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**ADVANCING KOSOVO TOGETHER – LOCAL SOLUTION PROGRAM
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS RFA-02-AKT-LS**

Issuance Date: March 5, 2015

Submission Closing Date & Time: April 10, 2015 at 3:30pm

Dear Applicants,

Community Development Fund, the implementing partner of USAID for “Advancing Kosovo Together – Local Solution (AKT – LS)” Program in Kosovo, pursuant to the authority contained in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with USAID Cooperative Agreement No. AID-167-A-14-00008, is seeking applications from qualified Kosovan Non-Governmental Organizations to implement “Advancing Kosovo Together – Local Solution Grants Program in Support of USAID/Kosovo’s Democracy and Governance” (Detailed project description is in Section I. Funding Opportunity Description). Assistance will be in the form of Simplified, Fixed Obligation or In-Kind Grant Agreements in accordance with Chapter 303 of USAID’s Automated Directives System (ADS303).

The selected Grantees will implement their projects which will contribute towards the achievement of Advancing Kosovo Together – Local Solution program objectives:

1. Improve autonomous, horizontal communication between: (a) Kosovo Albanian and non-majority communities; and (b) the GoK and non-majority communities;
2. Improve economic opportunities in target municipalities;
3. Increase the efficiency and capacity of target municipal administrations to respond to the needs of all their citizens.

Pursuant to 22CFR226.81, profit under this award is not allowed. However, all reasonable, allocable, and allowable expenses, which are related to the grant program and are in accordance with the applicable cost standards (22CFR226, OMB Circular A-122, A-21, and FAR Part 31) may be paid under the grant.

All awards to Non-U.S. Organizations will be administered in accordance with applicable regulations as follows:

- ADS303, Mandatory Standard Provisions for Grants
- 22 CFR 226
- Applicable OMB Circulars
- Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Organizations
- 48 CFR 31.2 (for-profit organizations)

Regulations listed above can be accessed via the USAID webpage:

<http://www.usaid.gov/business/regulations/>

Subject to the availability of funds, we anticipate awarding multiple grants on or around April 2015. The size of any single grant awarded under this RFA will not exceed \$25,000.

Advancing Kosovo Together – Local Solution/USAID reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solution requests that the applicants demonstrate their commitment to program success by including cost-sharing.

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

- Section I – Funding Opportunity Description;
- Section II – Award Information;
- Section III – Eligibility Information;
- Section IV – Application Submission Information & Contacts;
- Section V – Application Review Information;
- Section VI – Award Administration Information;
- Section VII – Other Information; and
- Section VIII – Attachments.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,
Artan Avdiu,
Chief of Party

cc: Agron Selmani, Grants Manager

Section I: Funding Opportunity Description

IA. Background – Introduction

AKT Program (also AKT – LS) is implemented in 16 municipalities¹ with considerable presence of Serbian community. In essence, all three interventions are designed to contribute to expedited inclusion of Serbian community in the institutional and political life in Kosovo and increasing the exchanges between majority and minority communities across all spheres of life. Improvement of small-scale infrastructure and service delivery systems, coupled by increased ability to deliver quality services on the part of local governments and the efficient advocating of community needs and priorities, are encompassed in the project as different dimensions of intervention. These dimensions are expected to lead to improvement of both horizontal linkages across municipalities and vertical linkages with line ministries, through which lives of communities will be improved.

Employment and economic development are also envisaged by the project as key intervention measures aimed at contributing to the overall inclusion of the economies in the 16 beneficiary municipalities. Provision of opportunities for savvy entrepreneurially predisposed individuals and labor force development measures are the two main tools to be used for promoting employment and self-employment in the targeted communities.

In addition, the program will offer assistance to local municipalities to provide services in the most efficient manner, using transparent processes, which resulted in the setting of many standards across all municipalities, such as the creation of annual work plans, Service Improvement Action Plans (SIAPs) and citizen engagement plans. Such assistance was particularly helpful for the newly created municipalities, which did not typically have experienced leadership. This assistance will help target municipalities to continue instituting practical and concrete initiatives that will strengthen the legitimacy of Kosovo's local government system and improve service delivery in the targeted municipalities.

