



Request for Application

Issuance Date: 18 February 2019
Closing Date: 19 March 2019 (30 days after issuance date)
Closing Time: 4:00 PM Kabul Time
Due Date Questions: 03 March 2019 (4:00 PM)

Subject: Request for Applications (RFA) Number Musharikat-019-001
Advocacy for Improving/Increasing schoolgirl's attendance to school and reducing school girls' harassment at the provincial level

Reference: Issued Under Promote Musharikat,
USAID Contract No. AID-306-TO-15- 00073, AID- 306-I-14-00013

DAI, implementer of the Promote Musharikat project, is seeking grant applications for: Advocacy for Increasing/Improving Schoolgirls attendance to school and reducing/eliminating schoolgirl's harassment at the provincial level.

Background:

The USAID Promote project is a joint commitment by the U.S. and Afghan governments designed to empower 75,000 women across Afghanistan over the next five years. Promote equips women with the skills, experience, knowledge and networks to lead the country forward, together with their male counterparts, through the Transformation Decade (2015 – 2024) and beyond. One of a portfolio of Promote projects, Musharikat, meaning 'partnership' or 'participation' in Dari and Pashto, is designed to build a cadre of activists and civil society organizations (CSOs) to effectively advocate for and advance women's rights and empowerment. Through five regional offices – Kabul, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Nangarhar and Kandahar – Musharikat will work with more than 300 CSOs (at least two per province) and 5,000 activists across all 34 provinces, with a focus on the next generation of emerging leaders and CSOs.

Musharikat is designed to achieve the following complementary objectives:

- 1) Build constituencies among national, provincial, and local activists and CSOs focused on promoting women's equality and empowerment;
- 2) Strengthen more effective advocacy for women's equality and empowerment;
- 3) Increase awareness of, and support for, women's rights in all 34 provinces in Afghanistan; and,
- 4) Increase the effectiveness of civil society and the Government of Afghanistan in the development and implementation of gender policies, laws and regulations.

The project is explicitly designed to strengthen the advocacy skills of CSOs and activists working on women's rights and empowerment through participation in broad, inclusive coalitions focused on a specific issue. Coalition focal areas and objectives are determined by

Afghan women leaders. Each coalition will focus on achievement of a specific objective designed to make a substantial impact on the selected priority issue.

The grants issued in response to this RFA will support the objectives of the **Musharikat Access to Education (AE) coalition goal**. Specifically, these grants will address Musharikat's primary focus "improved implementation of National Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021, Section 5.3.2.3- Increase the enrollment, especially of girls, in remote areas - equitable access strategies to expand exclusive enrolment and retention of all Afghan social groups, especially girls and disadvantaged.

By achieving the AE's priority goal, the grants will result in reducing elimination of violence against women law Article 5.14 (prohibiting the harassment of women and girls) and Article 5.19 (prohibiting from the right to education) which are the secondary focus for Musharikat.

Please refer to the Program Description for a complete statement of goals and illustrative activities.

Pursuant to 2 CFR 700.13, it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments such as grant awards. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the grant program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (2 CFR 200 Subpart E for all US-based and for non-US based non-profit organizations, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations), may be paid under the grant.

For non-US organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-US Nongovernmental Recipients will apply. For US organizations, 2 CFR 200 and the Standard Provision for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients will apply. See Annex 1 for Standard Provisions.

Subject to the availability of funds, DAI intends to provide approximately 5 (five) grants to civil society organizations and networks up to a maximum amount of AFN 5,655,000.00 (\$75,000) each. The expected duration of DAI support or the period of performance is 12 months. **DAI, as primary implementer of the Promote Musharikat project, reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.**

For the purposes of this program, this RFA is being issued and consists of this cover letter and the following:

Section A – Grant Application Instructions

1. Application Procedure

A. Completion and Submission of Applications

B. Preparation Instruction- Technical

C. Preparation Instructions- Financial and Administration Documentation

Section B – Special Grant Requirements

Section C – Selection Process

Section D – Program Description

Annexes 1-13

Applications must be received at the Promote Musharikat offices in Kabul not later than 30 days after the date of issuance indicated at the top of this cover letter at the place designated below for receipt of applications. Applications and modifications thereof shall be submitted in electronic pdf format to Musharikat_Grants@dai.com. Please use “RFA 019-001 “Advocacy for improving/increasing enrollment of schoolgirls”” in the subject line. Award(s) will be made to the responsible applicant(s) whose application(s) offers the best value for DAI Promote Musharikat in accordance with the merit review process outlined in this RFA.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of DAI, nor does it commit DAI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, DAI reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Any questions concerning this RFA should be submitted in writing no later than the time indicated at the top of this cover letter to queries_musharikatgrants@dai.com. Responses to all questions will be consolidated and issued to potential applicants in a single file within one week after the deadline for questions. In accordance with DAI policies and procedures, Promote Musharikat will not entertain telephone calls and will not respond to queries submitted outside of the process indicated above. **Applicants should retain for their records all original application documents submitted electronically to Musharikat.**

Thank you for your interest in Promote Musharikat activities.

