

Request for Applications- S-RFA-NIA-14-CA-002

The United States Embassy in Niger is looking for qualified organization that will contribute to the U.S. Mission's efforts in promoting gender equality in a way that builds synergies; reinforces local initiatives, resources, and expertise; and produces measurable results that contribute to the strategic objectives of the United States mission and partnerships in Niger.

Source of Funding : U.S Embassy Niamey, Niger

Project Title: Niger Integrated Gender Equality Promotion and Local Solutions Project

Request for Applications number: S-RFA-NIA-14-CA-002

Estimated Total Funding: \$313,731 USD

Estimated Project Start Date: Sept 30, 2014

Estimated length of Project: 24 months

Eligible Applicants: International non-profit/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with operations in Niger and Nigerienne Local [NGOs](#).

DUNS Number: Prospective applicants must have a valid Dun and Bradstreet (DUNS) number as well as a current Central Contractor Registration (www.sam.gov) – this registration process can take weeks

Funding Instrument: Cooperative Agreement

Important: Email Subject line should read: "Niger Integrated Gender Equality"

How to Apply: Interested parties may send applications to the American Embassy Niamey or via e-mail to Niameygrants@state.gov **No later** than 1:00pm Friday August 22, 2014.

Attention: Mireille Gbetholancy-Kun, Grants Unit Manager/Gender Focal Point

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CONTEXT

Niger ranks among the countries with the lowest gender equality ratios in the world. Most Nigerien girls are married by the age of 18 and the literacy rate of girls and women in Niger is under 15% while the fertility rate is the highest anywhere at an average of over 7 children born per woman (2013 estimate). In addition, gender dynamics in Niger are complex and vary across regions and ethnicities, and have an important impact on larger social, political, and economic dynamics locally and nationally. Studies show that in order to succeed, efforts to promote broad-based development, peace and security must take into account nuanced understanding of gender relations and that the empowerment of women and girls – half of the population – is a critical element of these efforts.

Currently, there are many initiatives working across Niger both at the national and local level to promote female empowerment and constructive gender relations. Given the momentum of these efforts and the work the U.S. Embassy in Niger is already doing to support gender equality in many different ways, there is a window of opportunity to better connect gender equality promotion across sectors and to boost the impact of existing actions by better capitalizing on local resource people and organizations and creating stronger synergies across initiatives.

SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT: Piloting of an Effectiveness-Strengthening Small Grants & Local Solutions Program

To take advantage of this window of opportunity, the U.S. Embassy in Niger is embarking on a project to strengthen and better coordinate actions across the U.S. mission in Niger to have greater positive impact on gender equality in the country, enhancing and integrating work across agencies and sectors at post and better connecting US government efforts to local and international efforts in Niger. The overall goal of this project is to promote gender equality in a way that builds synergies; reinforces local initiatives, resources, and expertise; and produces measurable results that contribute to the strategic objectives of the United States mission and partnerships in Niger. These strategic objectives focus on assisting Nigeriens in boosting sustainable development and socio-economic opportunities, strengthening democracy and governance, and countering regional threats to security.

As a key part of this effort, the U.S. Embassy intends to support the piloting of a cross-sectoral small grants program to test the approach of providing assistance that leverages local expertise and resources to strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of local actors, organizations, associations, businesses, and government entities already working to promote gender equality and empowerment in Niger. This could include tapping into resources of local women

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entrepreneurs/leaders that have already demonstrated positive individual initiatives and can serve as role models for young women.

In order to successfully implement this pilot program, the U.S. Embassy in Niger is seeking a partnership with an organization to lead the design, management and evaluation of the small grants and local solutions elements of the integrated gender equality promotion project. The grants allocated via this activity can span the domains of economic participation, political and civic participation, women's role in conflict mitigation, and community development generally, but all grantmaking should be under a common approach of funding local or regional service providers and NGOs to help smaller NGOs, community-based organizations, or local government units do what they do better.

The organization selected to manage the small grants and local solutions project is encouraged to use an approach of inviting local or regional service providers to submit proposals for how they will help achieve this objective, such as by providing technical/programmatic assistance and/or organizational development assistance (how to better mobilize funds, use these funds more effectively, create strategic partnerships, link into helpful networks, etc.). Illustrative examples of potential grants: a grant to an activity encouraging women's economic participation via public-private partnerships with women leaders in the banking industry to enhance the work of micro-credit lenders through on-going mentorship of women entrepreneurs; a grant to a local consulting firm to assist local gender committees in conflict-prone zones with their communication strategies for reducing gender-based violence. Cross-sectorial approaches should be prioritized.

