

Public Announcement on Availability of FY 2022 Disability Program Funding

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation's Inclusive Development Hub (DDI/ID) is inviting all interested USAID Missions to apply for FY22 Disability Funding to support programming in the area of **Disability-Inclusive Climate Action (DCA)**.

Approximately \$7 million is available for this Mission-wide, competitive program (subject to finalization of funding levels). 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.

Projects may be stand-alone targeted interventions, or they can be mainstreamed within larger Mission interventions. Within the DCA theme, projects should reflect the most pressing needs in the country and align with the Mission's development priorities. All proposals should be guided by the provisions set forth in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

All awards (grants or cooperative agreements) under this request for concept papers will be administered through and managed by Missions. Funding will be provided from USAID/Washington to Missions for this purpose and they are responsible for all obligation requirements, award management, and project oversight. Please note this announcement is NOT a USAID/Washington-issued Annual Program Statement (APS) or Request for Proposals (RFA). Rather, USAID Missions have been informed that these funds are available should they wish to participate in applying for them.

Qualified organizations interested in this funding opportunity should contact their local USAID field Mission for more information on this program. Mission contact information can be found at: <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work> or <http://www.usaid.gov/mission-directory>

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.

For more information about USAID and disability inclusive development, visit our [website](#).

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](#), DDI/ID 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.

Within the theme of disability-inclusive climate action (DCA), **DDI/ID will prioritize submissions that demonstrate robust participation and involvement of Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs).**¹ **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.**

Proposed projects should complement Missions' Country Development Cooperation Strategies and other pertinent documents (e.g. the [USAID Climate Strategy 2022-2030](#)).

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. Projects that address the needs of persons with disabilities, including individuals who are deaf, deafblind, and persons with cognitive or intellectual, developmental, or mental/psychosocial disabilities, are also encouraged.

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.

¹ Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) - also known as Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) are civil society organizations run by and for persons with disabilities. DPOs exist at local, national, regional and global levels. They may focus on specific issues (e.g. elections, women's rights), specific disability types (e.g. associations of blind, deaf, or autistic persons), or be cross-disability groups (e.g. a national association of persons with disabilities that is open to members representing different disability types).

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).

- 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.
- Due to the availability of significant funding through BHA, 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 call.

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. In addition to required [F Framework](#) indicators, 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.

In addition to the criteria above, applications will also be reviewed for geographic diversity.

V. AVAILABLE FUNDS

Subject to availability of funds, the total estimated level of funding available for awards under this **worldwide** request is up to approximately \$7,000,000 over a 24-36 month period. DDI/ID may fund individual programs in two categories:

1. Programs ranging from \$300,000 - \$500,000; and
2. Programs ranging from \$500,001 - \$1,000,000

Missions can use this funding for the procurement of new awards or use it to modify existing grant agreements.

VII. PROPOSAL LIMIT

Missions may submit up to two proposals.

VIII. CONCEPT PAPER PROCESS

A. **General Guidance:**

USAID Missions have been informed that this funding is available to implement programs inclusive of persons with disabilities under the DCA theme. Interested and qualified organizations must apply for this funding directly through their local Missions.

1. **Contact local Mission (or relevant bureau/office)** – interested organizations should contact their local Mission or the Mission representative who is responsible for managing activities in the proposed country to assess interest and ability to participate in this funding opportunity. USAID/Washington does not maintain a list of participating Missions, and not all Missions will decide to participate. It is the responsibility of interested organizations to engage directly with Missions. **Mission contact information can be found at:** <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work> or <http://www.usaid.gov/mission-directory>

2. **Submitting applications** – Organizations should follow Mission instructions for application submission. Please note it may take Missions one month or more to review applications before forwarding them to DDI/ID in Washington. Please allow adequate time and submit your application early, well in advance of the DDI/ID Washington deadline listed below. Applications submitted by Missions after this deadline may not be considered.
3. **Review process** – Missions will conduct the first review based on their established procedures. Selected applications will be forwarded to DDI/ID Washington for further review. Final determinations will be communicated to applicants by the local Mission.

B. Submission Deadlines:

The deadline for Missions to submit applications DDI/ID in Washington is no later than **COB April 3, 2023**. **Applications must be submitted by USAID Missions only. DDI/ID will not accept applications submitted directly by potential implementing organizations.** Missions will establish their own internal deadline to receive applications under this call. Prospective applicants must check with their local USAID Mission to verify additional deadlines and plan accordingly.

C. Application Format:

Submissions must utilize the required application format provided in **Attachment A – FY 2022 USAID Disability Funding Program Application**. Be sure to complete all information requested on the application form. **The 10 page limit must be respected.** The cover page, annexes to the budget, and letters of cooperation between potential implementing partners are not subject to the page limit.

IX. MISSION ELIGIBILITY

All interested USAID Missions are invited to apply for DDI/ID Disability Program funds.

X. POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTING PARTNER ELIGIBILITY

Submissions of project concepts (utilizing the required application format provided in **Attachment A – FY 2022 USAID Disability Funding Program Application**) 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 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.

In line with USAID's [New Partnerships Initiative](#), new and underutilized organizations are encouraged to respond to this call. These can include U.S. and local community-based and faith-based partners, that have limited or no recent experience in working with, and receiving funds from USAID.

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reporting on the project is required. The exact format for, preparation of, and timing for submission of all reports will be determined by the Mission. Implementing partners will be required to report on standard indicators required by Washington and additional indicators as determined by Missions. Though not required, implementing partners are encouraged to submit photographs of activities, success stories and/or other media as part of their progress reports.
