AFGHANISTAN'S MEASURE FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY (AMANAT) PROJECT

ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS)
Year Two

October 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019

ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS)

AMANAT Project

(USAID Contract Number AID-306-H-17-00003)

APS.18.002

APS ISSUANCE/CLOSING DATE: October 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019

PRE-APPLICATION TRAINING WORKSHOPS: Will be held on a rolling basis. Please see details in Section D on page 10.

LOCATION: Kabul and other provinces as required. For reservations, please contact AMANAT.Grants@msiworldwide.com.

CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS: All questions should be directed to: AMANAT.Grants@msiworldwide.com. Phone calls regarding technical content will not be entertained. Questions and answers will be updated on a regular basis and uploaded online. You can access them here: https://msiworldwide.egnyte.com/fl/IQjktBwkaX (Password: APS.18.002)

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF CONCEPT PAPERS: USAID/AMANAT will accept Concept Papers on a rolling basis until **March 31, 2019 (by 4:00PM Kabul time).** Subject to the availability of funds, this deadline may be extended to a later date to be determined and advertised amending this APS. Concept Papers will be reviewed as they are received on a first-come, first-serve basis. Concept Papers must be sent via email only to: AMANAT.Grants@msiworldwide.com with cc to jfreer@msi-inc.com (emailed documents should be in MS Word and Excel). All Concept Papers submitted via email must state in the subject line "Concept Paper Submission – APS.18.002"

GRANTS AMOUNT ESTIMATION: Between US$10,000 to US$100,000 per grant award, subject to funds availability, with grant activities expected to be conducted within a 12-month period or shorter.

APS OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this Annual Program Statement (ASP) is to generate a number of grant awards which focus on promoting Afghan non-governmental activities against corruption. Afghanistan's Measure for Accountability and Transparency (AMANAT) seeks proposals from a wide range of Afghan national, regional, and local Civil Society Organization (CSOs), media organizations, and business associations to implement specific activities that fit within this scope of the AMANAT project.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS: The APS solicits applications for interventions which will be implemented in Kabul and other provinces throughout Afghanistan.

ORGANIZATION ELIGIBLE TO APPLY: Organizations should have recent track record of implementing projects related to the mitigation/elimination of corruption in Afghanistan. Capable and responsible non-partisan legally-registered Afghan CSO and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); consortia of local CSOs, research organizations, and universities are encouraged to apply. Individuals and government entities, as well as non-Afghan organizations, are **not** eligible to apply under this APS.

EXPECTED GRANT TYPE: Fixed Amount Awards, Simplified Grants, or In-kind Grants.

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System (USAID)
AMANAT	Afghanistan's Measure for Accountability and Transparency
APS	Annual Program Statement
BMP	Branding and Marking Plan
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COI	Conflict of Interest
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System
FAA	Fixed Amount Award (formerly known as a Fixed Obligation Grant)
GEC	Grants Evaluation Committee
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSI	Management Systems International, a Tetra Tech company
NDA	Non-Disclosure Agreement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity (see: APS and RFA)
PD	Program Description
SAM	System for Award Management
SOW	Scope of Work
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

SECTION I: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. BACKGROUND

Management Systems International (MSI) is a Washington, D.C. metro-area based international development firm founded in 1981 with a corporate commitment to improving public sector management in the US and abroad. MSI offers a strong range of technical expertise in the fields of democracy and governance, economic growth, monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning, organizational capacity building, and health, education and the justice sector. MSI assures exceptional technical expertise and strong project management quality through its reliable cost control capacity and consistent project management monitoring. The firm is a subsidiary of Tetra Tech, a global multi-specialist consulting business, headquartered in the USA. In Afghanistan, MSI is the prime contractor implementing the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)–funded "Afghanistan's Measure for Accountability and Transparency" (AMANAT) project.

The overall purpose of AMANAT is to support efforts to reduce and prevent corruption in the provision of government public services, such as health, education, water and sanitation, driver's licenses and building permits, to name just a few. AMANAT is a 5-year project funded by USAID that began in December 2017. Technical assistance is being provided to several key government ministries and departments to identify major corruption vulnerabilities, develop detailed plans to reduce these risks and implement those plans effectively. In addition to working with the government, a major focus of the project is to promote activities by civil society organizations, the mass media, and business associations to conduct oversight and monitoring of government agencies and their anti-corruption reforms, implement communications and public outreach campaigns concerning corruption and anti-corruption reforms, and conduct advocacy to promote further anti-corruption efforts, among others.

B. OVERVIEW

Through this Annual Program Statement (APS), AMANAT intends to assist Afghan non-governmental organizations by supporting local civic monitoring, activism and policy advocacy, and public communications/outreach initiatives concerning the fight against corruption, particularly related to the government's provision of public services in Kabul and at a provincial and local level. Afghan organizations interested in receiving funding for programs are invited to carefully read this APS in its entirety and to follow the APS guidance in order to apply for funds.

