Lebanon Civic Action Accelerator Program (LEB-CAAP)

<u>Request For Applications (RFA)</u>

Strengthening Civil Society for Impact (SCS)

RFA Issue Date	Wednesday, August 28, 2024
Solicitation Workshop (Online)	Thursday, September 5, 2024, 11:00 am to 12:30. Register by September 02, 2024 5:00 pm (Beirut Time) via SCS RFA Solicitation Workshop (Page 1 of 2) (office.com)
Q&A Deadline	Friday, September 06, 2024 by 12pm noon (Beirut Time) submitted via email to lebcaapgrants@fhi360.org
Q&A Posted	Tuesday, September 10, 2024 close of business on Daleel Madani (https://daleel-madani.org/civil-society-directory/fhi-360), @lebcaap Facebook, Instagram, and https://linktr.ee/lebcaap
Application Deadline	Thursday, September 26, 2024 by 12pm noon (Beirut Time). Complete applications are to be submitted via email to **lebcaapgrants@fhi360.org**

The contents of this Request for Applications are the responsibility of FHI 360 and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

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I. Overview of the LEB-CAAP Program

The USAID-funded Lebanon Civic Action Accelerator Program (LEB-CAAP) is a five-year (2021-2026) program which aims to enhance civil society responsiveness to locally driven demands to accelerate inclusive rights-based policies, practices, and services. LEB-CAAP is implemented by FHI 360, a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions in more than 70 countries. LEB-CAAP interventions were validated through a multisectoral, collaborative, refinement phase to ensure the program is responsive to the priorities of Lebanese civil society organizations (CSOs). To date, LEB-CAAP has engaged 633 unique civil society organizations and 3,132 unique local actors from across Lebanon[1]. Through grants, technical assistance, and partnerships, LEB-CAAP:

- Accelerates locally championed solutions and strategic collective efforts to advocate for rights.
- Provides tools, resources, and support that enable LEB-CAAP partners to improve their impact, effectively measure their performance, and enhance their sustainability.
- Assists civil society in balancing immediate, critical needs for relief and service delivery, with the need to advance long-term reforms and systemic change.
- Promotes the democratic principles of participation, inclusion, transparency, and accountability within civil society interventions and operations.
- Strengthens linkages and collaboration among and within the civil society landscape by leveraging previous investments, building on existing resources, and avoiding duplication of effort.
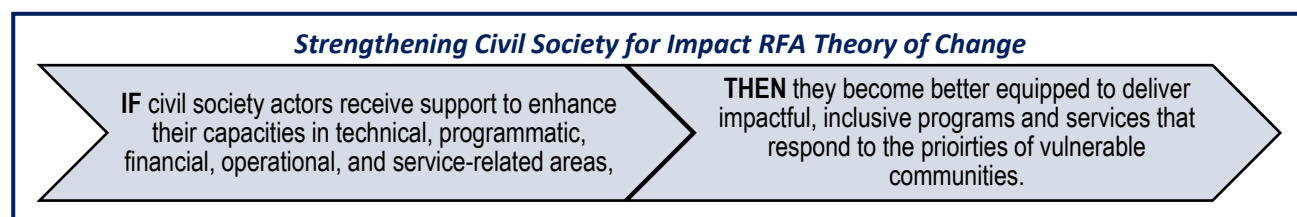
II. Overview of the Strengthening Civil Society for Impact (SCS) RFA

A. Summary

The goal of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to increase the impact and sustainability of CSOs in serving vulnerable communities through the delivery of responsive and inclusive quality programs, to be achieved through two interconnected objectives:

(1) Strengthen CSO organizational capacities for operational efficiency and technical effectiveness in order to better meet the priorities of vulnerable communities, specifically women, youth, elderly, persons with disabilities and/or persons with diverse SOGIESC[2], among others; and

(2) Expand CSO programmatic reach by piloting/expanding a community initiative, utilizing the strengthened systems and enhanced capacities gained through the SCS grant, to address one or more key themes: 1) Gender equality and women's empowerment; 2) diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA); 3) youth civic engagement; 4) poverty reduction; 5) conflict mitigation; 6) anti-corruption and/or accountability.

SCS grants aim to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of CSOs by supporting them to implement strategic initiatives that tackle specific operational and programmatic challenges in order to deliver a pilot or expanded project that responds to the needs of their targeted community over a 12-15 period. This holistic approach ensures that improvements in one area reinforce progress in the other, leading to more resilient and impactful CSOs capable of addressing community priorities in a sustainable way.

