



**Contracting authority:** Italian Agency for Development Cooperation - AICS

AID 12144\_INLAB – Economic empowerment and integration of Person with Disabilities to the job market in Sudan

**Title:** Labour market inclusion of person with disabilities

Guidelines  
for grant applicants

Reference: AID 12144\_G/01/2023

Deadline for submission of application:

**01/11/2023 at 14.00 (time zone of Addis Abeba)**

Addis Abeba, 31/08/2023



## NOTICE

This is an open call for proposals, where all documents are submitted together (concept note and full application). In the first instance, only the concept notes will be evaluated. Thereafter, for the lead applicants who have been pre-selected, the full applications will be evaluated. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority and the signed ‘declaration by the lead applicant’ sent together with the full application.



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## 1. LABOUR MARKET INCLUSION OF PERSON WITH DISABILITIES.

### 1.1. BACKGROUND

As a result of a series of conflicts, long period of complete international isolation and chronic economic vulnerability, Sudan is classified as a fragile State, and the current context has worsened the condition of Sudanese people from the different aspects (economic, social, health).

On April 2023 fighting broke out between the Sudan Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in Khartoum. The fighting rapidly spread to many other urban areas across the country, and after a few months the situation is still strongly unstable.

Before the fighting broke out, up to a third of the Sudanese population were in need of assistance. The situation has amplified an already dire situation and created new crises including mass forced displacement, major disruptions to the provision of health care and food insecurity.

In this context, the war disproportionately affected persons with disabilities. They face life-threatening barriers, such as the lack of accessible shelter, economic issues, lack of access to information and healthcare.

Disability inclusion is an essential condition to upholding human rights, sustainable development, and peace and security. It is also central to the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind. The commitment to realizing the rights of persons with disabilities is not only a matter of justice; it is an investment in a common future.

Article 27 of the Convention on the rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD) “recognize the right of person with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others, including the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation”.

Persons with disabilities encounter many disadvantages in their societies and are often subjected to stigma and discrimination. They remain largely marginalized, disproportionately poorer, frequently unemployed and have higher rates of mortality. Furthermore, they are largely excluded from civil and political processes and are overwhelmingly voiceless in matters that affect them and their society.

### 1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME, OUTPUT, BENEFICIARIES AND LOCALITIES

The **general objective** of this call for proposals **is to contribute to create an inclusive, accessible and sustainable job market for person with disabilities in Sudan.**

The **specific objective** of this call for proposals **is to contribute to strengthen the independence and inclusion of people with disability in the job market.**

The **expected output** of the project **is to promote the job placement, as self-employed person or employed, of working age people with disabilities in the public and private sector.**

#### Direct beneficiaries:

- Working age People with disabilities (+18 years old). It includes also IDPs and migrants.

The gender-mainstream approach must be considered in the disaggregation of beneficiaries. At least 40% of the beneficiaries of the project must be women (+18 years old).

The number of beneficiaries to target must be appropriate with the activities foreseen in the project proposal and the relative budget.



#### Indirect beneficiaries:

Indirect beneficiaries are those beneficiaries who will not benefit directly from the activities of the project, but they will indirectly improve their psychosocial condition at family level and not (such as family members, work colleagues, organisation for people with disabilities, communities, private companies, etc.).

### **1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY**

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 1.100.000,00 The contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds. Any grant requested under this call for proposals must not exceed the maximum amount of:

- **EUR 1.100.000,00**

## **2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the practical guide, which is applicable to the present call (available on the internet at this address <https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/ExactExternalWiki/ePRAG> ).<sup>1</sup>

### **2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors (2.1.1.):

- the **'lead applicant'**, i.e., the entity submitting the application form.
- if any, its **co-applicant(s) (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as 'applicant(s)')**;
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s).

(2) the actions (2.1.3.):

- actions for which a grant may be awarded.

(3) the costs (2.1.4.):

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that a lead applicant (i.e., a coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement template.