Sincerely,

Andrea Camoens Chief of Party

Section A – Grant Application Instructions

1. Application Procedures

A) Completion and submission of applications

Eligibility Requirements

1) Eligible Entities:

- a. Must have legal status that falls within one of the following categories;
 - i. Local Afghan non-profit, non-governmental and non-political organizations (CSOs/NGOs) currently registered with Ministry of Economy
 - ii. For-profit organizations registered with the relevant GIRoA ministry willing to forego profit.
 - iii. Formally and officially recognized networks currently registered with Ministry of Justice in Afghanistan.
- b. Afghan firms are preferred; International firms will be considered only on a case-by-case basis
- c. Must hold membership in OR agree to join the Musharikat Access to Education (AE) coalition before signing of a grant.
 - i. Those who do not hold membership in the AE coalitions should include a completed coalition membership application form along with other required documents as part of their proposal. Please see Annex 7 for Coalition Membership Application - CSO/Commercial entity.
- d. Must have an active presence in the province/region which the applicant proposes to implement activities.
- e. **Must have previous experience working on projects related to school girls' access to education and school girls' harassment issues.**

2) Ineligible Entities:

- a. Entities which are not formally registered with GIRoA are not eligible.
- b. Political parties, political party organizations and government institutions.
- c. Faith-based organizations whose objectives are discriminatory.
- d. Organizations from foreign policy restricted countries (Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan and Syria) are not eligible.
- e. Organizations included in the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs are not eligible for federal awards. In addition organizations are not eligible for awards if they have members who appear on the U.S. Department of Treasury's List of Specifically Designated Nationals (OFAC's Sanctions List) and Blocked Persons or who have been designated by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Sanctions Committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the 1267 Committee) as an individual linked to the Taliban, Osama bin Laden, or Al Qaeda organization.
- f. Any US entity which is a "Private Voluntary Organization" (PVO) but has not registered as such with USAID
- g. Any "Public International Organization" (PIO)
- h. Any government entities
- i. Any entity affiliated with DAI and DAI Sub-contractors or any of its directors, officers or employees.

3) Activities which are NOT Eligible for Funding

The following are a list of activities which will not be funded:

- a. Creation of new CSO advocacy groups/coalitions/networks. Grant activities should support one of the existing Musharikat coalitions and not establish new advocacy groups. All grant activities must be conducted in close coordination with the selected Musharikat coalition member CSOs and activists.
- b. Job placements, internships, scholarships and vocational training. These activities fall outside of the Musharikat mandate and are implemented through sister Promote projects - Women in the Economy, Women in Leadership and Women in Government.
- c. General organizational capacity building for CSOs/NGOs. Activities designed to improve an organization's capacity in the areas of finance, human resources, writing mission statement or business plans and other general areas are not eligible under Musharikat grants. The Musharikat project's capacity building efforts are focused specifically on strengthening coalition members' (CSOs and individual activists) skills in advocacy, lobbying and persuasion. The USAID funded ACEP project and other donor funded projects address overall organizational capacity building.
- d. General leadership & management training. Workshops and training to be funded under Musharikat grants must focus on awareness raising or improving knowledge in the specific laws, policies, social norms identified in the Musharikat coalition framework OR in improving advocacy, lobbying and persuasion skills of coalition members.
- e. General civic education. Workshops and training to be funded under Musharikat grants must focus on awareness raising or improving knowledge in the specific laws, policies, social norms identified in the Musharikat coalition framework.
- f. Service Provision vs advocacy: Provision of counseling services or establishment of mental health support groups for victims of violence. Musharikat fully agrees with the importance of providing these services in Afghanistan. However, direct implementation of counseling services or financial support to mental health support groups/individuals is not within the Musharikat project's mandate. Activities aimed at improved implementation of EVAW law within the justice system and awareness raising regarding available mental health support services are allowable.
- g. Research or support to Afghan businesswomen in the areas of supply chain management, potential exports, agribusiness, or farming initiatives. These activities fall outside of Musharikat's objectives. Potential grantees should check for opportunities with Promote WIE or similar economic growth sector projects.
- h. Income generating projects are not eligible in response to this RFA.

Application Submission Requirements:

1) Required Documents- Applications must include the following documents:

- a. Mandatory Standard Provisions and Required As Applicable Standard Provisions for U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations (Annex 1)
- b. Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Provisions (Annex 2)
- c. Completed Grant Application Form (Annex 3)
- d. Completed Implementation/Work Plan (Annex 4)
- e. Completed Budget and Budget Notes (Annex 5)
- f. CVs of Project Manager, Workshop facilitators/trainers and other key personnel (Annex 6)
- g. Musharikat CSO/Commercial Entity Coalition Membership Form (Annex 7)
- h. Evidence of a DUNS Number or a Self-Certification for Exemption from DUNS Requirement. (Annexes 8 & 9) DUNS number should be obtained prior to signing of the grant.
- i. Organizational Profile (must include total number of active members, with a breakdown of total members by number of female and the number male members)
- j. Current Organizational Chart
- k. Copy of current registration from Ministry of Economy, Justice or other relevant Ministry (or Incorporation Papers of Certificate of Registration and Statute).
- l. Checklist (Annex 13)
- m. Completed Financial Capability Questionnaire and attachments
- n. Statement of liability (part of application form)

Incomplete applications which do not include all the items listed above run the risk of not being considered in the review process.

Please see Annex 13, Required Document Checklist for a list of all required documents. Before submitting your application, mark all documents included on the checklist to verify completeness and submit with your application.

2) Deadlines and Format Requirement:

- a. Applications must be submitted electronically to musharikat_grants@dai.com on or before **17 March 2019 at 4:00 pm Kabul time**. Applications and modifications thereof shall be submitted in pdf electronic format to Musharikat_Grants@dai.com.

Note: Make sure to write your organization's acronym and RFA 019-001 "Advocacy for increasing/improving enrollment of girl to school" in the subject line.