Proposed activities may include, but are not limited to, initiating citizen monitoring and oversight of the government's delivery of public services and its implementation of anti-corruption reforms; conducting communications and awareness campaigns to inform the public about what constitutes corruption, how to stand up for your rights and how to register complaints; and advocating for new anti-corruption reforms, among others. In addition to programmatic activities, applicants may include activities to strengthen internal organizational capacity if needed.

All proposed activities shall directly relate to the achievement of the objectives of the AMANAT program. Applicants are encouraged to propose the best mix of approaches and activities to achieve the results envisioned under the proposed program. Grant projects should include innovative and localized approaches, especially those that mainstream gender or engage women, as well as encourage

collaborative work among civil society organizations (CSOs) in different regions or working in different sectors.

In every year of the AMANAT project, two APSs such as this one, will be issued to encourage the submission of grant proposals. Each APS will be held open for submissions for a six-month period. Grants will be provided to both national, regional and local level CSOs, and media and business organizations. Capacity building will be provided by AMANAT to local organizations to help them perform the work funded by their grants, as well as to manage them appropriately.

C. KEY AREAS OF INTEREST

The three areas listed below highlight the topics for which AMANAT is primarily interested in receiving concept papers & grant applications under this APS. These areas have been identified as those where more progress is needed to support citizen engagement in the fight against corruption. Proposed activities may cover one or more areas.

1) PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS INITIATIVES

Fighting corruption effectively requires engaging citizens in the process. To do this, citizens need to be well informed about what constitutes corrupt activity, what citizens can do to stand up for their rights, how citizens can register their complaints about corruption they encounter, and what the government is doing to reduce corrupt behavior. CSOs, the media and business organizations can play a very effective role in engaging, educating and promoting learning across citizens and stakeholders. They need to reach out and engage various constituencies, including, but not limited to, women's groups, teachers, community leaders, religious leaders, youth and sports groups, and businesses to empower them to act on issues directly affecting their lives.

Through this APS, AMANAT encourages CSOs, media organizations and business organizations to use innovative outreach/communications approaches tailored specifically to different audiences who are impacted by corruption when transacting with government. This can include, for example, interactive websites and social media platforms for youth and urban populations, and radio and street theater for those less educated and in rural areas. It can also involve investigative journalism, student competitions and debates, and business integrity forums, as examples. Many other approaches can and should be proposed to facilitate these public outreach and communications initiatives. These efforts should allow opportunities for citizens to learn, discuss and debate on critical issues about corruption and anti-corruption reforms as they relate to the delivery of public services.

2) MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY AND ANTI-CORRUPTION REFORMS

Citizen and community monitoring of the government's delivery of public services is a way to detect which services and procedures are most vulnerable to corruption and are in need of reform. Monitoring can also be conducted to assess anti-corruption reforms after they have been implemented to determine their effectiveness at reducing abuse. Monitoring and oversight initiatives can take many forms – conducting informal surveys of citizens as they leave government offices, conducting focus groups of consumers of particular public services, developing crowdsourcing and corruption reporting applications for smartphones, promoting whistleblowing protection for civil servants, and developing investigative journalistic reports, among many others. The ultimate goal is to collect data from the users and/or

providers of the public services on their first-hand experiences and to analyze that data to detect trends that show improvement or regression. Innovative ways of using or disseminating these monitoring results should be presented in grant proposals.

3) CSO ADVOCACY FOR ANTI-CORRUPTION REFORMS

It is critical for CSOs to advocate for anti-corruption reforms that they believe are needed in order to push government in the right direction. When certain segments of the population using, a service are particularly victimized by corrupt officials, when laws and regulations need to be changed, and when more open information is required to make the provision of quality government services fair and just, advocacy campaigns by CSOs are needed. CSO advocacy initiatives can take many forms. They can involve research that delves into a problem area, followed by public forums that promote solutions. They can promote citizen-government dialogues to develop paths to reform and develop and run community training programs for anti-corruption advocacy and reporting. They can involve lobbying of parliamentarians and government managers. There are many other approaches to conducting advocacy campaigns that will be strongly considered.

D. APPROACH

In developing creative program approaches, AMANAT strongly encourages applicants to consider and apply the following cross-cutting practices:

1) INNOVATE AND BUILD ON PAST SUCCESSES

AMANAT encourages programs that capitalize on existing opportunities and proven organizational capacities. Applications which seek to scale-up proven successes are especially welcome. At the same time, AMANAT is looking to support innovative approaches to longstanding problems and welcomes concept notes that reflect innovative thinking and a desire to advance the range, depth, and impact of civil society initiatives on identifying and reducing corruption.

