

LOW VALUE GRANTS SUPPORT FOR THE CSOs and CSOs COALITION

Request for Applications (RFA)

Human Rights Programme (HRP)

Atlas project ID	:	00097336
RFA number	:	HRP-2018-002
Project duration	:	15 months (August 2019 to December 2020)
Call for application	:	7 st March 2019
Submission Deadline:	:	28 th March 2019 (by 12:00 pm)
Expected starting date:	:	1 st July 2019

A. Description of Low-Value Grants (LVG)

1. General Information:

The LVG support call to CSOs is an initiative of Human Rights Programme (HRP), UNDP to foster small scale innovative ¹ human rights actions in addressing Human Rights problems/issues of the people/communities at local and national level of Bangladesh. The LVG support will encourage innovative ideas, actions and approaches for solution of Human Rights problems/issues through connecting specific group of people and communities under the thematic rights issues. The areas of actions should be connected national level and extended its link with HRP's 2019 priority districts in Bangladesh (please see the section-5). It is to be noted here that only one CSO will be eligible to apply on one thematic rights issue.

2. Background:

Human Rights Programme (HRP) is a rights-based initiative UNDP supported by a consortium of donors. The programme has a specific focus on "strengthening capacity of civil society organizations/community-based civil organizations to engage in human rights advocacy and awareness raising in Bangladesh". The Programme includes most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women and children and youth, ethnic and religious minorities, Dalits and gender-diverse communities (third-gender). With this focus, HRP-UNDP has taken initiatives to provide small grants support to CSOs and CSOs coalition to address specific Human Rights problems/issues in Bangladesh. It is noted here that HRP-UNDP has provided small grants support to 5 CSOs in 2016, 18 CSOs in 2017, and 21 CSOs and/or CSOs coalition in 2018 aiming to enhance their institutional capacity and better engagement in addressing Human Rights problems/issues at local and national context of Bangladesh.

¹ Innovation for Human Rights is about identifying more effective solutions of Human Rights problems/issues that add value for the people affected by Human Rights challenges – people, communities and institutions and other stakeholders at local and national level.

HRP-UNDP seeks to expand on human rights advocacy, awareness raising, human rights monitoring and reporting and collaborative actions of the CSOs through connecting people/communities/institutions and multi-stakeholders' groups/actors in addressing human rights problems/issues in Bangladesh.

The Human Rights Programme (HRP) has five components:

1) Component-1: NHRC-B

Strengthened capacity of the National Human Rights Commission to deliver on its mandate

Indicators:

- Number of dialogues/ consultations held by NHRC with government authorities and CSOs for preparation of reports to international Human Rights mechanisms
- % of trained human rights defenders, who have reported a human rights situation or violation to NHRC.
- Number of Human rights situation reports produced from CSO/CBO/HRDs data and information.

2) Component-2: CSOs/CBOs

Enhanced capacity of CSOs/CBOs to engage in human rights advocacy and awareness raising

Indicators:

- % trained CSOs reporting on international obligations of Bangladesh under selected treaties
- Number of HR victims benefiting from legal aid services or referrals to other services including psychosocial support services
- Number of human rights defenders' active on new online forum
- % of small grants that have met respective target and goals and consulted with women or minority groups in their design
- Number of rights forums jointly undertaken by NHRC thematic committees and CSOs to discuss contemporary human right issues
- % of students with increased awareness of human rights as a result of school campaigns with CSO/CBOs.

3) Component-3: Law Enforcing Agencies

Enhanced capacity of law enforcement agencies, in particular police, on human rights issues

Indicators:

- Number of cases reported against law enforcement agencies and police to NHRC.
- Number of CSOs and HRDs expressing their satisfaction on the role of coordination by the law enforcement officers
- % of police officials that have better understanding of Human Rights issues as a result of human rights advocacy and campaigns.
- Number of times the police take part in human rights dialogues with the NHRC and CSOs.

4) Component-4: Women

Strengthened capacity of national stakeholders to better protect and promote women's rights

Indicators:

- Number of cases that the legal aid offices / centres provided legal assistance/advise to women and children victims of violence (and other vulnerable groups).

- % of women population who understands and are aware of their rights as a human being and as women.²
- % of school students (including teachers) that have a better understanding on women and girl's rights after campaigns.
- Number of complaints of women's rights violations submitted to the NHRC by the Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (NNPC) and CSOs/CBOs.