- b. Your submission must be in one email using the templates included in this RFA. Those applications received through several different emails, in bits and pieces, and/or in a different format than the templates may not be evaluated by the merit review committee.
- c. Applications are to be submitted in English.

3) Questions

- a. Any questions concerning this RFA should be submitted in writing no later than **02 March 2019 at 4:00 PM Kabul time** to queries_musharikatgrants@dai.com. Responses to all questions will be consolidated and issued to all potential applicants within one week of the question deadline.
- b. In accordance with DAI policies and procedures, Promote Musharikat will not entertain telephone calls and will not respond to queries submitted outside of the process indicated above.

4) Late Applications

- a. All applications received by the deadline from eligible entities which include all required documents using the templates provided will be reviewed for responsiveness and programmatic merit according to the merit review criteria outlined in this solicitation. Section C addresses the merit review/evaluation procedures for applications. Applications which are submitted late or are incomplete run the risk of not being considered in the review process.

5) Ethical and Business Conduct

- a. DAI does not tolerate fraud, collusion among applicants, falsified applications, bribery, or kickbacks. Any firm or individual violating these standards will be disqualified from this grant process, barred from future grant opportunities, and may be reported to USAID.
- b. Employees and agents of DAI Musharikat are strictly prohibited from asking for or accepting any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, object of value or compensation from current or potential applicants in exchange for or as a reward for business. Employees and agents engaging in this conduct are subject to termination and will be reported to USAID. In addition, DAI will inform USAID of any applicant offers of money, fee, commission, credit, gift, and gratuity, object of value or compensation to obtain business.
- c. **Ethics Certification.** Applicants responding to this RFA must include the following as part of the application submission:
 - i. Disclose any close, familial, or financial relationships with DAI or project staff. For example, if an applicant's cousin is employed by the project, the offeror must state this.
 - ii. Disclose any family or financial relationship with other applicants submitting applications. For example, if the applicant's father owns an organization that is submitting another application, the applicant must state this.
 - iii. Certify that the budget in the offer has been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other applicants or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
 - iv. Certify that all information in the application and all supporting documentations are authentic and accurate.
 - v. Certify understanding and agreement to DAI's prohibitions against fraud, bribery and kickbacks.

Please contact Musharikat Grants at Musharikat_grants@dai.com, with any questions or concerns regarding the above information or to report any potential violations.

B) Preparation Instructions – Technical

Page Limitation: Applicants must be submitted using the Application Form template in Annex 3. Applications should be specific, complete, presented concisely and shall not exceed 15 pages (exclusive of annexes).

Applications submitted in response to this RFA must include the following information:

1. Project Description: The applicant must provide a detailed description of the project, specifying its goal, activities and results. To facilitate the competitive review of the applications, proposals should include the following contents.

- a. Project summary (Provide a brief summary of the proposed project include any necessary background information; clearly address the justification for the project.)
- b. Outline the project's goal, objectives, activities and expected results
 - i. Provide accurate, detailed information
 - ii. Set achievable, realistic and measurable goals and objectives
 - iii. Describe the specific activities to be undertaken
 - iv. Describe the expected results/outcomes/impact to be achieved
 - v. Define the proposed project beneficiaries
 - vi. Include proposed provinces for implementation. Applicants may propose activities in one or more provinces, up to a maximum of 3-5 provinces where the applicants have presence.
 - vii. In addition to the major cities, application should also include activities in at least one province outside of Kabul and the other regional hubs of Mazar, Herat, Jalalabad, and Kandahar.

2. Implementation/Work Plan. The Plan should include:

- a) Timeline for phasing of activities
- b) Set forth a proposed implementation plan, inputs, outputs, and outcomes which are realistic and achievable within the proposed budget and timeframe. What are the key objectives that the grantee would like to achieve and how the grant activities will contribute to key performance indicators of Musharikat? **Please see list of performance indicators Annex 11 for further reference.**
- c) Reflect a grasp of the necessary steps to ensure rapid, effective execution of program activities.
- d) Address opportunities and strategies for scaling-up, achieving broad-based impact, promoting sustainability beyond Musharikat funding, and documenting and sharing lessons learned, where possible and appropriate.

3. Monitoring (Results and Benchmarks): The applicant should define, to the maximum extent possible at the application stage, results and benchmarks for monitoring the performance towards attainment of program objectives and M&E mechanisms to assess and report grants progress and results.

- a. What are the key performance indicators and targets to measure progress and results of grant activities?
- b. What data collection, data analysis and reporting mechanisms the grantee will use to assess progress and results on key performance indicators of the grant? This should also include, but not limited to grantee impact evaluation plan, if any.
Musharikat uses an online, web-based Performance Monitoring System (PMS), applying internet technology and finger print device to collect, analyze and report monitoring data on key Musharikat activities. The system will also be applied to Musharikat grant activities. The grantee will be responsible to register all beneficiaries into the system with their finger prints during each event. Musharikat will provide, on a loan basis, the units and software required to register beneficiaries. When presenting the data collection mechanisms, the applicant will need to consider Musharikat PMS as the integrated part of its M&E mechanisms.
- c. What staff and resources will be allocated to M&E? The applicant should propose experienced M&E Officer and share CV with the Musharikat. The project will also provide M&E training from the third-party monitoring agency.
- d. Overall the applicant should explain how M&E will contribute to ensure grant outcomes/impacts are achieved.