IB. Project Description

Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solutions (AKT - LS) is a three-year project that aims to increase constructive inter-ethnic cooperation and interaction, primarily between the majority Kosovo Albanian community and Kosovo Serb community, which is vital to the security and stability of the Balkans. The AKT – LS is part of the USAID Forward, the new USAID strategy of development aid delivery, where involvement of local know-how and expertise is essential for maximizing aid efficiency. The AKT – LS Project is part of the AKT Program, which aside from the intervention subject to this document, also includes AKT US Project, implemented by Chemonics Inc. The two projects implemented by the AKT US and CDF-led consortium of organizations both contribute to the same development objectives and are expected to cooperate closely in implementing their measures and achieve synergies.

The AKT – LS as a component of AKT Program, has a projected budget of **7 Mil USD**. Of these, a net investment of **5 Mil USD** is envisaged to be implemented as direct grant interventions through three different grant schemes, one for municipalities, one for private sector development, and one supporting civil society efforts and other grassroots inter-ethnic initiatives.

¹ Municipalities include: Gjilan/Gnjilane, Graçanicë/Gračanica, Istog/Istok, Klinë/Klina, Killokot/Klokot, Leposaviq/Leposavić, Mitrovicë e Veriut/ North Mitrovica, Novobërdë/Novo Brdo, Obiliq/Obilić, Partesh/Parteš, Pejë/Peć, Ranilluk/Ranilug, Shtërpçë/Štrpce, Vushtrri/Vučitrn, Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok and Zvečan/Zvečan.

This Request for Grant Applications solicits proposals from existing small and medium enterprises in the 16 municipalities covered by AKT – LS Program for activities that may be not limited to:

- Job creation, with an affirmative focus on the employment of non-majority women and youth;
- Activities that support job skills training for non-majority women and youth;
- Creating economic opportunities for non-majority youth and women;
- Expanding business development and access to finance opportunities for non-majority businesses, youth entrepreneurship and women-owned enterprises.

IC. General Criteria for Selection

AKT LS under the Component 2 aims improving economic prosperity and outlook of the 16 targeted communities. Improving the efficiency of the private sector to boost development and generate employment are the two core variables that the proposed action seeks to change. Investment support in core equipment and tools, training, and backstopping support services will be put to the service of private sector as part of the proposed project to eliminate some of the growth barriers that MSMEs face.

A valid proposal under the AKT LS Grant scheme must meet the following criteria:

- Be innovative and unique;
- Be independently originated and developed by the applicant;
- Be consistent with and supportive of USAID/AKT LS strategy and objectives;
- Be able to improve economic opportunities in target areas of the AKT – LS Program.

Section II: Award Information

1. Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solution intends to fund a single grant in response to this RFA. Allowable costs must be consistent with USAID policies and procedures and be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and well documented and justified for the proposed project and budget.

2. Under this RFA a grant will be made to the following types of organizations:

- **Small and Medium² Enterprises.**

3. Grants are expected to be less than one year in duration.

4. All Grant applications received by the deadline will be reviewed by the Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solution Review and Evaluation Committee (REC) within three weeks of the submission deadline according to the evaluation criteria outlined in this RFA.

5. Submissions received after the Closing Date and Time will not be considered in the review process. Both electronic and hardcopies must be received before the closing date and time.

6. Following submission of your *complete* Application, within thirty calendar days from the deadline for acceptance of applications, the Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solution's Grants Manager will send you an e-mail notification advising you of when we have scheduled our REC to review and evaluate your Application. Those applicants receiving the highest scores, up to the point that available funds are expended will move to the pre-award/negotiation phase of the grant award process. Note: The inclusion of a detailed budget and detailed budget notes will help to expedite the negotiation phase. Once an

² According to Law No.03/L-031, a Small Enterprise is considered any enterprises having 10 to 49 employees
Medium Enterprise is considered any enterprises having 50 to 249 employees.

application has been successfully negotiated and approved by USAID, it will be funded upon availability of resources.