Strengthening Civil Society for Impact RFA Theory of Change

IF civil society actors receive support to enhance their capacities in technical, programmatic, financial, operational, and service-related areas,

THEN they become better equipped to deliver impactful, inclusive programs and services that respond to the prioirties of vulnerable communities.

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[1] To learn more, visit https://daleel-madani.org/civil-society-directory/fhi-360 and our Facebook and Instagram pages @lebcaap.
[2] SOGIESC stands for Sexual Orientations, Gender Identities, Gender Expressions & Sex Characteristics.

Grants issued under the SCS RFA will provide CSOs with access to expert technical assistance, tools, and resources necessary to address their organizational and technical challenges, enabling them to play a more significant and sustainable role in addressing the diverse needs of their communities and contributing to positive social change related to the thematic areas: 1) Gender equality and women's empowerment; 2) diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA); 3) youth civic engagement; 4) poverty reduction; 5) conflict mitigation; 6) anti-corruption and/or accountability. The integration and mainstreaming of gender, equity, safeguarding, and social inclusion (GESSI) as well as positive youth development (PYD) within CSO programs and operations are cross-cutting capacity strengthening priorities that must be addressed under this RFA.

LEB-CAAP anticipates issuing grants up to $50,000 USD each from an estimated grants pool of $200K. Interested CSOs must submit a technical narrative, detailed budget, and other required documents as outlined in "Section VI. Grants Selection Process and Award" and in accordance with the evaluation criteria in "Section V. Evaluation Criteria".

Shortlisted applicants will be required to participate in a co-design workshop with LEB-CAAP to validate the proposed capacity strengthening interventions, finalize the project design and implementation plan, and confirm the budget requirements to ensure cost allowability, allocability and reasonableness. Subsequent pre-award requirements and due diligence processes are outlined in "Section VII. Grant Selection Process and Award".

B. Background

Lebanon is in a multifaceted crisis marked by economic instability, political turmoil, and significant security challenges. These conditions present challenges for CSOs which are crucial in filling the growing gaps left by inadequate governmental structures. CSOs in Lebanon are pivotal in providing essential services and fostering social change, yet they face enormous barriers in maintaining operational viability due to fluctuating donor funding and the overall volatile environment. Their traditional reliance on donor support has become increasingly unsustainable, pushing these organizations towards seeking more reliable funding sources to continue their vital work amidst national and global shifts in priorities.

On an operational level, CSOs struggle with internal issues such as insufficient capacity, inadequate staff training, and inefficient management structures—all of which are impaired by the ongoing crises. The legal and institutional frameworks within which they operate also pose significant challenges. On a programmatic level, CSOs struggle to continuously adapt strategically to the changing circumstances and shifting community priorities and have few opportunities to innovate both in fundraising and program delivery. Moreover, it is often difficult to retain talented staff or institutionalize technical knowledge and skills to ensure quality activities are being implemented.

As a result, there is a pressing need for CSOs to reevaluate their roles and functions, enhancing organizational resilience, diversifying funding sources, and leveraging technology for better efficiency and reach. To this end, building partnerships with international donors, engaging in private sector collaborations, and integrating into broader networks are crucial strategies that could provide the necessary support and resources for CSOs to navigate through these challenging times and ensure continued service to the communities they support.

In response to these challenges, LEB-CAAP has developed a strategic initiative to support the strengthening of CSOs through enhanced organizational and technical capacities as well as the delivery of program interventions that benefit their targeted communities. Recognizing the need for CSOs to diversify their funding sources, become more operationally efficient, and to continuously improve or adapt their programs to serve their communities, LEB-CAAP's Strengthening Civil Society Capacities

for Impact Grants (SCS) will enable qualified CSOs to not only survive in a challenging environment but to thrive and increase their social impact.

The SCS initiative is built on lessons learned from LEB-CAAP's flagship grants programs - the Catalyst Fund for Relief and Response (CFRR) and the Community Action for Accountability (CAFA). The CFRR grants empowered CSOs to tackle the multifaceted crises in Lebanon, addressing the escalated relief and response demands at both local and national levels. Through these grants, CSOs were equipped to adapt to dynamic and uncertain conditions, enhancing their capacity to sustain and improve their existing services. This support addressed immediate community needs and strengthened the institutional capabilities of CSOs, increasing their effectiveness, efficiency, quality, and inclusiveness. The CAFA grants allowed local CSOs to address community priorities through designing and initiating new rights-based advocacy campaigns that mobilized communities for civic action, while benefiting from technical assistance to improve their organizational strength and advocacy skills.

