



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**TAJIKISTAN**

Issue Date: 09 March 2023

Closing Date: 29 March 2023

**Subject: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for Disability-Inclusive Climate Action Activity**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is seeking concept papers as the first step in a two-step procurement from qualified entities to implement a Disability-Inclusive Climate Action Activity.

**Eligibility for this award is restricted to the following:**

**Submissions of project concept papers must utilize the required application format provided in Attachment A – FY 2022 USAID Disability Funding Program Application .**

**Concept papers 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), faith- and local community-based organizations, private voluntary organizations, universities, research organizations, and professional associations.**

**Local Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) are strongly encouraged to submit project concepts. Preference will be given to qualified DPOs and/or any of the above organization types that directly collaborate with and/or award sub-grants to DPOs while meeting the requirements for funding.**

**In their submissions to Missions, mainstream (non-DPO) organizations must include letter(s) of signed support from local DPOs they wish to partner with for the purpose of the project. Such letters should demonstrate significant involvement of the DPO(s) in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project.**

**PIOs are not eligible to apply for funding under this program.**

USAID may request full applications from the applicant(s) who best meet(s) the objectives of this funding opportunity based on the **Review Criteria** described in this notice. Eligible parties interested in submitting a concept paper are encouraged to read this request thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, concept paper submission requirements and selection process.

To be eligible for award, the applicant must provide all information as required in this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and meet eligibility standards as above and in section C. This funding opportunity is posted on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the NOFO has been received from the internet in its entirety. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion process.

Please send any questions to the point(s) of contact identified in Section D. Responses to applicable questions received prior to the deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice posted to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government nor does it commit the Government to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of comments/suggestions or a concept paper. Concept papers are submitted at the risk of the applicant.

All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Thank you for your interest in USAID programs.

Sincerely,

Eyole Luma  
Agreement Officer

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Page</b>
Section A – Program Description	4
Section B – Federal Award Information	8
Section C – Eligibility Information	9
Section D – Concept Paper Submission Information	10
Section E – Concept Paper Review Information	12

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment\_A\_-\_FY\_2022\_USAID\_Disability\_Funding\_Program\_Application.doc

## **SECTION A – PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

USAID invites interested organizations to apply for Disability Funding to support programming in Disability-Inclusive Climate Action (DCA). The Concept Papers in English should be submitted by email to the Point of Contact as per Section D - Concept Paper Submission Information.

Proposed projects may be stand-alone, targeted programs, or they can be mainstreamed within larger activities. Within the DCA theme, projects should reflect the most pressing needs in Tajikistan and align with the Mission's development priorities. As part of USAID's commitment to advance Global Action for Climate Equity and USAID's Global Disability Summit commitments, USAID seeks concepts that will support persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in taking climate action to respond to climate change, bolstering their resilience to the effects of climate change, and situating them to contribute to climate action as positive agents of change and sources of solutions. Proposals should be guided by the provisions set forth in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Projects that highlight and incorporate strategies to address the needs of persons with disabilities within marginalized or underrepresented groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQI+ people, women and girls, and youth are encouraged. All programs, regardless of implementing partner, must verify significant involvement of persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities, in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project. Additionally, projects should demonstrate participation and involvement of Disabled Persons' Organizations. All awards (e.g., grants or cooperative agreements) under this request for concept papers will be administered through and managed by the USAID/Tajikistan Mission.

### **I. Background**

Approximately 15% of any population constitutes persons with disabilities, with a higher incidence in countries that are post conflict or affected by natural disasters. The prevalence of disability is expected to rise in coming years due to an aging global population and an increase in chronic health conditions, including chronic health conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the estimated 1 billion persons with disabilities throughout the world, 80% live in lower and middle income countries. Persons with disabilities are more likely to experience poverty. Women and girls with disabilities often experience heightened discrimination on the basis of their gender and disability.