5) Component-5: Ethnic Minorities

Strengthened capacity of national stakeholders to better protect and promote the rights of ethnic minorities

Indicators:

- % of ethnic minority population aware of their human rights and as "indigenous People" as per international human rights instruments.³
- Number of international instruments/national laws/acts/policies on the rights of ethnic minority and other vulnerable groups adopted and implemented by government.
- % collaborations between the NHRC (including regional offices) and CSOs that have resulted in at least one policy initiative or campaign on ethnic minority rights.
- Number of published reports from fact-finding missions conducted in collaboration with the Parliamentary Caucus and NHRC.
- Number of community radio stations broadcasting minority language programming and rights education programmes.
- % of youth leaders trained have become active in transforming their leadership role to promote the rights of ethnic minorities.
- No. of ethnic minority representatives included and active in the respective UP standing committees.

It is noted here that the CF call, 2019 considers all above-mentioned components to extend rights-based actions of the CSOs/CBOs at local and national level of Bangladesh.

3. The Purpose of the RFA

The purpose of RFA 2019 is to solicit applications and establish partnerships with CSOs on specific thematic rights issues to ***enhance the institutional capacity and better engagement of CSOs/CBOs coalitions for promotion and protection of Human Rights in context of Bangladesh.***

The RFA 2019 is open to **all CSOs**, working at national context and have aligned initiatives in HRP's 2019 priority districts (please see the section-5) of Bangladesh to make positive changes on advancing Human Rights, accessibility and human dignity (knowledge, capacity and practices) of target groups/communities.

² Baseline survey asked: have you heard of the term human rights, follow-up survey should attempt to measure a deeper understanding of rights. Follow-up survey has still to be designed. The survey will focus on selected districts.

³ Baseline survey asked: have you heard of the term human rights, follow-up survey should attempt to measure a deeper understanding of rights. Follow-up survey has still to be designed. The survey will be conducted in selected districts (linked with OP 4)

4. Size of the Grants

The size of LVG support will be maximum 20,000 USD

5. HRP's Priority districts:

As of 2018, the Challenge Fund support of HRP-UNDP focused on the following districts in Bangladesh.

CF Call	Focusing districts
CF Call, 2016	Satkhira, Khulna, Bandarban, Sirajganj and Dhaka
CF Call, 2017	Gaibandha, Habiganj, Cox's Bazar, Satkhira and Sirajganj
CF Call, 2018	Madaripur, Barishal, Satkhira, Khulna, Gaibandha, Dinajpur, Cox's Bazar, Sirajganj, Habiganj, Mymensingh
The Challenge Fund (CF) Call, 2019 will focus on the following districts	
CF Call, 2019	Focusing division and districts
	Division
	District
	Dhaka
	1. Dhaka; 2. Manikganj
	Rajshahi
	3. Rajshahi
	Rangpur
	4. Dinajpur
	Khulna
	5. Khulna; 6. Jessore
	Barishal
	7. Barishal
	Chattogram
	8. Cox's Bazar
	Mymensingh
	9. Mymensingh
	Sylhet
	10. Moulvibazar

6. Thematic Rights Issues and Grant Size:

The RFA 2019 will predominantly focus on the following thematic rights issues and context of Bangladesh:

SL	Thematic rights issue	Priority context	Applicable to	Grants Size
1.	Freedom of Expression	National and alignment with HRP's priority districts	CSOs	20,000 USD
2.	Media rights monitoring and advocacy	National and alignment with HRP's priority districts	CSOs	20,000 USD

Note: One CSO can apply on one thematic rights issue.

6.1 Details on Thematic Issue-1: Freedom of Expression

Although the constitution of Bangladesh provides for freedom of expression, subject to "reasonable restrictions," the press is constrained by national security legislation as well as sedition and criminal libel laws, which are occasionally used to arrest and prosecute journalists. Freedom of the press is usually considered as an extended version of freedom of speech and expression. However, article 39 of the Constitution of Bangladesh has separately guaranteed press freedom along with recognizing citizen's freedom of thought and conscience vis-à-vis freedom of expression and speech. Though the Constitution of India apparently guarantees more freedom to the press and media compared to other South Asian countries, the Constitution of Bangladesh is one step ahead to that of India which does not exclusively recognize freedom of the press. From the perspective of constitutional law, here lies the uniqueness of press freedom in Bangladesh.