Building on the achievements of both grant programs, the SCS RFA targets CSOs who are responding to current community priorities – through service delivery, civic engagement or other types of programming that directly benefit communities, particularly vulnerable populations – and whose projects will result in tangible outcomes, ensuring CSO resilience and sustained social impact.

C. RFA Goals and Objectives

This RFA contributes to LEB-CAAP's *Objective 1: Strengthened capacities of civil society to address Lebanon's crises and advance long-term rights-based change* and *Objective 2: Improved civil society solutions to community priorities through innovative approaches and models*. Funding through the SCS grants program is structured to provide comprehensive support to CSOs to strengthen both their operational and programmatic capacities (40% of the budget total) and to utilize this learning by piloting or expanding a solution that responds to community priorities (60%), specifically targeting vulnerable groups (women, youth, elderly, persons with disabilities and/or diverse SOGIESC) and addressing priority themes: 1) Gender equality and women's empowerment; 2) diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA); 3) youth civic engagement; 4) poverty reduction; 5) conflict mitigation; 6) anti-corruption and/or accountability . Illustrative activities under each objective include but are not limited to:

SCS Goal: Increase the impact and sustainability of CSOs in serving vulnerable communities through the delivery of responsive and inclusive quality programs	
Objective 1: Strengthen CSO organizational capacities for operational efficiency and technical effectiveness in order to better meet the priorities of vulnerable communities	**Objective 2:** Expand CSO programmatic reach by piloting/expanding a community initiative, utilizing the strengthened systems and enhanced capacities gained through the SCS grant

• Improve governance structures, management practices, team skills, or systems to maximize operational efficiency. • Streamline program processes and workflows, adopt advanced technological solutions, or acquire equipment for smoother operations. • Upgrade the quality of program methodologies, tools, and technical resources. • Enhance organizational strategies, financial sustainability plans or digital transformation plans to foster growth and sustainability. • Build the capacity of staff in strategic and technical domains to align CSO response with evolving community priorities. • Integrate strategic approaches to ensure GESSI and PYD in programs and/or operations.	• Pilot new approaches that apply innovation and learning to address community problems. • Scale the impact of programs by expanding target community groups and/or partnering with new stakeholders. • Increase delivery of essential services to vulnerable groups. • Deliver enhanced technical interventions that meet GESSI goals and ensure inclusion of women, youth, elderly, persons with disabilities and/or persons with diverse SOGIESC, among others. • Build on existing interventions to address evolving community priorities.
40% of the total budget	**60% of the total budget**

Overall, SCS grants will provide the resources required to enable CSOs to sustain and expand their core programs and operations over the long term. This involves technical assistance in strategic planning, program development, and revenue diversification, enabling CSOs to better align their missions with the priorities of the communities they serve and to ensure continuous improvement in their programming. Funding allows for CSOs to benefit from operational improvements that directly contribute to enhanced program delivery and vice versa, creating a synergistic effect that amplifies the impact and sustainability of CSOs in Lebanon. Targeted recipients of USAID assistance under this grant are both (1) the CSO personnel that will benefit from capacity strengthening and (2) individuals that participate/benefit in the pilot/expanded community initiative (program or services).

D. Gender, Equity, Safeguarding and Social Inclusion (GESSI)

Applicants must outline appropriate inclusion strategies within the proposed project activities and across all implementation phases to ensure equal opportunities for the meaningful engagement and participation of vulnerable groups (women, youth, elderly, persons with disabilities, people with diverse SOGIESC and people with disabilities, among others) to take part and be represented on equal footing throughout program processes and implementation. Applicants must demonstrate a thorough understanding of existing gaps related to gender and inclusion (i.e. the different roles and status of women or persons with disabilities and how it affects the work to be undertaken or the anticipated results, barriers to participation and accessibility to service, etc.).

LEB-CAAP will provide the needed technical assistance to support all grantees in mainstreaming gender and inclusion of persons with disabilities and integrating a PYD approach into the project action plan, as well as provide complementary capacity building support to ensure the grantees design and deliver programs that achieve proposed inclusion strategies.

Right holder groups are highly encouraged to apply.

E. Anticipated Results

SCS grants are expected to deliver impactful results, including but not limited to:

1) Sustained and/or expanded programs to new target groups and geographies.