### 2.1.1. Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))

#### Lead applicant

- (2) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:
- a) be a legal person **and**
  - b) be non-profit-making **and**
  - c) be a non-governmental organisation duly registered in their own country **and**
  - d) duly registered and authorized to operate and implement activities in Sudan **and**
  - e) demonstrate at least 3 years of proven experience in humanitarian aid interventions in **and**
  - f) demonstrate at least 1 year of experience in managing programmes in the disability sector **and**
  - g) have managed at least one programme for an amount above 800.000,00 euro **and**
  - h) be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary **and**
  - i) not registered in the list of subjects undergoing restrictive measures consultable on [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu). This requirement must be owned by all the actors involve in the implementation of the action.

**Criteria above listed must be satisfied also by the co-applicants, except for letter h). (Please refer to section Co-applicant(s)).**

- (2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide;

Lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities and, in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants and the affiliated entities are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide, personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In this respect, provisionally selected lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities or those placed in the reserve list are obliged to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations through a signed declaration on honour (Annex H). For grants of EUR 15 000 or less, no declaration on honour is required. See Section 2.4.

In Part B Section 8 of the grant application form ('declaration(s) by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

The lead applicant may act individually or with co-applicant(s).

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the coordinator in Annex G (special conditions). The coordinator is the sole interlocutor of the contracting authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.



## Co-applicant(s)

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

### **Co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself.**

Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Part B Section 4 of the grant application form.

If awarded the grant contract, the co-applicant(s) (if any) will become beneficiary(ies) in the action (together with the coordinator).

- (3) In addition, please note that contracts cannot be awarded to or signed with applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG).

### **2.1.2. *Affiliated entities***

The lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies). :

Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (i.e. the lead applicant or a co-applicant), in particular a legal or capital link, may be considered as affiliated entities to the lead applicant and/or to co-applicant(s).

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- (i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to an applicant may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
  - Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
  - Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).
- (ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g., network, federation, association,...) as the proposed affiliated entities.

The structural link shall, as a general rule, be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to an applicant even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of so-called 'sole applicants' or 'sole beneficiaries'. A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is a legal entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.



### What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to an applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant,
- Entities that receive financial support from the applicant,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a ‘sole applicant’ as described above).

### How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be proved on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for implementation contracts and financial support to third parties and subcontractors) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the beneficiary(ies) under the grant contract.

They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Part B Section 5 of the grant application form.

### ***2.1.3. Associates, partners and contractors***

The following entities are not applicants and do not have to sign the ‘mandate for co-applicant(s)’ or ‘affiliated entities’ statement:

- Associates

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. Associates have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1. letters b) d) e). Associates must be mentioned in Part B Section 6 — ‘Associates participating in the action’ — of the grant application form.

In case of associates/partners, a signed and dated partnership agreement must be attached to the project proposal.

- Contractors

The beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts. Associates or partners entity(ies) cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.



The maximum overall budget entrusted to associates, and contractors cannot exceed the 50% of the total budget requested for the action. The budget file must clearly indicate the budget entrusted to associates, and contractors.

#### **2.1.4. Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made**

Definition:

An action is composed of a set of activities.

##### Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not exceed 15 months.

Sectors or themes

Employment of People with disabilities.

##### Location

Actions must take place in the following targeted locations in Sudan: Kassala and/or Port Sudan and/or Gedaref.

##### Types of action

The **impact** of the actions within this grant should contribute to create an inclusive and accessible job market for people with disability in Sudan.

The **outcome** of the action should contribute to promote the access to decent job opportunities for people with disabilities.

The **output** of the action should promote the job inclusion, as self-employed and/or employee, of people with disabilities in the private and public sector in Sudan.