Impunity is the norm for those who perpetrate crimes against journalists, and police investigations generally proceed slowly, if at all. Law enforcement authorities largely failed to curb or punish the

series of violent attacks on bloggers and other writers during 2015. Officials sometimes advised those who felt threatened to stop writing or leave the country. However, in December, a Dhaka court convicted eight people for the 2013 murder of blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider. Two were sentenced to death, including the organizer of the attack, who was sentenced in absentia and remained at large. The government continued to enact many laws to restrict the right to freedom of expression, and to target and harass journalists and human rights defenders. Key punitive provisions of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Act remained intact, despite repeated calls by human rights mechanisms to repeal its abusive clauses. The government reiterated its intention to introduce the Digital Security Act, which would restrict further the right to freedom of expression online.

Censorship of internet-based content has become increasingly common in Bangladesh, with periodic blocking of YouTube, Facebook, other social-media and messaging applications, and high-profile Bengali blogs in recent years. In November 2015, the government temporarily blocked the social-media platforms Facebook, Viber, and WhatsApp, allegedly to maintain public order at the time of the controversial sentencing of opposition leaders for war crimes dating back to 1971. Death threats and attacks against bloggers have exacerbated self-censorship, leading many to stop writing, go into hiding, or leave the country. Some professional journalists practice self-censorship to avoid repercussions when reporting on sensitive topics like the military and judiciary. Tensions have increased in recent years with respect to coverage of the International Crimes Tribunal and the place of Islam in politics and society. Self-censorship can also stem from the business or political interests of media owners.

Considering that the call focuses on freedom of expression to create enabling environment for better media reporting on Human Rights issues and concerns. The actions should consider the national context of Bangladesh with special focus on:

- Discussion/Dialogues with national stakeholders on the existing laws, policies, directives and proceedings relevant to media monitoring and reporting;
- Monitoring/follow up of the cases against the media personnel/journalists;
- Capacity development of media/journalist on sensible reporting on violent extremisms and Human Rights;
- Advocacy on elimination of fake and fabricated news and violent extremisms in social media;
- Celebration of Press Freedom (Day observance);
- Sensitize the media/journalists/state agencies on UN guidelines related to freedom of expression;
- Fact-finding and press conference on incidences against media/journalists
- Produce a comprehensive report (half yearly/annual) on the status of freedom of expression in context of Bangladesh.

This is an opportunity to **CSOs**, working in national context to work and deliver the meaningful results for creating an enabling environment for freedom of expression in Bangladesh.

6.2 Details on Thematic Issue-2: Media rights monitoring and advocacy

On September 2000 the United Nations (UN) adopted the Millennium Declaration that urged for “efforts to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development.” It also supported the “freedom of the media to perform their essential role and the right of the public to have access to information.” 16 years after, what we are witnessing around the globe indicate that we are far away from achievement. also, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are directly related to access to information and press freedom. Countries including Bangladesh are expected to achieve these targets by 2030. There is a wide variety of privately owned daily and weekly print publications. Private broadcasting continues to expand, with more than 42 television and two dozen radio

stations—including three commercial FM outlets and 14 community stations. The state directly owns or influences several broadcast outlets, including the public BTV, which remains the sole terrestrial television broadcaster with national reach.

Access to the internet is generally unrestricted, though the penetration rate was still less than 15% of the population as of 2015. During past few years, the number of online news outlets, including news websites and internet-based radio stations, has increased dramatically, as has use of major social-networking sites. Private broadcast and print media in Bangladesh are often owned by business conglomerates controlled by politically influential individuals or families with extensive assets in other industries, such as manufacturing and finance. Some such outlets allow the interests of their owners to influence their news coverage. However, journalists faced obstruction and violence while reporting in the field during the state of press freedom did not witness any significant improvement. Journalists and institutions that reject censorship and self-censorship risk different types of attacks either from the state itself or from powerful quarters who have the capacity to influence and use state institutions against the journalists.

In the age of communication technology and digital media, one thing that cannot be done is barring the flow of information and hindering people's access to information. This is the power of media, new media and press in this century that bombards us every moment with huge amounts of information. The media has evolved and become more active over the years with the help of technological innovation and access to information that has revolutionized the concept of freedom of expression. Free media constitutes the fourth pillar of democracy. Right to information and press freedom are highly critical for achieving Goal 16 of the SDG, particularly the target 10 as it is directly linked with people's right to access information and safety of journalists. This, in turn, is closely linked to a culture of openness. Being a democratic country, Bangladesh must do more to ensure press freedom. The challenge before press freedom has been reflected in a number of international studies commissioned by different press freedom watchdogs. Bangladesh's media was demoted as “not free” from its previous “partly free” position. Strengthen our fourth pillar and achieve target 16.10 that will ultimately guide our leaders and policymakers by freely monitoring SDG targets and thus letting them know whether they are on the right track or not. This will be possible only if we believe from the bottom of our hearts that press freedom is a key element for development and for attaining SDG targets for all.