2) Improved quality of programs through streamlined administrative processes, efficient service delivery processes, or the adoption of technological solutions.

3) Development of strategic plans, program designs, technical interventions or sustainable income sources.

4) Development and implementation of innovative solutions through cross-sectoral partnerships.

5) Mainstreaming of gender, equity, safeguarding, and social inclusion as well as positive youth development strategies and approaches.

6) Addressing one or more of the key thematic areas outlined in section II.C above.

7) Fostering long-term sustainability through capacity building, partnerships, and a culture of continuous improvement.

III. Grant Parameters

The chart below summarizes the award amount, potential types of grants, and related requirements.

Award Ceiling	LEB-CAAP anticipates issuing grants up to $50,000 USD each from an estimated pool of $200K for this RFA.
Period of Performance	Between 12-15 months
Expected Award Type	**Fixed Amount Award (FAA)**. A grant type whereby the grantee is paid in pre-established tranches upon approval of pre-determined milestones. FAAs are used when there is a reasonable estimate for the costs, and where milestones can be clearly defined and verified.
Advances	No cash advances are allowed under FAAs.
Branding and Marking	All grants shall adhere to USAID and FHI 360 branding and marking requirements. "Branding" refers to how a program or project is named and positioned, who it is from, and identifies the sponsor of the work. "Marking" refers to applying graphic identities or logos to program materials or project signage to visibly acknowledge contributors; it identifies organizations supporting the work. Branding and marking requirements for USAID-funded grants are contained in 2 CFR 700.16. USAID and are incorporated into the grant agreement.
Pre-Approvals	Equipment (in excess of USD 5,000/unit), restricted commodities and participant support costs must be pre-approved by USAID.
Reporting Requirements	Narrative reports will be submitted on a regular basis depending on milestone schedules established in the pre-award phase, including agreed upon monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requirements per the grant agreement. A final report is also required.
U.S. Government Regulations	Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards to Nongovernmental Organizations - A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 303 (usaid.gov) Compliance with Prohibition on the Use of Forced Labor in the Performance of USAID Awards (Regarding procurement of solar equipment): Xinjiang Supply Chain Business Advisory - United States Department of State
Environmental Compliance	Successful applicants will work with LEB-CAAP to ensure that the proposed projects comply with USAID's 22 CFR Regulation 216. Where required, environmental mitigation measures will be defined through the completion of an Environmental Review and Assessment Checklist (ERAC) and as needed, the development of an Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP). LEB-CAAP's environmental expert will remain on standby to support grantees in complying with any required environmental mitigation measures for their projects.

IV. Eligibility Requirements

Only applicants that meet all eligibility criteria listed below will be evaluated:

• Applicants must be not-for-profit, non-governmental organizations that are locally registered and headquartered in Lebanon.

- Applicants should have a minimum of three years of operations.
- Applicants must have implemented at least one grant of a USD 50,000 minimum during the past three years.

The following are <u>not</u> eligible to receive grant support:

- Individuals
- Informal Groups (unregistered organizations)
- International not-for-profit and non-governmental organizations
- For-profit entities
- Political parties, groupings, or institutions or their subsidiaries and affiliates
- Government institutions (this includes entities that the Government of Lebanon owns at least 50% share of or receive at least 50% of their annual financial support from the Government of Lebanon)
- Faith-based organizations whose objectives are discriminatory and/or serve religious purposes, and/or whose main objective of the grant is of a religious nature
- Any entity that has been found to have misused USAID funds in the past (unless specifically approved by USAID)
- Organizations that advocate or promote anti-democratic policies or illegal activities
- Any entity included in any supplementary information concerning prohibited individuals or entities that may be provided by USAID
- Any entity whose principal governing officers appear on the Specifically Designated Nationals List administered by the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control, the UN's 1267 Committee List on Al Qaeda and the Taliban and Associated Individuals and Entities
- Any entity whose principal governing officers refuse to complete the USAID Partner Information Form 500-13 or who fail to pass USAID due diligence phase, in accordance with the relevant USAID/Lebanon Mission Order requirements
- Any organization that refuses to sign all required certifications and assurances
- Any entity debarred from doing business with the US Government
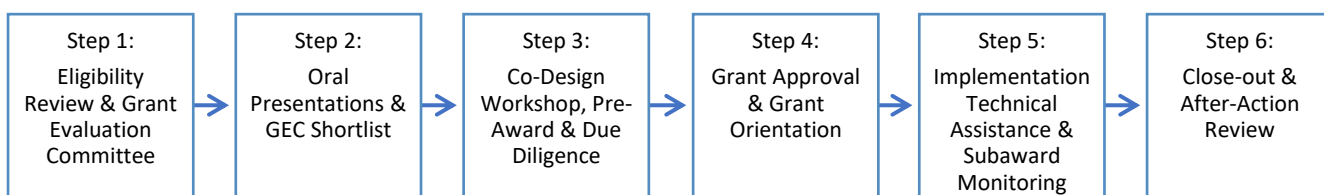
V. Evaluation Criteria

