



**International Foundation
for Electoral Systems**

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS (IFES)

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) for
Local Government Representative Capacity Building Program in
Pakistan**

RFA-24-015

April 24, 2024

1. Request for Application (RFA)

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to invite civil society organization(s) to submit applications to implement IFES' Capacity Building Program for Elected Local Government Representatives (LGR) in Pakistan. The objective of this project is to enhance the capacity of LGRs in project districts, particularly focused on improved citizen interaction, climate resilience and effective governance. The RFA provides prospective organizations with the relevant operational and performance requirements. IFES anticipates issuing multiple awards under this RFA.

1.2. RFA Schedule

IFES will conduct a competitive process to identify grantees per the tentative timeline below:

Issuance of RFA	April 24, 2024
Questions Due	April 30, 2024 by 17:00 Washington DC (EST)
Response from IFES	May 3, 2024
RFA Closes—All Applications Due	May 15, 2024 by 17:00 Washington DC (EST)
Anticipated Implementation Period	July 2024 – June 2026

2. General Information

2.1. Background

IFES is an independent, non-governmental organization providing professional support to electoral democracy. IFES supports citizens' rights to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to deliver sustainable solutions.

As the global leader in democracy promotion, we advance good governance and democratic rights by Providing technical assistance to election officials, Empowering the underrepresented to participate in electoral and political processes, and Applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle.

Since 1987, IFES has worked in over 145 countries – from developing democracies, to mature democracies.

3. Application Preparation Instructions

3.1. Applicant's Understanding of the RFA

In responding to this RFA, the applicant accepts full responsibility to understand the RFA in its entirety, and in detail, including making any inquiries to IFES as necessary to gain such understanding. IFES reserves the right to disqualify any applicant who demonstrates less than such understanding. Further, IFES reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, whether the applicant has demonstrated such understanding. Such disqualification and/or cancellation shall be at no fault, cost, or liability whatsoever to IFES.

3.2. Good Faith Statement

All information provided by IFES in this RFA is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time. IFES makes no certification that any item is without error. IFES is not responsible or liable for any use of the information or for any claims asserted there from.

3.3. Communication

Verbal communication shall not be effective unless formally confirmed in writing by the IFES officials identified in Section 3.5 of this RFA. In no case shall verbal communication govern over

written communication.

3.3.1. Applicant Inquiries

Inquiries, questions, and requests for clarification related to this RFA should be submitted in writing to the representative listed below by the deadline listed in 1.2. RFA Schedule.

Name: Cayla Vega
cvega@ifes.org

and

Name: Sarah Bibler
sbibler@ifes.org

Questions/Answers and Addenda(s) related to this RFA can be found on [IFES Procurement Notices](#).

3.3.2. Formal Communications shall include, but are not limited to:

- Questions concerning this RFA
- Expressions of Interest
- Pre-award negotiations under this RFA
- Addenda to this RFA

3.3.3. Addenda

IFES will make a good-faith effort to provide written responses to the questions or requests for clarifications that require addenda by the date set in the RFA Schedule above. All questions, answers, and addenda will be shared with all interested organizations.

3.4. Eligibility

Locally registered Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Non-Political Party Organizations or other similar not-for-profit institutions are invited to apply. If a DPO, CSO, or NGO is not locally registered, a signed letter stating the reason why must be included as part of the application.

Individuals and the following organizations are **not eligible** to access funding:

- Governmental and semi-governmental institutions
- International organizations
- Political parties or organizations affiliated with or engaging in partisan activities
- Organizations running on a for-profit basis

3.5. Application Instructions

All applications should include the following, in order for their application to be considered:

3.5.1. Technical Application

The Technical Application must include a written application in English describing in detail the applicant's (a) Technical Approach, (b) implementation timeline, and (c) results framework to implement the Program Description as described in Article 4 of this RFA. The evaluation criteria can be found in Article 3.6. Applicants should use the technical narrative template in Attachment A.

3.5.2. Cost Application – Budget & Budget Narrative

- The Budget should reflect costs associated with the technical activities and deliverables. All applicants must use the budget template provided in Attachment B and submit it in Excel format as part of their application. The Budget should be presented in **USD**, with applicable taxes/charges clearly identified. Unit costs are required and, in the case of discrepancies between unit costs and total costs, the unit cost will be taken as the reference basis in the evaluation.

- The applicant must agree to keep these costs valid for a minimum of 90 calendar days.
- The Cost Application should include a Budget Narrative that describes each cost element of the Budget (see column H of Attachment B).