Considering that the call focuses on media monitoring and advocacy to enable media personnel/journalists as Human Rights Defender for better and sensible reporting on Human Rights issues/concerns at local and national level. The actions should consider the local and national context of Bangladesh with special focus on:

- Strengthening the Journalist forum/platform on Human Rights at national level and HRP priority districts⁴;
- Capacity development (training) for journalists (journalists at national and priority districts) on Human Rights, Peace, Tolerance and Social Harmony issues;
- Organize a day long convention for the journalists at national level;
- Initiate nationwide Human Rights awareness, campaigns and rights advocacy through the journalists;
- Produce a comprehensive Human Rights situation report (through the reports of journalists) in context of Bangladesh.

This is an opportunity to **CSOs**, working on **Media rights monitoring and advocacy** issues at national level (with alignment in HRP's priority district) to work and deliver meaningful results in advancing media rights in Bangladesh.

⁴ HRP priority districts: Dhaka, Mymensingh, Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Satkhira, Khulna, Barishal, Madaripur, Dinajpur, Habiganj, Cox's Bazar
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7. Expectations

The RFA 2019 is expecting that as immediate outputs, the CSOs working at national and/or linking with HRP's priority districts will:

- 1) Have greater opportunity to enhance institutional capacity of the rights-based coalition of CSOs;
- 2) Have an opportunity to work together on thematic rights issues at local and national level of Bangladesh;
- 3) Have an opportunity to be engaged in human rights awareness, rights advocacy, fact-finding and rights-based networking, human rights monitoring and reporting at local and national context of Bangladesh;
- 4) Establish a stronger and sustainable platform of rights-based CSOs in HRP's priority districts in Bangladesh;
- 5) Maintain effective coordination of coalition members on thematic rights issues for better promotion and protection of human rights in Bangladesh.

8. Eligibility Requirements:

The LVG call, 2019 will be part of a web-based advertisement. However, the following eligibility requirements will be adopted for selection of CSOs at national and/or linking with HRP's priority districts in Bangladesh:

1. Hold a valid Govt. registration (i.e. registration from NGOAB/Dept. of Social Welfare/Joint Stock Com./Dept. of Youth Development)
2. Have at least five years working experiences⁵ on thematic rights issues
3. Have valid and authorised audit report of last Financial Year
4. Organisational contribution to the allocated budget

9. Selection Criteria and Requirement

The selection criteria and requirement to be eligible to receive grants in accordance with UNDP's guidelines for Low-Value Grants(LVG).

UNDP provides micro-capital grants for both credit and non-credit purposes as inputs to its programme and project activities for this strategy, HRP will be using the noncredit grant modality under LVGs are generally and broadly used for:

- a. Strengthening the institutional capacity of the local NGO and CSOs coalitions;
- b. Supporting community-based self-help initiatives, which may include income-generating activities designed to alleviate poverty;
- c. Promoting advocacy activities and networking between civil society organizations (CSOs), government and donors; and
- d. Supporting NGOs and CSOs involved with local environmental protection and poverty eradication activities.

10. Evaluation Criteria

All submitted applications/proposals (including evidential attachments) will be assessed with the following technical and financial criterias:

⁵ Five (5) years working experiences applicable to lead CSOs

I. Technical Evaluation:

Technical Evaluation Criteria		Points obtainable	CSO				
1. Demonstrate contextual analysis on thematic rights issues at national/local context of Bangladesh			A	B	C	E	D
1.1	Context Analysis on thematic rights issues	10					
1.2	Relevance of actions in addressing specific human rights concerns/problems	10					
2. Strength of the CSOs:							
2.1	Working experience on thematic rights issues	10					
2.2	Working approach/strategy with national institutions/local administration/other stakeholders	10					
3. Setting of <u>Desired Results</u> and <u>Result-wise activities</u> (Action Plan)		10					
4. Setting of SMART Monitoring and Evaluation plan and aligning with HRP-UNDP indicators		5					
5. Innovation in the proposed activities		10					
6. Sustainability of the proposed human rights actions.		5					
Technical Score Total =		70					