7. Simplified, Fixed Obligation or In-Kind Grant Agreement will be awarded.

8. Pre-Award Certifications, Assurances and other Statements of the Recipient – All non-U.S. organizations prior to signing of any grant agreement must sign the following certifications, assurances and other statements: a signed copy of the Certification Regarding Terrorist Funding required by the Internal Mandatory Reference AAPD 04-14, Self-Certification and Certification of Recipient.

Section III: Eligibility Information

This RFA is open to organizations registered in Kosovo (more specific types of organization is referenced in Section II. 2 above), including faith-based organizations (in accordance with Executive Order 13279).

In addition, Grantees must:

- Be legally registered and recognized under the laws of Kosovo [**please provide copy of registration**];
- Have sufficient staff and capacity to undertake proposed activities;
- Possess the sound managerial, technical, and institutional capacities to achieve the results of the project;
- Possess a system of internal controls that safeguard assets and protect against fraud, waste, and conflicts of interest;
- Be in good standing with all civil and fiscal authorities;
- Possess financial accountability and maintain detailed records of all expenses;
- Be willing to sign applicable certifications; and
- Not be found on the list of System for Award Management (SAM) and/or OFAC's SDN and Blocked Person List.

The following organizations are *not* eligible for Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solution grant funding:

- Political parties, their subsidiaries, or affiliates;
- Organizations that appear on the SAM, OFAC or U.N. 1267 list;
- Organizations that promote or engage in illegal activities or anti-democratic activities;
- Faith-based organizations whose objectives are for discriminatory and/or religious purposes, and whose main objective of the grant is of a religious nature;
- Any entity affiliated with Community Development Fund (CDF) (Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solution), its officers, directors, or employees; and
- Public International Organizations.

Section IV: Application Submission Information & Contacts

1. The RFA includes all information required to apply for a grant, however, questions on this RFA should be submitted to:

Attention: Agron Selmani, Grants Manager
Advancing Kosovo Together – Local Solution Office
Sejdi Kryeziu, no.16, Peyton, Pristina, 10000, Kosovo

Office Number: 038 249 677/678
E-mail: grants@kcdf.org

The deadline for questions is March 20, 2015 at 3:30 pm. Both the questions and answers will be distributed to all applicants by March 23, 2014 by 3:30 pm.

Information Days with potential applicants will be organized as follows:

1. Assembly Hall, Address: 'Aleksandër Moisiu' n.n. Pejë/Pec on March 16, 2015 at 10:00 am
2. AKTIV Office, Address: Cika Jovina 3, North City II/6, Mitrovica on March 17, 2015 at 10:00 am
3. Assembly Hall, Vushtrri/Vučitrn on March 17, 2015 at 2:00 pm
4. Assembly Hall, Gračanica/Graçanicë on March 18, 2015 at 10:00
5. House of Culture, Klokot/Kllokot on March 18, 2015 at 2:00 pm
6. Assembly Hall, Štrpce/Shtërpçë on March 19, 2015 at 10:00 am

The USAID/AKT – LS program will not cover any costs related to participation in this Info Day.

Applicants must submit the application using the forms/templates included:

Attachment 1: MSME Proposal Form

2. Successful applicants will be required to sign all applicable certifications from ADS 303.3.8: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf>. For this RFA, applicants will sign certifications prior to any grant agreement signing, the certifications are labeled as followed:

- A signed copy of the Certification Regarding Terrorist Funding required by the Internal Mandatory Reference AAPD 04-14;
- Self-Certification; and
- Certification of Recipient

3. Applications can be submitted in English, Albanian and Serbian. Applicants must submit one original and one hard copy in a sealed envelope to the address above.

If sending by e-mail, please insert "Advancing Kosovo Together – Local Solution RFA-02-AKT-LS" in the subject line.

4. Advancing Kosovo Together – Local Solution will incorporate its USAID-Approved Branding and Marking Plan to all awards under this RFA.