2) SUSTAINABILITY

AMANAT is committed to empowering partners and beneficiaries to take increased ownership of the development process, including financing, and to maintain project results and impact beyond the life of the grant. All projects should explicitly address how the project results or impact will continue after the end of the project. Indications of how a project can generate revenue or self-finance itself will be welcome.

3) EXPLORE JOINT INITIATIVE / COALITION / PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

To increase program impact and sustainability, AMANAT strongly encourages applicants to consider partnership, teaming, or other arrangements that make best use of existing organizational capacities. Approaches may involve the formal or informal establishment of coalitions, partnerships, networks, consortia, Communities of Practice, or other arrangements of civil society groups, youth, and others. These types of joint or collective action initiatives may involve sub-grant relationships.

Approaches which connect organizations in different geographic areas and with different skill levels are particularly encouraged. For example, applicants may consider teaming larger, more established organizations with younger organizations, or linking similar kinds of organizations from different geographic areas. If joint initiatives or coalitions are developed, concept papers and applications must reflect how they will be managed and identify the lead organization that will be the main point of contact for AMANAT.

4) GENDER INTEGRATION

Corruption in the delivery of public services affects men and women differently. Women are often confronted with corruption more than men because they are the ones requesting public services for family members. As a result, grant proposals must include a discussion of how activities conducted under the proposed project will be designed to take these differential impacts into account. It might involve training that highlights how corruption affects men and women differently, providing training to help women combat and report corruption, developing information campaigns that focus on these differential impacts, or prioritizing activities that reduce the most negative impacts of corruption on women, for example. Overall, the proposed projects should build the capabilities of both men and women to combat corrupt practices that negatively affect their lives, economic opportunities and democratic governance of all Afghan citizens.

SECTION II: GRANT PROPOSAL INFORMATION

A. ESTIMATED FUNDING LEVEL:

AMANAT expects that grants provided through this mechanism will range in value from US$10,000 to US$100,000, subject to funds availability.

B. ANTICIPATED PERIOD

AMANAT project anticipates a performance period of 12 months or shorter. If appropriate, longer-term projects will be considered. These amounts and timeframes may be adjusted depending on the grant's activities, the applicant's institutional capacity, the geographic scope of the proposed program, and the type and extent of partnership or other teaming arrangements that are proposed. The awards made under this APS will be administered through and managed by the AMANAT project.

This APS will be open for about six months after initial announcement. That means that concept papers will be accepted by AMANAT for almost six months under this APS announcement (through March 31, 2019). AMANAT may revise aspects of this APS, including program priority areas, during this period. If and when revisions are made, a revised APS will be posted and made publicly available.

C. AWARD TYPE

Grants may be provided where funds are disbursed based on specified "milestones" or deliverables (FAA – Fixed Amount Awards), Cost reimbursable funds (Simplified Grant), or either in direct material or equipment (In-Kind Grant). The grant mechanism will be determined by the AMANAT grants

management team through a pre-award determination process based on the nature of the grant activity and the financial and management capacity of the grantee organization. The award size, the number of awards and amount of available funding is subject to change

D. PRE-APPLICATION GRANTS WORKSHOPS

AMANAT will hold grants workshops for interested applicants to the APS to ask questions about the application process in Kabul and other provinces as required. All interested applicants are welcome to attend and should RSVP to AMANAT.Grants@msiworldwide.com to ensure space availability. APS clarification questions or comments should be sent to AMANAT.Grants@msiworldwide.com.

GRANTS WORKSHOP	PROVINCE	DATE & TIME	LOCATION/VENUE
Concept Development Workshop	Kabul	October 25, 2018 – 10:00 AM	Near Kabul Airport, Khowaja Rawash Road, Hawashenasi Area, Baron Hotel
Concept Development & Application/Proposal Workshop	Herat	November 12, 2018 10:00 AM	Herat Province, Herat City
Application/Proposal Development Workshop	Kabul	December 11, 2018 10:00 AM	Near Kabul Airport, Khowaja Rawash Road, Hawashenasi Area, Baron Hotel
Concept Development & Application/Proposal Workshop	Balkh	January 23, 2019 – 10:00 AM	Balk Province, Mazar-e-Sharif Center
Concept Development & Application/Proposal Workshop	Nangarhar	February 20, 2019 10:00 AM	Nangarhar Province, Jalalabad City
Concept Development Workshop	Kabul	March 20, 2019 10:00 AM	Near Kabul Airport, Khowaja Rawash Road, Hawashenasi Area, Baron Hotel
Concept Development & Application/Proposal Workshop	Kandahar	March 27, 2019 10:00 AM	Kandahar province, Kandahar City

AMANAT grants team can conduct grants workshops in other provinces upon request from a number or group of CSO not less than 10.