Due to stigma, discrimination and inaccessibility, persons with disabilities are less likely to be able to access basic services related to education, employment, and healthcare, amongst others. The lack of access to vital services and programs contributes to their marginalization and exclusion, perpetuating a cycle of poverty. Societies that are inclusive of their diverse populations are more likely to be democratic, participatory, and equitable. They are more likely to meet their development goals, and disability-inclusive development is an important tool in supporting USAID's overall commitment to development that is locally led and inclusive of marginalized and underrepresented populations. In spite of this, and although disability is a cross-cutting development issue, persons with disabilities often remain underrepresented in the global development agenda. In July 2009, the United States signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), affirming its commitment to the human rights of persons with disabilities around the world. To date, most of the countries in which USAID operates are parties to the CRPD, signaling a global movement towards the full realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and their role in the international development community. USAID's Disability Policy states that USAID will not discriminate against persons with disabilities, and will work to ensure the inclusion and active participation of persons with disabilities in USAID-funded programs and activities. To this end, USAID has mainstreamed disability in many of its key policies and sector strategies. The Policy also calls on 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. Increasingly, Missions are including disability in their Country Development Cooperation Strategies and other foundational documents. A deliberate human rights lens should be applied across USAID's portfolio to ensure that the Agency is not inadvertently contributing to marginalization or inequality. By using a human rights lens, potential

beneficiaries who are most at risk of having their rights neglected or abused—such as persons with disabilities—will be better recognized and included in programming.

## **II. Theme: Disability-Inclusive Climate Action (DCA)**

With 80% of the world’s one billion persons with disabilities living in developing countries, this leaves many persons with disabilities in contexts with high exposure to extreme weather events, including weather events catalyzed by climate change. As persons with disabilities are at greater risk of poverty due to pervasive societal inequalities, such as ableist norms, inaccessible environments, discrimination, and exclusion, they are often deprived of opportunities to build resilience in the face of climate change. These multidimensional inequalities mean that persons with disabilities often experience higher rates of injury and mortality during climate-related extremes than their non-disabled peers.

The intersections of climate change and larger societal inequalities experienced by persons with disabilities too often mean that:

- Climate change-related information, including early warning systems for extreme weather events, may be inaccessible to persons with disabilities.
- Persons with disabilities may be intentionally or effectively excluded from meaningful access to and inclusion in governance, finance, and decision-making processes related to climate action.
- Disability-based discrimination in education, employment, urban planning, agriculture, food security, health, disaster preparedness, and other contexts may leave persons with disabilities at risk of exclusion from measures related to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Persons with disabilities may be unable to evacuate in the face of extreme weather events, or to fully utilize migration as a climate change adaptive response due to inaccessibility of the built environment, transportation, emergency shelter facilities and poor access to financial and other resources, leading to increased risks of injuries and/or secondary disabilities or mortality.
- Perceptions of inherent vulnerability of persons with disabilities may result in persons with disabilities being forced into segregated settings, or otherwise limit their exercise of agency to generate climate change solutions of benefit to persons with disabilities and wider society.

As part of USAID’s commitment to advance Global Action for Climate Equity and USAID’s Global Disability Summit commitments, USAID/Tajikistan seeks concepts that will support persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in taking climate action to respond to climate change, bolstering their resilience to the effects of climate change, and situating them to contribute to climate action as positive agents of change and sources of solutions. Submitted concepts are asked to show how proposed interventions promote disability-inclusive climate action by persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in their country context. Illustrative activities are included as follows, however other innovative ideas are also welcome:

- Bolstering the resilience of persons with disabilities to the effects of climate change, including by:
  - Promoting disability-inclusive approaches to disaster risk management, including meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities in the development and implementation of disaster risk reduction policies and strategies.
  - Including persons with disabilities in the development of early warning systems for extreme weather events that are accessible to persons with disabilities.

- Facilitating participation of persons with disabilities in urban planning processes, and promoting resilient infrastructure and urban resilience measures adopted in response to climate change that incorporate accessibility standards and principles of universal design, and are inclusive of and responsive to the specific needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities.
- Including persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of financial protection strategies and instruments to ensure that persons with disabilities can withstand the costs of climate shocks and extreme weather events on an equal basis with others.
- Facilitating the participation of persons with disabilities in sustainable employment and economic empowerment activities that promote climate resilience, e.g. climate-sensitive agriculture and related activities that promote food security.
- Supporting the contribution of persons with disabilities to climate change response, including climate change mitigation, as positive agents of change and sources of solutions, including by:
  - Promoting a “just transition” to a green economy for persons with disabilities on an equitable basis with others, including facilitating the participation of persons with disabilities in current and emerging “green jobs” that seek to de-carbonize the economy, bring down emissions of greenhouse gases, promote fuel efficiency and/or the use of renewable energy sources, or otherwise contribute to climate change mitigation.
  - Promoting disability-inclusive approaches to climate change response, including meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities in the development of climate change response and mitigation policies, strategies, and activities at regional, national, and/or sub-national levels.
  - Promoting the development of national disability action plans that are inclusive of climate action.
  - Strengthening the advocacy capacity of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to be climate leaders, effectively influence climate change response, and ensure that climate action by governments and other actors is informed by and responsive to the unique ideas and contributions of persons with disabilities.
  - Promoting collaboration and coordination on climate change action between advocates with disabilities and climate activists.

