



NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

Institute of Social Development

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community
Collectives for Democratic Governance
(CCCDG) Project

April 2023

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Section A: Request for Applications

Title of funding opportunity:	Calling potential District Partner Organizations (DPO) for the Badulla, Monaragala, Kegalle, Kandy and Matale Districts for the project CSOs and Community Collectives for Democratic Governance (CCCDG)
Date of issue:	10 th of April 2023
Deadline for clarifications:	20 th of April 2023
Applicants conference (online):	25 th of April 2023
Deadline for applications:	By 12 midnight on or before 9 th of May 2023
Length of project period:	12 months, renewed annually for 3 more years based on performance and availability of funding.
Anticipated start date:	15 th of June 2023
Eligibility:	Not for profit organizations, registered in Sri Lanka with over five years of experience in implementing projects in the plantation sector in the Central, Sabaragamuwa and Uva provinces may apply for this sub grant.
Application submission rules:	<p>Applicants must submit their applications to kandyisd@slt.net.lk by 12 midnight on 9th of May 2023, using the application format provided in annex II, as per the specifications set out as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Font: arial 2. Font size: 11 3. Spacing: single 4. Margins: 2.5 cms <p>Any questions and/or clarifications about this process may be forwarded via email to kandyisd@slt.net.lk on or before 20th of April 2023.</p> <p>Applications that do not strictly adhere to these guidelines may be disqualified and will not be reviewed.</p>

Section B: Instructions to Applicants

1. Background and Introduction

The Institute of Social Development (ISD) is a non-governmental organization based in Kandy, Sri Lanka established with the aim of empowering marginalized plantation communities. Founded in 1991 by a group of intellectuals, ISD has been executing various programs on promotion of democratic governance, human rights such as labor, housing and land rights, and transitional justice issues. The interventions include awareness, capacity building, lobby and advocacy efforts.

Since June 2022, ISD has been implementing the *CSOs and Community Collectives for Democratic Governance (CCCDG) Project* supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Civil Society Impact initiative. This project is implemented to strengthen CSOs in the marginalized plantation communities to address legal, policy, developmental, and governance issues that affect people in the plantations and neighboring villages through collective action and advocacy. The project is implemented in the Kandy, Nuwara Eliya and Matale Districts in the Central Province, Kegalle and Rathnapura Districts in the Sabaragamuwa Province and Badulla and Monaragala in the Uva Province. ISD works through District Partner Organizations (DPOs) in these districts that are sub grantees of the project. These DPOs are NGOs working in the districts promoting the rights of the plantation community to enhance / strengthen democratic governance. ISD commenced this five-year Activity on the 27th of June 2022 with three pre-approved sub-grantees for Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Kegalle and Rathnapura.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity is published with a view to identify more sub grantees for the Badulla, Monaragala, Kegalle, Kandy and Matale districts.

This grants program is funded by USAID and is authorized in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act. Issuance of this Request for Applications (RFA) does not constitute an award commitment on the part of ISD, nor does it commit ISD to pay for the prices incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. ISD reserves the right to fund one or more of the applications received. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

2. Specific Requirements and RFA Sections

This call is aimed at civil society organizations (CSOs) whose work has sub national level (district and/or province) reach in Sri Lanka, in advocating for democratic governance and protecting rights of Malaiyaha Thamilar Community. Through this RFA, ISD seeks to support civil society efforts that will advance reforms through collaborative approaches for strengthening the capacities of CSOs in the areas of (a) promoting citizen and government engagement (b) capacity building and networking and (c) increasing civil society support for more inclusive, sustainable democratic and economic governance. Within these themes, ISD's RFA is looking to support activities more fully described in Section C.

This RFA includes three sections and four annexes:

SECTION A	–	NOFO RFA Cover Page
SECTION B	–	Instructions to Applicants
SECTION C	–	Program Description
ANNEX I	--	Declaration of Authorized Representative(s) (Separate Word Format)
ANNEX II	--	Technical Application Template (Separate Word Format)
ANNEX III	--	Budget Template (Separate Excel Format)
ANNEX IV	--	Pre-award Survey (Separate Word Format)

3. Award Information

A. Type of Award

ISD anticipates awarding Sub Grants, as detailed in Section C. Duration of the grants are generally expected to be for 12 months, renewed annually for 3 more years based on performance and availability of funding.