Eligible applications will be scored separately in accordance with the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria/Points	
1. Community Problem • Urgency and relevance of the community problem is clearly articulated (5) • Community problem is aligned with the CSO mission and technical capabilities in line with the priority themes covered in section II.C of this RFA (5)	10 points
2. CSO's Organizational Challenges and Suggested Solutions • Urgency and relevance of the operational and/or technical challenge(s) that impacts the CSO's ability to respond to community priorities (5) • Feasibility and potential impact that the proposed operational and/or technical solution(s) has on the CSO's operations and/or ability to deliver inclusive, quality programs (5)	10 points
3. CSO's Programmatic Response to Community Priorities • CSO has a proven track record in working on the RFA key thematic areas as outlined in section II.C above (5) • Programmatic response is feasible to implement as planned in the targeted community (5) • Programmatic response is evidence/data-driven and has the potential to positively impact the targeted community (5) • Ability of the CSO to sustain the program/service beyond the grant timeframe (5) • Clearly defined the targeted beneficiaries, how they will reach them and the number of community beneficiaries that will be directly impacted during the grant (10)	30 points

4. CSO Organizational Capacity • CSO has the qualified human resources (leadership, staff, consultants) to technically manage and implement the project (10) • CSO has a proven track record in managing donor-funded grants, particularly USAID, with required financial systems, skills, expertise & experience in place (10) • Ability of the CSO to achieve the desired outcomes within the project timeframe (5)	25 points
5. Engagement and Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups • Extent to which the CSO is already engaging and serving vulnerable groups defined by this RFA (5) • Clearly defined challenges and actions to enhance/mainstream GESSI and PYD within the CSO programs and operations (5) • Impact of proposed program response in meaningfully engaging and/or serving vulnerable groups (5)	15 points
6. Cost Efficiency • Budget cost effectiveness and reasonableness (5) • Detailed clarity of costs aligning to proposed activities under Objective 1 (40% of total budget) and Objective 2 (60% of total budget) (5)	10 points
Total Points	**100**

VII. Grant Selection Process and Award

The steps below illustrate LEB-CAAP's process for evaluating applications, engaging the shortlisted applicant through co-design and due diligence, obtaining requisite approvals to issue a grant, pending USAID final approval, and supporting grantee during implementation.

Step 1: Eligibility Review & Grant Evaluation Committee	→	Step 2: Oral Presentations & GEC Shortlist	→	Step 3: Co-Design Workshop, Pre-Award & Due Diligence	→	Step 4: Grant Approval & Grant Orientation	→	Step 5: Implementation Technical Assistance & Subaward Monitoring	→	Step 6: Close-out & After-Action Review

STEP 1: Evaluation
All submitted applications will be assessed for completion and eligibility per the requirements included in this RFA. Eligible applicants will be assessed based on the Evaluation Criteria described above by a Grant Evaluation Committee (GEC).

STEP 2: Oral Presentations
Based on the results of the GEC, shortlisted applicant(s) will be invited to make an oral presentation to the GEC. During this presentation, applicant(s) will present their proposal, including their methodology to implement the statement of work and capacity statement (previous work, partnerships, etc.). The GEC will then rescore each applicant per the above evaluation criteria, at which time only apparently successful applicants will move to the next step in this process, pending USAID concurrence.

STEP 3: Co-Design Workshop & Due Diligence with the shortlisted applicant
Final shortlisted applicants will be invited to a co-design workshop with LEB-CAAP to further develop their project description and budget. In parallel, LEB-CAAP will conduct assessments of the shortlisted applicant and due diligence to assess the applicant's capacity to manage a USAID award.