##### Types of activities:

Following some of the activities that can be implemented to achieve the impact of the action:

- Specific and customized activities for job placement for PWD guaranteeing beneficiaries a decent job (work contracts, internships in private and/or public sector, local and international organisation, etc.)
- Activities aimed at promoting the start and/or strengthening of self-employment activities (self-employment, micro and small enterprises, ecc.), through customized and integrated path that involve trainings, mentoring, tutoring for the creation of a business and follow-ups.
- Professional/job trainings followed by internship in private or public sector.
- Supply of assistive technology (laptop, tablet, smartphone, etc.) to facilitate smart working and allow beneficiaries to work remotely.
- Socio-educational activities based on participatory and inclusive approaches to promote the wellbeing, the personal development, interpersonal internships, social inclusion and personal fulfilment.
- Research activities, collection and analyses of data, publication, events promoting job inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Activities to promote disability awareness in the workplaces and in the society/communities.

Please note that the activities above listed are suggested activities, but other activities can be proposed by the applicant(s) within the grant, and they will be evaluated by the Evaluation Committee during the evaluation process.

### Value-adding principles

The applicants will need to make sure that their methodology states how the below value adding principles will be embedded in their project proposals:

- Sustainable: all proposed actions should be designed to achieve long-lasting changes. Applicants should include a description of how sustainability is promoted.
- Inclusive and participatory: the intervention must use on an inclusive and participatory approach also following the “leave no one behind” and “do not harm” principles.
- Complementary: The action should create synergies with other activities and projects implemented in Sudan. Finding complementarities implies continued information sharing with relevant stakeholders. Reporting of good practices and lessons learned will be positively evaluated.
- Monitoring and evaluation: adoption of an effective and efficient Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism with impact, process and performance indicators, quantitative and qualitative, coherent, measurable and verifiable. Target groups must be clearly and precisely defined in the project proposal disaggregated by age, gender, rural and urban, etc.

Monitoring of Programme activities will be regularly guaranteed by AICS through ad hoc meetings, monitoring missions in the areas of intervention and revision of the progress reports (financial and narrative). to be submitted every 6 months.

### Financial support to third parties<sup>2</sup>

Applicants may not propose financial support to third parties.

### Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the AICS has financed the action.

All the activities implemented must comply with AICS communication and visibility rules.

### Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

The lead applicant may not submit more than 1 (one) application under this call for proposals.

The lead applicant may not be awarded more than 1 (one) grant under this call for proposals.

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<sup>2</sup> These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

The lead applicant may not be a co-applicant or an affiliated entity in another application at the same time.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be the co-applicant or affiliated entity in more than 1 (one) application under this call for proposals.

A co-applicant/affiliated entity may not be awarded more than 1 (one) grant under this call for proposals.

### **2.1.5. Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included**

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below.

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

#### Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines).

More specifically, eligible costs must respect the following rules:

- Cost pertinent, appropriate and clearly ascribable to the project activities;
- Foreseen by the approved budget;
- Expenses incurred in the period between the signature of the contract and the conclusion of the project;
- Expenses actually incurred with a valid proof of purchase and in line with national and/or local rules;

#### Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7% of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

#### Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible, as for Article 14.11 of the General Conditions:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses, debts or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) grant (including through the European Development Fund);

- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action and according to the conditions specified in the special conditions; in all cases the ownership shall be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credits to third parties, unless otherwise specified in the special conditions;
- in kind contributions (except for volunteers' work);
- salary costs of the personnel of national administrations, unless otherwise specified in the special conditions and only to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action were not undertaken;
- bonuses included in costs of staff;
- negative interest charged by banks or other financial institutions.

Moreover, the following expenses are non-eligible:

- Personal purchases;
- Costs not planned in the approved budget;
- Costs incurred beyond the period between the signature of the contract and the conclusion of the project;
- Expenses not accompanied by valid proof of purchase or not in line with national and/or local rules;
- Expenses made in cash, unless clearly approved by AICS Khartoum after official request accompanied by exhaustive reason;
- Exchange rate to use is InforEuro available at: [https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/procedures-guidelines-tenders/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-inforeuro\\_it](https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/procedures-guidelines-tenders/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-inforeuro_it).

