**GRANTS PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT (GPA)**

**Armenia Protection, Inclusion, and Empowerment Activity (PIE)**

**"Social & Economic Integration Interventions for the Displaced Population from Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) in Armenia" GPA No.: PIE-GPA-001**

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| **Issue Date:** | 17 June 2024 |
| **Issuing Organization Name** | Democracy International |
| **Title:** | "Social & Economic Integration Interventions for the Displaced Population from NK in Armenia" |
| **Deadline for Applications:** | 04 July 2024 |
| **Goal:** | People affected by instability and violence receive better need-based services and protection. |
| **Target group:** | This activity aims to build social cohesion of NK displaced populations within host communities. The primary target group is the forcibly displaced population from NK, and the secondary target group is the local population of Armenia. |
| **Geographic Coverage:** | Republic of Armenia |
| **Timeframe:** | Up to 18 months |
| **Grant Type:** | Fixed Amount Award (FAA) |
| **Grant funding:** | Lot 1: Building resilience through promotion of livelihoods. This lot has a grant ceiling value of $150,000 and a minimum floor value of $127,500.  Lot 2: Meeting social protection needs of vulnerable populations affected by instability or violent conflict. This lot has a grant ceiling value of $150,000 and a minimum floor value of $127,500.  Lot 3: Encourage Social Cohesion between Host and Displaced Communities and Raise Awareness $100,000. This lot has a grant ceiling value of $100,000 and a minimum floor value of $85,000.  DI plans to issue one grant per lot. |
| **Attachments:** | 1. Concept note (no more than 5 pages, template available [here)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pY13zyd8YG9qWfPJRyv5IKw4zPFqcTUcwVr5Iz4N3fY/edit?usp=sharing) 2. Budget (no more than 2 pages, template available [here)](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vezCqhQhHAm83mIZ7xN1L3gV0U6Y8DqEKZVPz02MHFw/edit?usp=sharing) 3. Organization’s legal registration certificate in Armenia. 4. Organization’s Charter |

# BACKGROUND

**Addressing social protection needs of vulnerable populations affected by instability or violent conflict** is part of **the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** funded **Protection, Inclusion, and Empowerment Activity**, implemented by **Democracy International** (DI) in Armenia. The five-year project aims to improve the lives of disadvantaged and marginalized populations through needed legal-regulatory framework changes, improved services, and intensified cooperation between the government and non-governmental actors to address the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups. The project will emphasize emergency response activities and address the needs of the affected population through timely and effective support.

# INTRODUCTION

The Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) conflict had a profound impact on social cohesion in Armenia, particularly due to the forcible displacement of people from NK. Following the escalation of a decades-long conflict in the region at the end of September 2023, more than 100,000 people - including 30,000 girls and boys, were forced to flee from their homes to Armenia. The total number of new arrivals constituted 3.3 percent of the entire Armenian population (approximately 2.8 million), which means that approximately one in 30 people in Armenia were displaced.

The forcible displacement of such a large population can strain social cohesion in host communities. Challenges include resource allocation, cultural adaptation, and integration. Inclusive policies and development investments are essential to mitigate negative effects and foster cohesion.

Despite various strategic plans and programs in the field, there is currently no unified vision for how Armenia envisions social and economic integration of the forcibly displaced population. Armenia’s social protection system faces challenges but also opportunities for improvement. Funding constraints, coverage gaps and fragmentation of services are some of these challenges. While overall digital transformation, currently ongoing policy reforms and increasing public and private partnership create good grounds for improvement of the services.

For long-term impact on the lives of the people affected by the conflict of the NK, Democracy International (DI) is launching a new grant funding initiative to implement social and economic integration interventions. DI will provide grants to locally registered civil society organizations (CSOs) to address the specific needs of the displaced, as well as local, populations, particularly women, children, persons with disabilities, older adults, and LGBTIQ+.