B. Number and Size of awards

Grants to be awarded under this RFA may vary in size from USD 50,000 to a maximum of USD 60,000. A grant of a value lower or higher than this range may be considered based on the discretion of the Grant Evaluation Committee (GEC). ISD anticipates reviewing applications within one month of the closing date of this RFA and issuing around one to five grants thereafter.

C. Period of Award

The sub grants are issued for one-year duration with possibility of extension for a further period to be determined based on performance by ISD and subject to availability of funding. The first grants under this RFA are expected to start on or after July 2023, subject to USAID approvals. All projects under this RFA must be completed on or before December 2024.

D. Cost Share

Cost-share contribution represents the portion of a funded project that the grantee can contribute to share the costs of meeting the objectives of the project outlined in the grant agreement. Applicants are encouraged to contribute cost share. The cost share contribution can be from grantees' own resources or other non-US Government funding that the applicant has access to. When cost share is included as a part of a grant application, please use the ISD provided template in Annex III. ISD will provide detailed guidance to the grantee on what may or may not be considered as cost share as a part of the grant award.

4. Award Selection

Grants will be awarded to successful applicants who meet the eligibility criteria listed in Section 6 below and are selected via a competitive process based on pre-defined selection criteria outlined in section 7 below and with a view to achieving stated objectives of the CCCDG project as more fully described in the Program Description (Section C). In order to facilitate the selection process, grantees are expected to submit a complete set of application material together with the required attachments described below. Incomplete applications and applications received after the deadline may not be considered for selection.

5. Application Format

Grant application must include the following:

i. Technical Application

The technical proposal shall be submitted using the prescribed ISD's template (Annex II) and will be the principal document to assess the technical components of the selection criteria.

ii. Cost Application

The cost application shall be submitted as an excel using ISD's template provided as a separate excel template (Annex III). All grants will be awarded in local currency ONLY. Cost application shall be submitted separately from the technical application. It must include the total cost necessary for the implementation of the sub grants program your organization is proposing, and detailed budget notes to explain the unit rates and number of units proposed. Detailed budget notes should describe each proposed budget line item - including the basis for each price and provide a justification for why the line item is needed for the program. The evaluators should be able to identify from the cost proposal a direct link to the proposed activities.

The cost application must be presented in Microsoft Excel, showing calculations and formulas. For successful applicants, to establish cost/price reasonableness, applicants may be requested to provide evidence and supporting documentation for the costs to be incurred and budget items. Evidence that may be requested includes pay slips, employment contracts, lease agreements, the organization's internal policies, etc.

All costs budgeted must be reasonable, necessary to the proposed project, and allowable (no interest expense, fines, penalties, alcohol, or entertainment). No profit or fee can be included in the budget nor paid for with sub grant funds.

The budget may include the following categories of costs:

- Personnel: Salaries, Wages and Fringe/Benefits. This covers salaries and fees for personnel involved in project implementation. For regular staff, information must be provided on specific roles/responsibilities on the project, salary, and percentage of time the person will be working on the project. For short-term consultants, information must be provided on specific services to be rendered, daily or hourly rate, and number of days/hours to be worked on the project. Any associated taxes required by local laws must be included in the salary and fee rates. Social benefits/fringe must be shown in a separate budget line. Biographical data sheets are required for staff included in the budget (using the form found at <https://www.usaid.gov/forms/aid-1420-17>). Applicants may be required to provide supporting documentation justifying salaries or rates (such as pay slips, employment contracts, etc.).
- Travel and Transportation. Applicants should justify any in-country travel budgeted and provide detailed information on the kind of travel, purpose, and associated expenses (Eg: origin and destination of travel, type of transportation, etc.)
- Supplies/Equipment. Applicants should estimate expenses for supplies and general equipment maintenance during the period of the project (e.g., pens, paper, cartridges, etc.). If the applicant requests office equipment to be purchased or leased (e.g., computers, printers, telephones, fax machines, copiers, etc.), detailed explanations must be provided describing the kind of equipment needed and how it will be used for the purpose of the project (note that the purchase of used equipment is not authorized).
- Other Direct Costs (ODCs). This category includes other costs associated with implementation of the project that are not included in any other cost category specified above, such as training workshops or conferences; office/facility rent; communication and post-office expenses; photocopying, printing, and publishing; translation costs; bank charges; and other expenses essential for project implementation. The budget notes should provide as many details as possible. For example, costs related to training workshops should specify the expected number of participants, duration of the training, location of the training, site costs per participant or per day, etc.
- Cost Share. We encourage applicants to explore different cost share possibilities within their organization as well as pursuing other potential donors that could contribute to project costs. This contribution may be in cash, goods, or services. For instance, the cost share may be in the form of funds from other (non-US Government) donors; it may be the labor of grantee employees or volunteers (time sheets may be required to substantiate); or it may be the use of a grantee's meeting room to hold a workshop for the grant project. Full guidance on cost share, including allowable and unallowable cost share, reporting cost share, and links to US Government regulations on cost share will be provided.

Applicants should feel free to propose alternate and/or additional line items and costs that accurately reflect project activities. Budget line items must show unit type, unit price, and number

of units, and must be justified in the budget notes, including the basis of the costs (e.g., quotes were obtained, costs are actual currently incurred costs of the organization etc.) and how the costs further project objectives.

All the sums indicated in the budget must include associated taxes.

ISD CCCDG Project reserves the right to negotiate the actual sub grant budget with the selected applicant(s).

iii. Pre-Award Surveys

In addition to the technical application, applicants shall be required to complete a Pre-Award Survey and submit sufficient evidence of capacity and responsibility for ISD to make an affirmative determination of applicant's capacity to complete the activities being proposed.

The applicant should fulfill the following requirements:

1. Be a legally registered entity in Sri Lanka with required registration(s) to work in the specific districts mentioned in the RFA.
2. Has proper financial procedures in place including annually audited accounts and is willing to maintain a separate bank account if selected for the award.
3. Is willing to enter into an agreement with ISD which will include an annual implementation plan with deliverables as per project requirements.
4. Is able to manage funds effectively.
5. Has experience in implementing projects of a similar nature specifically in the plantation sector.
6. Has wide network and outreach in the project areas including ability to manage stakeholder relationships with government, NGOs, and other agencies.
7. Has a good reputation among stakeholders, a high degree of integrity and compliance with ethical policies and procedures.

6. Eligibility Requirements for Submitting Application

a. Eligible Entities

Applicants must be Sri Lankan organizations with a recent history of implementing activities in the focus areas of this RFA. Applicants can be any organization with legal personality in Sri Lanka that is not a public sector or a for profit private sector institution. Such local organizations may be registered under a variety of statutes, and take the form of non-governmental organizations, not-for-profit companies, societies, trusts, cooperatives, independent trade unions, professional associations, and community-based organizations. They must also be responsible, law-abiding organizations with a record of business integrity. Grant funds awarded under this RFA cannot be used towards any profit by the grantees. Applicants can propose to work with smaller locally based CSOs and community-based organizations, registered or informal.

In addition, the applicants under this RFA must be organizations that are recognized for playing a role in advocacy and democratic governance for the benefit of the Malaiyaha Thamilar community. They must have been in active and continuous operation under the current registration for at least two years. They must have demonstrated experience working on the chosen issue or on a directly related issue at multiple levels (local/regional/national).

b. Ineligible Entities

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

1. List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs (<https://www.sam.gov>);
2. Specially Designated Nationals List (<http://sdnsearch.ofac.treas.gov/Default.aspx>); and
3. The list established and maintained by the United Nations 1267 Committee with respect to individuals, groups, undertakings and other entities associated with Al-Qaida (<https://www.un.org/sc/suborg/sites/www.un.org.sc.suborg/files/1267.htm>).

c. Eligible and Ineligible Activities

- i. Activities that are aligned with the mandate of the CCCDG project are eligible for funding while activities that are not aligned with the project objectives and mandate are ineligible.
- ii. Activities must take place in the designated project area and be reasonable, allocable, and allowable.
 - a. Reasonable – necessary costs incurred for conducting business
 - b. Allocable – costs linked to project implementation (salaries, experts’ fees, trainings, meetings and seminars, publications, purchase and rental of equipment, office expenses, in-country travel, and other direct costs)
 - c. Allowable - costs which conform to any limitations in the grant award.
- iii. Project activities can only start after signature of the grant agreement between the applicant and the CCCDG Project. Costs incurred before signing of the grant agreement will not be reimbursed.