5. Funding restrictions:

- Applicants are encouraged to submit their proposed list of commodities to be reviewed by AKT - LS during the evaluation process. However, please note that any ineligible commodities shown on applicants proposed list of commodities are subject to approval of from AKT - LS. A complete list of allowable and eligible commodities can be found at ADS 312: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/312.pdf>
- The award will not allow the reimbursement of pre-award costs. That is, only allowable obligations incurred during the period defined within the grant agreement will be reimbursed.

Applicants should submit the following to Advancing Kosovo Together Local Solution:

- MSME Proposal Form;
- A copy of the Applicant's valid legal business registration;
- A copy of the Kosovo ID card.

Hard copies of Application may be delivered to one of the following addresses:

CDF Office, Agron Selmani
Address: 'Sejdi Kryeziu', no.16, Peyton, 10000, Pristina, Kosovo
Tel: 038 249 677

AKTIV Office, Branislav Nesovic

Address: Cika Jovina 3, North City II/6, Mitrovica

Section V: Application Review Information

1. A Review and Evaluation Committee (REC) will formally evaluate and rank all proposals independently and uniformly in writing, using an Application Evaluation Form. Rankings will be based on the criteria and points, based on 100 as the maximum points allowed.

- **Strategic fit: 20 points**

- a) Contribution toward AKT – LS project goals and objectives;
- b) Sustainability of project results; and
- c) Anticipated benefits to the beneficiaries.

- **Technical approach: 30 points**

- a) Clearly defined problem statement;
- b) Clearly outlined goals;
- c) Innovative technical approach; and
- d) Potential obstacles identified and solutions provided.

- **Organizational capabilities: 20 points**

- a) Past performance on similar projects;
- b) Relevance of staff skills to the proposed program;
- c) Capacity to follow USAID financial guidelines.

- **Job creation: 10 points**

- a) Number of jobs created.

- **Gender and Disadvantaged consideration: 10 points**

- a) Focus on women/youth/minorities issues;
- b) Impact on women/youth/minorities participation.

- **Cost effectiveness, including cost share: 10 points**

Costs will be evaluated in terms of their feasibility, cost realism, reasonableness, completeness, allocability, and cost-effectiveness for undertaking activities outlined in the planning matrix. As technical scores converge, proposals that maximize direct activity costs including cost sharing and leveraging and that minimize administrative costs will be more favorably considered. The cost selection criteria below will allow Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solution to evaluate the applicants cost application:

- Is the proposed budget reasonable and cost-effective?
- Does the proposal have a high percentage of cost share funds? Are there other leveraged funds or submitted funding proposals that could complement program activities?
- Applicant's representation of the cost share constitutes an eligibility factor and will not be separately evaluated.

2. A Review and Evaluation Committee (REC) consisting of a minimum of three individuals will review and evaluate all applications.

Section VI: Award and Administration Information

Once this RFA is released, any questions related to this RFA must be directed to the Grants Manager only.

Once the REC has convened and evaluated applications, successful recipients will receive an e-mail from the Grants Manager to schedule the following negotiation tasks:

- (1) Simplified Pre-Award Survey³ (for In-Kind grants AKT – LS will do the Field Visit Before Approval Survey)
- (2) Technical/activity negotiations, including cost analysis of the budget
- (3) Environmental assessments, if considered necessary

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing within one week following REC meeting. Reporting requirements: Program progress and financial reporting requirements will be established during the negotiation.

Section VII: Other Information

1. USAID and/or Advancing Kosovo Together - Local Solution reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Additionally, all awards pursuant to this funding opportunity are contingent upon the availability of funds and the receipt of a sufficient number of meritorious applications.