- 4. Sustainability:** The applicant should describe how the project or its benefits will continue after grant funding ends.
- 5. Personnel.** The applicant should propose a Project Manager, Workshop Facilitators/Trainers, and other required staff. Each applicant should provide, as part of their application, detailed curriculum vitae (CV) that demonstrate the Key Personnel's ability to perform the duties outlined in the statement of work and in accordance with the evaluation factors found herein. Musharikat will evaluate the CV to determine the individual's knowledge, skills and abilities in the areas listed herein.
- 6. Organizational Capability:** Each application shall include information that demonstrates the applicant's expertise and ability to meet or exceed the goals of this program. Your organization's profile must be included as documentation with the application.
- 7. Past Performance:** Applicants must present evidence of their past experience in delivering similar workshops and awareness raising programs in the Application Form, Annex 3. Descriptions of at least 3 projects or other similar activities implemented in the last 5 years must be included. The clients' name, email and telephone number must be included to allow Musharikat to contact them for verification, as required.

In addition, applicants should include at least 2 references letters from previous/current clients as verification of your organization's successful implementation of similar projects. Applications lacking past performance reference letters and contact details of previous donors will not be considered for funding.

8. **Budget:** All proposals must include a completed budget; see Section C for more details.
9. **Other materials:** Applicants may also want to submit other materials as attachments along with their applications such as letters of reference, newspaper clippings reporting on the organization's activities, brochures or other promotional material. Support letters demonstrating partnerships and cooperation with local government are of particular interest. However, attachments should be limited to 5 pages and they will not be returned to the applicants.

C) Preparation Instructions – Financial and Administrative Documentation

1. **Completed Budget.** The applicant shall prepare a detailed budget and budget notes using the template provided in Annex 5.
 - a. All budget lines must be clearly linked to specific project activities. Although Musharikat will support organization staff and operating costs that are necessary for reaching project goals, applicants should direct resources primarily to project implementation, rather than the organization's operating costs. See attached Annex 5 for the budget form.
 - b. Supporting information shall be provided in the budget notes in sufficient detail to allow for a complete analysis of each line item cost.
 - c. **Indirect Cost Rates:** Indirect cost rates, if included in the detailed budget, must be consistent with the applicant's Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and the agreement should be included with the applicant's budget. If the applicant does not have a NICRA, the applicant may elect to charge a maximum rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR 200.414(f)) and the applicant must follow the requirements in 2 CFR 200.414(f).
 - d. **Profit:** Profit is not allowable under grants. Commercial organizations submitting applications must agree to forego profit on proposed activities.

Cost Sharing Contribution: Musharikat project encourages the applicants when possible include cost share contribution up to 10% of the total budget. Details regarding the proposed cost sharing contribution by your organization must be included. In-kind contributions are allowable as cost share, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.306. This includes such things as proportionate shares of management and other employee time, equipment, office supplies, and other costs of program operation. Rates for employee services shall be consistent with those paid for similar work in the recipient's organization. The value of equipment (i.e., computers) shall not exceed the fair market value of equipment of the same age and condition. The basis for determining the valuation of services, equipment and supplies shall be documented in the application.

2. Documentation that the applicant has the ability to comply with the award conditions, taking into account all existing and currently prospective commitments of the applicant. The applicant must demonstrate its ability to segregate funds obtained from the award of a capital grant from other activities of the organization. A separate bank account is required should a grant award be made. (Documentation may include certification from the applicant's bank or a summary of previous awards, including type of funding, value, client, etc.)

3. Documentation that the applicant has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics. (Documentation may include references from other donors or clients and a summary of previous awards, including type of funding, value, client, etc.)
4. **Copy of Current Registration with relevant ministry.**
5. **Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)** For grants awarded under this RFA, there is a mandatory requirement for the applicant to provide a DUNS number to DAI. The Data Universal Numbering System is a system developed and regulated by Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) that assigns a unique numeric identifier, referred to as a "DUNS number" to a single business entity. Without a DUNS number, DAI cannot deem an applicant to be "responsible" to conduct business with and therefore, DAI will not enter into an agreement with any such organization. The award of a grant resulting from this RFA is contingent upon the winner providing a DUNS number to DAI. Organizations who fail to provide a DUNS number will not receive an agreement and DAI will select an alternate awardee.

All U.S. and foreign organizations which receive a grant with a value of \$25,000 and above **are required** to obtain a DUNS number prior to signing of the agreement. Organizations are exempt from this requirement if the gross income received from all sources in the previous tax year was under \$300,000. DAI requires that grant applicants sign the self-certification statement if the applicant claims exemption for this reason.

For those required to obtain a DUNS number, see Annex 8- Instructions for Obtaining a DUNS Number - DAI'S Vendors, Subcontractors and Grantees.

For those not required to obtain a DUNS number, see Annex 9- Self Certification for Exemption from DUNS Requirement

6. Additional Supporting Documents for Apparent Successful Applicants:

Prior to the award of grant, depending on grant type and size, the apparent successful applicant(s) may also be required to submit:

- a. Additional documentation to support proposed budget estimates.
- b. USAID Biodata forms for all project team members identified in the budget.
- c. Financial Capability Questionnaire
 - i. which includes a copy of the applicant's most recent financial report which has been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to Musharikat or,
 - ii. If no recent audit is available, a Balance Sheet and Income Statement for the most current and previous fiscal year or other evidence of adequate capacity, as determined by Musharikat.
- d. Description of the organization's management structure and/or oversight procedures
- e. Copy of the applicant's accounting policies and procedures manual
- f. Copy of the applicant's operations manual
- g. Copy of the applicant's purchasing policies and description of the applicant's purchasing system.

