refers to the type of eligible CSOs - section 12.1 - further clarification is provided by indicating the financial amount required by putting in a range indicating 0 to 1 million ETB for small and emerging CSO applicants. We encourage you to read section 12.1 Operational definition of eligible CSOs, section of Annex II of the EOI Application Guide.**

14. Is the project period five years or one year and one year and four months? Is this the planning period for the five years project? **Dear applicant, the duration of your project depends on the thematic area you are applying for. The minimum project duration is 12 months and the maximum 18 months. A period of 5 years is not specified for the EOI. For the appropriate proposed project duration, please refer to the title "Project Duration" under section 4 of the EOI Application Guidelines (Annex II).**
15. Is it possible to apply in two separate locations (example Shashemene and Holeta both locations in one region) with one thematic area? **Refer to section 7.2, bullet 3 of the EOI Application Guidelines (Annex II) and decide based on your organizational capacity and interest.**
16. Is it possible if mature CSOs apply to the thematic areas provided to small and emerging CSO's? **Appropriate information is provided in section 4 of the EOI Application Guidelines (Annex II). Please refer to the heading "Eligible CSO groups" in the thematic tables for your decision.**
17. Is there an operational definition for these terms? Target stakeholders and beneficiaries and Target Audience/ Key stakeholders. **The EOI Guide does not provide definitions for target stakeholders and beneficiaries and target audience/key stakeholders. We don't have the capacity to help you with this. This should be at your discretion.**
18. There are 41 CSOs under our consortium currently, and most of them are emerging CSO. In the expression of interest, there is a term indicating organizations implementing a project for the previous 3 years with ETH 1,000,000. Do you think this emerging and less mature CSOs can cope up with this requirement. **The program welcomes all CSOs to apply as long as they fulfill the minimum requirements. It is also good to note that after due evaluation the highest scorer will be awarded the grant.**
19. In my opinion, the problem, and the challenge you might face during the process might be the capacity to write a proposal descriptively. Is there a plan to provide orientation or training for the CSOs on how to write good proposals? **In all regions, incl. in Addis Ababa, orientation and question and answer sessions have been conducted to clarify the guidelines on call for expression of interest and the application template. There is no other training on how to write a proposal.**



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20. In the documents you have shared with us, there are terminologies, including, “mature CSOs, less mature CSO etc.”. Is there a working definition for the above terminologies? [Operational definition for eligible CSOs is given in pages 15-16 of Guidelines for Expression of Interest \(EOI\) Application. Please refer the guidelines.](#)
21. Is there room for the CSOs to apply twice or for a double grant? A room to send two expressions of interest? [Yes, it is possible to apply for two thematic areas in the same region in different woredas and Kebeles. Hence, two EOI have to be submitted. Please note that the financial allocation can't be above the thematic area and in total above Euro 50,000.](#)
22. Based on the current context, most of the CSOs are new with very limited experience and exposure to financial and project management. How are you planning to balance this issue? [Annex II- Guidelines for the EOI Application clearly explain the eligibility and selection criteria for emerging CSOs. In addition, Annex-III of the EOI Application Template clearly indicates what is applicable and what is not applicable for emerging/newly established CSOs. Therefore, we advise you to carefully read the Guide and follow the instructions in the Application Template.](#)
23. You have mentioned that CSOs can engage on national advocacy level, is there a room to implement projects across regions? And do you have any advice on this regard? [No, application and implementation will have to be in specific region, woreda, and kebele. To be discussed further with Mesfin and Tiringo if it could be done at national level in Addis and in the regions.](#)
24. On the presentation of the workshop session, you have mentioned as you will incorporate CBOs and networks who are not registered. How are you going to evaluate them with the existing criteria along with the registered once? Is there any special treatment? [In this round of call for EOI, CBOs and informal networks are not invited and will not be considered to participate. They will be invited in another round of call with different criteria.](#)
25. What do you mean when we say, “grassroot”? do you mean CSOs which are registered at regional level? [Yes, registered at regional, zonal, woreda or municipal level registered and work with local community members to address the causes of local communities. We encourage you to refer pages 15-16 of Annex II. Guidelines for Expression of Interest \(EOI\) Application.](#)
26. There are CSOs which have received license from the region? How are you going to treat them in comparison to CSOs with a license at federal level? [If a CSO has physical presence and experience working in a region, zone, woreda or community, it can apply for the locality it wants to serve. Refer, Annex II, section 12.1 Eligible criterion and further working definition of the target CSOs.](#)
27. While drafting the criteria to define major terminologies, have you consulted the respective regional government stakeholders and Network of Civil Society Organizations in Oromia (NeCSOO)? [To the best of our knowledge, there is no compiled reference document on the definition and terminologies of CSOs operating](#)



