

# Active Communities

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## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

FHI 360 is seeking applications for funding from prospective grantees to support advocacy initiatives to link local-level priorities involving improved service delivery to national level. The grants will be issued under the Active Communities project funded by the United States Agency

**Issuance date:**  
21 June 2021

**Closing date:**  
30 June 2021

**Closing time:**  
18.00 PM Bishkek Time

**Applicant profile:** Registered civil society organizations (CSOs) with proven experience providing support and working with local communities and self-governance bodies.

**Number of grants:** Up to 3 grant awards

**Duration:** 6-12 months (August 2021- July 2022)

**Grant budget size:** From 1,000,000 Kyrgyz Soms (KGS) to 1,700,000 KGS (depending on the number of awarded grants)

## DISCLAIMER

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The applicant shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its application. Active Communities (AC) project is hereby informing potential applicants that this Request for Applications is not a contract or financial obligation by Active Communities project to the parties that respond to this solicitation. AC project reserves the right to cancel the entire process without any obligation to inform the applicants of the reason for its actions.

**THIS REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) IS THE EXCLUSIVE, CONFIDENTIAL, PROPRIETARY PROPERTY OF FAMILY HEALTH INTERNATIONAL (FHI 360). IT MAY NOT BE COPIED, TRANSMITTED, OR DISCLOSED BY ANY MEANS WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN CONSENT OF FHI 360. BY ACCEPTING A COPY HEREOF, RECIPIENT AGREES TO USE THE RFA (AND ANY RELATED DOCUMENTS) SOLELY FOR RESPONDING TO THIS RFA AND DESTROY THE RFA (AND ANY RELATED DOCUMENTS) UPON YOUR DECISION NOT TO RESPOND TO THIS RFA.**

## GENERAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

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This Request for Applications (RFA) is part of Active Communities (AC) project, a five-year initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by FHI 360 and its partners.

The overall goal of AC is to enable interaction and collaboration of individuals and organizations to advocate for and bring about change across issues that resonate with local communities and increase government responsiveness and accountability in the Kyrgyz Republic. The AC project accomplishes this by meeting the following major sub-purposes (SP):

- SP 1:** Improved collaboration between civic, government and private sector actors to address issues of local concern including linkages between diverse actors with common goals.
- SP 2:** Increased networks' access to financial, human and intellectual assets.
- SP 3:** Applied ongoing learning and adaptation for more effective civic participation that resonates with people, particularly at the local level.
- SP 4:** Strengthen citizens' understanding of their rights and increase demand for rule of law.

The project focuses on several thematic issue areas of importance to local communities, in ways that also support local authorities' priorities on these issues. Lastly, the project works with government and non-government legal aid providers and civil society organizations to strengthen citizens' understanding of their legal rights, increase demand for the rule of law, and improve access to justice.

## GOAL OF THE REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

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One of the goals of the AC Project is to develop horizontal and vertical networks in target municipalities by fostering coordination and networking between local and national actors through consultations, deliberation regarding legal issues, and coordination meetings, as well as through expert and technical support to elevate local priorities to the national level.

The findings of the Listening Tours held in 2020 and resulting Learning Labs highlighted the importance for local people of mainly legal (documentation, access to information, etc.) and socio-economic (electricity, waste management) challenges, among many other issues. The AC Project facilitated local discussions that identified relevant priorities from among these issues to be addressed both at local and national levels. These issues tend to be common to villages throughout the country. The assumption underlying the AC Project theory of change is that the demonstration effect of coordinated efforts – both in terms of the result and the process, itself – can sustain this coordination and inspire similar efforts elsewhere.

The goal of this grant program is to elevate local issues which are common to the most communities and needs resolution at national level.

## PROGRAM DESIGN ELEMENTS

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### Project description

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Applicants should provide an outline of the proposed goals, objectives, activities, and time frame for the project. The sequence of activities should be clear, and the timing of each main activity should be noted. Applicants must use the application template attached to this RFA. No other template will be accepted.