3.5.3. A brief outline of the applicant's organization and experience.

Organizations should demonstrate prior experience working with young people from a wide range of states and regions, particularly rural areas, facilitating training programs, and working on programming such as youth leadership, civic education, and/or elections.

3.5.4. Additional documentation

- When available, a copy of the organization's most recent final, signed audits/financial statements
- Proof of organization's registration or a signed letter indicating why the organization is not registered.
- CVs of key personnel including the organization's Director and anticipated program manager
- Any other supporting document that will strengthen the application

3.6. Application Submission

Applicants must send final applications in electronic copy via e-mail to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1 on or prior to the closing date and time shown in the *Schedule of Events*.

3.7. Criteria for Selection

The evaluation of each response to this RFA will be based on its demonstrated competence, compliance, format, and organization. The purpose of this RFA is to identify those organizations that have the interest, capability, and financial strength to implement the project as described in Article 4 of this RFA.

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|--|------------------|
| 1. Technical Approach, Implementation Timeline, Results Framework | 40 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated understanding of the RFA and of IFES' requirements • Soundness and feasibility of technical approach • Reasonable implementation timeline and results framework | |
| 2. Competitive Budget with efficient and reasonable cost structure | 30 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost realism in response to RFA requirements • Clear budget presentation of necessary, allocable and reasonable costs • Appropriate balance of budget between operational/personnel costs and activity costs | |
| 3. Past Performance and Organizational Capacity | 30 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which proposed personnel have relevant qualifications and experience • Demonstrated capacity to organize, manage and implement full range of activities required to achieve program goals and objectives • Demonstrated flexibility to adjust implementation in response to changing environments • Demonstrated strong past performance in implementing programs of similar size, scope and complexity • Demonstrated presence and/or networks in the proposed target districts | |

3.8. Selection and Notification

Applicants determined by IFES that possess the capacity to compete for this project will be selected to move into the negotiation phase of this process. Written notification will be sent to

these applicants via e-mail. Those applicants not selected for the negotiation phase will also be notified.

4. Scope of Work

IFES is implementing the Building Understanding and Involvement in Local Governance and Democracy (BUILD) project with funding support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Under the BUILD project, IFES aims to enhance the capacity of Local Government Representatives (LGRs) in project districts, particularly focusing on improved citizen's interaction, climate resilience, and effective governance. IFES will work with local partners to create a comprehensive capacity-building program for elected officials including: knowledge-building on the local government structure and their role as elected leaders; budgeting and legislative processes; principles of ethical leadership; and strategies for effective citizen outreach with a focus on climate governance, understanding and effectively responding to citizens' needs, advocating for humanitarian budget allocations and soliciting citizen feedback on humanitarian relief efforts, allocating funds for post-disaster rehabilitation in provincial and local government budgets. This program will also pilot a Climate-Crisis Simulation that will provide participants with experience identifying and exhibiting the main skills and behaviors needed to exercise effective leadership in the face of a climate crisis.

Following the modular trainings, a "community of practice" will be established for elected officials to pilot new strategies and exchange lessons learned from constituent outreach, particularly from more marginalized groups who may be reticent to approach leaders in public settings. In the target flood-affected districts, IFES' partners will work with locally elected leaders and their constituents to establish district-level coordination committees, known as Climate Resilience Forums (CRF), to bring citizens, elected leaders, and relevant government departments together in assessing and streamlining flood response. Partners will mobilize Youth PAVE Ambassadors and She Leads alumnae to participate in newly established or strengthened platforms as a means of direct advocacy to local government leaders. This model of investment in both citizen advocacy and local government outreach empowers marginalized voices and helps forge and institutionalize new patterns of government engagement, while alleviating tensions by better ensuring that local decision-making responds to priorities communicated by citizens.

IFES is looking for local civil society organization (CSO) partners for implementation of the LGR project in the selected districts of Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as detailed in the following table.

Geographical Location	Balochistan (<i>Lasbela</i>)	Sindh <i>Shahid Benazir Abad and Naushehro Feroze</i>	KP (<i>Bajour and Khyber</i>)
Stakeholder Outreach	150	350	400

Please note that bids must be for one province only, however organizations interested in working in more than one province should submit a proposal for each province separately. The planned intervention will be implemented in two years.

Under the LGR program, CSO partners will be expected to carry out the following project requirements:

- Coordinate and sign Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Local Government Departments/Local Government Schools/Academies/Authorities in the relevant province for the implementation of LGR Capacity Building Training Program.

- Design and conduct a training needs analysis to identify training needs of LGRs for enhanced Citizen Engagement and effectively responding to the citizens' needs, while working in close coordination with the relevant Local Government Representative (LGR) training institute.
- Design training materials, e.g. handbooks, trainers' manuals, handouts and other training aids based on the results of the training needs analysis.
- Develop criteria for the selection of LGRs, from the selected tehsil/district, including but not limited to the interest/experience in doing community work and willingness to engage with a long term (two years) training and advocacy program.
- Conduct training of trainers (ToT) which may include trainers from IP staff as well as Staff from the provincial department for training of LGRs.
- Develop a modular training program for training of LGR over a period of 1-2 years in consultation with the relevant department responsible for training of elected leaders. The training program contents may cover: knowledge building on the local government structure and role of elected leaders; budgeting and legislative processes; principles of ethical leadership; strategies for effective citizen outreach; climate resilience as a core component of good governance; understanding and effectively responding to citizens disaster related needs and local government's role; and how to assess fund allocation to post-disaster rehabilitation in provincial and local government budgets.
- Develop LGRs action plans after modular training to identify strategic activities and benchmarks for improving citizen engagement, as well as relevant institutional partners to engage, like the district-level Social Welfare Departments and Health Departments, and the provincial-level Planning and Development Departments.
- Develop a mechanism to monitor and gather details of LGRs' action plans, focusing on how they are engaging with citizens and leading advocacy initiatives after each modular training.
- Arrange for community radio programs that give local government leaders a platform to share their priorities and take listeners' questions and feedback – such programs may also be executed using social media, web portals, community meetings, or other relevant outreach methods.
- Develop, publish and launch a "Know Your Representative" directory of elected officials, which can be expanded to include information on points of contact for flood assistance.
- Implement advocacy initiatives/campaigns for pro-citizen legislation and operational reforms and workshops for citizen engagement.
- Establish district-level coordination committees, known as Climate Resilience Forums (CRFs), to engage citizens, Youth PAVE Ambassadors, She Leads alumnae, MALE Allies and C2C alumni directly with LGRs and relevant government departments in assessing and streamlining flood response and other coordination-related initiatives.
- Conduct two advocacy refresher trainings for LGR-CRF members focusing on both technical knowledge and practical experience, demonstrating how to provide support for emerging community leaders (C2C, PAVE, MALE Allies and She Leads alumnae) in managing and leading advocacy campaigns for common priorities. This aims to empower marginalized voices and institutionalize new patterns of government engagement.
- Establishment of a "community of practice" for elected officials to come together for sharing success, failures and pilot new strategies targeting effective citizen engagement and climate governance.
- Design, print and disseminate relevant IEC materials for general public awareness online and community-based campaigns. Each material should be converted into braille and sign language to make it more inclusive.
- Arrange a lessons learned workshop for LGR graduates for showcasing and experience sharing.

Reporting and Monitoring:

- Submit program progress, event reports, M&E reports and final report - on weekly, monthly and quarterly basis or as required by IFES.
- Provide IFES with participant lists, photographs of trainings, monitoring and evaluation data and training reports for each training.
- Participate regularly in project coordination/progress review meetings arranged by IFES (online or in-person).

5. Functional Requirements

5.1. Timeline:

Applicants must submit a detailed timeline in their Application showing the time required to implement the services requested. IFES requires all deliverables to be completed not later than June 30, 2026.

5.2. Monitoring & Evaluation

- As part of its due diligence, IFES conducts pre-award surveys on all potential grantees to assess capacity and inform the appropriate grant mechanism. In addition, applicants expected to expend \$750,000 or more in U.S. funded awards during their fiscal year must have an audit conducted in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F—Audit Requirements. If Applicable, applicants must ensure that funds are included in the grant budget for an audit.
- IFES will issue the appropriate grant mechanism depending on the nature of the work, the capacity of the grantee, the duration of the grant, and the overall value of the grant.
- IFES will provide continuous mentorship, training and oversight to ensure grant management practices are in line with anti-corruption principles as well as to build capacity of local grantees to fully manage and implement their programs in adherence to donor regulations and with a view towards sustainability.

5.3. Deliverables:

Specific deliverables and reporting will be determined based on the grant activities proposed and negotiated during the negotiation phase.

6. Additional Terms & Conditions

6.1. Non-Disclosure Agreement

IFES reserves the right to require any applicant to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.