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in Ethiopia, specifically for the Oromia National Regional State. We went far through numerous steps including using the new CSO proclamation and some selected policies, guidelines, referring to different literatures, creating a review reference group, key informant interview etc. to conclude and use a working definition for eligible target CSO's terminologies with their respective criterion. We also established a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) with members from each eligible regional state CSO and local government representatives. Hence, be confident that CSOs and regional government stakeholders are part of the processes.

28. What does it mean by “Messo and Macro level” for the CSOs to provide their expression of interest? **Micro** means at grassroot, community or kebele level; **Messo** means at medium, municipality or woreda level and **macro** level means at higher level implying zonal regional or national/ federal level. Please, refer Project Location under Section 4 of Annex II of the Guideline for EOI.
29. For small and emerging, there is statement which includes with a budget of (0 to 1000,000). Do you think this is practical for the small and emerging CSOs? **Yes, even though a CSO may not have undertaken projects financed by donor or with financial spending, activities done by volunteers could be accounted in financial terms and reported as accomplished.**
30. You have also mentioned that the objective of the projects for the CSO should be in line with the program’s objective. How can program and project objective be similar? **All thematic areas are crafted in line with the program objectives. So, when crafting objectives of your application for EOI, you must align it to the program objectives and with the seven thematic areas.**
31. Are private social enterprises and chambers of commerce eligible to apply for the grant? **Annex II Guideline for EOI application section 12.1 clearly listed the eligible CSOs for the application of EOI.**
32. Are government sector offices eligible for the sub grant award? **No, definitely not. Please refer Annex II Guideline for EOI application section 12.1**
33. Is it possible to apply for all the eligible geographical areas with a single proposal/EOI? **Annex II, Section 7.2 rule of the call stated that each organization is expected to submit applications for interventions in only one geographic region. Applications from a single CSO for multiple regions will be considered ineligible.**
34. Registered CSO networks, consortia and coalitions have significantly played their role of capacity building and support to their member CSOs. Is it possible for local CSO networks to apply for CSO capacity building and financial support project activities for their members? **All capacity building initiatives under the indicated thematic area are eligible, however, an intermediary role is not allowed as the applicant is directly responsible for the preparation, management, and implementation of the action.**



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C. Questions on Lots and thematic areas (including indicative activities), as well as eligible geographic area.

35. Can an organization apply for two different thematic areas in the same region for different target groups simultaneously. Example for, Economic empowerment & rights of marginalized groups; and Social & political inclusion and rights of marginalized groups. Applicants can submit two different applications from two different thematic areas in the same region as per the CSO eligible group indicated under Section 4 of Annex II. Guideline for the EOI application.
36. While reading the call for EOI we encountered some issues that demand your answers. Our question is when we work on activities based on thematic areas do we have to incorporate all the indicative project activities listed under Annex II Guideline EOI or do we have the right to choose one indicative activity and develop our specific activities on that? The indicative activities are not exhaustive, so you can decide which activity to choose based on your organization's experience and objective.
37. First of all, I want to thank you for your valuable understanding for our vulnerable community current situation. My question is, can we apply with regional level informal associations? Application is possible for those CSOs which are registered at federal, regional, woreda or city administrative body. Applying with informal associations/ CSPs as a beneficiary is the discretion of your organization and we are not in a position to give advice in this regard.
38. Can we apply different thematic areas to the same geographical location? because one organization can apply a maximum of two thematic areas? A CSO can apply in two different thematic areas in the same region.
39. Can we apply as a consortium or as two or more partners for one project to implement together? Application in consortium is not allowed. Refer Annex II, guidelines of the EOI Application Section 7.1 which stated be directly responsible for the preparation, management, and implementation of the action, not acting as an intermediary.
40. Can consultancy companies be eligible for this tender? This call is only for non-profit CSOs and does not include consulting companies.
41. We have learnt that most of the thematic areas of the EOI call focus on advocacy work on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, but the role of media is not emphasized in the thematic areas of the call and in the indicative project activities. Can we design a project that includes a media engagement component? There are indicative activities with media and media also mentioned under the indicative activities for some thematic areas. Therefore, it is under the discretion of the applicant to take on.
42. The indicative activities listed in the EOI Call Guidelines are very specific and predefined. Do you value project ideas outside the indicative list of activities based on local initiative?



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43. Are associations allowed to apply for thematic areas 1.1 and 2.1 which is micro level thematic area implementation? Refer Annex II, Guidelines for the EOI application section 4 for deciding for which thematic area to apply.
44. Can mature CSOs apply for thematic areas designated for smaller, emerging and less mature CSOs? Refer Annex II, Guidelines for the EOI application section 4 for deciding for which thematic area to apply.

A. Questions on application template and formatting

45. Restriction on 10 pages and 2000 words for some instructions of the application template needs clarification. Do you think 10 pages is enough for the instructions to be answered? Please make your writings brief, it should not necessarily reach 2000 words, but the 10-page rules should be respected.
46. Could you list illegible overhead costs? We can produce a list of overhead costs for your project. You can only include project admin costs, so no overhead costs are allowed. Please see ineligible overhead costs listed in the guidelines.
47. Could you share with us the indicative activities mentioned in the call promotion sessions? Refer the shared Annex II Guidelines of the EOI with other EOI call packages.
48. Do you expect us to submit two separate applications for two separate projects, or can we submit a single application for both projects? The applications must be submitted separately.

D. Questions on budgetary Issues

49. The exchange rate you mentioned in the budget section of Annex III is 1 EURO= 58 Ethiopian Birr but the latest currency exchange rate is 1 Euro= 61.25 Ethiopian Birr. The calculation for costs in EOI submission must be as per the rate provided in the EOI application template. The exchange rate to be applied will be the one which prevails at the time of grant provision.
50. How should the “Operational” and “Administrative” costs be defined? This question is too technical and depends on your activity plan in the main budget headings, especially human resources, travel, equipment, and local office, etc. You must therefore decide on the basis of your activity plan.
51. Can we include costs incurred at head office for the monitoring, follow ups, back up support ... etc. under budget item #6 “Other”? Check the eligible and ineligible cost listed under Annex II Guidelines for EOI application, Section 7.3.



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52. What does the “Local office” mean? Is it only the project office, the head office or both?
'Local Office' implies only the project office.
53. How did you decide on the project ceiling? Have you conducted a market assessment to use it as a base? The maximum sub- grant size, the higher the ceiling, is determined based on the Project Implementation Contract Article 10.6 and the CSF Plus call guideline, considering the basic principle of FSTP and the maximum amount allocated by the donor for FSTP support. In addition, the coordinator decided on the minimum ceiling based on the practical experience of similar small grant civil society support initiatives currently working in Ethiopia.
54. The budget allocated for one specific project is already limited given the nature of the projects implemented (50,000 Euro). Based on this do you think the project will be cost effective and cost efficient? For project duration of 12-18 months, we believe projects will be cost effective and efficient.
55. Overhead cost is ineligible for the CSOs which do not have other source of funding or budget; how do you think the project will be implemented effectively? All relevant costs associated with project implementation are eligible. However, those costs listed as ineligible, including overhead costs are not eligible.
56. It was mentioned that there will be much effort to enhance the capacity of the less mature and emerging CSOs and most of the activities may take time? How are you going to balance this challenge? For the allocated grant and time ranging between 12-18 months, we believe the time is sufficient.
57. Given the context of the call, there will be CSOs, which will implement projects at national level, in the central areas with good infrastructure and accessibility. On the other hand, there will be CSOs implementing projects in hard-to-reach areas, is there an incentive or means to treat them considering this challenge? The question is quite reasonable to consider the hardest to reach areas. However, this program does not give special consideration for geographic and other barriers to project programming and implementation.
58. The total indicative FSTP amount for the project is EUR 3,270,000.00. And the funding distribution for 70CSOs for 5 years project period is small. In monitoring the work of CSOs, the local government sector offices found that the capacity gap in the operation of grassroots CSOs is very large. In spite of this, the project's subgrant size is very small. Is there a chance of increasing the maximum sub- grant size once the CSO becomes a pool member? At this point of the project phase, we can't give a guarantee for the possibility of increasing the maximum sub grant size. Hence, there is no possibility of increasing at this stage of the project.