7. Evaluation criteria

Awards will be made to responsible and responsive applicants whose applications offer the greatest value to the CCCDG program. Applications will be evaluated and scored based on the following evaluation criteria:

Responsiveness of the Technical Approach		(Maximum 50 points)
Relevance of the activity to ISD CCCDG project objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Demonstrated understanding</u> of this RFA and ISDs goals as described under Program Description in this document and about challenges and opportunities in the operational context for the proposed initiative in the selected district/s. • <u>Implementation Plan</u>: detailed, results-oriented implementation plan with realistic timeline, logical sequence of tasks, and well-defined results contributing to RFA objectives. • <u>Performance Monitoring Plan</u>: sound approach to monitoring and evaluation, with clear indicators and target results. • <u>Reach</u> - ability to reach unreached, marginalised plantation communities in the project districts. 	30
Networking	Activities contain collaborative approaches at the provincial, district and local levels that support one or more of the ISD CCCDG project’s identified sub-purposes.	10
Gender	Demonstrated how gender considerations have been incorporated in the needs analysis, problem definition, design, and implementation plan of the proposed intervention.	10

Past Performance and Organizational Capability		(Maximum 40 points)
Demonstrated relevant experience	Proven experience (with references) in conducting activities/projects that are similar/relevant to those being proposed, results achieved, recognition gained, etc. Demonstrated experience in networking at local and national levels.	20
Over-all Organizational Capacity	Demonstrated prior experience in successfully implementing donor funded activities, managing projects of similar scale and complexity and results achieved, adequate organizational systems, general acceptance of the organization among MTC community in the area, other CSOs as well as government officials.	20
Proposed Personnel and Management Plan		(Maximum 10 points)
Team structure	Qualified team of key personnel offering the right mix of skills and expertise to ensure successful project implementation.	10

Applications can be submitted in English /Tamil /Sinhala.

8. Submission of Applications

The following documents constitute your application package. Please use this section as a checklist to ensure that all listed documents are submitted in electronic form:

- 1 Declaration of Authorized Representative(s) ANNEX I
- 2 Technical Application (including M&E Plan and draft Work Plan) ANNEX II
- 3 A full Organization Chart highlighting those responsible for the proposed project.
- 4 Cost Application – Budget ANNEX III
- 5 Pre-Award Questionnaire ANNEX IV
- 6 CVs of three key/top level staff responsible for project (no more than 2 pages each)
- 7 List of latest Board of Directors/Advisor Board/Governing Council
- 8 Duly Audited Statement of Accounts of the Organization for two years

Electronic applications are to be submitted to **kandyisd@sltnet.lk**. All applications submitted must include the name of the organization in the file name.

Submissions by Facsimile will not be accepted. Applications should not contain any unnecessary promotional material or elaborate presentation formats (black and white is preferred).

9. Questions

Requests for clarification and questions regarding this NOFO must be addressed in writing (via e-mail - **kandyisd@sltnet.lk**) to the Program Manager, ISD CCCDG Project on or before 20th of April 2023. Phone calls regarding technical content will not be entertained. Requests for clarifications and questions received by ISD, will be circulated among applicants via email.

10. Applicants Conference

A pre-award meeting for prospective applicants will be held on 25th of April 2023 at 10.00 am. This event will be conducted online. If your organization wishes to attend the sessions, please RSVP to Program Manager via email at kandyisd@sltnet.lk before 20th of April 2023. Please note that attendance at this conference is a mandatory requirement if you wish to submit an application for the sub grant.

