Issue date: February 15, 2018
Reference: RfA # CEP-PG-02
Subject: Clarifications regarding RFA # CEP-PG-02

Question 1: Can a CSO appear in more than one CSO alliance/network that plan to apply on this call? Can a CSO assume the role of a lead CSO applicant and apply as such on behalf of different CSO alliances/networks?

Answer 1: It is eligible for a CSO to be listed as one of the CSO alliance members of more than one CSO alliance that plan to apply under this RfA. In addition, CEP will not restrict the number of applications of CSOs in the role of a lead CSO applicant/organization of different CSO alliances. However, please note that CEP will not accept or review applications submitted by:
- Lead CSO applicants/organizations that are currently implementing CEPs Partnership Grants;
- Current recipients of CEPs Strategic Support Grants in the role of a lead CSO applicant/organization.

Question 2: Is there a restriction that one CSO (as a registered alliance) cannot participate under this RfA with more than one application, i.e. in the role of a lead CSO applicant/organization as well as in the role of a CSO alliance member (partner CSOs)?

Answer 2: Please see answer 1 from the above.

Question 3: Does the area of intervention of non-registered CSO alliances need to be on one subject area for at least 3 years, or it is required for the CSO alliance to be active in more subject areas in the period of 3 years?

Answer 3: Please refer to Eligibility Criteria: (iii) Be registered for at least three years (if registered as an CSO alliance) <u>or have joint activities for at least the past three years (if not registered</u>**) in the priority areas of this RFA**. Hence, it is not required to have joint activities in more than one subject area under this RFA. In the case of non-registered CSO alliance please also refer to eligibility criteria (iv) Provide **relevant proof** for the existence of the CSO alliance that could include: reports on joint initiatives by CSO alliance members submitted to respective donors; correspondence with donors or/and public institutions related to the CSO alliance's joint initiatives; minutes, list of participants, and pictures of the CSO Alliance's meetings, etc.

Question 4: Can we be part of an alliance with the Regional Planning Center (in the role of a lead CSO applicant or in the role of a member of the alliance)?

Answer 4: Please see answer 1 from the above. In addition, please refer to Eligibility Criteria: (i) Be a Macedonian CSO alliance, meaning that it is managed by a governing body the simple majority of which are citizens or lawful permanent residents of Macedonia; (ii) Have at least five (5) CSO members – individual (person) members of the CSO alliances do not count for the purpose of this criterion. Please note that CSO alliance members need to be registered as non-for profit CSOs in Macedonia.

Question 5: In order to be an appropriate partner to the applicant, is the partner (organization) required to be registered for at least one year?

Answer 5: Please refer to Eligibility Criteria: (iii) Be registered for at least three years (if registered as an CSO alliance) or have joint activities for at least the past three years (if not registered) in the priority areas of this RFA. In the case of non-registered CSO alliance please also refer to eligibility criteria (iv) Provide **relevant proof** for the existence of the CSO alliance that could include: reports on joint initiatives by CSO alliance members submitted to respective donors; correspondence with donors or/and public institutions related to the CSO alliance's joint initiatives; minutes, list of participants, and pictures of the CSO Alliance's meetings, etc.

Question 6: Is the period for working with the successful applicants to conduct OACA and Net Mapping, and develop and/or update their SP and CDP (from May 2018 to October 2018) included in the 30 to 36 months of the proposed project duration?

Answer 6: The planned project activities and provided capacity development assistance (CDA) will be carried in parallel, meaning the period of conducting the CDA will be within the project duration (in between the 30 and 36 months) as described in the Capacity Development Assistance part of the RFA:

- Upon signing the grant agreement, CEP will provide CDA to the winning applicants. At the beginning, CEP will conduct capacity assessment of the CSO alliance using two tools: Organizational and Advocacy Capacity Assessment (OACA) and Net-Map Analysis.
- Building upon the awarded proposal and the results of OACA and Net-Map, within two months following the assessments, CEP will assist the CSO alliance to develop (or update when this plan exists) their Strategic Plan (SP), Capacity Development Plan (CDP), and Annual Work Plan (AWP).

Question 7: Our CSO alliance has signed the Memorandum of Understanding for the purpose of the project. However, the collaboration between the five CSOs exists for more than three years and we have documents as proof for this collaboration. Is it mandatory for the CSO alliance to exist with a signed Memorandum of Understanding for other purposes other than this project?

Answer 7: Please see answer 5 from the above. In addition please refer to Eligibility Criteria: (v) Applicable only for non-registered CSO alliances - Provide a Memorandum of Understanding signed by all CSO members of the CSO alliance. In cases of non-registered CSO alliances, CEP will award the grant to one (lead applicant) CSO that is a member of the respective CSO alliance, based on a Memorandum of Understanding that is signed by all the respective CSO alliance members prior to the grant award. Hence, it is not required to have a signed MoU for any other purpose except for this project.

Question 8: Our CSO is an organization with collective and individual membership. Collective members may be CSOs with compatible statutes. Currently, there are 17 CSOs that are collective members. We plan to submit an application with 4 CSOs that are part of the organization, together with another CSOs which is not part of the organization, but with which we have collaborated for more than 3 years in the priority areas of the RFA. Does this satisfy the eligibility criteria of the RFA?