**For applicants:** The grant must be informed by the consultations with project direct beneficiaries, *“Multi-sectoral needs assessment of persons (households) under temporary protection from Nagorno-Karabakh”* (done by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and UNICEF), as well as the needs raised by other stakeholders, such as the *“*[*Barrier Analysis for the social-economic integration of refugee population and host communities in Armenia*](https://reliefweb.int/report/armenia/barrier-analysis-social-economic-integration-refugee-population-and-host-communities-armenia-february-2024)*”* (done by World Food Project), the [*Multisectoral assessment report on the challenges and needs of the population forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh in autumn 2023*](https://armenia.peopleinneed.net/en/multisectoral-assessment-report-on-the-challenges-and-needs-of-the-population-forcibly-displaced-from-nagorno-karabakh-in-autumn-2023-2257pub)*”* (done by People in Need), and the needs identified through DI’s Social Integration Challenges of People Displaced from NK to Armenia.

Below are some of the recommendations derived from the assessments relevant to the current GPA.

**Promotion of Economic Opportunities**

* Map the existing opportunities, projects, required workforce and the potential for refugees, and accordingly develop a systematic approach for employment and self-employment programs.
* Allocate resources towards initiatives that promote economic opportunities and livelihood restoration for displaced individuals, aiming to reduce dependency on external assistance in the long term.
* Facilitate access to vocational training opportunities aligned with the evolving needs of the job market, enhancing the skill set of displaced individuals for better employment prospects.
* Foster initiatives that support the establishment and growth of small businesses within the displaced community, promoting entrepreneurship and self-sustainability.
* Clarify perceptions around salary levels and working conditions in Armenia, so refugees understand the importance of equal treatments.

**Promotion of access to and creation of social services**

* Improve access to information by providing training and resources on using online tools and systems for state social assistance programs.
* Foster community engagement and participation in decision-making processes related to aid distribution and support programs, ensuring that the voices of displaced individuals are heard, and their preferences are considered.
* Strengthen psychosocial assistance programs to tackle post-traumatic stress issues among displaced people.
* Create safe and supportive environments, such as Children Safe Spaces, where displaced children can access educational resources, receive tutoring, and participate in recreational activities and ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of safe space initiatives.
* Establish community-based support groups and resource centers that provide guidance and assistance to displaced individuals navigating local resources and support services.

**Promotion of Social Cohesion**

* Develop community-based support programs tailored to the needs of refugees and the local population, fostering social cohesion and integration.
* Implement cross-cultural communication initiatives to encourage interaction and understanding between refugees and local communities.
* Integrate refugees in formal and non-formal structures fostering integration.
* Mitigate the risks for social cohesion, such as the effective coordination and inclusiveness of humanitarian assistance and development investments.

This GPA outlines the envisioned scope of work which applicants are requested to submit a detailed concept note, budget, organization registration certificate and charter. The GPA aims to identify qualified organizations capable of providing effective interventions to address specific needs of displaced populations from NK. The document also explains the selection process and the next steps through which DI will award grants to the final qualified organizations.

The GPA is open to all qualifying CSOs registered in the Republic of Armenia. The grant is announced in three lots and the organizations can apply to one, two, or all three lots. Applicants that apply to more than one lot must submit a separate concept note and budget for each lot. DI reserves the right to fund several or none of the applications submitted. DI plans to issue no more than one grant per lot. Organizations may apply individually or in a consortium of organizations. Consortia applicants must clearly designate a prime organization and the prime organization must submit a single proposal. Subgrants to consortium partners will require specific approval from DI.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE**:

Applicants should submit applications electronically, via email to [PIE-Grants@democracyinternational.com](mailto:PIE-Grants@democracyinternational.com). The closing date for submission of applications is July 04, 2024, 18:00 Caucasus Standard Time. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applicants should submit any questions concerning this GPA electronically, via email at [PIE-Grants@democracyinternational.com](mailto:PIE-Grants@democracyinternational.com). The deadline for submission of the questions is June 24, 2024. Response to the questions will be provided no later than June 27, 2024.

All applicants must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). The UEI is a universal identifier for recipients and subrecipients of Federal awards. DI may not enter into a grant agreement with an entity that does not have a UEI. An entity applies for a UEI on SAM.gov.

# GOAL

The Goal of this GPA is to ensure that **people affected by instability and violent conflict receive better need-based services and protection**. While the GPA gives general objectives and directions (below), the applicant organizations are expected to propose specific interventions and activities to address the social and economic integration needs of the NK displaced population.