### **2.1.6. Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct**

#### a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

#### b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular, and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the

conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

### **Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment**

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

Applicants (and affiliated entities) other than (i) natural persons, (ii) pillar-assessed entities and (iii) governments and other public bodies, whose application has been provisionally selected or placed in a reserve list shall assess their internal policy against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) through a self-evaluation questionnaire (Annex L).

#### **c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery**

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

#### **d) Unusual commercial expenses**

Applications will be rejected, or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by AICS are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated..

#### **e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud**

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

## **2.2. HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW**

### **2.2.1. *Application forms***

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the concept note and the full applications in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

Applicants must apply in English.

Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions on the concept note or any major inconsistency in the application (e.g., if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when the information provided is unclear and thus prevents the contracting authority from conducting an objective assessment.

**Please note that only the grant application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.**

**The offline PADOR form (Annex F) must be submitted by the lead applicant, by the co-applicant and by each affiliated entities (if any) and attached to the proposal.**

Please note that the following documents should be submitted together with the PADOR offline registration form and the application form:

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity.
2. Legal entity form (see Annex D of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e., by the lead applicant and by each co-applicant, if any), accompanied by the justifying documents requested there.
3. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached as Annex E of these guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the lead applicant is established. If the lead applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European Commission was in charge of the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.
4. Declaration of Honour (Annex H)
5. If the project foresees the involvement of any associates, a signed and dated partnership agreement between the lead applicant and/or co-applicant and partner(s) must be presented. The partnership agreement must include:
  - List of activities implemented by the partner(s).
  - Breakdown of the amount in charge of the partner(s) for the implementation of the activities.
  - Commitment by the partner to comply with AICS procedure and rules.
6. Valid certificate of registration to operate in Sudan (i.e. proof of registration).
7. Valid certificate of registration in the country of origin (i.e. proof of registration).
8. In case of co-financing, submit a document which confirm the commitment by the actor proposing.
9. Monitoring and Evaluation plan.
10. Documentations proving previous experience in implementing projects (please see letters e, f, and g of point 2.1.1 of these guidelines).
11. Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H: the lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in the self-evaluation questionnaire assessing the organisation's internal



policy and procedure against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEA-H) (Annex L) (see Section 2.5.6 of the PRAG).

In addition, for the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, the following documents should be submitted<sup>3</sup>:

For action grants exceeding EUR 750 000 and for operating grants above EUR 100 000, the lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law. That report shall certify the accounts for up to the last three available financial years. In all other cases, the applicant shall provide a self-declaration signed by its authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for up to the last three available financial years. Such self-declaration shall be dated and signed, either by hand or by applying a qualified electronic signature (QES)<sup>4</sup> by an authorised representative of the signatory.

This requirement shall apply only to the first application made by a beneficiary the same contracting authority in any one financial year.

Documents must be submitted in the form or originals and/or copies.

Where such documents are not in English, a translation into English of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

## **2.2.2. Where and how to send applications**

The application and declaration by the lead applicant (to be found in **Part A Section 3** of the grant application form) must be submitted in one original and two copies in A4 size, each bound. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

An electronic version of the application must also be submitted. A USB Key with the application in electronic format will be included, along with the paper version, in a sealed envelope. The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words 'Not to be opened before the opening session'.

To reduce expense and waste, we strongly recommend that you do not use plastic folders or dividers. Please also use double-sided printing if possible.

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below:

<sup>3</sup> No supporting documents will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

<sup>4</sup> Please note that only the QES within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 (eIDAS Regulation) will be accepted. Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC.

### **Postal address for delivery of applications**

Italian Agency for Development Cooperation

Embassy of Italy

P.O.Box 1108

Villa Italia, Kebena

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel: +251111239600/01

Applications sent by any other means or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

**Please note that incomplete applications may be rejected. Lead applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete using the checklist for application (Part A Section 2 of the grant application form).**

#### ***2.2.3. Deadline for submission of applications***

The applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that there are two different systems for sending applications/full proposals: one is by post or private courier service, the other is by hand delivery.