### Areas of intervention and illustrative activities

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Through this small national level advocacy grants program, the AC project will support advocacy initiatives to link local-level priorities involving improved service delivery to national level. The list of areas of intervention are below and activities below are illustrative. Applicants should not limit themselves to these activities but must align proposed activities with the goal of this grant program to be considered for funding. Applicants are asked to designate which area(s) of intervention they are applying for in their applications and should clearly describe their prior experience supporting activities under that area in their applications. Applicants are allowed to propose activities in more than one area of intervention.

### Background and areas of intervention

One of the goals of JJ Project is to develop horizontal and vertical networks in target municipalities by fostering coordination and networking between local and national actors through consultations, deliberation regarding legal issues, and coordination meetings, as well as through expert and technical support to elevate local priorities to the national level.

The findings of the Listening Tours held in 2020 and resulting Learning Labs highlighted the importance for local people of mainly legal (documentation, access to information, etc.) and socio-economic (electricity, waste management) challenges, among many other issues. JJ facilitated local discussions that identified relevant priorities from among these issues to be addressed both at local and national levels. These issues tend to be common to villages throughout the country. The assumption underlying the JJ theory of change is that the demonstration effect of coordinated efforts – both in terms of the result and the process, itself – can sustain this coordination and inspire similar efforts elsewhere.

JJ Project identified the following topics to be addressed at the national level:

1) Electricity supply issue. Beneficiaries in eight out of ten municipalities raised this issue during the Listening Tours conducted last year. Communities in Issyk Kul (Tort Kul) and Osh (Ak Jar and Kara Tash) described the electricity supply issue as a priority. In February, the JJ team conducted a brief analysis of related legislation and found some discrepancies between law and the practice. Under the law, electricity distribution companies must provide continuous electricity to consumers (populations) and cover the costs of related infrastructure. In practice, local communities and LSGs bear these expenses.

2) Waste management. Preliminary analysis conducted by FHI360 showed existing gaps in the legislation as well as discrepancies between the law and practice across municipalities. The main issue concerns complicated, and unclear procedures related to recycling and use of waste, including the use of land for waste disposal. Waste recycling procedures are regulated by several laws and administrative regulations that are often contradictory. For instance, the Framework Law on Waste Products directly contradicts environmental protection and sanitary regulations. As a first step, the JJ project supported its partners in target municipalities to raise this issue at the

regional (oblast) level. At the national level, JJ will support partner advocacy focused on environmental protection through consultations with relevant NGOs and experts.

3) Legal Aid providers and access to legal information. Access to legal information remains an ongoing challenge. The practice of the work of the project lawyers in the target municipalities shows a growing need for legal information from community members on various issues: starting from basic consultations, access to information and finishing with qualified and professional legal support on civil and criminal issues. By the time being, almost 1,000 beneficiaries in target municipalities approached the project lawyers. In many cases community members have to go to administrative centers of the districts to look for a lawyer. The issue is complicated with a low capacity of local authorities to address the legal matters. The Project will link with national NGOs and networks to support practices such as, amongst others, internships for law school students in the regions that can help to address this challenge. Ongoing work by the project lawyers shows many gaps in the legislation that should be addressed at the national level. These gaps prevent lawyers from helping clients with issues such as the right of minors to identity, state allowances, alimonies, property issues, and related matters. To foster settling this issue, the Project will support advocacy work to amend the Civic Registration Law and administrative proceedings in partnership with civil society and state institutions.

In this regard, FHI360 intends to announce a Call for Applications amongst civil society organizations including CSOs networks to elevate local issues which are common to the most communities and needs resolution at national level.

Thematic areas:

Applications are accepted from civil society organizations (Applications from existing networks of CSOs are advantage). The applicants may apply for only one thematic area at the same time based on their expertise, experience, as well as organizational technical and administrative capacity.