II. Financial Evaluation:

Financial Evaluation Criteria		Points obtainable	CSO				
7. Cost-effectiveness of the proposed Human Rights actions			A	B	C	E	D
7.1	Proportion of programme cost and management/operation cost	10					
7.2	Evidence of Bank Certificate /statement	5					
8. Authorised audit report (last Financial year)		5					
9. Cost sharing in the budget (i.e. budgetary contribution).		10					
Financial Score Total =		30					

10. Submission of Application:

The interested CSOs coalition are requested to submit their proposal (technical and financial proposal) with signed letter and attachment of all supporting documents in line with proposal format (**Annex-1&2**).

The CSO/CBO coalition should have to submit their proposal with:

- ✓ **a hard copy of proposal** (including all supporting documents); and
- ✓ **soft copy of proposal** (including scanned version of all supporting documents with a CD no DVD is allowed).

The letter of submission should clearly indicate the subject as: “**Application for Low-Value Grants Support**” and submit to:

Human Rights Programme (HRP)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bangladesh,
BTMC Bhaban (8th floor)
National Human Rights Commission (8th Floor), 7-9 Karwanbazar,
Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh

The application must be legibly typed in English in 12 points, Times New Roman Font. Any incomplete application without any required documents, will not be considered.

11. Award Information

The award information will be disseminated to the selected CSO through e-mail or organizational contact information.

Annex-1:

Project Proposal Format
For
Low-Value Grant (Non-Credit Related Activities)
UNDP-Bangladesh
Submission Date:

A. NAME AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE CSOs*(2 pages maximum):**(This includes: background information of the CSOs, mandates, working approach/strategy with other CSOs and national institutions.***B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

1. Title of the project:
2. Thematic Issue:
3. Project Duration: 15 months (----- to -----)
4. Legal status of the CSOs (also attach the registration certificates)
5. Background Analysis on thematic rights concerns/problems
(max. 2 page): please analyse human rights problem/concerns under the thematic right issues at national/local context of Bangladesh. Also justify that why the problem/issues need to address).
6. Results and Result-wise Activities
(Set the desired results and key activities in addressing the specific concerns/problem. Also set the targets, working approach etc.)
7. Target groups and beneficiaries
(Please specify the target groups and beneficiaries of your activities/actions and define approx. numbers of target group/beneficiaries of your action)
8. Project implementation area
(Please specify the working areas. If it is local context, please specify the district, upazilas and name of Unions):
9. Common work plan:
(Please explain your activity plan with timeline)

SL	Desired Results	Activities	Result Indicator	Targets	Responsibility	Timeline (15 months)				
						Q-1	Q-2	Q-3	Q-4	Q-5
	Result-1									
	Result-2									
	Result-3									

10. Project Management
11. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
(Please insert SMART indicators and align with HRP-UNDP indicators)
12. Reporting
(Please insert three forms of reporting, such as: progress reporting, financial reporting and M&E reporting to HRP, UNDP)
13. Sustainability of the proposed action
14. Risk Assessment & Mitigation strategy
15. Project Budget: Amount in BDT
(*please make a detailed budget breakdown and attach as Annex, format attached*)
16. Log-frame (if possible)

Annexes: to be attached

This should be attached with the proposal application (as signed version)

- ✓ Evidence (signed MoU for coalition and GoB registration certificate for lead CSOs)
- ✓ *Audit Report and Bank certificate (last year)*
- ✓ *Detailed and shared budget (**As per attached template**)*

Annex-2

Project Title:

Common Budget:

Duration: 15 months

Name of the CSOs:

S. N	Head of Budgeted Expenditure	Proposed Budget (in BDT)				
		Measuring Unit	Unit Cost	Total Unit	Total cost	Responsible CSO
1	Programme/Activity Cost					
	Sub Total 1					-
2	Operational and Management cost					
2.1	Human Resources cost					-
2.1.1		Person				-
2.1.2		Person				-
2.2	Prog. Monitoring cost					
2.2.1		Person				
2.2.2		Person				
2.3	Other Costs					
2.3.1						
2.3.2						
2.3.3						
	Sub-total 2					-
3.	Contribution of CSOs and/or coalition					
3.1						
3.2						
	Sub-total 3					-
	Total Budget =					
	Requested Budget to UNDP (Total Budget – CSOs contribution)					

In word (requested budget to UNDP):

Signature:

Date: