Request for Applications (RFA):
Education Advocacy

Application Due: December 20, 2019
Award Size: 20,000-40,000 USD
Grant Types: Cost-Reimbursable, Fixed Amount

I. SUCCESS PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The USAID-supported *Systems to Uphold the Credibility and Constitutionality of Elections in South Sudan* (SUCCESS) project supports effective, inclusive, and accountable governance to bring stability to the people of South Sudan. Through the provision of technical assistance, trainings, and material support, activities are designed to promote stakeholder participation in processes viewed as legitimate and representative of their aspirations. The project includes substantial support for the development of South Sudanese civil society. The project seeks to engage civil society organizations, build their capacity to represent and engage various communities, and award grants and provide technical assistance to support the implementation of effective, inclusive, and sustainable programs.

The project is supported under a cooperative agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

II. BACKGROUND

Education is the foundation for active and informed citizens. However, due to the ongoing conflict and economic crisis in South Sudan, the country's education system has experienced unfavorable effects. The South Sudan Education Cluster Assessment conducted in October 2018 found that schools are not functioning consistently and there are still many obstacles to providing uninterrupted and high quality education for all children. These obstacles include insufficient school feeding programs for starving children, inadequate teaching and learning materials, inconsistent teacher payment, inadequate teacher training, limited sanitation facilities at schools, low enrollment and attendance, and high drop-out rates, especially among girls.

The education system in South Sudan is striving to meet the needs in a very complex political, humanitarian, and economic context. The renewed conflict in December 2013 and July 2016 exacerbated the challenges facing the education sector in the country. Food insecurity and epidemics also pose great obstacles to the education system. Despite the fact that more than 90% of the country's land is arable, South Sudan is marked by alarming levels of hunger (South Sudan General Education Plan, 2017-2022). As of August 2019, more than 6.35 million (54%) of the South Sudan population were food insecure, according to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Analysis jointly conducted by the United Nations and the Government in September 2019 (South Sudan Situation Report, UNOCHA, 2019).

Poverty and illiteracy are widespread in South Sudan. More than half (51%) of the country's population live below the poverty line. Early marriages and pregnancies are common. In 2010, 40% of the girls age 15-19 years were married or in a union and nearly one-third (31%) of girls aged 15-19 had already begun child-bearing. This negatively affects schooling as most do not return to school after they become mothers (South Sudan General Education Plan 2017-2022). Natural disasters such as floods also hamper the progress of the education system in some parts of the country. Since July 2019, 908,000 people have been affected by heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding, hence worsening the health, hygiene, shelter, and nutrition of the school-aged children in most parts of the country (South Sudan Situation Report, 2019). Civil society

will play a critical role in advocating for solutions to these challenges and for an overall improved education system in South Sudan.

III.   GRANT OBJECTIVES

The SUCCESS project is seeking opportunities to support civil society organizations *to develop and implement local advocacy initiatives aimed at improving the educational system* and administration of schools in the six locations where DI/SUCCESS operates Civic Engagement Centers: Aweil, Juba, Rumbek, Torit, Wau, and Yambio. Grantees will be required to work with school representatives and community members.

Grant activities may include, among others: raising awareness on sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in schools; training parents and teachers on sexual harassment and child protection; and promoting equal access to education for girls and boys thus reducing girl dropout rates in the targeted locations.

IV.   GRANT TYPE

SUCCESS intends to award up to six (6) **Grants** (one in each region) to South Sudanese civil society organizations that work in the education sector in the areas where DI/SUCCESS operates its CECs: Aweil, Juba, Rumbek, Torit, Wau, and Yambio. Awards will range from $20,000 – $40,000 and will be a cost-reimbursable or fixed amount award.