### **III. Activities and Programs Excluded**

The following activities and programs will not be considered for funding:

- Programs promoting or supporting segregated environments, or that perpetuate stereotypes of persons with disabilities.
- Programs that presume suitability for employment based on type of disability rather than an individual’s skills and employment interests, or that promote acquisition of skills that are not informed by actual market and industry needs with respect to “green jobs” or climate-sensitive employment and economic empowerment.
- Programs that encourage compensation of persons with disabilities at rates below those for non-disabled persons performing comparable work.
- Programs with significant infrastructure or construction activities. Note - programs that empower persons with disabilities to influence the outcomes of infrastructure or construction activities will be considered (e.g. advocacy to promote the use of accessibility standards in construction), but the cost of the infrastructure or construction itself will not be considered for funding. Minor refurbishment of existing facilities (e.g. making toilets accessible, installing ramps) may be considered and must comply

with “USAID Policy on Standards for Accessibility for the Disabled in USAID-Financed Construction” ([https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pdacg011.pdf](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pdacg011.pdf)).

- Programs primarily focused on the provision of assistive devices or physical rehabilitation.
- Programs supporting institutionalization of, or perpetuation of institutions for, children or adults with disabilities.
- Programs with a primary focus on awareness raising.
- Due to the availability of significant funding through PEPFAR, disability funding may not be used to support HIV-AIDS-related activities.
- Disability funding may not be used to support activities related to the direct provision of humanitarian assistance during humanitarian crises.
- In recent years, there has been significant Disability Program funding for inclusive education, and these investments continue. Inclusive education activities without a clear linkage to the DCA theme will not be supported through this request for concept papers..

#### **IV. Review Criteria**

Eligible projects submitted under this call will be reviewed based on the criteria listed below.

1. Within the DCA theme, represents a pressing need in the country and demonstrates a clear linkage with USAID Mission priorities: The proposed project responds to a pressing DCA need in a country that has yet to be adequately addressed and demonstrates a clear linkage with existing Mission priorities.
2. Sound technical approach and likely to contribute to sustainable and institutional change: The proposed project demonstrates a sound technical approach based on promising practices, lessons learned and/or international standards in DCA, and demonstrates how and to what extent it will contribute to sustainable and institutional change either at the person-, community-, or country-level. The project goes beyond addressing the symptom of a problem and seeks to identify and mitigate the root causes of inequality and persistent exclusion.
3. Substantial involvement of and direct benefit to persons with disabilities: The proposed project demonstrates meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities in the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the project. The overall direct benefit to persons with disabilities and DPOs offers the best value for the amount of funding requested.
4. Thoughtful integration of gender equality and women’s empowerment: The promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment must be thoughtfully integrated into the main objectives, activities, and monitoring and evaluation plans of all applications, in accordance with USAID’s Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Policy and USAID ADS 205. If the application is successful, gender considerations must likewise be integrated into the resulting program design.
5. Sound monitoring, evaluation and opportunities for learning: The proposed project includes relevant and meaningful indicators to measure both implementation progress as well as success in meeting the stated objectives, and realistic targets. At least three illustrative indicators measuring project outcomes must be provided. The proposed project should also demonstrate how project learning will be captured and shared with a broad audience, including country stakeholders, USAID and other members of the international development community

**END OF SECTION A - PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

## **SECTION B: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

### **1. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated**

Subject to funding availability, USAID intends to provide funding for individual projects ranging from \$300,000 up to \$1,000,000.00 in total. Submissions will be considered within the following two funding ranges: (1) from \$300,000 to \$500,000, and (2) from \$500,001 to \$1,000,000. Actual funding amounts are subject to availability of funds. USAID intends to award one or two Cooperative Agreement(s) or Grant(s) pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity and after successful completion of the full application process. USAID reserves the right to not fund a Concept paper or Full Application submitted.