**The specific objectives and anticipated results of the GPA are:**

**Lot 1: Building resilience through promotion of livelihoods.** Addressing economic activity among the target groups, supporting them with income generating opportunities and promoting their sustainable livelihood. The interventions can include but are not limited to increasing knowledge and skills among target groups to enter labor market, and/or providing small-scale business development opportunities, including through seed funding, business plan development support. Within this Lot, DI encourages piloting and scaling up of public-private partnerships, enabling the economic strengthening of displaced populations through private sector engagement. The concept notes must include at least two types of initiatives / interventions aimed at achieving the expected result of Lot 1 and propose wide coverage across Armenia. The suggested interventions must present long-term sustainable solutions to resilience building of the project participants.

***Expected result:*** Promoted resilience of target groups.

**Lot 2: Meeting Social Protection Needs of Vulnerable Populations Affected by Instability or Violent Conflict**. Implementation of inclusive programs to support target groups to become resilient through better access to social protection services. The interventions can include but are not limited to expanding the social protection programs and services to address the needs of people displaced from NK, introducing social protection new services based on identified needs and geographic coverage, reaching out the farthest rural communities. Providing material, psychosocial, and legal support, trauma healing, and counseling services. Facilitating access to the available services. The concept notes must include at least two types of initiatives / interventions aimed at achieving the expected result of Lot 2, propose wide coverage across Armenia. The suggested initiatives / interventions must incorporate **new strategies, technologies, policies, or practices to better meet the needs and expectations of service users**. It is expected that at least one of the suggested initiatives will be advocated for adoption by the local, regional, and national government.

***Expected*** ***result***: New initiatives (at least one) to address social protection service gaps for displaced and conflict-affected populations.

**Lot 3. Encourage Social Cohesion between Host and Displaced Communities.** Experience sharing is an essential aspect of addressing any conflict-related challenge. However, those most affected by conflict do not have sufficient, safe spaces to share experiences and get support from their peers. Such spaces can also be linked with platforms for advocacy for long-term solutions to conflict and to address needs, including activities that promote resilience to mis/disinformation and hate speech on digital platforms. The interventions within this Lot can be organizing activities aimed at bringing people together, improving constructive cooperation, strengthening opportunities for dialogue among social groups and breaking stereotypes. Preventing or overcoming tensions between displaced and host communities by utilizing People 2 People (P2P)[[1]](#footnote-2) approach. The interventions may include but are not limited to providing spaces and platforms for women, girls, men, and boys to gather, discuss peace-relevant issues, set civic engagement agendas, and strategize, creating meaningful participation in decision-making processes and engaging in meaningful, satisfying social interactions. Supporting women-led associations, school-clubs, engaging children, youth and adults in soft skill-building initiatives are some of the examples of projects that can be implemented within this lot.

***Expected*** ***result 1***: Displaced populations perceive acceptance in their host communities.

# PROCESS

The GPA process will include the following phases:

**First Phase: GPA Announcement and Submission:**

The GPA is announced on 17 June 2024, and the deadline for submission of proposals is 04 July 2024. All interested organizations must submit a **concept note** and **budget** responding to the needs of this GPA electronically to the following e-mail: PIE-Grants@DemocracyInternational.com no later than 04 July, 18:00 Yerevan local time.

The organizations may apply for one or more Lots, based on their experience and areas of interest. In this case they must submit a separate concept note and budget for each Lot. DI may choose to award all or only selected Lots to the selected organizations.

The **concept note** at the minimum, should include the following components:

**Information about the applicant**

* Organization’s legal and business name.
* Physical address in Armenia, including the coverage area within Armenia.
* Organization’s legal registration certificate in Armenia.
* Organization’s Charter

**Information about applicant’s experience**

* Organization’s portfolio with special emphasis on Social Protection, Economic Empowerment, Social Integration activities, including:
  + Names, objectives, results (if relevant) and timelines of the projects completed and/or ongoing that are relevant to the objective of this GPA.
  + Number, locations, size, and capacities of the regional offices/representations, if any.
  + Human and technical capacity (including key staff and experts’ CVs).

**Past performance references**

* Three reference contacts from
  + Previous or current donors, and/or
  + Consortium member implementing organizations and/or
  + Financial institution

**Concept note:**

* + Problem statement and context
  + Goal, objectives, and specific interventions
  + Technical approach / methodology
  + Target groups
  + Management approach / key personnel
  + Timeline for implementation

**Budget**[[2]](#footnote-3)

* + Cost application (in Microsoft Excel format)
  + Budget Narrative
  + Budget Summary

***Note:*** *The applicants applying as a consortium must provide a summary budget with all partners costs included, and separate tabs presenting each organization's individual budget.*

***Note:*** *All costs and quotes included in the budget must remain valid for at least 6 months*

**Cost Share:** A **minimum** of ten (10%) percent of cost share (cash or in kind) is required. Applicants are encouraged to contribute resources from their own private or other sources. US Government funding may not count toward cost share for the implementation of this program.