E. GUIDELINESS & NOTICES FOR APPLICATIONS

1) SOURCE & NATIONALITY

The USAID authorized geographic code for the procurement of goods and services under this opportunity is 935. A current list of eligible countries and further information on Source and Nationality may be found at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1876/310.pdf

Applicants must agree that no services will be rendered through a service provider in any foreign policy restricted country.

2) LANGUAGE

The required language for all Concept Papers and application is English. There will be an unofficial translation of the Annual Program Statement issued for informational purposes only. In case of any conflict or discrepancy, the English version shall prevail and take precedence.

3) NO OBLIGATION AWARD

USAID/AMANAT may reject any or all applications or not award any grants under this APS if such action is in the best interest of AMANAT, its Donor, or the Host Country. AMANAT may also waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received, should such actions be in the best interest of AMANAT, its Donor, or the Host Country the issuance of any award resulting for this APS is subject to the prior approval from USAID, including vetting approval for grants over $25,000.

4) PRICING

Priced to be valid for at least ninety (90) calendar days from the date of their application. Pricing must include all applicable taxes. Entities registered as a Non-Profit NGO with the Government of Afghanistan, will not be considered a Tax Exempted Entity until a copy of the Tax Exemption Certification from the Ministry of Finance is provided to AMANAT.

5) CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

Information pertaining to AMANAT, USAID and USAID's partners obtained by the Applicant as a result of participation in the APS is confidential and shall not be disclosed at any time without prior written authorization form AMANAT's authorized representative.

6) REQUIRED REGISTRATIONS

Prior to receipt of an award, the winning applicant must be registered with the U.S. Government at www.sam.gov.   Instructions to register can be found at https://www.sam.gov/sam/SAMGuide/SAMUserGuide.htm.

For any grants award(s) resulting from this solicitation that is other than in-kind and equivalent to $25,000 or more, grantees will be required to provide Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number at the time of award. If the application already has a DUNS number, it should be included in their application. Otherwise, applicants will be expected to get a DUNS number before an award is made. The AMANAT project will assist successful applicants with this process. DUNS numbers can be obtained online at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp. Both registrations are free of charge. An exception to this requirement can only be made by the Director of Contracts and Grants Management.

F. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1) BRANDING AND MARKING

All USAID-sponsored assistance awards are required to adhere to branding policies and revised marking requirements for grants and cooperative agreements in accordance with ADS 320. This includes visibly displaying the USAID Standard Graphic Identity that clearly communicates assistance is, "From the American people" on all programs, projects, activities, publications, public communications, and

commodities provided or supported through USAID assistance awards. ADS 320 requires that, after the evaluation of the applications, AMANAT Staff will request the Apparently Successful Applicant to submit a Branding Strategy that describes how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and cooperating country citizens, and identifies all donors and explains how they will be acknowledged. AMANAT staff will work with the successful grantee to draft a marking and branding plan which will be annexed to the grants agreement.

2) ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (22 CFR 216) and in USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) Parts ADS 201.5.10g and 204 (http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/), which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. Compliance with USAID Environmental Procedures (22 CFR Reg. 216), including appropriate environmental mitigation and monitoring measures, should be considered an integral and required part of all activity development and implementation and should be budgeted accordingly. All environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures will be explained to the successful grantee. These will be also stated in the grants agreement.

3) VETTING

For approved procurement of goods or services of more than $25,000, the potential vendor will be vetted through USAID, per USAID/Afghanistan Mission Order 201.06.

4) DONOR FLOW-DOWN CLAUSES

The winning applicant will be required to comply with the following donor required rules and regulations:

1) Any resulting award will be subject to the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations at USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) 303mab. Copies of the provisions may be found at: http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf or are available on request.
2) The following U.S. Government issued documents shall serve as the primary reference for any questions regarding policies, procedures, and allowable costs, not specifically addressed elsewhere in this Award:
   - 2 CFR 200, Subpart E, Cost Principles (available at: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200-subpartE.pdf) or 48 CFR part 31 (available at: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title48-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title48-vol1-part31.pdf), as applicable
   - 2 CFR 200, Subpart F, Audit Requirements (available at: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200-subpartF.pdf), as applicable.

Applicants are encouraged to review these required rules and regulations to ensure that they will be able to comply with them if an award is made.

AMANAT reserves the right to modify by written notice the terms of this APS at any time in its sole discretion. AMANAT also reserves the right to withdraw this APS at any time-with or without statement of cause- prior to actual award.

SECTION III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Any legally registered Afghan civil society/media/business organization/association is eligible to submit applications under this APS. For-profit companies are eligible to be prime recipients of a grant, but may NOT receive any profit under a grant award. Organizations may submit applications representing their firm or in partnership with other local organizations. If applications are done through a partnership or consortium, there must be one lead organization identified that would be responsible for managing the overall activity.