In the first case, the application/full proposal must be sent before the date for submission, as evidenced by the postmark or deposit slip, but in the second case it is the acknowledgment of receipt given at the time of the delivery of the application/full proposal which will serve as proof.

The **deadline** for the submission of applications is **November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 at 14:00 (timezone of Addis Abeba)** as evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is on **November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 at 14:00 (timezone of Addis Abeba)** as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt. Any application submitted after the deadline will automatically be rejected.

The contracting authority may, for reasons of administrative efficiency, reject any application submitted on time to the postal service but received, for any reason beyond the contracting authority's control, after the effective date of approval of the first evaluation step (i.e. concept note), if accepting applications that were submitted on time but arrived late would considerably delay the award procedure or jeopardise decisions already taken and notified. (see indicative calendar under Section 2.5.2).

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

#### ***2.2.4. Further information about applications***

Questions and/or clarification requests may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 calendar days before the deadline for the submission of applications to the below address(es), clearly indicating the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: [procurement.sudan@aics.gov.it](mailto:procurement.sudan@aics.gov.it)

CC: [fabio.monni@aics.gov.it](mailto:fabio.monni@aics.gov.it)

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.



Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the website where the call was published: <https://khartoum.aics.gov.it/en/home-eng/opportunities/calls/>. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

Please note that the contracting authority may decide to cancel the call for proposals procedure at any stage according to the conditions set out in Section 6.5.9 of the PRAG.

### **2.3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.



## **(1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION**

During the opening and administrative check, the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which can be found in Part A of the grant application form.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

### **Scores**

<b>1. Relevance of the action</b>	Sub-score	<b>20</b>
1.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (Section 1.2)?	5	
1.2 How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5	
1.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5	
1.4 Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g., innovation, best practices) and the other additional elements indicated under 1.2. of the guidelines for applicants?	5	
<b>2. Design of the action</b>	Sub-score	<b>30</b>
2.1 How coherent is the overall design of the action?  Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?	5x2*	
2.2 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5	



2.3 Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions)?	5	
2.4 Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results (including timeframe)? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	5	
2.5 To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, youth, combating HIV/AIDS (if there is a strong prevalence in the target country/region)?	5	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>		<b>50</b>

\*this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

Once all concept notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Only the concept notes with a score of at least 30 will be considered for pre-selection.

After the evaluation of concept notes, the contracting authority will send letters to all lead applicants indicating whether their application was submitted by the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether the concept note was evaluated and the results of that evaluation. The evaluation committee will then proceed with the lead applicants whose proposals have been pre-selected.

## (2) EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION

If the applications pass the opening and administrative checks along the instructions of the Step 1: they will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies). They will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

**The selection criteria** help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the lead applicant's financial capacity and are used to verify that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding (this only applies to lead applicants);
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This applies to applicants and any affiliated entity(ies).

**The award criteria** help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in the guidelines, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They help to select applications which the contracting authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the call for proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

### *Scoring:*

The evaluation grid is divided into Sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.



## Evaluation grid

Section	Maximum Score
<b>1. Financial and operational capacity</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1 Do the applicants and applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house experience of project management?	5
1.2 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) sufficient in-house technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house management capacity? (Including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4 Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
<b>2. Relevance</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Score transferred from the Concept Note evaluation</i>	
<b>3. Design of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 How coherent is the design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outputs and outcome(s)?	5
3.2 Does the proposal/Logical Framework include credible baseline, targets and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study budgeted appropriately in the proposal)?	5
3.3 Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
<b>4. Implementation approach</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1 Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timeline realistic?	5
4.2 Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system? Is there an evaluation planned (previous, during or/and at the end of the implementation)?	5
4.3 Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
<b>5. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>15</b>

5.1 Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
5.2 Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension, capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?	5
5.3 Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?  - Financially ( <i>e.g., financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs</i> )  - Institutionally ( <i>will structures allow the results of the action to be sustained at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?</i> )  - At policy level (where applicable) ( <i>what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g., improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods</i> )  - Environmentally (if applicable) ( <i>will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?</i> )	5
<b>6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	/ 5
6.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the results satisfactory?	/ 10
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under Section 1 is 1, the application will also be rejected.