Answer 8: Please refer to Eligibility Criteria section in the RfA:

CSO alliances legally registered and non-registered CSO alliances operating in Macedonia are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RfA. In cases of non-registered CSO alliances, CEP will award the grant to one (lead applicant) CSO that is a member of the respective CSO alliance, based on a Memorandum of Understanding that is signed by all the respective CSO alliance members prior to the grant award. In addition please refer to Eligibility criteria: (ii) Have **at least five (5) CSO members** – individual (person) members of the CSO alliances do not count for the purpose of this criterion; (iii) Be registered for at least **three years** (if registered as an CSO alliance) or have joint activities for at least the past three years (if not registered) in the priority areas of this RFA; (iv) *Applicable only for non-registered CSO alliances* - Provide **relevant proof** for the existence of the CSO alliance, that could include: reports on joint initiatives by CSO alliance members submitted to respective donors; correspondence with donors or/and public institutions related to the CSO alliance's joint initiatives; minutes, list of participants, and pictures of the CSO Alliance's meetings, etc.; (v) *Applicable only for non-registered CSO alliances* - Provide a **Memorandum of Understanding** signed by all CSO members of the CSO alliance.

Question 9: Should all organizations have at least three years of experience?

Answer 9: Please see answer 5 from the above.

Question 10: Is the leading CSO managing the finances?

Answer 10: Please refer to the first two paragraphs of the Eligibility Criteria section in the RfA:

CSO alliances legally registered and non-registered CSO alliances operating in Macedonia are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RfA. In cases of non-registered CSO alliances, CEP will award the grant to one (lead applicant) CSO that is a member of the respective CSO alliance, based on a Memorandum of Understanding that is signed by all the respective CSO alliance members prior to the grant award.

The Eligibility Criteria listed in the RfA apply to the secretariat/coordinating body of the legally registered CSO alliances and the CSO alliance members that will manage the grant on behalf of the CSO alliances that are not legally registered.

Question 11: Is it obligatory for the CSOs to have a continuous cooperation in the last three years? Or with interruptions?

Answer 11: Please see answer 5 from the above.

Question 12: Should the project team be employed with gross salaries?

Answer 12: Please refer to Funding Priorities in the RFA; in particular, CEP will give priority to CSO alliances that:

- In the case of non-registered CSO alliances, **plan to engage staff from more than one CSO alliance member** in the implementation of the proposed project; and
- **Allocate relevant resources** for the needs of the CSO alliance and are willing to commit for the successful implementation of this project **at least one full-time staff member** of the CSO alliance.

In addition, please refer to Annex B – Budget Guidelines: **a. Staff Gross Salaries** - Includes direct costs for the services provided by employees with gross salaries working on the implementation of the project funded by USAIDs Civic Engagement Project (CEP). Calculations of these expenditures shall be based on employment contracts concluded between the organization/employment agency and the employee. The budget should show the names and titles of the proposed staff and indicate whether salaries are full or partial. If partial, the percentage of work time covered from the salary should be indicated. **This line item should not include consultants' fees, honoraria, temporary personnel services and all other types of services**.

Question 13: Should the CSO alliance/network register in order to be able to apply on this RfA in case it is not registered?

Answer 13: Please see answer 10 from the above.

Question 14: Can we put online links in the application?

Answer 14: Each section in the Grant Application Form has specified maximum word limits. Please stay within the limitations and try to be as concise and as clear as possible by providing all requested information. CEP Grant Review Committee members will evaluate the content of each Application Form and required submitted documents listed in the Application Submission Procedures of the RFA/Application Checklist.

Question 15: Which CSO will be implementing the grant in case of non-registered network?

Answer 15: Please see answer 10 from the above.

Question 16: Whose capacities will be evaluated in case of non-registered network?

Answer 16: Please see answer 10 from the above. In terms of Capacity Development Assistance, CEP will conduct capacity assessment of the CSO Alliance as stated in the RFA's Capacity Development Assistance section. In addition, please refer to the Application Submission Procedures; in particular, to the paragraph related to pre-award risk assessment of selected applicants for awards and additional documentation that CEP may request.

Question 17: Which CSO should submit the application in case of non-registered network?

Answer 17: Please see answer 10 from the above.

Question 18: Should the CSO alliance/network provide cost share?

Answer 18: Cost share/co-funding is not required under this RfA. However, please note under Evaluation process and Criteria, part I. Technical Approach – more specifically under e) Sustainability and Impact, that the extent to which applicants can demonstrate existing or likely co-funding from external (i.e., municipalities, private sector, community) sources or own-sources is included as one of the criteria.

Question 19: Is it a disadvantage if the CSO comes from a homogenous environment where 93% are of Macedonian ethnicity?

Answer 19: Please refer to Funding Priorities in the RFA: CEP will give priority to CSO alliances that:
- support multi-culturalism and inter-ethnic cooperation and take progressive stances vis-à-vis gender equality and social inclusion.

In addition, please refer to descriptions provided under Evaluation process and Criteria, part I. Technical Approach – more specifically in b) Geography and in c) Beneficiaries.

Question 20: Is it a disadvantage if the CSOs have working experience in one area and are now planning on working in a different one under this RfA??

Answer 20: Please see answer 5 from the above.

Question 21: Should the CSO partners of the alliance/network be from the same region?

Answer 21: Please see answer 19 from the above.

Question 22: Will this project support activities that are international?

Answer 22: CSO alliances legally registered and non-registered CSO alliances operating in Macedonia are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RfA. CEP is a program that works to strengthen constructive engagement by CSOs on policies and issues of public concern and increase and sustain youth engagement **in public life in Macedonia**. All of the activities should be based in Macedonia. In addition, please refer to Annex B – Budget Guidelines.