B. The following are not eligible for grant support: individuals and government entities; political parties or organizations; organizations that advocate, promote, or espouse anti-democratic policies or illegal activities; faith-based organizations pursuing exclusive religious purposes or whose programs and services discriminate based on religion, and whose main objective of the grant is of a religious nature; and any entity whose name appears on the:

1. List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs (http://www.sam.gov);

2. Specially Designated Nationals List http://sdnsearch.ofac.treas.gov/Default.aspx); and

3. The list established and maintained by the 1267 Committee with respect to individuals, groups, undertakings and other entities associated with Al-Qaida (http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml).

C. Eligible and Ineligible Activities:

1. Activities that are eligible for funding include those that support APS objectives. Any purchases or activities that are not necessary to accomplish grant purposes are considered ineligible activities.

2. Execution of grant-funded activities must take place in Afghanistan and all costs must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable. Reasonable costs are those costs that are generally recognized as ordinary and necessary, and would be incurred by a prudent person in the conduct of normal business. Allocable costs are those costs specifically linked to the execution of the activity, such as project staff salaries, experts' fees, trainings, meetings and seminars, publications, purchase and rental of equipment, office expenses, in-country travel, and other direct costs. Allowable costs are those costs which conform to any limitations in the grant award.

3. Specific cost items that are unallowable under a grant include: profit or fee; application preparation costs; international travel; payment of debts; political elections and related campaign activities; fees for public and elected government officials; fines and penalties; creation of endowments; military equipment; surveillance equipment; commodities and services for support of police and other law enforcement activities; abortion equipment and services; luxury goods and gambling equipment; parties or "representation" expenses; purchases of restricted goods without prior USAID approval, such as agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, used equipment, and fertilizer.

AMANAT will not accept applications from individuals.

Cost sharing is not required under this APS. However, project co-funding and leveraging potential AMANAT funds with other financial and in-kind resources are highly encouraged and desirable.

SECTION IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

All applicants should provide application materials according to the requirements identified below. Concept papers may be submitted through **March 31, 2019.** Concept papers received after the APS closing date will not be accepted.

All concepts must respond to at least one of the program areas outlined above and should indicate how they will incorporate cross-cutting approaches in their activities.

Further, the proposed activity must have an estimated value and performance period that is within the parameters described in this APS.

No program expenditures will be paid by AMANAT except those covered in a signed grant. AMANAT reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.

Interested applicants should begin the application process by submitting a concept paper, preliminary budget and capability statement as per the following guidance in English to AMANAT.Grants@msiworldwide.com with cc to jfreer@msi-inc.com. Please contact us if there are technical or other difficulties with submitting the application by e-mail. Based on the competitiveness of the concept paper, selected applicants will be invited to submit full proposals. Please do not submit a full proposal unless specifically invited to do so by AMANAT.

Concept Papers received after that time or at a different location may not be accepted. This APS is open to all organizations that are eligible to apply at no cost per the terms provide herein. **If any person demands/requests consideration (payment of any kind) in exchange of this APS, or promises successful selection in exchange for consideration, please inform ethics@msi-inc.com.** Applicants must be technically qualified, financially responsible and otherwise eligible for receipt of an AMANAT Donor-funded award.

Incomplete or invalid applications, i.e., those that do not include all required application materials, respond to the APS program objectives, or otherwise comply with the application guidelines, will not be reviewed.

The application process is as follows:

STEP ONE: SUBMIT CONCEPT PAPER

As detailed further below, the Concept Paper should not exceed eight (8) pages, including (a) a maximum of six (6) pages for the program description, (b) one (1) page for the preliminary budget, and (c) one (1) page for the capability statement. Submissions must be written in English and must use the format described here. Eligible organizations interested in applying for a grant in response to this APS are invited to send their concept paper submissions via e-mail to AMANAT.Grants@msiworldwide.com with cc to jfreer@msi-inc.com (emailed documents should be in MS Word and Excel). All Concept Papers submitted via email must state in the subject line "Concept Paper Submission – APS.18.002" In developing the submission, the applicant should carefully consider all information contained in this APS. The concept paper should contain:

1) **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION (NOT TO EXCEED SIX (6) PAGES):**

a) **Program Summary** - Explain the specific problem to be addressed, the expected goals to be achieved, how this program supports the areas of interest in this APS, and a short description of the strategy to be used to achieve the proposed goals. Define the expected numbers and type of beneficiaries of this program, the geographic area in Afghanistan in which the proposed program will be conducted, and the timeframe.

b) **Primary Project Activities** - Include a brief description of the activities that will be undertaken to achieve the proposed objectives. All applications should include a brief, meaningful statement addressing any gender issues, such as how the program benefits or includes women or how the applicant proposes to address gender disparity.

c) **Expected Results** - Outline expected results and impact and the method that will be used to measure and monitor progress. This section should include an explanation of how activities and/or results will be sustained after the end of the award, if that is planned.

