

**Country:** Macedonia

**Language(s) for Concept Papers:** English

**Language(s) for Full Applications:** English

**Required format for submission of Concept Papers and Full Application:**

Email to [rricliev@usaid.gov](mailto:rricliev@usaid.gov) and [DGP@usaid.gov](mailto:DGP@usaid.gov)

**The types of awards:** Cooperative Agreement

**Maximum size of award:** \$2m for Cooperative Agreement

**Life of the award:** Up to 3 years for Cooperative Agreement

**Sector(s) of Focus or Development problem(s) to be addressed:**

USAID/Macedonia will accept proposals in three areas: democracy and governance, education, and economic growth.

### **Democracy and Governance**

This program area aims to support authentic civil society organizations in the areas of human rights and public advocacy. Responses that offer innovative approaches to stimulating civic activism, engaging with the government on substantive issues, and civic monitoring and oversight are particularly welcome.

### **Illustrative Activities**

The following list of activities is only illustrative - other innovative ideas are welcome.

1. Support research-based advocacy and lobbying;
2. Expand public knowledge of policy options through research based analysis, public debate and media;
3. Organize local awareness/public hearing/action campaigns around pressing social issues;
4. Generate civic activism, build constituencies, provide information, or share best practices using IT, websites, conventional media and social networking;
5. Support innovative use of social media to promote media issues; generate responsible, issues-based journalism; or to publicize media freedom violations; and
6. Develop a web-based platform to monitor media content.

### **Education**

This program area aims to increase capacity for assessment of early grade reading and numeracy skills of students while building the technical capacity of local service providers. The measurement of learning outcomes and education data are necessary to support decision-making, incentives, transparency, and accountability needed to improve reading and numeracy. A lack of quality data on student learning hinders the development and implementation of effective

educational policies and supportive classroom/school-level/community action. The potential impact of data on student learning has been very visible over the past few years, with the development and use of easy-to-use assessments such as the USAID supported Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Math Assessment (EGMA) and Pratham's Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). Such assessments have helped to create widespread awareness of student learning levels and efforts to improve learning in reading and math. This program area also aims to build the leadership capacity of teachers to be a driving force for quality education reforms that start in the classroom, specifically for reforms that will help to improve learning outcomes in early grade reading and math.

### **Illustrative Activities**

The following list of activities is only illustrative - other innovative ideas are welcome.

1. Implement simple approaches, such as the EGRA, EGMA, or ASER, to allow school and local level managers to prioritize, collect, analyze and use key education-related data at the school level to improve instruction and learning outcomes;
2. Consolidate and analyze disparate sources of education data at the local, regional, and national level and widely disseminate education-related data in easy-to-understand ways to a variety of audiences;
3. Build the capacity of teachers and education officials to conduct efficient student assessments and teacher evaluations;
4. Empower teachers to engage in innovative activities to promote better learning outcomes in students, such as developing teacher-champions who will lead changes in their schools;
5. Foster parent and community involvement in children's reading; and
6. Leverage existing learning resource such as community libraries, digital libraries, and other learning platforms to promote more involvement in children's reading and provide primary schools with additional reading resources.

### **Economic Growth**

By focusing on private sector competitiveness, local economic development, and social entrepreneurship, this program area aims to strengthen key capacities of a growing pool of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to drive economic growth and create new jobs.

Private Sector Competitiveness/Local Industry Upgrading: Opportunities in domestic markets are limited due to Macedonia's small size and population. Economic growth and job creation depend significantly on SMEs' abilities to expand into external markets or to become suppliers to larger enterprises. Many companies, however, are ill-equipped to compete internationally, lacking the technology, innovation, international standards and certifications, financing, sufficient training, technical expertise, export know-how, and connections to external markets. USAID aims to support the development, expansion, and

sustainability of public and private institutions focused on providing specialized services to SMEs to significantly improve private sector productivity and competitiveness. The provision of this assistance must be geared toward creating new or upgrading existing local industry and must be coordinated with the Government of Macedonia at national and local levels. Further, USAID is looking to support mechanisms for effective public-private dialogue for policy analysis and reform, with local and national government institutions, that will lead to improvements in policies, processes, and procedures that currently impede business development.

Local Economic Development (LED): USAID is looking for creative ways to support more balanced regional economic development throughout Macedonia by supporting LED in different regions of the country. LED initiatives could include local NGOs identifying specific market opportunities in their respective regions and working with local government institutions, academia, and the private sector to implement joint activities that support business development in new and existing SMEs.

Social Entrepreneurship: USAID is also looking for opportunities to support the development of social entrepreneurship in Macedonia to address market failures. Social entrepreneurship uses entrepreneurial skills to solve critical social and economic problems that are not being addressed by government or the private sector. Issues commonly addressed include poverty and exclusion, inequality, microfinance, environmental protection, agricultural development and services, especially promoting organic agriculture, irrigation and water systems, renewable/clean technology, women's empowerment, and others. Social enterprises generate enough income to cover their operations and reinvest revenues in the enterprise to expand operations and achieve greater developmental impact. As a result, social enterprises can be far more sustainable than traditional development models.

### **Illustrative Activities**

The following list of activities is only illustrative - other innovative ideas are welcome.

1. Introduce international standards and certifications;
2. Provide support for technology transfer and innovation to increase the efficiency of production processes or introduce new products on the market;
3. Provide access to innovative and affordable sources of finance;
4. Support export and market linkages;
5. Improve workforce development;
6. Implement Public Private Dialogue initiatives; and
7. Promotion of social entrepreneurship and creation of social enterprises.

**Target geographic area(s):** The Mission will consider proposals for any region of Macedonia.