2. Applicants are reminded of:

PROHIBITION AGAINST SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM

- (a) The Contractor/Recipient is reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the Contractor/Recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws.
- (b) One of the applicable orders is Executive Order 13224, dated September 24, 2001. The website of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the Department of Treasury contains the text of that order and a list of the individuals and entities designated thereunder. It also contains lists of individuals and entities designated under other anti-terrorism statutes, regulations and Executive Orders. See <http://www.treasury.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sdn/>.
- (c) USAID reserves the right to review and either approve or reject the following subaward if proposed under this contract/agreement: (i) any contract or subcontract in excess of \$25,000 with a non-U.S. organization or individual; and (ii) any grant or subgrant to a non-U.S. organization or individual, regardless of the dollar value. Furthermore, the written consent of USAID is required before certain other forms of assistance may be provided to a non-U.S. organization or individual. These include in-kind assistance such as renovation of an NGO's facilities, repair or replacement of a company's equipment, and certain training activities. No approval (or failure to disapprove) by USAID shall relieve the Contractor/Recipient of its legal obligation to comply with applicable Executive Orders and laws.
- (d) USAID reserves the right to rescind approval for a subaward in the event that USAID subsequently becomes aware of information indicating that the subaward is contrary to U.S. law or policy prohibiting support for terrorism. In such cases, USAID's Contracting Officer will provide written instructions to the Contractor/Recipient to terminate the subaward.
- (e) USAID reserves the right to terminate this contract/agreement if USAID determines that the Contractor/Recipient is involved in or advocates terrorist activity or has failed to comply with any of the requirements of this provision.

³ The Simplified Pre-Award Survey (SPAS) is used to determine whether or not the applicant has the capacity to adequately perform in accordance with principles established by USAID and OMB in the administration of a USAID funded grant. All applicants that pass the REC will be subject to the SPAS (in accordance with ADS 303.3.9). The SPAS is a question and answer based process that typically takes place at the applicant office. All areas of operation are reviewed, including but not limited to: budgeting, petty cash, procurement, accounting system, inventory, etc. If your organization has recently undergone a Pre-Award Survey with AKT - LS in the last 12 months, your organization will likely not be subject to another SPAS.

- (f) This provision, including this paragraph (f), shall be included in all contracts, subcontracts, grants and subgrants issued under this contract/agreement. The Contractor/Recipient shall promptly provide to USAID's Contracting/Agreement Officer a copy of the pages from each subaward that contains this provision.

USAID DISABILITY POLICY - ASSISTANCE (DECEMBER 2004)

- (a) The objectives of the USAID Disability Policy are (1) to enhance the attainment of United States foreign assistance program goals by promoting the participation and equalization of opportunities of individuals with disabilities in USAID policy, country and sector strategies, activity designs and implementation; (2) to increase awareness of issues of people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries; (3) to engage other U.S. government agencies, host country counterparts, governments, implementing organizations and other donors in fostering a climate of nondiscrimination against people with disabilities; and (4) to support international advocacy for people with disabilities. The full text of the policy paper can be found at the following website: http://pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/PDABQ631.pdf.
- (b) USAID therefore requires that the recipient not discriminate against people with disabilities in the implementation of USAID funded programs and that it make every effort to comply with the objectives of the USAID Disability Policy in performing the program under this grant or cooperative agreement. To that end and to the extent it can accomplish this goal within the scope of the program objectives, the recipient should demonstrate a comprehensive and consistent approach for including men, women and children with disabilities.

Restriction on Source Origin - Grantee is not to purchase any goods manufactured or produced in restricted countries list (reference ADS310, Source Origin and Nationality: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/310.pdf>)

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (JUNE 2012)

a. USAID is authorized to terminate this award, without penalty, if the recipient or its employees, or any subrecipient or its employees, engage in any of the following conduct:

(1) Trafficking in persons (as defined in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime) during the period of this award;

(2) Procurement of a commercial sex act during the period of this award; or

(3) Use of forced labor in the performance of this award.

b. For purposes of this provision, "employee" means an individual who is engaged in the performance of this award as a direct employee, consultant, or volunteer of the recipient or any subrecipient.

c. The recipient must include in all subagreements, including subawards and contracts, a provision prohibiting the conduct described in a(1)-(3) by the subrecipient, contractor or any of their employees.

Section VIII: Attachments

Attachment 1: MSME Proposal Form