11. Confidentiality of Information

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

12. UEI # and SAM Are Required Registrations for Awards Above USD 25,000

The winning applicant must be registered with the U.S. Government at: www.sam.gov.

Instructions to register can be found at:

https://www.sam.gov/sam/SAM_Guide/SAM_User_Guide.htm.

Both the UEI # and SAM registrations are free of charge. An exception to this requirement can only be made by USAID.

13. Donor Required Flow-Down Clauses

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

A. Any resulting award will be subject to the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations at USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) 303mab. Copies of the provisions may be found at:

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>

or are available on request.

B. The following U.S. Government issued documents shall serve as the primary reference for any questions regarding policies, procedures, and allowable costs, not specifically addressed elsewhere in this Award:

- 2 CFR 200, Subpart E, Cost Principles (available at:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200-subpartE.pdf>)

or 48 CFR part 31 available at:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title48-vol1/pdf/CFR-2011-title48-vol1-part31.pdf>,

as applicable

- 2 CFR 200, Subpart F, Audit Requirements, available at:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200-subpartF.pdf>, as applicable.

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

14. Pre-Award Certifications

Successful applicants before receiving any USAID grants are expected to provide certifications as required by US legislation. The applicants are required to familiarize themselves with the following if selected for this sub grant.

1. Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers for Covered Countries and Individuals (ADS 206).
2. Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing **Implementing Executive Order 13224**
3. Certification Regarding Trafficking in Persons.
4. Certification Regarding Lobbying (22 CFR 227).

15. No Obligation to Award, Modification and Withdrawal of RFA

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

ISD may reject any or all applications or not award any grants under this RFA if such action is in the best interests of ISD, its donor, or the host country. ISD may also waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received, should such actions be in the best interest of ISD, its donor, or the host country. The issuance of any award resulting from this RFA is subject to approval from USAID.