Required steps in the due diligence process include:

- Complete the Financial Pre-Award Assessment (to be conducted by LEB-CAAP staff during a scheduled site visit to the organization).
- Obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) through the Sam.gov website. The UEI is required to receive a USAID award and as it takes time, LEB-CAAP is requesting applicants to start the process as part of their application and provide a verification as outlined in the application instructions below.
- Provide final detailed budget and budget narrative along with detailed supporting documents for all budget items as requested by LEB-CAAP. NOTE: As LEB-CAAP anticipates issuing Fixed Amount Awards, shortlisted applicants will be required to provide detailed cost data in order to determine allowability, allocability and cost reasonableness.
- Provide audited financial statements, if available. English translation desirable, but not required. If no recent audit has been conducted, a revenue and expense statement and balance sheet for the previous financial year must be attached.
- Sign USAID's Certifications and Assurances (to be provided by LEB-CAAP).
- Sign Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency (FFATA) Certification (to be provided by LEB-CAAP).
- Provide information and documentation required for debarment and terrorist financing searches (to be conducted by LEB-CAAP).
- Submit all documentation required for USAID grant approval, including the completed Partner Information Form (PIF) and supporting documents for award(s) that total USD 25,000+.

As a result of the project design and due diligence process, FHI 360 can decide on the following:

- Fully fund the project
- Fund the project, with conditions
- Not to fund the project

STEP 4: Grant Approval
The LEB-CAAP team will finalize grant packages for FHI 360 review and USAID approval after which grants are awarded (pending UEI verification and approval through USAID vetting process). Mandatory grant orientation sessions will be held with grantees to review requirements related to grant management; M&E and reporting; branding, marking, and communications guidelines; as well as safeguarding, including completion of the mandatory safeguarding self-assessment related to preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), child safeguarding, and combating trafficking in persons.

STEP 5: Implementation and STEP 6: Close-out
Grantees implement their projects with ongoing technical assistance and support from LEB-CAAP, including close monitoring to ensure grant compliance throughout implementation and until close out. Grantees will be required to participate in "All Grantee Meetings" which are designed to improve communication and cooperation between grantees, and to foster exchange and learning around common priorities. During close-out, LEB-CAAP will work with the grantees to conduct an after action review to reflect on overall project learning.

VIII. Application Instructions and Deadline

A. Application Package

Applicants must submit all of the following documents for an application to be considered **complete and eligible for the GEC review**:

☐ Organizational Cover Letter signed by Authorized Signatory (Attachment I). The applicant is requested to add as an attachment to the application form a cover page on organizational letter

head signed by a person duly authorized to apply on behalf of the Applicant and to bind the Applicant to the application.

☐ Technical Application (Attachment II)

☐ Budget Template (Attachment III)

☐ Tax Identification Number: رقم مالي

☐ Value-added Tax (VAT) registration or exemption documentation

☐ Verification of Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) or Submission Request [3]

☐ Certificate of registration شهادة تسجيل with scanned Arabic photocopies

☐ Certificate of incorporation papers: علم وخبر with scanned Arabic photocopies

☐ Financial registration for the year 2024

☐ Ministry of Interior and Municipalities certification of the most recent Board Elections

(Original Arabic documents with English translation might be requested at a later stage).

Only applications submitted using templates provided by LEB-CAAP will be considered. It is important to answer all the questions included in the attached technical application form, as selection will be based on responses to these questions. Additionally, it is important to carefully complete the cost application using the attached budget template and include detailed line-item budget notes to clearly describe how the budgeted amounts were calculated. For shortlisted applicants, LEB-CAAP will request supporting documentation to determine if the costs are fair and reasonable.

B. Application Timeline

- **Solicitation Workshop**: LEB-CAAP will hold an online solicitation workshop to provide an opportunity for potential applicants to ask questions and better understand the activity, application process, budgeting, and grant parameters. Workshop will take place on Thursday, September 05, 2024 11:00 am to 12:30. Interested applicants should register for the Solicitation Workshop by September 02, 2024 by 5:00 pm (Beirut Time) through the following link: SCS RFA Solicitation Workshop (Page 1 of 2) (office.com).

- **Questions & Answers:** Questions about this RFA are due by September 06, 2024 by 12pm noon (Beirut Time) and should be submitted via email to lebcaapgrants@fhi360.org. Answers to all questions will be posted on FHI 360's page on Daleel Madani (daleel-madani.org) as well as @lebcaap social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram and https://linktr.ee/lebcaap by close of business on September 10, 2024.