V.   GRANT RESTRICTIONS:

All applicants must not engage in the following:

- Organization of protest rallies, marches, or similar events designed to demonstrate opposition to policies;
- Promotion of policies that do not contribute to good governance and social accountability in South Sudan (for more information on Good Governance and Social Accountability, please see the following link: http://bit.ly/1FfohnD)

VI.   ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICATIONS:

Organizations seeking awards must meet **ALL** of the following requirements:

1. Based in South Sudan, defined as an organization that is drawn primarily from residents of South Sudan *and* is currently legally registered as an NGO;
2. Be a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization that is independent of governmental control of the board or leadership;
3. Not be a political party or an organization that promotes or endorses electoral candidates;
4. Not be an organization that prohibits the participation of minority groups including ethnic, sexual, and religious minorities or the organizations expresses what is referred to as hate speech;
5. Promotes and adheres to non-violent, peaceful approaches and does not engage in armed conflict or policing;
6. Integrate gender and conflict-sensitive approaches.
7. Not be included in the U.S. Government's "Excluded Parties List System" (EPLS), found at: www.sam.gov;
8. Have a valid registration certificate and tax clearance
9. Demonstrates prior experience in implementation of education projects in any or all of the selected locations: Aweil, Juba, Rumbek, Torit, Wau, and Yambio

10. Must have verified, physical presence in the area of implementation
11. Has adequate financial systems, management structures, reporting mechanisms and systems, and personnel resources, or the ability to obtain such resources as required during the performance of the award; and
12. Respect the laws of South Sudan and adhere to labor laws for employed staff.

Faith-based organizations are encouraged to apply, but may not use award funds for religious worship, education, or proselytizing nor equipment for this purpose.

VII.   SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications should be no more than five-pages long (excluding the Performance Monitoring Plan)

All applications must be submitted in English to the SUCCESS Grants Team via email at SUCCESSRFA@democracyinternational.com no later than **December 20, 2019**. Applicants should retain for their records one copy of the application and all enclosures which accompany their submission. Organizations do not need to provide additional documentation beyond what is requested during the application stage. Paper copies may also be dropped off at the SUCCESS Office at Afex Riverside Camp at Hai Malakal, Juba (behind the Hai Malakal Cemetery and John Deere dealership). SUCCESS reserves the right to exclude any applications received after this deadline, those that do not meet the eligibility criteria, or are not relevant to the RFA requested.

To be considered for an award, an applicant's period of performance for activities must not exceed six months.

This announcement **does not constitute any commitment on the part of the Democracy International (DI), nor does it commit DI or SUCCESS to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application**. SUCCESS reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. Any award would be contingent on receiving sufficient funds and approval from USAID. SUCCESS reserves the right to incrementally fund activities over the duration of the program, if necessary, depending on program length, performance against approved program indicators, and availability of funds.

Any questions concerning this announcement should be directed to the SUCCESS Grants Team, via e-mail at SUCCESSRFA@democracyinternational.com.

VIII.   APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Applications should be no longer than five pages and must be written in English. Writing must be single-spaced, using 12-point font Times New Roman or a similar font. Please include the following sections in the application; the applicant name and organization, application date, program title, program period proposed start and end date.

1. **Application:**
The application should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. Use the application format provided and ensure all the sections are clearly written as described below.

- **Application Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization Applying**: A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous related grants. All

applicants must demonstrate prior experience working in the field of education, preferably with PTAs.

- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
- **Program Goals and Objectives:** The "goals" describe what the program is intended to achieve. The "objectives" refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Program Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Include a logic model as appropriate.
- **Proposed Program Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant? A template is annexed to the application.
- **Risk Analysis:** The applicant's should be able to identify and proposed measures to mitigate any potential risk to the project, its staff or other external parties
- **Sustainability.** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable should be cleared stipulated.
- **Gender Inclusivity:** This is an important aspect of the SUCCESS program. Applicants should demonstrate how projects will be gender inclusive.
- **Applicant Contribution:** As the applicant has a stake in the project, what can the applicant's organization contribute towards the implementation and success of the project?
- **Conflict Sensitivity:** Applicant should demonstrate that the organization is knowledgeable about the context in which it is operating specifically in the proposed project implementation location, how it understands the target population, any intergroup tensions which are potential triggers for conflict, and how to mitigate any emerging conflict.
- **Budget inclusive of the following categories:**
    a. Personnel costs: Should not exceed 35% of the total project cost
    b. Travel costs: Should not exceed 5% of the total project cost
    c. Activities expenses: Up to 50% of the total project cost
    d. Other Direct Cost; Should not exceed 10% of the total project cost