The project is seeking applications in the following thematic areas:

**Area 1. Access to better electricity supply services including transparency and accountability in this area.**

**Area 2. Provision of solutions related to recycling and use of waste, including use of land for waste disposal in rural areas, which take into account environmental protection principles.**

**Area 3. Better access to legal information and legal aid in rural and remote areas**

**The advocacy campaign shall include the following minimum illustrative activities:**

- Conduct desk and field research on the topics listed in the thematic areas, including methodology of the research and action plan; The research may include various methods including deep interviews, focus-group discussions, online surveys together with analysis of the existing legal framework, and its practical implementation.
- Present the findings of the research at a round table with participation of relevant stakeholders.
- Develop recommendations and advocacy plan for further actions (strategy).
- Organize alliance-building events with participation of relevant stakeholders, organizations, experts and individuals (community members) as a part of advocacy efforts.

- Organize workshops for local community members in target municipalities to share the best practices of advocacy efforts.

## Funding

The AC project will award up to three grants for the implementation of activities within the above-mentioned areas of intervention. Grants will be awarded in the range of 1,000,000 KGS to 1,700,000 KGS each for a period from 6 to 12 months.

The grants awarded under this RFA will be fixed award amount (FAA) grants. Under FAAs, FHI 360 reimburses grant recipients for achieving milestones that are connected to the project activities to be implemented under the award. The grant recipient procures its own goods and services, as well as manages implementation of all grant activities. To receive an FAA, an organization must demonstrate adequate and established systems and processes to manage procurements. It must also be possible to organize activities into discreet ‘milestones’ with deliverables. Payment to the grant recipient is dependent upon FHI 360 approval of these deliverables.



### Grant Type

Fixed Award Amount



### Grant Duration

6-12 months



### Number of Grants

Up to 3 grants



### Grant Amount

Up to 1,700,000 KGS

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

### MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicants must be registered as a Civil Society Organization (CSO) in accordance with Kyrgyzstan’s legislation.
- At least three years of experience working in the assigned or closely related area.
- Experience cooperating with local communities and self-governance bodies, national level key stakeholders.
- The applicant’s current statute and mission are in line with the AC objectives and the purpose of this grants program.

Only applicants that meet the eligibility criteria and submit a complete application and budget in the specified format will be considered. Organizations may not submit more than one application.

The grant application includes the following documents:

- **Application Form** with attachments (see Annex I “Application Form” for more details)

- Copy of the Registration Certificate
- Copy of the Organization's Statute
- Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number\*

*\*If the applicant already has a DUNS number, it should be included in their application. Otherwise, applicants will be expected to get a DUNS number before an award is made. FHI 360 will assist successful applicants with this process. DUNS numbers can be obtained online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp>*

- **Budget Table and Budget Narrative:** The Applicant's cost proposal shall include a detailed budget table and budget notes (see Annex II "Budget"). The detailed budget table should include a complete breakdown of the cost/price elements associated with each line item. The budget shall include cost or prices of labor, travel or transportation, and other direct costs related to various implemented activities. The Budget Notes should justify these expenses in terms of the reasonableness of the cost and the relevance to project activities. All project expenses should be detailed in Kyrgyz Soms (KGS). Please note that project budgets should reflect the full implementation period 6-12 months. **If selected, applicants will be expected to provide supporting documentation for all proposed salaries, consultant rates, any rent, and any budgeted items that are not common market goods.**
- **Optional documentation:** other material such as brochures, research reports, samples of publications and results of past programs are welcome.

FHI 360 may request additional information related to the application.

## **EVALUATION PROCESS**

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All interested applicants that meet the eligibility criteria above are invited to submit project applications responding to the requirements, terms and selection criteria of this Request for Application, in English or Russian, based on the application form and required attachments from the application package (see Annex I "Application Form") by June 30, 2021 (18.00 PM Bishkek Time).

Upon receipt, the AC project 's staff will review all applications for conformity to project eligibility and evaluation criteria described in the table below. Incomplete or late applications will be considered non-responsive and ineligible for consideration. Applications are confidential and will be treated as such.

A Review Committee will be created to review the applications. The following criteria will be used to evaluate each application. The number of points assigned to each criterion represents its weight in the evaluation process.

