



Call for Concept Notes for Multi-Year Funding Grants for Women-Led Organisations in Eastern & Central Equatorial and Jonglei Areas

CARE International in South Sudan is pleased to announce the multi-year funding opportunity of the Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) – South Sudan Program. We warmly welcome Concept Notes from Women-Led Organisations that work former Central Equatorial, Jonglei, and Eastern Equatorial States for 1 or more years. The deadline to apply is **August 3, 2019** at 5pm South Sudan time.

Interested Women-Led Organizations are required to submit Concept Notes using the template. The Concept Note Template can be collected from any CARE Offices in Juba, Torit or Bor or can be requested from ssdpartners@care.org or downloaded from the NGO Forum online notice board on <https://comms.southsudanngoforum.org/c/jobs>

Please read these guidelines carefully before you submit your Concept Note. CARE reserves the right to reject Concept Notes that are not fully completed or do not meet the eligibility criteria. If you have any questions, please contact ssdpartners@care.org before **July 20, 2019**. Responses to questions and comments will be consolidated into a factsheet and will be shared on July 23 with applicants who shared their email address with us, as well as can be obtained from CARE Offices in Bor, Torit and Juba on July 23. Please email ssdpartners@care.org before July 20, 2019 to request to be on the email list to receive the factsheet responding to applicants' questions.

Grant application opening date: July 10, 2019

Grant application closing date: August 3, 2019

Introduction of the Women's Voice and Leadership – South Sudan Program

CARE South Sudan, with funding from Global Affairs Canada, implements the Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) program in the former Eastern Equatorial, Central and Jonglei states. WVL is a four-year project to support the capacity and activities of local and national women-led organisations seeking to empower women and girls; advance the protection of women and girls' rights and achieve gender equality. To achieve this, the project will provide funding to local, state and national women-led organisations and networks in recognition of the funding gaps they face. The WVL Program aims to achieve the following:



1. Improved management and sustainability of women-led organisations
2. Enhanced performance of women-led organisations in programming, advocacy, feminist transformative community engagement and institutional capabilities to advance gender equality and empower women and girls
3. Increased effectiveness of national, state and local women-led organisations' platforms, networks and alliances to influence, policy, legal and social change in the country.

South Sudanese women-led organizations operate in a challenging environment with limited resources to support their advocacy agenda or invest in their institutional growth. The WVL Program aims to provide targeted support to selected women-led organizations to address these challenges and help them respond to gender inequality and issues that affect women and girls. The WVL Program will strengthen the capacities of women-led organisations through providing:

- 1. Multi-year funding grants to women's rights organisations (through this call for proposals)**
2. Fast responsive funding for short-term discrete advocacy, innovative and strategic activities (through a separate process)
3. Institutional capacity building support
4. Networking and alliance building among women-led organisations.

This call for concept notes

This call is for applicants who wish to apply for the multi-year funding grants (#1 above). The funds can cover costs such as: core/general support to the organisation, capacity building for staff/volunteers, activities for women, strengthening advocacy for women's rights, engaging men and boys in changing masculinities, engaging feminist awareness raising with women and girls, participation in networks, or any or all of these things. This call also does not have any preference for themes or activities as long as it meets one or more priority needs of women and girls in the proposed areas. Collectively, the grantees together will ideally cover a wide range of women and girls' priority needs, and be accessed by a diversity of groups, including different sized organisations, in all 3 target areas. Each applicant is expected to focus as narrowly as they like in terms of sector and geographic coverage. For example: focus on one sector or one target group, or choose to cover a wide range of priority needs, areas, and groups.

The Concept Note budget may include funding for the organisation's salaries, office running costs, training, capacity building, systems improvement, services for women, advocacy, networking, or gender responsive or transformative approaches to raise community awareness about women's and girls' rights. It could fund one or more of these things. The selected grantees will receive financial support to strengthen their systems and processes and help them to finance their capacity development plans and core work, which in the longer term will eventually help them to gain access to more predictable funding opportunities and improve their quality of service delivery and advocacy.

Both large and small women-led organisations in former Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial and Jonglei states will be eligible for support. The duration of the grants will be for between 2 to 3.5 years (between 1 September 2019 to March 31, 2023), but grants may be cancelled early if risks become too high or compliance, performance, or commitment is insufficient.