7. Partner Vetting Procedure

- a. A grant is contingent on successful vetting of the awarded offeror by USAID. Pursuant to USAID Kabul Mission Order 201.06, vetting is required for all non-U.S. recipients proposed for any award in excess of \$25,000 at any tier under a USAID contract, including subcontracts, 2nd-tier subcontracts, or any other similar award instrument.
- b. Vetting is conducted by USAID for all grants under contract in excess of \$25,000 issued by DAI.
- c. When vetting is required, the grantee will be required to complete and submit a "Partner Information Form" to DAI for submission to the USAID vetting services unit.

Section B – Special Grant Requirements

The applicant shall bear in mind the following special requirements for any grants awarded in response to this RFA:

1. **Separate Account:** A separate account must be established to house all funds provided under the grant, as well as all interest income.
2. **Permitted Uses of Program Income:** The Grantee will inform DAI of any program income generated under the grant and agrees to follow USAID's disposition requirements for such program income, which is in accordance with 2 CFR 200.307. Program income earned under this agreement shall be applied and used in the following descending order:
 - a. Added to funds committed by USAID and the recipient to the project or program, and used to further eligible project or program objectives;
 - b. Used to finance the non-Federal share of the project or program; and
 - c. Deducted from the total project or program allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

If the terms and conditions of the award do not specify how program income is to be used, then a) shall apply automatically. Grantees who are commercial organizations may not apply Option a) to their program income.

3. **Use of Funds:** Funds provided under any grant awarded shall be used exclusively for implementation of the activities proposed under this grant. Diversion of grant funds to other uses will result in cancellation of award and retrieval of funds disbursed to the grant recipient.
4. **Reporting Procedures:** A description of reporting requirements will be included in the Grant Agreements. The types of reporting required, along with the schedule of reporting, will depend on the grant type and project duration. Reporting forms will be provided to grant recipients. Types of reporting will include the following:
 - **Weekly bullet points on grant activities and more detailed monthly reports** which includes a description of project activities and progress towards meeting

the project goal; problems in project implementation; actions taken to overcome them; and plans on how the next phase of the project will be implemented.

- **Activity Report for each workshop and Awareness Raising Activity** Which includes:
 - a) Signed attendance sheets;
 - b) Photos;
 - c) Summary of the activity including the participation and active demonstration of a leadership role of each individual during the workshop and as well in awareness raising activities.
 - **Final Report** with key findings, lessons learned and recommendations. This report will describe how the project objectives and goals were reached, results of the project, and problems and solutions during implementation. Examples of successes and impact should be included. This information should be presented in a manner suitable for presentation to the public.
- 5. Project Monitoring:** DAI staff and third parties will monitor projects in terms of both programmatic and financial aspects. Grant recipients will be expected to facilitate monitoring by making relevant information available to DAI staff.
- 6. Restrictions:** The Grant Funds provided under the terms of this Agreement shall not be used to finance any of the following:
- a. Goods or services which are to be used primarily to meet military requirements or to support police or other law enforcement activities,
 - b. Surveillance equipment,
 - c. Equipment, research and/or services related to involuntary sterilization or the performance of abortion as a method of family planning,
 - d. Gambling equipment, supplies for gambling facilities or any hotels, casinos or accommodations in which gambling facilities are or are planned to be located,
 - e. Activities which significantly degrade national parks or similar protected areas or introduce exotic plants or animals into such areas, or
 - f. Establishment or development of any export processing zone or designated area where the labor, environmental, tax, tariff, and/or safety laws of the country in which such activity takes place would not apply.
 - g. Pharmaceuticals,
 - h. Pesticides,
 - i. Logging equipment,
 - j. Luxury goods (including alcoholic beverages and jewelry),

- k. Establishing or expanding any enterprise that will export raw materials that are likely to be in surplus in world markets at the time such production becomes effective and that are likely to cause substantial injury to U.S. producers,
- l. Activities which would result in the loss of forest lands due to livestock rearing, road construction or maintenance, colonization of forest lands or construction of dams or other water control structures,
- m. Activities which are likely to have a significant adverse effect on the environment, including any of the following (to the extent such activities are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment):
 - i.) Activities which may lead to degrading the quality or renewability of natural resources;
 - ii.) Activities which may lead to degrading the presence or health of threatened ecosystems or biodiversity;
 - iii.) Activities which may lead to degrading long-term viability of agricultural or forestry production (including through use of pesticides);
 - iv.) Activities which may lead to degrading community and social systems, including potable water supply, land administration, community health and well-being or social harmony.
- n. Activities which are likely to involve the loss of jobs in the United States due to the relocation or expansion outside of the United States of an enterprise located in the United States, or
- o. Activities which the Grantee is aware are reasonably likely to contribute to the violation of internationally or locally recognized rights of workers,
- p. Activities to support the production of agricultural commodities for export from Malawi when such commodities would directly compete with exports of similar United States agricultural commodities to third countries and have a significant impact on United States exporters.

Section C – Selection Process:-

1. Initial Screening of Applications:

Verification that the application meets submission requirements will be conducted at the Musharikat central office in Kabul by the grants team with support from other technical staff. The initial screening will review applications to confirm all required documents were included in the submission, the application used templates where required, and the entity meets all eligibility requirements as stated in this RFA.