### **2. Start Date and Period of Performance for Federal Awards**

The anticipated period of performance for the project will be determined in the Applicant's concept paper submission. The estimated start date will be upon the signature of the award, or other effective date determined by the Agreement Officer.

**END OF SECTION B - FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**



## **SECTION C: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

**Submissions of project concept papers must utilize the required application format provided in Attachment A – FY 2022 USAID Disability Funding Program Application .**

**Concept papers 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), faith- and local community-based organizations, private voluntary organizations, universities, research organizations, and professional associations.**

**Local Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) are strongly encouraged to submit project concepts. Preference will be given to qualified DPOs and/or any of the above organization types that directly collaborate with and/or award sub-grants to DPOs while meeting the requirements for funding.**

**In their submissions to Missions, mainstream (non-DPO) organizations must include letter(s) of signed support from local DPOs they wish to partner with for the purpose of the project. Such letters should demonstrate significant involvement of the DPO(s) in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project.**

**Public International Organizations (PIOs) are not eligible to apply for funding under this program.**

**END OF SECTION C - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

## SECTION D: CONCEPT PAPER SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### 1. Agency Point of Contact

Denis Arvanitidi  
Acquisition and Assistance Specialist  
USAID/Tajikistan  
E-mail: [darvanitidi@usaid.gov](mailto:darvanitidi@usaid.gov)

### 2. Questions and Answers

Questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted to Denis Arvanitidi at [darvanitidi@usaid.gov](mailto:darvanitidi@usaid.gov) with a cc copy to [eluma@usaid.gov](mailto:eluma@usaid.gov) no later than the closing date indicated on the cover letter, as amended. Any information given to a prospective applicant concerning this NOFO will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to this NOFO, if that information is necessary in submitting a concept paper or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

### 3. Instructions to Applicant:

The Applicant is expected to review, understand, and comply with all aspects of the NOFO.

Preparation of the Concept Paper:

The Applicant shall furnish the information required by this NOFO.

Should the Applicant include data that it does not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purposes, the Applicant should mark the title page with the following legend:

“This Concept Paper includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this Concept paper. If, however, a grant is awarded to this Applicant as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government’s right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets {insert sheet numbers} and, mark each sheet of data it wished to restrict with the following legend: “Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this application.”

The Applicant should retain for its records one (1) copy of its Concept Paper.

#### Concept Paper Submission Procedures:

It is the Applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is complete and received on time.

Electronic (e-mail) is the medium for submitting the Concept Paper. Please submit the Concept Paper application to Denis Arvanitidi at [darvanitidi@usaid.gov](mailto:darvanitidi@usaid.gov).

All emails should indicate in the subject line of the email “DCA Concept Paper”. The concept paper, if submitted by the submission deadline, will be reviewed for responsiveness to the NOFO and the required format. No additions or modifications will be accepted after the submission date.

If you discover an error in your transmission, please send the material again and note in the subject line of the email that it is a "corrected" submission. Do not send the same email more than once unless there has been a change, and if so, please note that it is a "corrected" email.

### **Concept Paper Format**

Submissions of project concept papers must utilize the required application format provided in **Attachment A – FY 2022 USAID Disability Funding Program Application**.

All answers must be typed in English using a minimum 11-point font. If partnering with a local “Disabled Persons Organization” (DPO) or “Organization of Persons with Disabilities” (OPD), a letter of cooperation must be attached to this application. A 10-page limit must be followed, not including the cover page below, budget annex and letter(s) of cooperation.

Successful applicants after the Concept Paper phase may be invited to submit a full application.

**END OF SECTION D - CONCEPT PAPER SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

**SECTION E: CONCEPT PAPER REVIEW INFORMATION**

**1. Evaluation**

The pass/fail scoring system will be used by the technical evaluation committee to assess the Review Criterias listed in the Section A (IV) - Review Criteria.

<b>“Pass”</b>	Meets or exceeds solicitation requirements. Complete, comprehensive, and exemplifies an understanding of the scope and depth of the task requirements as well as the Offeror’s understanding of the Government’s requirements.
<b>“Fail”</b>	Technical application has many deficiencies and/or gross omissions: Failure to understand much of the scope of work necessary to perform the required tasks; failure to provide a reasonable, logical approach to fulfilling much of the Government’s requirements;

**END OF SECTION E - CONCEPT PAPER REVIEW INFORMATION**