If the lead applicant applies without co-applicants or affiliated entities the score for point 4.3 shall be 5.

#### *Provisional selection*

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached.

### **(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES)**

The eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority (see Section 2.2.1). It will by default only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals.

- The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting

document or any incoherence between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.

- The eligibility of applicants and the affiliated entity(ies) will be verified according to the criteria set out in Section 2.1.1.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available budget for this call for proposals.

## 2.4. CAUSE OF EXCLUSION

Application will be excluded for the following reasons:

- Applications delivered after the deadline.
- Lack of one or more of the eligibility criteria listed in section 2.1.1. “Eligibility of applicants”.
- Budget entrusted to associates, partners and contractors, exceed the 50% of the total budget requested to AICS for the action (please refer to section 2.1.3. “Associates, partners and contractors”).
- Applications where the maximum budget requested to AICS exceeds the amount available for this grant (Section 1.3 of these guidelines).

## 2.5. NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY’S DECISION

### 2.5.1. *Content of the decision*

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the contracting authority’s decision concerning their application. Please note that the lead applicant is the intermediary for all communications between applicants and the contracting authority during the procedure.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. See Section 2.12 of the practical guide.

Applicants and, if they are legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over them, are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion, their personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. For more information, you may consult the privacy statement available on [http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm).



**2.5.2. Indicative timetable**

	DATE	TIME
<b>1. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority</b>	12/10/2023	11:00am*
<b>2. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority</b>	21/10/2023	-
<b>3. Deadline for submission of [open procedures: applications]</b>	01/11/2023	14:00*
<b>4. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)</b>	15/11/2023**	-
<b>5. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)</b>	10/12/2023**	-
<b>5. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)</b>	14/12/2023**	-
<b>6. Contract signature</b>	18/12/2023**	-

\*All times are in the time zone of the Addis Abeba, Ethiopia.

\*\*This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 1, 2, and 3) and may be updated by the contracting authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the web site where the call was published.

**2.6. CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT**

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract.

Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the beneficiary(ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

In this context, a distinction should be made between awarding implementation contracts and subcontracting parts of the action described in the proposal, i.e., the description of the action annexed to the grant contract,

such subcontracting being subject to additional restrictions (see the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

Awarding implementation contracts: implementation contracts relate to the acquisition by beneficiaries of routine services and/or necessary goods and equipment as part of their project management; they do not cover any outsourcing of tasks forming part of the action that are described in the proposal, i.e. in the description of the action annexed to the grant contract.

Subcontracting: subcontracting is the implementation, by a third party with which one or more beneficiaries have concluded a procurement contract, of specific tasks forming part of the action as described in annex to the grant contract (see also the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract).

### **3. LIST OF ANNEXES**

#### **DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED**

Grant application form (Word format)

Budget (Excel format)

Logical framework (Excel format)

Legal entity form

Financial identification form

PADOR offline registration form

Declaration on Honour

Self-evaluation questionnaire on SEA-H.

#### **OTHER ANNEXES FOR INFORMATION <sup>5</sup>**

Draft grant contract plus special conditions

Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at the following address:

[https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/funding/guidelines/managing-project/diem-rates\\_en](https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/funding/guidelines/managing-project/diem-rates_en)

General conditions

Procurement rules

Model financial interim and final report

Standard template for transfer of ownership of assets

Interim model narrative report

Final model narrative report

Expenditure verification – TOR and report of factual findings

Pre-financing guarantee form.

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<sup>5</sup> These documents should also be published by the contracting authority.