2. Merit Review Committee:

Within approximately 10 working days of the deadline for submitting applications, a review panel will convene. The review panel will include the Chief of Party, Deputy Chief of Party of Programs, Regional Directors, the Advocacy and Policy team and

other technical staff. Throughout the evaluation process, Musharikat shall take steps to ensure that members of the review panel do not have any conflicts of interest or the appearance of such with regard to the organizations whose applicants are under review. Conflict of interest (or the appearance of such) shall be considered to exist if/when that person, or that person's spouse, partner, child, close friend or relative works for or is negotiating to work for or has a financial interest (including being an unpaid member of a Board of Directors) in any organization that submitted an application currently under the panel's review. Members of the committee shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from parties to the awards.

3. Merit Review Criteria:

All applications which are complete, meet the eligible entity requirements, and comply with submission requirements will be reviewed by the review panel. If suitable applications are received, one or more awards will be made within approximately 4-6 weeks of the review panel meeting provided that the awardee(s) furnish (es) DAI with all the required documentation as itemized in Section A of this RFA.

The applications will be evaluated and scored according to the evaluation criteria set forth below. Awards will be made to responsible applicants whose applications offer the best value taking into account regional coverage of all grant awards collectively to maximize geographic coverage.

Awards will be made based on the ranking of applications by the review panel according to the evaluation criteria and scoring system identified below:

Merit Review Criteria	Score (Maximum Points)
1) Implementation Plan and Geographic Coverage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the proposed project relevant to the RFA? Is the implementation plan and work plan/time line reasonable, realistic and achievable? Are the activities clearly presented & is the proposed methodology sound? Does the implementation plan include creative and innovative approaches? Does the work plan include provincial centers outside of Kabul and the other Regional hub cities of Mazar, Herat, Jalalabad, and Kandahar? Does the work plan include one or more of the provinces listed on Annex 12 "Current Geographic Gaps chart?" (Extra points will be awarded if yes.) <p>Very good = 20 points; good = 10 points; average = 5 points; poor = 0 points</p>	20

<p>2) Past Performance, Personnel, and Organizational Capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organization possess the ability to successfully implement the activities? Does the organization have experience developing advocacy campaigns and conducting advocacy/lobbying activities with provincial or national GIRoA decision makers? Has the organization conducted advocacy activities related to women's rights? Has the organization conducted at least 2 projects of a similar nature? Does the past performance demonstrate experience conducting baseline and end line research? Did the applicant submit 2 completion certificates which confirm positive past performance? Do the proposed project manager and other key staff have sufficient relevant experience to undertake the project? <p>Very good = 30 points; good = 15 points; average = 5 points; poor = 0 points</p>	30
<p>3) Relevance and Potential Impact on target beneficiaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the proposed approach likely to achieve the desired impact on target beneficiaries? Do the project activities include close collaboration with the Musharikat AE coalition? Do the proposed activities directly address one or more of the Musharikat indicators listed in Annex II? Is the grant likely to result in achievement of a target? Does the project include strategies to secure the buy-in and commitment of key provincial (and national?) government stakeholders? Does the applicant demonstrate previous ability to develop successful working partnerships with GIRoA senior officials/decision makers, and would therefore be more likely to impact the government's improved implementation of National Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021, Section 5.3.2.3? <p>Very good = 30 points; good = 15 points; average = 5 points; poor = 0 points</p>	30
<p>4) Potential for Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the project or its benefits likely to continue after grant funding ends? <p>Very good = 10 points; good = 7 points; average = 5 points; poor = 0 points</p>	10
<p>5) Cost Effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the cost reasonable in terms of the expected results? 	10
<p>6) Very good = 10 points; good = 7 points; average = 5 points; poor = 0 points</p>	
<p>Total</p>	100

DAI reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received

4. Signing of Grant Agreements

Upon USAID concurrence of the applicant, a Grant Agreement will be prepared. After DAI and the successful applicant have signed the Grant Agreement, DAI will provide training on financial management of the grant and reporting on grant funds. All reporting and contractual obligations will be explained to the grant recipients. Before receiving the first grant installment, **all grant recipients must open a separate bank account** as this is the only means by which grant funds will be transferred from DAI to the grant recipient.

Section D – Program Description

Advocacy for Increasing and improving girls' attendance to schools and prevention of schoolgirl's harassment at the provincial level.

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE/PROJECT SUMMARY

The purpose of this RFA is to fund CSOs to use the Musharikat's AE research, findings, priorities and scale up, raise awareness, facilitate policy implementation at the provincial level as outlined in the National Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021, Section 5.3.2.3 Increase the enrollment, especially of girls, in remote areas. Indirectly, this policy implementation in regards to increasing girls' enrollment to school will affect the Elimination of Violence Against Women Law Article 5.14 (prohibiting the harassment of women and girls) and Article 5.19 (prohibiting from the right to education) which are the secondary focus for Musharikat.

II. BACKGROUND

Historically, Afghan women have been in a critical condition in terms of education and social-political participation in the male-dominant society of Afghanistan. Gender inequality, particularly in education, reached its peak during the Taliban era. Still gender disparity in education is evident in the country and school girls struggle with different challenges ranging from social norms, lack of families' support, unavailability of female teachers, lack of Tashkil at schools, insufficient salary, insecurity, poverty in the family, distance of girls' schools, etc.