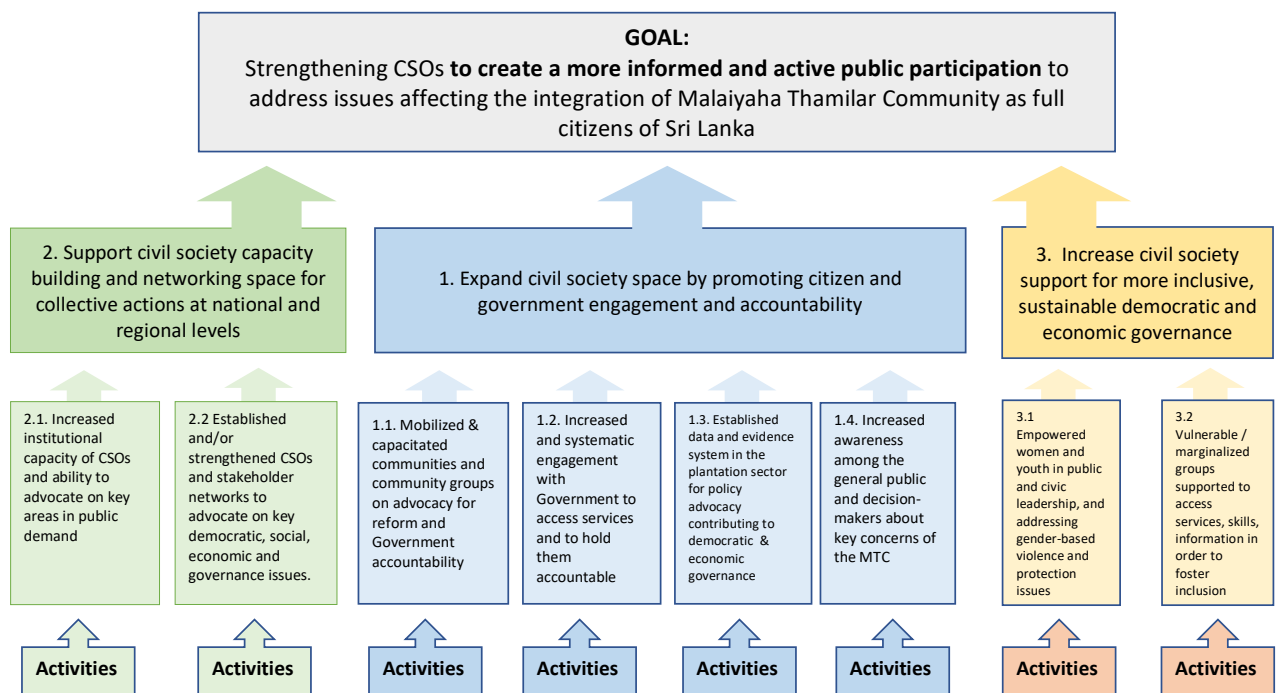
Section C: Program Description

1. Background of the Project

ISD implements the CSOs and Community Collectives for Democratic Governance (CCCDG) project, for five years from 27 June 2022 up to 26 June 2027 with support from the USAID's Civil Society Impact Program. The project was conceptualized with the overall goal: *to create more informed and active public participation to address issues affecting the integration of Malaiyaha Thamilar Community as full citizens of Sri Lanka*. The expected outcomes of the project are: 1) Expanded civil society space by promoting citizen and government engagement and accountability, 2) Supported civil society capacity building and networking space for collective actions at national and regional levels and 3) Increased civil society support for more inclusive, sustainable democratic and economic governance. The project is implemented in three provinces (Central, Uva and Sabaragamuwa) across seven districts (Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Monaragala, Kegalle and Rathnapura).

2. Results Framework

The results framework of the CCCDG project is provided below:



3. Expected Outputs of the project

As indicated in the figure above the expected outputs of the project are:

- 1.1. **Mobilized & capacitated communities and community groups on advocacy for reform and Government accountability.**
- 1.2. **Increased and systematic engagement with Government to access services and to hold them accountable.**
- 1.3. Established data and evidence system in the plantation sector for policy advocacy contributing to democratic & economic governance.
- 1.4. Increased awareness among the general public and decision-makers about key concerns of the MTC.

- 2.1. Increased institutional capacity of CSOs and ability to advocate on key areas in public demand.**
- 2.2 Established and/or strengthened CSOs and stakeholder networks to advocate on key democratic, social, economic and governance issues.**
- 3.1 Empowered women and youth in public and civic leadership, and addressing gender-based violence and protection issues**
- 3.2 Vulnerable / marginalized groups supported to access services, skills, information in order to foster inclusion.**

4. Activities of the Project

Activities of the CCCDG project includes strengthening CSOs on advocacy, governance and regulatory reform, identifying and implementing public outreach activities promoting reform, promoting collaboration between government, public and civil society, supporting CSO networks on key democratic, social, and economic governance issues, fostering inter and intra civil society coordination and public engagement, capacity building of CSOs and CSO networks on advocacy, implementing advocacy campaigns on democratic governance and citizen's rights, empowering vulnerable groups to access services and information and initiating a data and evidence system in the plantation sector for policy advocacy. CSOs and CSO networks will also be supported to develop their organizational capacity enabling them to implement focused, long term sustainable interventions and programs. As a result, capacitated CSOs and CSO networks will continue the interventions introduced by the project beyond the project timeline. The project is implemented across three provinces (Central, Uva and Sabaragamuwa) and seven districts (Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Monaragala, Kegalle and Rathnapura). DPOs will engage with 8 - 15 selected CSOs and CSO networks in their respective district."

The CSOs will directly benefit from the project, receiving programme related support and institutional capacity building support through training, materials, and finance. They will be selected based on criteria developed to assess their institutional capacity and ability to reach unreached, marginalised plantation communities in the project districts. The CSOs will be supported through the project to implement the interventions at community level approximately an annual basis for around three to four years of the project as per availability of funding from USAID and agreement with partner organizations. Partner organizations will develop the institutional capacities of CSOs with support of ISD.

5. Role of District Partner Organizations (DPOs)

In implementing this project, ISD works with District Partner Organizations. ISD has three pre-approved partners for this project while five more must be identified. DPOs are expected to engage with and establish networks of CSOs in the project areas. It is expected to engage one DPO per project district.