2) **PRELIMINARY BUDGET SUMMARY (NOT TO EXCEED ONE (1) PAGE):**

Provide a budget summary in MS Excel or compatible format that includes, at a minimum, the total funding requested from AMANAT and the proposed cost share contribution (e.g. amount and whether in cash or in-kind), if any, that may be contributed by the applicant from its own resources or other non-U.S. government sources. Budgets should be in US dollars. USAID may request more detailed budget information at a later stage in the review process. (A recommended budget template is attached in Annex 2).

Any cost budgeted must be reasonable, allocable to the project, and allowable (no profit or fee, interest expense, fines, penalties, or entertainment). AMANAT will only fund direct costs that are clearly related to project activities.

Detailed requirements for allowable costs are provided in the applicable U.S. Government "Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations: A Mandatory reference for ADS Chapter 303, "which can be found at https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab.

All the sums indicated in the budget must include associated taxes. Entities registered as a Non-Profit NGO with the Government of Afghanistan, will not be considered a Tax Exempted Entity until a copy of the Tax Exemption Certification from the Ministry of Finance is provided.

AMANAT reserves the right to negotiate the actual grant budget with the selected applicant(s)

All applications and delivery dates shall be valid for a period of ninety (90) days following the date of the submission, unless otherwise clearly specified by applicant.

3) **CAPABILITY STATEMENT (NOT TO EXCEED ONE (1) PAGE):**

Briefly describe your organization's technical and administrative capabilities and past experience in conducting programs similar to the one proposed. Describe any partnership, consortium, or coalition arrangements for the purpose of achieving the proposed program. Where such partnerships and consortia include sub-grant relationships, the terms and conditions of such sub-grants must be clearly described in the proposal as well as your organization's capacity and experience in managing sub-grants.

The following documents will be required as part of the submission of the Concept Paper (Annex 1), as annexes. Please note that there is no page limit for annexes.

- Legal Registration Certificate, please make sure to include a copy of a valid business license if the organization is for profit.

- Initial estimated budget (Annex 2)

- Pre-Award Certifications and Transparency Act Reporting & Certification (Annex 3)

STEP TWO: SELECTED APPLICANTS SUBMIT FULL APPLICATION

Within 14 working days of submitting concept notes AMANAT Grants team will contact the applicant, notifies both the unsuccessful applicants and shortlisted applicants of the status of their concept paper and If the concept paper is selected, AMANAT will ask the applicants and request a full application. Instructions for preparing a full application including a detailed budget will be provided at that time. Applicants should not provide an application if they are not requested to do so.

STEP THREE: NEGOTIATIONS AND AGREEMENT OF GRANT TERMS

If AMANAT's review results in a recommendation for funding, then the organization and AMANAT will enter final discussions to ensure all pre-award requirements are met and significant grant terms are negotiated and agreed. The exact details of this phase will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to each application. However, the following are common areas that may require further discussion and agreement prior to award:

- Payment terms may include payment through the provision of advances, direct reimbursement, or payment through a fixed amount award where payments are made based upon the achievement of specific results.

- Administrative procedures may include items concerning administrative reporting and logistical requirements for the program, including training components.

- Cost-sharing terms, where applicable, include any customs duties, sales taxes, social insurance taxes or other applicable local taxes and fees paid by the applicant that are directly related to the proposed grant, will be included as a cost-share for the grant.

- Other award terms may be included, such as special provisions and/or special award conditions.

SECTION V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

USAID EVALUATION CRITERIA

Concept papers will be reviewed by an AMANAT Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) using the following criteria:

- Technical merit and the responsiveness of the proposed activity to the APS Areas of Interest;

- Demonstrated Past Performance;

- Applicant's Organization Capacity and Capability of the proposed team to implement the proposed activity; and

- Cost realism and linkage between costs and program activities.

In applying the above-mentioned criteria, technical merit evaluation will be of most significance. Cost realism and capability evaluations will carry equal weight but will have less of significance than technical merit.

Concept papers that are deemed to be responsive will be selected and applicants will be requested to submit a full application to AMANAT.

AMANAT will review concept papers on a rolling basis. A successful application will propose a program or project that is responsive to the stated purpose of this APS, and is evaluated favorably against the evaluation factors.

AMANAT will inform unsuccessful applicants in writing, explaining briefly why the concept paper was not selected for further consideration.

Preliminary budgets will be examined to ensure they are a realistic financial expression of the proposed program, and do not contain estimated costs which may be unreasonable or unable to be charged under the program.

A grant application will not be viewed as more desirable over another simply because it has a lower budget. Programs with modest scope and budget, which are viewed as having a strong potential for positive impact and results, are preferred over more expensive, potentially less effective programs. AMANAT is expecting to fund projects whose activities and requested funding are in sensible alignment.