The budget must be calculated in United States Dollars (USD) and not exceed $40,000. SUCCESS will not pay overhead charges above 10% of the total grant value, and SUCCESS will not pay costs incurred prior to the approval of the grant to include costs related to the preparation of the application.

2. Required Registrations:
Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

All organizations applying for grants must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

- Unique entity identifier from Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS number)
- NCAGE/CAGE code
- www.SAM.gov registration

Step 1: Apply for a DUNS number and an NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously)

DUNS application:
Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform

NCAGE application:
Application page here: https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx
Instructions for the NCAGE application process:
https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCAGE.pdf

For NCAGE help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423
For NCAGE help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766 Email NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM.gov by logging onto: https://www.sam.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

IX.   APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Criteria for Selection
- Applicant must have used SUCCESS application and budget templates in Microsoft Word
- All applications that meet the eligibility and program requirements, and conform to the application preparation and submission instructions detailed above, will be reviewed and scored by the SUCCESS Grant Selection Committee using the evaluation criteria presented in this section. The budget section of all applications under consideration for award will be reviewed for what are necessary and reasonable costs to support the proposed program.
- Applications will be evaluated on the set of criteria below. All technical information within your application will be evaluated by these standards. Please keep in mind that cost realism and reasonableness will be an important criterion.

Application Scoring.
a. **Relevance to Objective (10 points)**
- Applications will be evaluated based on their relevance to the program objectives as stated in Section III. Grant Objectives contained herein.

b. **Technical Approach (40 points)**
Applications will be evaluated on the viability of the proposed approach, with specific consideration given to the following:
- A concept summary that provides clear rationale for the proposed approach to satisfy the grant objectives;
- The feasibility of implementing the proposed approach within the specified timeframe;
- The appropriateness of the proposed approach for the identified target audience;
- The extent of the proposed approach's impact;
- The interactive nature of the proposed approach;
- Inclusion of robust monitoring and evaluation tools to measure project performance;

- Efficient use of budgeted funds to produce quality activities;
- Integration of gender and conflict-sensitive approaches;
- Inclusion of strategy to avoid or mitigate safety risks to the applicant, the SUCCESS program, and/or any third party, including activity participants; and
- Sustainability—i.e., the likelihood that the projects and/or their potential results will have lasting effects and will continue to stimulate improved education systems in South Sudan beyond the project completion date.

c. **Capacity to implement (30 points)**

Applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant demonstrates its capacity to implement proposed activities, with specific consideration given to the following:
- The applicant's administrative and financial management capacity;
- The ability of the applicant to recruit and support staff necessary for implementation of the proposed approach;
- Internal capacity to apply monitoring & evaluation tools; and
- Demonstration of current and/or recent past performance on implementation of similar activities of a similar scope.

d. **Budget (20 Points):**

The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities. A detailed budget narrative in word document attached

X. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION

All applications must be submitted electronically to the e-mail address provided below or in person to the address below:

Electronically	Hard Copies
E-mail the Application and budget as separate attachments (using MS Word, Excel, Adobe Acrobat, or similar file formats, as needed) to: *SUCCESSRFA@democracyinternational.com* In the subject line please state: "***Education Advocacy RFA***" and the name of the organization	SUCCESS Grants Team Re: Grant Application Democracy International Afex Riverside Camp Juba, South Sudan

Applications sent any other way will not be considered.