Regardless of the exact approach taken for grant selection, the final choice of grants will need to be put to a jury of evaluators to include at minimum the selected organization implementing this grant program, the U.S. Embassy/Department of State, USAID, and a representative of the Ministry of Women's Promotion.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

All proposals must:

- Be no more than nine (9) pages, using 12 point font or larger
- Contain all sections and subsections according to the outline presented below

I. **Cover Page (does not count towards 9 page limit)**

- US Embassy Niamey, Niger RFA # S-RFA-NIA-14-CA-002
Name and address of organization
- DUNS number Organizations can request a DUNS number at
- <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> (takes several weeks)
- Type of organization (Non-Profit, , international organization, etc)
- Contact person (lead contact name; telephone number, fax and e-mail information)

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- Name(s) and title(s) of the principal author(s) of the proposal
- Total dollar amount of funds requested for the project period;
- Signature, name and title of the authorized representative of the applicant.

II. Project Description

a. Situational analysis (1 page maximum)

Brief background analysis on key gender considerations for development, security, and democratic governance in Niger; the landscape of organizations working on gender issues in Niger; how these organizations can be strengthened and work more effectively; and what more can be done to achieve gender equality and integration of effective gender sensitive approaches to governmental and non-governmental initiatives in Niger.

b. Approach to achieving the general goals set out in the RFP (1 pages maximum)

A more detailed delineation of project objectives and expected results, and description of how the applicant proposes to achieve these. Description should also include proposed approaches for communication and coordination with the U.S. Embassy, Niamey (including its different sections and agencies).

c. Illustrative grants/supported activities (1 page maximum)

Examples of potential activities with an emphasis on activities to strengthen the work of existing organizations and initiatives.

d. Monitoring and evaluation (1 page maximum)

Brief plan of how the Applicant would measure the stated objectives and expected results. This will include a list of targets and results anticipated for key performance indicators, along with a list of those indicators and how the objectives and results would be measured. The recipient will be responsible for monitoring and reporting during and after the project, and the embassy and Grants Officer will regularly monitor the project's performance to assess whether project activities are on track and targets are being achieved

e. Timeline (1 page maximum)

Estimated proposed timeline/work plan of project start-up, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, reporting, and close-out, with a maximum of one year of project period of performance.

III. Organizational Capacity and Experience (1 pages maximum)

- Concise description of the Applicant's organizational capacity and relevant experience, particularly related to grant management, and organizational capacity strengthening

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- Summary of qualifications and experience of proposed staff who would be critical for the successful implementation of the project
- Summary (objectives, amount of funding, activities, results) of any previous projects in Niger supported by the U.S. State Department, USAID, and/or any other international partner
- Summary argument justifying why the Applicant is the appropriate entity to lead this initiative

IV. Cost Proposal

a. Detailed Budget (2 page maximum)

Delineation in the attached excel spreadsheet format table format of projected costs, including:

- Direct program costs (salaries for grant manager and other project staff according to time spent directly on this project; and other costs directly attributable to this project including workshops, travel, communications, report preparation, etc.)
- Any cost share that the organization is able to provide, from other non US government sources.
- If Indirect Costs are requested, the organization must have an established Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

b. Budget Narrative/Notes (1 page maximum)

Explanation of items and estimated costs presented in the proposed detailed budget

V. Other Required Documents:

1. Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424a, and SF424b (attached)
2. Your organization's most recent financial audit.
3. A completed Financial Management Survey (attached)

VI. Other Optional Attachments (no page limit, but please be concise)

- o Applicant's organizational chart
- o Previous work product or project summaries for initiatives related to fiscal transparency, network facilitation, and/or organizational capacity strengthening

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APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

An evaluation committee, using the criteria shown in this Section, will evaluate the proposals, based on the weighted scores below.

The relative importance of each criterion is indicated by the number of points assigned. A total of 100 points is possible.

Quality of Program Idea Rating (Total Possible 25) :

Does the proposal fit the requirements of the RFA? Is it appropriate in the country/regional context? Is it original, substantive, and feasible, without duplicating similar projects?

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives Rating (Total Possible 25)

Is it clear how activities contribute to the overall goal? Are activities well-thought out? Is there a work plan? Are objectives clear, specific, attainable, measurable? Does it describe roles and who will do what?

Cost Effectiveness/Cost Sharing (Total Possible 15)

Are all budget items necessary, appropriate and linked to program objectives? Are personnel costs reasonable for the work involved? Optional: The proposal offers meaningful cost-sharing (over and above?)

Program Monitoring and Evaluation (Total Possible 15)

Is it clear what the objectives, targets, and indicators are? Is there a strong monitoring plan?

Sustainability of Impact (Total Possible 10)

Will impact be sustainable beyond the life of the grant?

Institution's Record and Capacity Rating (Total Possible 10)

Does the applicant have a record of successful programs? Does primary staff have relevant professional experience? Does the applicant have the capacity to manage US government funds responsibly?

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL APPLICATIONS BY 1:00 PM Friday, AUGUST 22, 2014