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
<p><b>Technical Approach</b></p> <p><b>Project Design</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities are consistent with the goals of the grants program.</li> <li>• The application includes sufficient detail about how project activities will be carried out.</li> <li>• The application provides a reasonable timeline for the implementation of activities.</li> <li>• Proposed activities are likely to produce measurable results.</li> <li>• The application includes sufficient detail about how the implementer will establish cooperation with other CSOs and government stakeholders.</li> <li>• The project will establish a practice or approach that can be replicated by other groups or institutions.</li> <li>• The proposed activities will reach a significant number of constituents/beneficiaries.</li> <li>• The project will mainstream gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) issues through project activities.</li> </ul>	<p>45 points</p>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How likely is it that the benefits of the project and/or its activities will continue after the life of the grant?</li> </ul>	<p>5 points</p>

**Organizations' capacity**

- Applicant has sufficient capacity to manage the project/grant and to achieve the goals of the advocacy grant program.
- Applicant has sufficient staff (full-time; part-time; associates) and volunteers to complete the proposed activities.
- Applicant has sufficient skills, expertise and experience to implement the proposed activities.
- Applicant has available thematic areas of expertise, including geographical focus.
- Applicant has demonstrated ability to communicate and build effective networking with various community members and organizations.
- Experience implementing activities related to the area of intervention described in the RFA for which the applicant is applying:
  - Area 1: Access to better electricity supply services including transparency and accountability in this area.
  - Area 2: Provision of solutions related to recycling and use of waste including use of land for waste disposal in rural areas which take into account environmental protection principles.
  - Area 3: Better access to legal information and legal aid in rural and remote areas.
- Applicant has demonstrated ability to reach a broad range of stakeholders at national, regional and local levels.
- Applicant has relevant past assignments, including list of research and public reports.
- Ability in working online, conducting training\workshops online if needed.

35 points

**Budget (see additional budget requirements below)**

- Cost Effectiveness (costs have been reasonably set in the budget and are the most economical amount to allow attaining the project objectives).
- Budget summary, detailed budget and budget notes included.
- Proposed costs reflect a clear understanding of the requirements stated in this RFA;
- Proposed price is reasonable in comparison with prices with the independent cost estimate.
- Proposed planned costs ensure optimal delivery of the proposed activities.
- A detailed line item budget, budget narrative, and supporting documentation that clearly describe how the budgeted amounts are calculated must support the applicant's budget.

15 points

**TOTAL**

**100 points**

**Pre-Award Requirements**

The AC project will select the organization with the highest overall scores out of 100 points and greatest capacity to serve as the AC project's grantee. The selected applicants will be required to undergo and pass a pre-award assessment process in order to receive funding. All final selections will be contingent upon USAID approval.



## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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Applications may be submitted in English or Russian:

1. **Electronically** by email (with scanned attachments of all required forms and materials stated in the Application Form) to: [info.dlcpa@fhi360.org](mailto:info.dlcpa@fhi360.org)

All applications must be submitted by June 30, 2021. In order to be reviewed, the proposals must be registered as received with FHI 360/AC at the time of delivery. Proposals sent electronically will receive a confirmation email from FHI 360/AC.

Note: English language version of the RFA will be the controlling version. English will be the controlling language of any grants and any supporting award documents.

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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As a USAID-funded project, the AC project is required to follow the provisions of the United States Foreign Assistance Act and other United States Government laws and regulations. For non-U.S. organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Grantees will apply. 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 700 will also apply to any sub-awards under this award. It is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments.

For non-U.S. organizations, the Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Grantees and the applicable cost principles (2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Cost Principles) will apply.

- 2 CFR 200 Cost Principles:  
<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=2:1.1.2.2.1.5&rgn=div6>
- Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Grantees:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>

### A. Activities that will not be considered for funding

- Activities related to the promotion of specific political parties;
- Reconstruction or building rehabilitation projects that are not accompanied by plans for wide community use and maintenance;
- Distribution of emergency/humanitarian assistance or funds;
- Religious events or activities that promote a particular faith;
- For-profit business activities that benefit a small select group, rather than providing increased opportunities to the larger community;
- Unrelated operational expenses.

