



**USAID's Global Civil Society
Strengthening Cooperative Agreement:
A Flexible Funding Mechanism for
Democracy and Governance Activities**



What is the Global Civil Society Strengthening Cooperative Agreement?

The Global Civil Society Strengthening Cooperative Agreement offers ready assistance to missions and bureaus in meeting immediate and long-term requirements for assessments, strategy formulations, activity design, and implementation related to strengthening civil society. These activities may be negotiated and awarded without competition and without the noncompetitive justification normally required by USAID. Pact and a consortium of associate organizations are the administrators of the five-year Cooperative Agreement under an award by the Global Bureau's Center for Democracy and Governance (G/DG).

What kinds of activities does the Cooperative Agreement fund?

The Cooperative Agreement identifies six core activity areas:

- Establishing legal frameworks to protect and promote civil society
- Increasing citizen participation in policy processes, implementation and oversight
- Increasing institutional and financial viability of civil society organizations
- Enhancing the free flow of information
- Strengthening democratic political culture and gender equality
- Supporting activities under the Department of State's anti-sweatshop initiative.

Establishing legal frameworks

Activities target law reform and implementation to protect and promote civil society activities and organizations.

Activities might include:

- Undertaking participatory assessments of the political and legal climate
- Conducting joint training programs for government officials, and NGO and union staff to foster mutual understanding and cooperation in legal reform and monitoring
- Developing resource centers with Internet connectivity and links to databases worldwide that enable information generation and exchange on NGO sector and labor-related legal reform
- Fostering indigenous approaches to legal reform through internships, conferences and continuing legal education seminars for law students and practicing lawyers
- Educating judges, relevant public officials, members of CSOs, unions and the community about new NGO and/or labor laws to ensure fair and consistent implementation and enforcement
- Providing legal aid and counseling services to unions and laborers.



Increasing citizen participation in public policy processes

Activities focus on advocacy and citizen participation in public policy decision making. Activities might include:

- Fostering citizen-government relations through dialogues, consultations, town hall meetings, and legislative caucuses
- Engaging communities in local advocacy and problem-solving efforts and fostering federations of neighborhood associations
- Providing training in advocacy techniques, including issue identification, research, policy analysis, legislative drafting, media relations, constituency and coalition building, negotiation, policy dialogue, and campaigning
- Building local, national and regional NGO coalitions, and linking CSOs/NGOs via conferences, forums, publications, and the Internet
- Linking communities to government through service delivery NGOs and their grassroots constituencies
- Assessing advocacy capacity of CSOs using the Advocacy Index and other integrated participatory monitoring and evaluation tools.

Increasing institutional and financial viability

Activities target building the organizational capacity of CSOs/NGOs to be well-managed, accountable and transparent. Activities might include:

- Conducting participatory organizational capacity assessments to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses and to establish baseline information and benchmarks for organizational growth
- Providing training in areas including management structure, mission development, participatory planning and evaluation, financial management, board development, information systems and knowledge networking, conflict resolution, and relationship building with the media, government and commercial sectors
- Conducting training of trainer programs to create a cadre of local trainers that ensure ongoing availability of and access to capacity building resources
- Assisting CSOs/NGOs in identifying and developing fundraising and financial sustainability strategies through enhanced marketing, financial management, and cost recovery
- Supporting media campaigns to increase public awareness of the positive role CSOs play in society.



Enhancing the free flow of information

Activities focus on enhancing informed public policy debate and decision making, and increasing the flow of information among the public, civil society organizations, government, and the media. Activities might include:

- Providing training in journalism and investigative reporting on sectoral as well as political issues
- Developing online networks and Websites for distribution of accurate news and editorials
- Supporting professional organizations to encourage media accountability and ethical practices
- Developing media indices to measure news quality and objectivity
- Assisting media and CSOs in improving the enabling environment for speech and media freedom
- Assisting media organizations in developing alternative funding mechanisms, such as low interest loans, revolving loan funds, and endowments
- Supporting regional networks and conferences for media and related CSOs
- Supporting study tours, peer partnering, and exchange programs for journalists and media executives.