- **Deadline to submit Applications:** The complete application package is due by 12pm noon (Beirut Time) on Thursday September 26, 2024 and must be submitted via email to lebcaapgrants@fhi360.org.
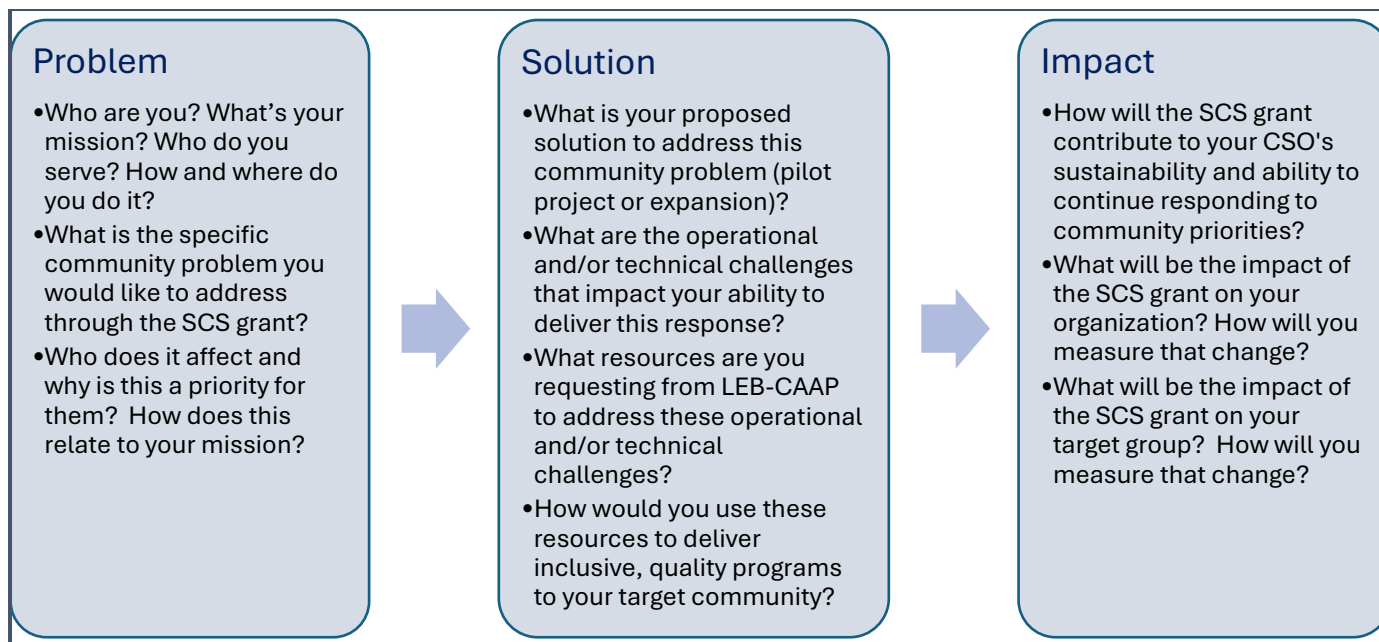
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[3] The applicant should attach a screenshot from SAM.gov of the organization's UEI number or attach a screenshot from SAM.gov of the incident opened in response to your organization's request for a UEI. This video may aid in requesting a UEI: Get a Unique Entity ID in SAM.gov (كيفية الحصول على معرّف الكيان الفريد على الموقع (UEI) | SAM.gov (عربي) (youtube.com)).

C. Technical Application Guidelines

Applicants must show how their proposed capacity strengthening initiatives align with the two main objectives of the RFA. They must showcase a clear understanding of how operational improvements will directly support and enhance program implementation, and conversely, how strengthened programmatic capacity will contribute to more efficient operations. This holistic approach aims to create a seamless integration between organizational functions, maximizing the overall effectiveness of CSOs.

Furthermore, applicants are expected to elaborate on the process undertaken to identify the priority areas for capacity development within their organizations. This includes detailing the methodologies employed, such as internal assessments, stakeholder consultations, or external evaluations. By transparently documenting the process followed to identify these priorities, applicants can showcase the thoroughness and relevance of their proposed interventions.

When reviewing a Technical Application, the GEC should be able to clearly understand the community problem, the proposed solution and the associated technical and operational gaps this grant will address, and the expected impact on the CSO and the community through the delivery of pilot/expanded projects. Applicants can use the guiding questions in the graph below as they develop the Technical Application.