### B. Prohibited Goods and Services

Under no circumstances shall the recipient procure any of the following under this award, as these items are excluded by the Foreign Assistance Act and other legislation which govern USAID funding:

- Military equipment;
- Surveillance equipment;
- Commodities and services for support of police or other law enforcement activities;
- Abortion equipment and services;

- Luxury goods and gambling equipment;
- Weather modification equipment.

### **C. Restricted Goods**

The following costs are restricted by USAID (primarily due to higher-level restrictions imposed by U.S. regulatory bodies or through specific legislation) and require prior approval from FHI 360 and USAID:

- Agricultural commodities;
- Motor vehicles;
- Pharmaceuticals;
- Pesticides;
- Fertilizer;
- Used equipment; and
- U.S. Government-owned excess property.

### **D. Grant Agreement**

A fixed amount award grant agreement will include the approved final project description, milestone payment schedule, reporting requirements, and relevant provisions. Once executed it is a legally binding agreement between FHI 360 and the recipient CSO. Once the grant agreement is signed, it cannot be modified without prior written approval from FHI 360.

### **E. Grant Disbursement and Financial Management**

Recipients of funds under this grant will need to open a separate bank account before any funds are transferred from FHI 360. The grants will be disbursed in Kyrgyz Soms (KGS) and transferred only through bank transactions.

### **F. Reporting**

A description of reporting requirements will be included in the grant agreement. The types of reporting required, along with the schedule of reporting, will be provided.

## **DISCLAIMERS**

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1. FHI 360 may cancel this solicitation and not award.
2. FHI 360 may reject any or all responses received.
3. Issuance of solicitation does not constitute award commitment by FHI 360.
4. FHI 360 will not compensate offeror for responses to solicitation.
5. FHI 360 reserves the right to disqualify any offer based on offeror failure to follow solicitation instructions.
6. FHI 360 may choose to award only part of the activities in the solicitation, or issue multiple awards based on the solicitation's activities.
7. FHI 360 reserves the right to waive minor proposal deficiencies that can be corrected prior to award determination to promote competition.
8. FHI 360 will be contacting all offerors to confirm the contact person, address, and that a bid was submitted for this solicitation.
9. FHI 360 also reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received without explanation.
10. FHI 360 has the right to issue amendments to the RFA at any time.

### **Withdrawals of Proposals**

Applicant may withdraw proposals by written notice via email received at any time before award. Proposals may be withdrawn in person by an applicant or his/her authorized representative, if the

representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the proposal before award.

### **Right to Select/Reject**

FHI 360 reserves the right to select and negotiate with those organization it determines, in its sole discretion, to be qualified for competitive proposals and to terminate negotiations without incurring any liability. FHI 360 also reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received without explanation.

### **RFA Not an Offer**

This RFA represents only a definition of requirements. It is merely an invitation for submission of proposals and does not legally obligate FHI 360 to accept any of the submitted proposals in whole or in part. FHI 360 has no contractual obligations with any organization based upon issuance of this RFA. It is not an offer to award. Only the execution of a written agreement shall obligate FHI 360 in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such agreement.

### **Discussions and Award**

FHI 360 reserves the right to seek clarifications, enter into discussions or negotiations, or to make award on initial submissions without discussions or negotiations of any kind. FHI 360 reserves the right to exclude from further consideration any proposal at any time, including after discussions or negotiations have been entered into.

### **Pre-Award (Due-diligence)**

FHI 360 reserves the right to conduct pre-award review of the selected applicant before making a final decision to award.

### **Proposal Validity Date**

All information submitted in connection with this RFA will be valid for three (3) months from the RFA due date. This includes, but is not limited to, cost, pricing, terms and conditions, service levels, and all other information. If your organization is awarded the contract, all information in the RFA and negotiation process is contractually binding.

### **Offer Verification**

FHI 360 may contact organizations to confirm contact person, address, bid amount and to confirm that the bid was submitted for this solicitation.

### **False Statements in Offer**

Applicant must provide full, accurate and complete information as required by this solicitation and its attachments. At any time that FHI 360 determines that an applicant has provide false statements in the proposal, FHI 360 may reject the proposal without further consideration.