

**Request for Concept Papers**  
**Expanding Participation of People with Disabilities**

**1. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

USAID/Sierra Leone is seeking applications for Concept Papers in support of increasing participation of people with disabilities (PWDs) and strengthening the capacities of disabled people's organizations (DPOs) in USAID activities. All awards (Grants or Cooperative Agreements) under this request for concept papers will not exceed \$300,000 and such award will be administered through USAID/Sierra Leone. Applications must be submitted in English and use of the *attached application form* is mandatory.

Funding for this activity will be sourced through the Office of Democracy and Governance in the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance. Funds should be used to support projects and programs that will increase the participation of people with disabilities in line with the programs and strategies of USAID/Sierra Leone.

Program areas to be considered include Education, Health, Governance, Civil Society Building, HIV/AIDS, Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Employment Opportunities. Capacity building programs for DPOs may include organizational capacity, advocacy efforts, coordination, and leadership.

Concept papers will be considered for multiple awards worth between \$20,000 to \$300,000. Any requests over \$300,000 for the total project period will not be reviewed. Concept papers will be considered for "one time grants", with no expectations for follow-on funding. Implementation period should not exceed three years.

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. Awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with (1) 22 C.F.R. 226, (2) OMB Circulars and (3) the USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients. Awards to non-U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with USAID Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Recipients.

**2. BACKGROUND**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 10% of any population has some form of disability with a higher incidence of disability in countries that are post conflict. Therefore, it is estimated that 600 million people throughout the world have a disability and 400 million of those are living within developing nations.

People with disabilities have been marginalized from traditional development activities due to discrimination or inadvertent barriers, which have limited their access to health care services, education, employment, and civil society integration.

Previously, emphasis was put on developing separate programs for persons with disability rather than integrating them into existing development activities. Although it may be necessary at times to develop separate programs designed to address some specific needs of people with disabilities, it is also extremely important to find innovative ways to include people with disabilities in general development cooperation to ensure access to and benefit from a wider variety of services.

In September 1997, USAID adopted a policy that advanced a clear vision and framework for the Agency's efforts in the area of disability. The policy states that USAID will not discriminate against people with disabilities and will work to ensure the inclusion of people with disabilities in USAID-funded programs and activities. The policy also calls on USAID 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.

### **3. AREAS OF INTEREST**

The two main objectives are to increase participation of people with disabilities in current USAID programs and strengthen the capacity of disabled people's organizations (DPOs).

Ideally, activities should compliment Mission/Washington Operating Unit's strategic objectives.

The lists provided under each heading are only illustrative - other innovative ideas are welcome.

#### **i. Increase participation of people with disabilities in current USAID programs.**

Examples:

- i. Promote participation of people with disabilities in the democratic process and elections.
- ii. Promote inclusion of participation of people with disabilities in HIV/AIDS awareness raising and education programs.
- iii. Foster inclusion of children with disabilities in education programs.
- iv. Increase employment and economic opportunities for people with disabilities.
- v. Build capacity of humanitarian relief workers and first responders to better incorporate the needs of people with disabilities in all disaster relief planning.
- vi. Improve laws and policies within country that better reflect the inclusion of people with disabilities.

**ii. Strengthen the capacity of Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs).**

Examples:

- i. Improving the organizational capacity, financial management, human/material resources, strategic planning, fundraising, leadership and coordination of DPOs.
- ii. Building advocacy skills of DPOs to increase the inclusion of people with disabilities in programs funded by USAID, host government and other donors.

**4. CONCEPT PAPER SELECTION PROCESS**

- i. USAID/Sierra Leone solicits and reviews concept papers.
- ii. USAID/Sierra Leone sends short-listed concept paper(s) to Washington.
- iii. Washington selects and recommends concept papers for funding.
- iv. Final negotiations, awards and management will be the responsibility of USAID/Sierra Leone.

**IMPORTANT: Concept papers that are considered non-responsive to the terms and conditions of this announcement will not be reviewed. The standard application form must be used and applicants must respect the eight-page limit.**

**5. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The concept papers will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

**I. INFORMATION ABOUT THE APPLICANT (20 points)**

To receive a full score of 20 points the organization will have:

1. Extensive involvement in disability issues or be registered as a Disabled People's Organization.
2. Previous experience in project management or managing activities related to those proposed in the concept paper.
3. A mission, objectives and orientation that is in line with proposed activities.

## **II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION [60 points]**

To receive a full score of 60 points the project must:

1. Show a clear link between the described need and the proposed activities.
2. Describe the impact on existing USAID programs, activities or strategies.
3. Define who will benefit from the project (able-bodied, persons with disability, sex).
4. Provide an activity schedule that is well-defined and realistic.
5. Indicate what indicators (beyond the core indicators under IIP 3.3.2) will be used to show that the project was a success.

## **III. INTEGRATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (20 points)**

To receive a full score of 20 points the organization will:

1. Show evidence of linkages with existing disability programs or organizations.
2. Illustrate how people with disabilities have been/will be involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of the program.
3. Ensure that women with disability will participate in and benefit from proposed activities.