Strengthening democratic political culture and gender equality

Activities target efforts to enhance democratic political culture through civic education, conflict resolution, and equity and participation, especially for women and marginalized groups. Activities might include:

- Supporting citizen-local government exchanges through neighborhood committees, town hall meetings, and other forums for discussion
- Training women and marginalized groups in political processes, political leadership, and campaign organizing
- Designing and implementing voter education campaigns
- Developing specifically targeted civic education messages and programs for dissemination to local and national audiences
- Developing school curricula and activities that foster democratic values and behaviors
- Supporting conflict prevention and resolution efforts, focusing particularly on the use of local mechanisms and cultural practices
- Working through labor unions to address the particular needs of women workers.



Supporting anti-sweatshop activities

Activities target efforts to eliminate abusive labor practices in factories exporting consumer goods to U.S. markets. Activities might include:

- Conducting educational campaigns on workers' rights and the elimination of abusive labor conditions in factories abroad
- Coordinating anti-sweatshop efforts of unions, employers, government and NGOs across the developed and developing world
- Supporting the monitoring and reporting of labor code violations
- Conducting educational exchanges and training seminars on organizational and bargaining techniques and strategies
- Fostering and supporting legal rights centers staffed by specialists in labor conflict resolution
- Conducting surveys and investigations of sweatshop conditions
- Engaging the media in disseminating information on sweatshop abuses.

How does the funding mechanism work?

The Global Civil Society Cooperative Agreement is awarded as a "leader" with "associate" grants. G/DG funding of the leader grant prepositions resources for quick mobilization of training and technical assistance. USAID missions and bureaus can readily access resources to meet urgent requirements for assessments, strategy formulations, activity design, and implementation start-up. Rapid response capability is expected to be especially useful in programming Economic Support Funds (ESF) and nonpresence country activities.

Missions and bureaus may negotiate and award grants or cooperative agreements without further competition and without the noncompetitive justification required by USAID. Associate awards may be in the form of grants or cooperative agreements and may extend beyond the life of the lead award for up to five years.



Who are the members of the consortium?

The Pact consortium is comprised of eight partners and five affiliates and is structured so that each partner and affiliate will respond to one or more of the core activity areas.

Prime

Pact

Focus area: increasing institutional and financial viability of civil society organizations.

www.pactworld.org

Partners

The Institute for Development Research (IDR)

Focus area: increasing institutional and financial viability of civil society organizations.

www.jsi.com/idr

International Center for Non-Profit Law (ICNL)

Focus area: establishing legal frameworks to protect and promote civil society.

www.icnl.org

The International Republican Institute (IRI)

Focus areas: increasing citizen participation in the policy process, implementation, and oversight of public institutions; and strengthening democratic political culture and gender equity.

www.iri.org

Internews Network, Inc.

Focus area: enhancing the free flow of information.

www.internews.org

The National Democratic Institute (NDI)

Focus areas: increasing citizen participation in the policy process, implementation, and oversight of public institutions; and strengthening democratic political culture and gender equity.

www.ndi.org

Research Triangle Institute (RTI)

Focus area: increasing citizen participation in the policy process, implementation, and oversight of public institutions.

www.rti.org/cid

World Education

Focus areas: increasing institutional and financial viability of civil society organizations; and strengthening democratic political culture and gender equity.

www.worlded.org



Affiliates

**The American Center for International Labor Solidarity
(ACILS)**

www.solidaritycenter.org

The Center for Civic Education

www.civiced.org

The Center for Private Enterprise (CIPE)

www.cipe.org

Children's Resources International, Inc.

www.childrensresources.org

UNITE Union

www.uniteunion.org

For more information, please contact:

Paola Lang

Senior Program Manager
Pact

202.466.5666 (tel)

202.466.5669 (fax)

plang@pacthq.org

Sara Steinmetz

Senior Technical Advisor
Pact

202.466.5666 (tel)

202.466.5669 (fax)

ssteinmetz@pacthq.org

Andrea Freeman

Program Officer
Pact

202.466.5666 (tel)

202.4656.5669 (fax)

afreeman@pacthq.org

David R. Nelson

Cognizant Technical Officer
USAID

Center for Democracy and
Governance, Global Bureau

202. 712-1633 (tel)

202. 216-3232 (fax)

dnelson@usaid.gov

Pact

1200 18th Street

Suite 350

Washington, D.C. 20036

www.pactworld.org

Photo credits

ACILS

Internews

Pact

Design

Greg Berger Design, Inc.

Production

JHDesign, Inc.

Printed on recycled paper 



Pact
Paola Lang
plang@pacthq.org

Sara Steinmetz
ssteinmetz@pacthq.org



USAID
David R. Nelson
dnelson@usaid.gov