Eligibility Criteria

All those applying must meet all the mandatory **eligibility requirements / criteria** below. Failure to meet any of the following criteria will lead to automatic disqualification:



1. Must be a South Sudanese organisation.
2. Must be non-government, non-political and not-for-profit (non-commercial) entity.
3. Must have existed for 1 year or more.
4. Must be registered with relevant authority at state or national level.
5. Must have an active board of directors, governors or advisors and at least 2/3 of the board members must be female.
6. Must be an organisation that is led by one or more women or girls (female leadership).
7. Must have at least 2/3 of staff, volunteers, or members who are women or girls.
8. Must be an organisation that targets women and girls as the main beneficiaries including:
 - a. Must be an organization that can demonstrate, through its activities and actions, a belief in the full realisation of women's and girls' empowerment.
 - b. The organization's current mission, values, and the profile of the activities that it is currently implementing, is focused on transforming gender inequalities.
 - c. The main focus of the organizations' activities and results is on making systematic changes to sustainably improve women's and girls' lives, including by engaging men and boys.
9. Must be an organisation with a physical presence in the target areas. It must have its office (if it has one) and staff/volunteers/members based in former Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial and Jonglei states and holds its meetings/activities there. (small local women-led organisations operating in no more than one county does not need an office to be eligible).
10. Must be available and willing to participate in WVL capacity development initiatives (which will be funded by the project).
11. Must be willing and able to set up a bank account if they don't already have one, to receive funds from the project if successful.

For those who pass the eligibility checklist, their Concept Note will be grouped according to small local women-led organisations operating in no more than one county, medium and large women-led organisations. Applications in each size category will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Institutional capacity of the organization to implement its proposed work plan / concept note.
2. Extent of the organisation's focus on women's and girls' rights and services.
 - a. Must be an organization that can demonstrate, through its activities and actions, a belief in the full realisation of women's and girls' human rights.
 - b. The organization's current mission, and values, and the profile of the activities that it is currently implementing, is focused on transforming gender inequalities.
 - c. The main focus of the organizations activities and results is on making systematic changes to sustainably improve women's and girls' lives, including by engaging men and boys.
3. Quality and quantity of experience in doing activities, awareness-raising or advocacy on women's issues and rights.
4. Presence / reach in the constituency it serves.
5. Experience of engaging with authorities or decision-makers at any level.
6. Potential for sustainable impact.
7. Quality of concept note submitted.
8. Reasonable costing of budgeted items.
9. Value-for-money.
10. Past experience managing similar size of grant.



The top 10 scoring candidates in each size category will be shortlisted, to ensure that the program will fund women-led organisations of a variety of sizes. The shortlist will then be reviewed and narrowed down further to ensure that:

- There are at least 5 grantees in each of the geographic areas of the project: Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial, and Jonglei Areas
- That there is diversity in the groups of women / girls that the organisations are supporting (ex. disability, religion, ethnic group, minority group, and particularly marginalised groups)

Activities not allowed

Ineligible activities include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Activities concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorship for participation in international workshops/conferences.
2. Activities concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses.
3. Activities supporting political parties.
4. Activities supporting conflict.
5. Activities supporting debts and debt service charges.

Submission of Concept Notes

Each organisation may only submit one application. If a group submits more than one application, all may be determined ineligible. Any organisation can apply to work in one or more of the target areas but it must 1) have a presence in all the target states where it is applying, and 2) must submit only one concept note covering all the areas where it proposes to work in the three target areas. We require applicants to complete the concept note template. The concept note template is available on the website <https://comms.southsudanngoforum.org/c/jobs> or can be requested from ssdpartners@care.org. Please read these guidelines carefully before you submit your application. Supporting documents to submit are also explained there.

Please submit your concept notes and supporting documents to ssdpartners@care.org or hardcopy to CARE South Sudan field offices in Torit, Juba and Bor in a sealed envelope marked "Women Voice and Leadership Concept Note". All concept notes must be submitted as per the deadline above. Late submissions will be disqualified.