Staff salaries will be considered reasonable to the extent that they are comparable to that paid for similar work in the relevant labor market; salary history will not be used to determine the salary range for a particular job category,

If a concept paper is selected for further consideration, a pre-award survey or assessment may be conducted. The areas covered by a pre-award survey or assessment will vary according to circumstances, but may include reviews to ensure the organization meets the necessary standards for financial management, program management, property, procurement, reports and records, internal controls, is in good financial standing, and has the technical capacity to conduct the proposed program.

AMANAT will use the following criteria in reviewing **full application** proposals:

1) TECHNICAL MERIT (50 POINTS):

AMANAT will review the extent to which the proposed technical approach can reasonably be expected to produce the intended results in a specific timeframe. This includes reviewing the relevance of the approach to the problem to be addressed, whether the proposed activities are consistent with the objectives sought, how the activities are interrelated, how activities will be tracked, monitored and reported, how well the program supports AMANAT's objectives, and the

degree to which the proposal incorporates lessons learned from similar programs or activities, builds on prior relevant programs or activities, and supports consensus building and the appropriate use of the media. AMANAT will review whether the proposed beneficiaries are strategically chosen, and whether the proposed performance targets appear reasonable and realistic.

AMANAT will review the effectiveness of the applicant's approach to gender issues relating to the proposed activities. Sustainability of proposed activities beyond the life of award is an important evaluation factor as well. For applications with a focus on sustaining activities or organizational capacity beyond the life of the award, AMANAT will review the extent to which the proposed activity promotes, strengthens, and is supported by sustainable local organizations that can champion sound concepts, innovative practices, and changes beyond the life of the award.

2) DEMONSTRATED PAST PERFORMANCE (30 POINTS):

All applicants will be subject to a past performance review, with emphasis on prior activities, if any, which are similar to that which is proposed. If the applicant has no past performance history, the applicant will receive a neutral rating in this category.

3) ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY OF PROPOSED PERSONNEL (20 POINTS):

AMANAT will review the effectiveness of the approach in terms of the applicant organization's internal structure, technical capacity, and ability to represent beneficiary interests. Applicants are encouraged to consider partnerships and coalitions, as appropriate, to broaden geographic diversity, promote greater inclusion, and increase program reach.

Partnership arrangements, if any, with other civil society organizations, which enhance the effectiveness and capabilities of program implementation should be specifically outlined, and the capabilities of key partners as well as the primary applicant should be clearly presented. Partnerships that build on the relative strengths of participating organizations with clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each organization in the application will strengthen an application.

4) COST EFFECTIVENESS:

While not an evaluative factor for which points will be assigned, please note that the Applicant's proposed budget will be reviewed to determine if the applicant's approach is cost effective and makes use of existing resources, capacities, materials, tools, and other leveraged sources of funding. A proposal will be viewed more favorably if it proposes results which are objective, quantifiable, and measurable and if the costs can be tied directly to specific corresponding results.

Although price is not a factor for technical consideration it is an important element in evaluation for award. Price must show demonstrated "reasonableness" and be "balanced" among the respective components of performance. The significance of price will increase the closer technical rankings become. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide their best price proposal with submission of their offer. MSI recognizes that price is often the single most significant factor in a determination of best value.

A realistic commitment to cost-share or leveraging from other sources is generally viewed as enhancing the cost effectiveness of a proposed budget. However, cost share is not a requirement under this APS.

As a general principle, the payment of any customs duties, sales tax or other applicable taxes and fees shall be included as a cost-share. Please note that if cost- share is included within a grant, it will be considered as a part of the grant and thus will be specifically tracked by AMANAT during program implementation to ensure compliance.

SECTION VI: AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

The award(s) under this request for concept papers will be administered through and managed by the AMANAT project.

Awards will include language prohibiting transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism; the same will be required in all sub-contracts and sub-awards.

GUIDELINES ON CONCEPT PAPER

SECTION 1: ORGANIZATION PROFILE & BACKGROUND

1.1. Organization Details

- Provide the full name of the organization as it appears on the registration certificate and the acronym.
- Provide the year of registration and the registration number. Also attach photocopies of the registration form(s)
- Indicate which institution your organization is registered with. Possible institutions could be the Registrar Generals Dept., District/Municipal/Metropolitan Assembly, Department of Cooperatives, Department of Social Welfare, etc.

1.2. Location of Organization

- Write clearly the name of the District where the organization is located.
- Write the name of the region, where the organization is located
- Indicate clearly the postal address
- Indicate the street address. Where the street has no name, state the closest landmark in the area
- State clearly the e-mail address of the organization.   If the organization does not have an e-mail address use the e-mail address of any of the executives or the contact person
- Indicate the phone numbers – land line and / or cell/mobile phone number of the contact person

1.3. What kind of organization?

- State the type of organization. It could be an Association, a Civil Society Organization (CSO), a Community-Based Organization (CBO), among others.

1.4. What is your staff/membership strength?

- It could also be staff or both depending on the kind of organization.
- State the number of male and female members in the association/organization as well as staff.
- Attach your organizational structure if available.

1.5. List three management/executive/board members/key staff

- List the three executive members of the association as indicated. With regards to the date of appointment, we are interested to know how long the person has served in that position. Each of the three members should personally sign the document.

1.6. Details of contact persons

- The contact persons within the context of the proposed intervention are those people who form the team who provide leadership for the implementation of the intervention. This is important so that we relay information to the organization through these persons.

1.7. Capability Statement

- Briefly describe your organization's technical and administrative capabilities and past experience in conducting programs similar to the one proposed.

1.8. What are the purpose and objectives of your organization?

- State the reason and objectives for which the organization was set up, as per the constitution. Also indicate the beneficiaries you targeted in setting up the organization.

SECTION 2: PROPOSED CONCEPT & ACTIVITY DETAILS

2.1. Activity Title:

- Give a clear, simple and concise subject or activity title that can help reviewer to understand what is your concept note written about.

2.2. Activity Duration:

- Estimate how long it would take to implement the action. Be realistic in the estimate, and remember that the longer the action takes it can become stale. People tend to lose interest when it becomes stale. You also do not have much control over the external organizations that you will be targeting by this action, especially when the activities of your action are delayed. Actions that are also rushed are not likely to be effective. Try and balance these to arrive at a realistic estimation.

2.3. Which of The Aps Objective (Key Areas of Interest) Is Meeting Your Proposed Concept Note

- Indicate from the table that which objectives (key areas of interest) of the APS met by proposed activity

2.4. Needs Assessment: clearly state what the problem is:

- Under this section, clearly state what the problem is. What is the current situation that you believe is adversely affecting people's participation in governance and their development? Please be specific and straight to the point. Avoid long winded sentences.

2.5. What are the purpose and objectives of your proposed intervention?

- How do you propose that the problem could be resolved? State clearly the solution that you envisage will address the problem identified. Be clear and straight to the point.

2.6. What is the proposed intervention?

- State the overall goal for the intervention. This is a general but clear statement of the future situation the organization desires to see with your intervention.
- Also state your immediate objectives, which are the specific measurable ambitions that are contributing towards the attainment of the goal within a specified time frame. What

makes the objective different from the goal is that it states specific things we intend to achieve within the immediate future while the goal statement is quite general.

2.7. Who will benefit from the proposed Intervention?

- State those you are targeting to benefit from your proposed intervention and where they are. It could be at the community level, area council or district level.

2.8. What are the expected results and impacts of the proposed intervention?

- What are the deliverables that the organization intends to produce in order to achieve the purpose for the intervention?
- When the problem is resolved, what outputs are being expected in relation to for instance citizen's ability to hold local governance (District Assemblies and Traditional Authorities) to account and influence public policy?
- Outline the specific change/ benefit you expect your intervention to bring on target beneficiaries (e.g. the poor, % of women, people with disabilities, the youth and marginalized population, etc. Again, be clear and straight to the point.

2.9. Who and how will the intervention will be implemented (institutional framework)?

- Indicate the names of the stakeholders (institution/unit/resource person) that you have identified, that could support your intervention to resolve the identified problem. Also indicate the responsibilities of each of the identified stakeholder.

2.10. Outline your organization's relevant experiences

- If it is more than one experience use additional sheet.
- Indicate your organization's experience in resolving the identified problem. Be brief and straight to the point.

2.11. What is the estimated price of the proposed intervention?

- Provide the estimated price of implementing the intervention, taking into account all activities aimed at successful implementation of the intervention.
- A realistic commitment to cost-share or leveraging from other sources is generally viewed as enhancing the evaluated cost effectiveness of a program. However, cost share is not a requirement under this APS.

SECTION 3: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (TO BE SUBMITTED ALONG WITH CONCEPT PAPER as attachments) CHECKLIST

3.1. Valid Organization License

- Submit organization valid license along with concept note to verify the legal existence.

3.2. SAM & DUNS

- For any organization receiving more than $25,000,00 need to register and activate profile in federal register and also to gain 9-digit universal data numbering system.

- Links: www.sam.gov/portal/SAM/ &
  https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/CCRSearch.do?val=1

3.3. Signed Pre-Award Certifications

- Applicants should sign the pre-award certifications attached as an (Annex 3)

3.4. Budget (Excel Sheet)

- Applicant to provide an estimated budget along with concept note as an (Annex 2)

ANNEX 1: CONCEPT PAPER (Attached As MS Word)

ANNEX 2: ESTIMATED BUDGET (Attached As MS Excel)

ANNEX 3: PRE-AWARD CERTIFICATIONS (Attached As MS Word)

<u>End of APS</u>