Partner organizations will develop the institutional capacities of CSOs with the support of ISD to be able to ensure that the program reaches vulnerable groups in both plantation and rural areas through constant engagement with relevant government agencies.

ISD will develop a portfolio of District Partner Organizations and CSO networks through provision of sub grants so that together they can advocate for democratic governance as reflected in the results framework provided above.

ISD will manage the project, handling overall coordination with the Donor agency and other stakeholders. ISD will implement the key interventions of the program through the Project Management Unit based in Kandy. Further ISD will ensure the quality assurance of the project

interventions in collaboration with Management Systems International (MSI) and monitor field interventions. The District Partner Organizations (DPOs) will manage and monitor district level implementation. DPOs will be responsible for CSO mapping, selection, assessment and CSO capacity building under the guidance of ISD.

6. Illustrative Tasks and Expected Results

This RFA is designed to support civil society's efforts to promote democratic governance among Malayaha Thamilar communities. Though a variety of strategies and tactics may be used the objective of such strategies should support improved participation and activism, use of data and research, and collaboration and networking to promote more robust and effective advocacy of the CCCDG project's democratic governance promotion agenda.

Grants awarded through this RFA, therefore, will support a range of activities that will contribute to achieving CCCDG objectives including the following:

- **Strengthening community groups and communities on advocacy and reform:** DPOs will support CSOs to identify suitable community groups and communities in their areas that are able to lobby for reform with the government. CSOs will identify relevant local issues, that can be taken up by the community groups and communities for lobby and advocacy initiatives. CSOs will facilitate activities at community level guided and supported by the DPO through mobilizing the community.
- **Access to services:** Lack of access to services from government agencies is an issue affecting the MT community. Activities promoting improved delivery of services and opening up better access to these services are encouraged and expected. Activities to promote community participation in advocacy related to demanding better service delivery can be included. Lobby and advocacy activities must influence changes in the current practice where government services do not reach the MTCs.
- **Increased institutional capacity of CSOs:** Once the DPO identifies suitable CSOs in their districts, a capacity assessment of the CSOs must be done to determine their current capacity. Once the assessment is done, CSOs are expected to develop their own action plan incorporating their activities, DPOs will support this process. DPOs will then develop their own training plan aligned with the gaps identified in the CSOs under their purview. Subsequently the activities will be implemented to improve the organizational capacities of the CSOs based on the requirements of each CSO.
- **Formation and strengthening of CSO networks:** DPOs will carry out CSO network mapping exercises and identify current levels with regards to their capacity. Activities will be carried out to further strengthen the CSO networks and support them to implement joint activities towards lobbying and advocating for issues identified. The network is expected to implement these activities independently and lobby at all levels (community, district, provincial and national).
- **Inclusion (women and youth):** Women and youth are identified as groups excluded from mainstream development activities. DPOs are expected to engage with groups working on women and youth affairs and promote activities related to inclusion of these groups into development initiatives. Activities must be aimed at developing the leadership capacities of women and youth and their engagement in political activities including taking up leadership positions within their communities, must be included.
- **Inclusion of other marginalized groups:** Issues affecting other marginalized groups (persons with disabilities, elders, children, etc.) must be identified and activities designed and implemented to address such issues. Legal aid, support to resolve domestic violence and

labor issues, senior citizens' issues such as access to social welfare, are some of the activities that are encouraged.

Gender and Diversity Considerations

All applications must demonstrate how gender considerations have been incorporated in the needs analysis, problem definition, design, and implementation plan of the proposed interventions. Applicants are expected to ensure that the stakeholder consultations if used to identify proposed interventions involve a broad cross-section of actors and reflect gender, age, and where applicable ethnic/religious balance. The stakeholders consulted should represent a variety of viewpoints and include both women and men. They are expected to have consulted and incorporated the perspectives of youth.

Geographic focus

This RFA solicits applications for interventions that will predominantly be implemented in the seven districts of the Central, Sabaragamuwa and Uva provinces in Sri Lanka. A key objective of this RFA is to support and foster more inclusive and democratic governance for the Malaiyaha Thamilar community in these provinces.