Size of grants

Multi-year grants available per organization have a maximum of 132,000 Canadian dollars, which is approximately 100,000 US Dollar or 12.9 M SSP at the rate of July 10, 2019. Organisations are suggested to apply for an amount of money that they can confidently handle. CARE reserves the right to adjust the specific grant amount of any applicant depending on the financial management strength and past experience in managing similar grants.

Selection process

CARE will use a women focused, feminist and participatory approach to select grantees for the WVLM multi-year grants. This means that representatives of women-led organisations in former Eastern Equatorial, Central Equatorial and Jonglei states will be involved in approving the selection of women-led organisations to benefit. The WVLM Strategic Advisory Committee approve the final decisions about which women-led organisations that will receive the grants. This Committee is made up of representatives from: the UN, INGOs specifically with a history of working with WROs in South Sudan, GBV sub cluster, national women network, Women Monthly Forum, Global Affairs Canada, CARE,



technical experts and women-led organisations. This Committee will ensure objective, transparent and balanced selection of grantees in the target areas.

Step 1 Pre-assessment of Concept Notes: All concept notes will be received by two impartial administrators from CARE (one from CARE South Sudan and one from Canada). CARE's Compliance Committee (CARE finance, grants management, programs, and admin staff) will together open the applications on the day after the deadline, assign reference numbers, and check that all the questions have been answered on the form. They will also determine if the organisation will be categorised as small, medium, or large. Concepts that do not comply with the basic requirements and guidelines will be dropped at this stage with reasons noted in a full report of all the concepts received, details of those disqualified, and details of those to proceed.

Step 2 Evaluation of Concept Notes: For concept notes that proceed to step 2, each concept will be subjected to a joint technical evaluation undertaken by CARE's Compliance Committee. The final scores will be the average of the scores awarded by the independent evaluators for each application. A disparity level in scores of 20% or more will mean that an additional assessment will be done. Following an additional assessment, the average scores will be considered in the decision making process. Scores or marks awarded to concepts will be recorded in the evaluation grid (see below) based on the criteria above. The Compliance Committee will provide a summary report of all the concept notes, provide feedback/recommendations on these, and scores. Scores will be compared by size category (e.g. Small organisations will be competing against other small organisations) to ensure a good mixture of small local women-led organisations operating in only one county, medium, and large women-led organisations. The Compliance Committee will recommend shortlisting the top 10 concept notes of each size category.

Step 3 Review and Approval: The Strategic Advisory Committee will review the summary of each concept note, evaluator notes/feedbacks, recommendations, and scores of the CARE Compliance Committee. They will ensure that the process has been done fairly with no bias or conflict of interest. They will approve by unanimous consensus or, if not possible, by a simple majority vote by a show of hands on the selected grants based on 1) the objective, transparent, inclusive, and verifiable criteria and processes (applied to each size category); 2) ensuring an overall balanced and fair representation to women rights organizations by geographic area (ex. at least 3 per state); and 3) a diversity of groups of women and girls including most vulnerable groups. Applicants passing this step will be notified. Selection decision of the SAC is final. However, individual feedback will be provided to concept notes that are not successful with clear reasons. Interested applicants will have access to their rated concept notes to ensure transparency and fairness in the selection.

Step 4 Due Diligence: Successful candidates will receive a due diligence visit to ensure they exist, that their application form is accurate, that they are not receiving funding from another initiative to undertake the same activities, and are feminist or women-led organizations. A capacity assessment will be undertaken with them. CARE South Sudan will make recommendation to discontinue any potential grantee deemed to be too high risk. A due diligence and capacity assessment report will be presented to the Strategic Advisory Committee to finalise selection and decide the number of grants, and the size of grant each organisation will receive. Successful grantees will be notified of findings, the size and length of their grant, and receive feedback on their application. Some will be requested to review their application to revise their plans, timelines, and/or budget as required before the grant is made.



Step 5 Award Letters and Partnerships Agreements: Successful grantees will receive award letters from CARE South Sudan. An award letter does not constitute any contractual obligation. Partnerships Agreements will be signed with the winners after further discussions.

Due to the expected large number of applications, CARE may not be able to send notification to all unsuccessful applicants but will endeavour to provide feedback where possible.