Problem	Solution	Impact
•Who are you? What's your mission? Who do you serve? How and where do you do it? •What is the specific community problem you would like to address through the SCS grant? •Who does it affect and why is this a priority for them? How does this relate to your mission?	•What is your proposed solution to address this community problem (pilot project or expansion)? •What are the operational and/or technical challenges that impact your ability to deliver this response? •What resources are you requesting from LEB-CAAP to address these operational and/or technical challenges? •How would you use these resources to deliver inclusive, quality programs to your target community?	•How will the SCS grant contribute to your CSO's sustainability and ability to continue responding to community priorities? •What will be the impact of the SCS grant on your organization? How will you measure that change? •What will be the impact of the SCS grant on your target group? How will you measure that change?

It is essential that applicants provide a clear vision for how they will address the priority themes as defined under this RFA. In addition, CSOs must also elaborate on their efforts in implementing inclusive programs, explaining how their activities are designed in line with inclusion principles and how the SCS grant will allow them to improve their inclusivity of vulnerable groups as defined in this RFA.

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) – Successful applicants must monitor their own activities. During the co-design phase, LEB-CAAP will work with shortlisted applicants in developing an M&E plan to define how the project's outputs, outcomes and overall impact will be determined, and to assist grantees to manage the collection of performance data. LEB-CAAP will provide guidance and assistance to grantees to ensure that the M&E Plan contains the following:

- Clearly defined M&E indicators based on intended results and objectives
- The unit of measurement

- The sources and methods of data collection
- Frequency and schedule of data collection
- Project team member responsible for ensuring data is available on time
- Baseline, benchmarks, and targets

In addition, LEB-CAAP will share relevant indicators, as applicable, from its own performance monitoring plan against which grantees are required to report. Quarterly reporting on the approved indicators will be required once the grant is awarded.

D. Allowable and Unallowable Costs

As outlined above, the total award ceiling for individual grants is $50,000 of which 40% should support implementation of Objective 1 capacity strengthening activities and 60% should support implementation of program/service delivery to vulnerable communities. Applicants should consider the following in their budget applications:

- Only salaries of staff directly responsible for the implementation of activities under this proposed project are allowed. The budget narrative must clearly articulate the role of proposed personnel and justify the proposed salary and level of effort (LOE) to the project.
- Staff must be budgeted based on the current proposed individual's salaried rate.
- The proposed operating costs, including salaries, cannot exceed 25% of the total budget amount.
- Applicants should budget appropriately for resources and adequate LOE for relevant staff focal points to:

  - support monitoring, evaluation and learning throughout all phases of the project
  - integrate GESSI and PYD into capacity strengthening and program delivery
  - ensure accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities as well as reasonable accommodations (i.e., Braille, sign language interpretation, etc.).
  - Outreach activities.

Unallowable Costs under this RFA are:
- Any expenses related to ceremonies, parties, and celebrations;
- The purchase of any goods restricted and prohibited under USAID or U.S. Government regulations such as alcoholic beverages, surveillance equipment, military equipment or arms whether new or surplus, police or law enforcement equipment, abortion equipment and services, weather modification equipment, luxury goods and gambling equipment. See USAID Commodity Eligibility Listing;
- The purchase of goods from source countries that are designated by USAID as prohibited sources and other countries or suppliers as may be identified by USAID's consolidated list of debarred, suspended, or ineligible sub-contractors especially those engaged in support of terrorist activities (these must be reported). See Source and Nationality Requirements for Procurement of Commodities and Services Financed by USAID;
- Expenses related to purchases or activities which are illegal under Lebanese or United States law;
- Promotion of political parties, religion, or commercial interests;
- Fundraising;
- Payments made to government employees.

X. Disclaimers

- Applicants will not be reimbursed for the cost incurred in preparation and submission of an application. All preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant's expense

- This RFA represents only a definition of requirements. It is merely an invitation for submission of applications and does not legally obligate FHI 360 to accept any of the submitted applications in whole or in part, nor is FHI 360 obligated to select the lowest priced application.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to negotiate with any or all organizations, both with respect to cost and/or scope of activities.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to independently negotiate with any applicant, or to make an award without conducting discussion based solely on the applications if it decides it is in its best interest to do so.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications received.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to disqualify any application based on applicant failure to follow application instructions.
- FHI 360 may choose to award only part of the activities in the application, or issue multiple awards based on the application activities.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to waive minor application deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to check applicant's donor references.

- End -