* *Cost share refers to the resources a recipient contributes to the total cost of an agreement. These contributions must be quantifiable and verifiable through financial reports.*
* *Cash contributions involve direct monetary contributions made by the recipient or third party towards the project. Cash contributions can include donations, grants or funds from other sources, specifically allocated for the project.*
* *In-kind contributions refer to non-cash contributions, that hold value and contribute to the project’s objectives. Goods and services (also made by third party contributors) are forms of in-kind contributions. Donated services may include volunteer staff time.*

***Note:*** *Do not submit a full proposal unless requested by DI. Only upon receipt of positive DI written feedback on the concept note will DI request for applicants to develop a full proposal.*

**Second Phase: Co-creation with Selected Organizations:**

DI will invite organizations with successful concept notes to submit a full proposal. DI will support the selected organizations to develop formal applications through a grant co-creation workshop.

During this workshop, DI will work with the selected organization(s) to develop their full grant application, including goal and objectives of the proposed grant; sound technical approach including the strategy and set of activities; sound approach to engaging marginalized and under-represented groups; proposed approach for monitoring and reporting on the proposed activities, including proposed indicators, targets, and data collection methods; and budget with a detailed breakdown of costs.

**Standard certifications, Standard Provisions and Terms and Conditions**

All materials produced under this agreement will become the property of Democracy International, Inc. (DI) (subject to the U.S. Government’s rights) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Please be advised that entering into an agreement with DI, the Prime Contractor for the USAID PIE activity, will mean that the firm will not possess the copyright or legal title to the products generated in the performance or as a result of this subcontract.

Applicable Standard Certifications and Provisions: [Standard Certifications.docx](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pyqzfP8rh714SPX98kdGqDPr5a5G_X5w/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=114581264515888200130&rtpof=true&sd=true)

Subcontract terms and conditions: [Subcontract TEMPLATE.docx](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1S9A5a19eZCZsDYCt9eSqMjL_B0ymWvTP/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=114581264515888200130&rtpof=true&sd=true)

# EVALUATION

Only fully completed applications will be reviewed. The applications submitted late, or with missing attachments or in any other way not complying with GPA requirements, will not be considered.

DI will review each fully completed GPA in terms of responsiveness to the announcement and appropriateness of subject matter, based on the criteria provided below:

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| Criteria for assessment |  | Description of Criteria | Maximum  Score |
| 1. Past Performance / Organizational Capacity | * Past performance in similar projects. * Human and technical capacity. * Degree of geographic coverage of programs, infrastructure, or operations across Armenia. * Availability of organizational policies (HR, accounting, procurement, safeguarding, anticorruption, etc.) | | 20 |
| 1. Technical Merit | * Relevance to program goals and target beneficiaries * Realism and viability of technical approach to achieve projected results * Sustainability of project results * Anticipated impact on project participants | | 30 |
| 1. Project Management. | * Project management and monitoring capacities. * Proposed personnel and facilities to implement the project activities. | | 30 |
| 1. **Cost Effectiveness** | * Proposal cost effectiveness (value for money) * Cost share of at least 10%. | | 20 |
| Total score | | | 100 |

# PROPOSED TIMELINE

The proposed timeline for the GPA process is as follows:

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| --- | --- |
| GPA Announcement: | June 17, 2024 |
| Deadline for Receipt of Questions: | **June 24, 2024** |
| Concept Note Submission Deadline: | **July 04, 2024** |
| Concept Note Evaluation: | **July 15, 2024** |
| Shortlisting and Negotiation: | **July 20, 2024** |
| Cocreation Workshop: | **August 1, 2024** |
| Pre-Award Survey: | **August 7, 2024** |
| Grant Award: | **August 15, 2024** |

1. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\_docs/pbaad866.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. **Please note** the PIE Activity is VAT exempted. All grantees will be provided with a VAT exemption letter. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)