Musharikat AE coalition conducted the survey in March 2018 on causes of girls not attending schools. Based on the survey results, the most cited factors by respondents that prevent girls from continuing their secondary education are categorized as **inadequate number of female teachers, social and cultural factors (lack of families' support, early and forced marriages), distance of girls' schools to community, lack of high schools, mixed classes of boys and girls, and poverty**. That harassment of women should be a concern for the Afghan government and lawmakers was highlighted in March 2015 when President Ashraf Ghani spoke to the US Congress. Pledging to make educational facilities and work places safe for women, he said "A mental and cultural revolution must take place over the treatment of women in and by our society. There is no point talking about how much we respect women's honor, if we let it go unpunished or allowed harassment in our streets." The low level of participation of girls and women in education could be considered as a key challenge to the development of the country. Hence the survey findings pave the way for an enormous development opportunity and it requires government and particularly Ministry of Education to effectively continue their

efforts to respond to the educational needs of girls in the country. As a follow up to the survey results, Musharikat intends to work with civil society organizations to respond to the educational needs of girls in the country and support activities that target the social norms harmful to the girls' access to education and affect policy implementation.

Harmful gender norms are factors that influence girls' being absent from school: in many families, boys' education is prioritized over girls', or girls' education is seen as wholly undesirable or acceptable only for a few years before puberty. In a country where a third of girls marry before age 18, child marriage forces many girls out of education. Under Afghan law, the minimum age of marriage for girls is 16, or 15 with the permission of the girl's father or a judge. In practice, the law is rarely enforced, so girls could be forced to marry even earlier. The consequences of child marriage are deeply harmful, and they include girls dropping out or being excluded from education. Girls who marry as children are also more likely to be victims of domestic violence than women who marry later¹. Because of these EVAW law is closely linked with schoolgirls in Afghanistan being absent from school, therefore, the project focuses on facilitating the implementation of both NESP and EVAW law to complement each other.

The grantees are encouraged to work with critical ministries and government agencies such as the Ministries of Education, of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, of Hajj and Religious Affairs, of Women's Affairs and of Rural Rehabilitation and Development who all provide/support education services. The grantees will cooperate with the ministries for the success of the program. Awareness raising and prompt effective action by key stakeholders is critical to success.

III. PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Within the context of addressing the increasing school girls' enrolment to school and violence against women issues, PROMOTE Musharikat is requesting proposals from eligible CSOs for projects intended to **support initiatives involving strengthening the development and implementation of gender policies by the government of Afghanistan.**

The **goal** of this grant is to increase girl's attendance to school and prevent/eliminate schoolgirl's harassment.

Objectives:

1. Improve the effectiveness of National Education Strategic Plan's policy on "equitable access: increased equitable and inclusive access to relevant, safe and quality learning opportunities especially women and girls" by facilitating establishment of inter-government 'support mechanisms and linkages' at the targeted province during the life of the project.
2. Facilitate the implementation of National Education Strategic plan by helping relevant government departments and local influential people come up with an effective

¹ Source: Human Rights Watch, Oct 17, 2017 "I won't be a doctor, and one day you will be sick", Girls access to Education in Afghanistan.

oversight and reporting procedure in relation to girls' harassment on streets to and from schools.

3. Raise awareness of local population on importance of girls' education and anti-harassment of school girls to and from school during the life of the project.

Approach:

To support improved implementation of the NESP and EVAW Law P Musharikat anticipates awarding 5 grants to Afghan civil society organizations. Each grantee will work in 3-5 provinces dependent upon the CSO's management, technical and financial capacity, as well as provinces where organization has offices and/or documented experience and established relationships with provincial government offices. Grantees will also take into consideration language, cultural and regional differences when proposing the provinces where they will implement. To ensure broad national coverage and wide distribution of support, Musharikat will endeavor to award grants across all regions and prioritize provinces where there was a lower number of grants in the previous round. The total number of provinces covered by all grantees is expected to be over 15.

The grantees will support and coordinate fully with the Musharikat AE steering committee that has the full backing of a cross functional Kabul-based coalition support team (CST) that includes a Musharikat policy/advocacy leader, senior grants officer, M&E point person, and communications officer. In the regions, Musharikat's regional teams are made up of a director, outreach officer and M&E specialist along with local coalition members who will provide direct support to and advocacy engagement with the grantee(s) in their region. The CST and AE Coalition's steering committee will make visits to the provinces to observe and support grant progress and capture best practices.

Collaboration with Musharikat AE Coalition members:

The AE steering committee, with the support of the CST, will play the lead role in providing background research and finding, guiding and supporting the work of all the grantees in facilitating policy implementation. Each grantee will focus on addressing harmful social norms concerning schoolgirl's enrollment and prevention of school girl harassment through relevant interventions and share their observations or lessons learned with Musharikat at the relevant event.

Illustrative Project Activities:

Based on the Musharikat's AE coalition steering committee survey, applicants are encouraged to implement the following illustrative activities however additional innovative activities are welcomed:

A. Stakeholder Mapping and Provincial Engagement Mapping

Conduct Stakeholder Mapping in coordination with AE steering committee to identify key stakeholders in grantee's selected provinces with interest/experience related to Access to Education, specifically with implementation of the National Education Strategic Plan and the Elimination of Violence against Woman Law.

1) Develop Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

2) Hold Initial Stakeholder Meetings and Obtain Letters of Introduction from Relevant Provincial Governors & Directorates/Ministries

B. Baseline and Final Survey and Report to Support Advocacy Efforts

C. Develop Policy Advocacy Campaign

1) Develop draft advocacy campaign focused on preventing schoolgirls harassment;

2) Conduct Working Session with Provincial Government Stakeholders & AE steering committee/ members

3) Submission of Final Advocacy Campaign Plan.

D. Implement Policy Advocacy Campaign

1) Hold Advocacy Meetings with Key Stakeholders: Provincial Government Officials and Governors

2) Awareness Raising Activities: As part of the advocacy campaign, grantee will coordinate with the steering committee to conduct targeted, strategic awareness raising activities which directly supports lobbying/advocacy efforts **with provincial government officials.**

a. Town Hall Meetings:

b. Identify Round table participants when requested in support of Musharikat-led national awareness raising campaign for AE coalition priorities.

