CALL FOR PROPOSALS - WEST AFRICA

Civil Society Engagement with the Financial Action Task Force to Protect Civic Space

Background

The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) is an international not-for-profit organization that promotes an enabling legal environment for civil society, freedom of association, assembly and expression, and public participation around the world. ICNL has provided technical, research and capacity-building assistance to support the reform of laws affecting civil society organizations (CSOs) in over 100 countries. We draw upon a worldwide network of partners and experts to produce innovative research and analysis on legal topics affecting civil society. To learn more about ICNL’s programs in Africa, visit www.icnl.org.

In 2019, ICNL supported regional convenings of CSOs from anglophone and francophone West Africa to learn about civic space restrictions that states impose to strengthen anti-money laundering and to counter the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT). Such restrictions are often based on a misapplication of the standards developed by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and manifest, for example, as (i) legislation that restricts CSO registration and operations; (ii) excessive CSO financial oversight and funding restrictions; and (iii) efforts to constrain CSO self-regulation. Often, the restrictions are more apparent where a FATF national mutual evaluation review is imminent, or where a country is seeking to avoid or respond to a bad rating. By increasing understanding of, and participation in FATF processes, and improving engagement with FATF’s regional bodies, such as the Inter-Governmental Action Group Against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA), CSOs can proactively limit restrictions on civic space.

ICNL is pleased to invite proposals for subgrants as part of its “Protecting Civic Space through Civil Society Engagement with FATF” program. During this pilot phase, ICNL aims to support national-level engagement and innovative information exchange and advocacy by CSOs in four countries – two in anglophone West Africa, and two in francophone West Africa – to promote and protect the fundamental rights of association and assembly at various key stages of the FATF evaluation process. To
achieve these program goals, ICNL will provide small grants and technical assistance to grantees as needed.

Eligibility Requirements
This is a limited solicitation open to organizations that participated in the West Africa FATF convenings organized by ICNL and the West African Civil Society Initiative (WACSI) in Accra, Ghana in April 2019, or in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire, in August 2019. However, applicants are free to partner with non-participating organizations in their proposed activities. Organizations must be based in West Africa, and a focus on national-level activities is strongly encouraged.

Application Instructions
Applicants must submit the following fully completed items via email to africa@icnl.org with the subject “West Africa CSO engagement with FATF”

- Application Coversheet;
- Proposal (no more than five pages); and
- Line-item Budget (no more than $15,000).

All project activities must be completed by the end of December 2020. All grant recipients will be required to submit progress reports during the grant period and a final report on the use of funds, activities conducted, and outcomes of their projects prior to receiving their final grant disbursements.

Content of Proposal
In no more than five (5) pages, please describe your project proposal, which may address one or more of the following issues:

- Increasing civil society engagement in national risk assessments, sector-specific risk assessments, and mutual evaluation review processes;
- Strengthening legislative and administrative frameworks for civil society that have been or expect to be negatively affected by laws and policies adopted as a result of FATF processes;
- Improving civil society collaboration with GIABA, national financial intelligence agencies and NGO regulators to address FATF-related civic space concerns; and
- Research or monitoring initiatives to track the effects of FATF-inspired AML/CFT measures.

The proposal should be structured strictly as follows:

- An overview of the proposed project, including a description of proposed activities, outputs, and outcomes;
The proposed activity plan and timeline for the project;
Specific goals, their feasibility, and how results will be measured (including a monitoring and evaluation plan);
The plan to sustain the impact of the project beyond the grant support.
Applicant’s experience in working on civil society legal reform, the rights to freedom of association, assembly, or expression, other civic space related issues, and knowledge of FATF-related issues; and
Existing initiatives by the applicant or other entities dealing with similar or related issues and, where applicable, the plan for ensuring complementarity between the proposed project and existing initiatives.
A line-item budget (which does not count toward the 5-page limit for the proposal) that may include one or more of the following broad categories: (i) personnel; (ii) travel; (iii) supplies; (iv) program activities; and (v) other direct or indirect costs.

Selection Criteria
Applications will be evaluated based on the following factors:
Compliance with eligibility requirements and application procedures;
Demonstrated commitment of applicant to protecting civic space;
Quality of proposed project, including:
  o Level of innovation, potential impact/multiplier effect of proposed project,
  o the proposed methodology/design, and
  o project feasibility (e.g., activities are targeted to achieve stated results, and anticipated results are realistic and attainable);
Likelihood that the proposed project will enhance civic space in the project country and region;
Sustainability of the proposed project beyond the grant period;
Proposed budget and apparent value for money;
Inclusion of reasonable indicators to measure project success; and
Level of collaboration and inclusion in the project of other stakeholders in the sector and across sectors.

Deadline
Applications will be considered on a rolling basis until all grant funds are awarded. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Contact us at africa@icnl.org with questions.