6.2. Zero Tolerance for Fraud

IFES has zero tolerance for fraud. Fraud is any act or omission that intentionally misleads, or attempts to mislead, to obtain a benefit or to avoid an obligation. If you have concerns about potential fraud in any way related to IFES projects, contracts, or activities, please contact IFES' Compliance Hotline at compliance@ifes.org or at +1 202-350-6791.

6.3. Intellectual Property

Applicants should not use any intellectual property of IFES including, but not limited to, all logos, registered trademarks, or trade names of IFES, at any time, without the prior written approval of IFES, as appropriate.

6.4. Applications

All accepted applications shall become the property of IFES and will not be returned.

6.5. Governing Law

This RFA and the applicants' applications shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, USA.

6.6. Partial Awarding

IFES reserves the right to accept all or part of the application when awarding the grant. IFES also reserves the right to issue multiple awards and procure only items or services from selected applicants.

6.7. No Liability

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute a commitment on the part of IFES to make an award nor does it commit IFES to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any application in response to this RFA. Further, IFES reserves the right to reject any or all applications received or stop solicitation process at any time, without assigning any reason or liability.

IFES shall not be liable to any applicant, person, or entity for any losses, expenses, costs, claims, or damages of any kind:

- Arising out of, by reason of, or attributable to, the applicant responding to this RFA; or
- As a result of the use of any information, error, or omission contained in this RFA document or provided during the RFA process.

6.8. Entire RFA

This RFA, any addenda to it, and any attached schedules, constitute the entire RFA.

6.9. Attachments

Attachment A: Technical Narrative Template
Attachment B: Budget Template
Attachment C: Organizational Capacity and Past Performance Template

End of RFA

ATTACHMENT A
Technical Narrative Template

I. General Information

Complete Legal Name of Applicant Organization

Office Address

Legal Mailing Address (if different)

Office Telephone Number(s)

E-Mail Address(es)

Director of Organization

Project Manager/Contact Person

Project Dates (month/year – month/year)

Project Title

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)¹

PAN Number

¹ Only organizations with Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) are eligible to receive a subaward under this RFA. If your organization does not have a UEI, please visit www.SAM.gov to get a Unique Entity ID only (no entity registration required).

II. Technical Approach:

Please include the following components in in a maximum of 5 pages

- A. Project Summary:** describe your project in one paragraph, including objectives, issue, target audience, and geographic coverage.
- B. Need for the project:** identify the problem your project would help to solve. Why is this project important?
- C. Project’s Goal and Objectives:** what is the specific goal of your effort? Does it comply with the goals and objectives of the competition?
- D. Target Audience and Stakeholders:** what is your main target audience? What groups of stakeholders will the project primarily serve?
- E. Activities:** identify and describe in detail each activity to be undertaken to produce results, justifying the choice of activities.
- F. Expected Deliverables:** identify specific deliverables that you expect to develop within your project (research/analytical reports; specific strategies; public policy recommendations; etc.).

III. Implementation Timeline

Please use the following format to provide an implementation timeline

Project Month	Activity	Expected Result	Involved Stakeholders

IV. Results Framework

Please identify specific results that you expect to realize upon completion of your project and the quantitative and qualitative criteria for the project’s success. How will you determine that the project goals have been accomplished? The framework should include:

- A list of results you expect to accomplish throughout the project
- 1-4 performance indicators for each result including a detailed definition for each
- The source, method, frequency and schedule of data collection,
- Staff responsible for collecting data.
- How the performance data will be collected
- How data will be reviewed, analyzed and reported

ATTACHMENT B
Budget Template

[CLICK HERE](#) to visit IFES Procurement Notices page and download the budget template.

ATTACHMENT C
Organizational Capacity and Past Performance Template

I. Summary

Briefly present your organization’s mission, its core activities, and why it is best suited for this project

II. Human Resources

- A. *Please provide full legal name of organization’s Director and / or Chief Executive Officer.*
- B. *Please provide CVs for the core technical members of the team (the director of the organization training or curriculum experts, project manager etc.).*
- C. *Please provide hiring plan for full and part-time positions the organization including a list of positions and recruitment plan or cost-share with existing positions.*

III. Past Performance

- A. *Briefly describe how your organization’s previous experience prepares it to successfully implement the proposed project; highlight the organization’s relationship and work experience with lawmakers, political parties or government officials if applicable.*
- B. *Please specify previous work in the relevant field.*
- C. *Please list the organization’s major projects from the past five years in the following format:*

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Project Activities</i>	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Award Amount</i>	<i>Period of Award</i>

IV. References:

If applicable, contact information for three references from donor funded projects similar in scope.