3) Follow up on status of implementation of National Education Strategic Plan and the Elimination of Violence Against Women Law at provincial level

E. Actively Participate in National Summit in Kabul on the prevention of schoolgirl harassment in provincial government offices.

F. Final Report

IV. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1) Weekly bullet points on grant activities

2) The grantee will leverage the Musharikat Knowledge Management Platform for both its formal reporting to the steering committee/CST and regular communications with other coalition members in their region. It is strongly recommended that the grantee leverage other advocacy tools in the MKMP such as the discussion forum and announcement section to further their efforts and the broader efforts of the entire campaign. Proposed policy/procedure discussions in the forum are welcome.

- 3) **Monthly reports** which include a description of project activities and progress towards meeting the project goal; problems in project implementation; actions taken to overcome them; and plans on how the next phase of the project will be implemented.
- 4) **Activity Report for each provincial government lobbying/advocacy meeting, and awareness raising event (e.g. town hall meeting) which includes:**
 - Signed participant sheets;
 - Photos;
 - Summary of the activity.
- 5) **Draft Final Report** summarizing grant successes and best practices for incorporation into national level report for summit
- 6) **Final Report** with key findings, lessons learned and recommendations. This report will describe how the project objectives and goals were reached, results of the project, and problems and solutions during implementation. Examples of successes and impact should be included. This information should be presented in a manner suitable for presentation to the public.

The grantee will leverage the Musharikat Knowledge Management Platform for both its formal reporting to the steering committee/CST and regular communications with other coalition members in their region. It is strongly recommended that the grantee leverage other advocacy tools in the MKMP such as the discussion forum and announcement section to further their efforts and the broader efforts of the entire campaign. Proposed policy/procedure discussions in the forum are welcome.

V. CONTRIBUTION TO MUSHARIKAT INDICATORS AND POTENTIAL IMPACT

Project results:

The project is designed to increase schoolgirl's enrollment to school (NESP 2017-2021) and reduce harassment by implementing the EVAW Law article 5.14 and 5.19.

Proposed grant activities will support the primary Musharikat M&E indicators, and attempt to support the secondary indicators:

- Number of legal instruments drafted, proposed or adopted with USG assistance designed to promote gender equality or non-discrimination against women or girls at the national or sub-national level.
- Number of legal instruments promoting women's rights and/or gender issues with improved implementation as a result of Musharikat IBC advocacy efforts.
- Percentage of civil society organizations in Musharikat issue-based coalitions that improve their ability to advocate for women's rights and empowerment
- Number of regulations, laws, policies and procedures raised by Musharikat issue-based coalitions.
- Number of government entities that adopt gender-specific policies as a result of Musharikat advocacy campaigns.
- Number of government entities that are engaged in Musharikat issue-based coalitions and its grant projects' advocacy campaign planning and implementation.

- Number of civil service organizations that participate in legislative proceedings and/or engage in advocacy with national legislature and its committees.

VI. Musharikat Coalitions Advocacy Framework:

The proposed activities must address and be focused on the Musharikat Access to Education Coalition Advocacy Framework including schoolgirl harassment as outlined in the National Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 which hinders the girls from access to their education under the AE Coalition. Please refer to Annex 10 for Musharikat Coalition Advocacy Framework.

Enclosed to this RFA are Annexes.

Annexes are attached in separate files. Below are the list of all annexes associated in this RFA.

ANNEX 1: Mandatory Standard Provisions:

Refer to the Mandatory Standard Provisions, by grant type attached separately.

ANNEX 2: Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient and Solicitation Provisions

Please make sure to sign each section where required.

ANNEX 3: Grant Application Form

Please fill in the application form using the template provided.

ANNEX 4: Completed Implementation/Work Plan

Please fill in the work plan using the template provided.

ANNEX 5: Budget Template

Please provide a detailed budget and a budget note for the entire duration of the project, using the template provided. The budget note should provide details on all types of costs planned, cost per unit and cost justification.

ANNEX 6: Curriculum Vitae

Provide the CVs for all proposed project staff as you will list in the budget using the CV template provided.

ANNEX 7: Musharikat Coalition Membership Form

If you are already a member of the Musharikat Coalitions, you are not required to resubmit this form. If you are not currently a member of the Musharikat Coalition, you are required to fill the Musharikat Membership Form available in Annex 7 attachment in order to become eligible for Musharikat Funding. This Membership Form has to be submitted together with the rest of the proposal to Musharikat. Recipients that are not currently holding Musharikat Coalition Membership and fails to submit the membership form at this point will not be considered.

ANNEX 8: Instructions for Obtaining a DUNS Number

For instruction to obtaining a DUNS Number; refer to the template provided.

ANNEX 9: Self Certification for Exemption from DUNS Requirement

For a self-certification for exemption from DUNS; refer to the template provided.

ANNEX 10: Musharikat Coalitions Advocacy Framework

The proposed activities must address and be focused to the Musharikat Coalition Advocacy Framework.

ANNEX 11: List of Musharikat Indicators

Proposed activities should support one or more of the Musharikat M&E indicators.

ANNEX 12: Musharikat Regional Map

Musharikat geographic map is attached.

ANNEX 13: Application Checklist and Signature Page

Please refer to the application checklist and Signature Page template for the list of documents you have to submit along this RFA and your institution certification provided.