Time Table

Please take note of the below timetable for the selection process:

Activity	Timeline/Deadline
Opening of expression of interest call	July 10, 2019
Window for questions, clarifications and applications issues	July 20, 2019
CARE response to questions and concerns	July 23, 2019
Deadline for submission of concept notes	August 3, 2019
Opening of all concept notes for preliminary review by the compliance committee	August 5, 2019
Evaluation of concept notes by Compliance and Strategic Advisory Committee	August 6-9, 2019
Review and approval of summary list of selected concept notes by the SAC	August 9, 2019
Due diligence and capacity assessment for successful applicants	Aug 12 - Sept 30, 2019
Award letters to selected grantees	October 1 – 6, 2019
Partnerships agreement signing with selected grantees	October 30, 2019



Annex 1: Eligibility Checklist

All those applying must meet the mandatory **eligibility requirements / criteria** below. Failure to meet any of the following criteria will lead to automatic disqualification:

Eligibility Checklist			
#	Eligibility Criteria	Evidence required (Attach all relevant documents)	Any evidence? Yes or No?
1	Must be a South Sudanese organisation	Contact address and/or registration document from RRC.	
2	Must be non-government, not-for-profit (non-commercial), and not affiliated with any political group or leader	Registration document from any authority and organizational profile	
3	Must have existed for 1 year or more	Registration document from RRC, and/or references and or references / community validation. Annual or past activity reports	
4	Must be registered with relevant authority at state or national level	Registration certificate of any authority	
5	Must have an active board of director, governors or advisors and at least 2/3 of the board members must be female.	List of board of directors and any board meeting minutes	
6	Must be an organisation that has been led by one or more women or girls (female leadership)	Name, gender and contact information of the leader of the organisation. Staff or volunteers or members lists	
7	Must have at least 2/3 of staff, volunteers, or members who are females	List of staff or volunteers or members.	
8	Must be an organisation that targets women and girls as the main beneficiaries.	References / community validation. Or activity report	
9	Must be an organisation with a physical presence in the target areas. Including an office, staff, volunteers, members in the area. (office not a mandatory required for small, local women-led organisations operating in no more than one county)	Office address, Name and location of staff/volunteers/members.	



10	Must be willing to participate in some WVL capacity development trainings.	State Yes on concept note form stating that the organisation plans to participate in required capacity building training.	
11	Must be willing to set up a bank account if they have not already done so at the time of applying.	State Yes on concept note form stating that the organisation plans to set up a bank account to receive funding under this program.	

Annex 2: Evaluation Scoring Grid

For those organisations that pass the eligibility criteria above, these will be scored against the following evaluation criteria in the scoring grid below:

Scoring Grid								
#	Evaluation Criteria	Scorer 1	Scorer 2	Scorer 3	Variance in scores	Fourth scorer (if 20%+ variance)	Points out of	Average of points
Part 1: Technical								
1	Institutional capacity of the organization to implement its proposed work plan/ concept note.						/5	
2	Extent of the organisation's focus on women's and girls' rights and services, ex. can demonstrate, through its activities and actions, a belief in the full realisation of women's and girls' human rights; a focus on transforming gender inequalities and making systematic changes to sustainably improve women's and girls' lives, (which may also include by engaging men and boys).						/20	



3	Quality and quantity of experience in doing activities, awareness-raising or advocacy on women's issues and rights						/5	
4	Presence/reach in the constituency it serves.						/5	
5	Experience of engaging with authorities or decision-makers at any level.						/5	
6	Potential for sustainable impact.						/10	
7	Quality of Concept Note submitted promising approaches to advance gender equality.						/10	
Part 2: Financial								
8	Reasonable costing of budgeted items						/10	
9	Value-for-money						/20	
10	Past experience managing similar size of grant						/10	
	TOTAL						100	

Annex 3: Compliance Committee Recommendations Report

#	Name of applicant	Geographic coverage	Thematic coverage	Coverage of any marginalised groups	Average of points / Score Out of 100	Evaluation Summary Comments
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						



Annex 4: Strategic Advisory Committee Decision Report

#	Name of applicant	Geographic coverage	Thematic coverage	Coverage of any marginalised groups	Average of points / Score	Ranking for selection (top 15 will move to Step 4 Due Diligence)	Reasons for the ranking
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							