Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices (PRODIP)

GUIDELINES FOR PRODIP GRANT APPLICANTS
## ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<td>DPPF</td>
<td>District Public Policy Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>M &amp; E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<td>MPs</td>
<td>Member of Parliamentarians</td>
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<td>PCN</td>
<td>Project Concept Note</td>
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<td>PMP</td>
<td>Performance Monitoring Plan</td>
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<td>PP</td>
<td>Project Proposal</td>
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<td>PRODIP</td>
<td>Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROGATI</td>
<td>Promoting Governance, Accountability, Transparency and Integrity</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUNY</td>
<td>State University of New York Center for International Development</td>
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<td>TAF</td>
<td>The Asia Foundation</td>
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<td>UNMC</td>
<td>United Nation Millennium Campaign</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Promoting Democratic Institutions and practices (PRODIP) project is a five year project which will contribute to USAID/Bangladesh’s development goals in the areas of “Good Governance” under the Governing Justly and Democratically Program Objective of the U.S. Foreign Assistance Framework. The Asia Foundation (Foundation), in partnership with the State University of New York Center for International Development (SUNY), will implement the project. It will specifically contribute to build “More Effective and Responsive Democratic Institutions and Processes in Bangladesh.” To achieve this goal, PRODIP will work closely with the Parliament of Bangladesh and civil society partners to implement a comprehensive, two pronged program to strengthen the democratic governance in Bangladesh. Over the course of the next four years, interventions under PRODIP will: 1) assist Parliament to improve its law making and oversight capability, strengthen its committees, increase public awareness of its functions; and create opportunities for increased public input into the development of national policy; 2) On the demand side; PRODIP will help the civil society to understand how policies and laws are made, and how it can maximize its effectiveness in participating in the process.

Under the demand side of the program, PRODIP will provide grants to create a more constructive role for Civil Society in Democratic Governance. In doing that, the PRODIP Team will support and facilitate networking and cooperation between civil society organizations, public interest groups, research institutions, the media, and other non-governmental stakeholders that share a common commitment to assist Parliament to become an effective and credible institution that takes account of citizen views and interests and welcomes public inputs in policy formulation and oversight. The strategy will draw on the Foundation’s unparalleled experience and nationwide connections with civil society in Bangladesh and other countries. It will engage civil society partners to adopt new approaches and to establish new working relationships—including public-private partnerships between civil society stakeholders and parliamentary authorities that link national and grassroots development issues and actors, and multi-pronged research, advocacy, oversight, and education initiatives that focus on democratic governance.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

Key objectives of this program are to strengthen the Bangladesh Parliament and to enhance the role of civil society in political governance. The specific intermediate level results of PRODIP are:

- Improved parliamentary lawmaking and oversight capacity
- A stronger parliamentary committee system
- Increased public awareness of and participation in parliamentary functions and processes
- Increased institutional capacity of CSOs to advance public participation in democratic governance
- More active role for CSOs and research institutions in informing and monitoring public policy
- More active role for CSOs and the media in educating the public on democratic processes and practices

1.3 PROGRAM APPROACH

The challenges faced by PRODIP in bringing the Parliament and civil society of Bangladesh to work together constructively and effectively are significant, especially since recent history has shown that their interaction has sometimes been antagonistic or damagingly absent. PRODIP believes that the best hope for constructive collaboration lies in focusing both groups on addressing issues of common concern to Bangladesh’s citizens. This will motivate and inspire MPs and members of civil society alike, providing space for them to discover the benefits of such cooperation. If the Bangladesh Parliament is to move from being a winner-take-all institution to becoming a legislature known for working together for the good of the nation, opposition members must play a substantive role in the policy process, if not in voting for specific legislation, at least in its development. Working through individual political parties, as well as through various cross-party initiatives, PRODIP will make a concerted effort to involve Members from all parties—and the CSOs which share their interests—in Program activities. CSOs can play a constructive role in bridging political party differences and bringing MPs
together across party lines, at least in the important early stages of the policy development. PRODIP’s mandate has collaboration and broad public participation in policy and legislation at its core; the program’s legislative focus allows it to reflect this mandate in all phases of the policy process.

Linkages between MPs and CSOs must occur both at the center and locally if this process is to succeed. Through District Public Policy Forums (DPPFs) designed to engage Members of Parliament, government officials and CSOs, media, youth and women leaders, community leaders in discussing a range of policy issues, PRODIP’s CSO grantees will forge these linkages at the District and local levels. Many MPs and CSOs seek ways to demonstrate their value to their respective constituencies; PRODIP’s DPPFs will help meet this need by providing a venue for local groups to bring issues to public attention, develop them into policy, and shepherd them through the legislative process, offering excellent opportunities for both MPs and CSOs to elevate their public profiles by working with PRODIP. PRODIP will use issues identified in the DPPFs as themes for the democratic governance grants which will improve Bangladeshi CSOs’ capacity to participate more constructively and more effectively in the development of public policy and legislation. Refer to annex-2 for detail information on DPPF.

1.4 COORDINATION WITH OTHER DONORS

TAF/SUNY through PRODIP will work synergistically with other donor agencies like UNDP, World Bank Institute, UNICEF, PROGATI and other relevant agencies through a comprehensive approach that works both at national and local levels to strengthen the democratic institutions. The applicants should outline areas of collaboration with donors that reinforce common objectives in promoting democratic governance and strengthening the parliament.

1.5 CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVES

The mutually reinforcing activities under Objectives 1 and 2 will advance USAID’s crosscutting development objectives for work with Parliament and civil society. NDI’s support for the Bangladesh Alliance for Women Leaders, SUNY’s provision of technical assistance to women leaders of issues-based caucuses, and the Foundation engagement of women leaders and activists in direct democracy initiatives will enhance the skills of women in leadership roles and promote cross-party cooperation and consensus-building. PRODIP will likewise address youth needs and interests through work with parliamentary standing committees on youth policy and through initiatives to raise youth interest and engagement in parliamentary affairs. Activities to strengthen the communications capacity of Parliament and engage CSOs in policymaking and oversight will increase Parliament’s transparency and accountability to the electorate and will enhance parliamentary and independent oversight capacity.

1.6 GRANT ACTIVITIES

PRODIP will provide grants to CSOs to create a more constructive role for citizens to engage in the process of democratic governance and identify constructive mechanism to bridge the differences and bring MPs together across party lines, at least in the important early stages of policy development. The CSO are further encouraged to take active initiative to critically engage grass root citizen groups, coalitions and similar initiatives to work in a cohesive and coordinated manner to assist Parliament to become an effective and credible institution that takes account of citizen views and interests and welcomes public inputs in policy formulation and oversight. Furthermore, through its democratic governance grant making, PRODIP will support innovative print and broadcast media initiatives to engage and educate citizens, communities, and elected officials in parliamentary democracy.

The applicant is strongly encouraged to consider related development projects on democratic governance specifically focusing on policy advocacy, experience to work in print and broadcast media on democratic
governance (specifically for media grantees), experience to work with parliamentarians, previous achievements and lessons learned while designing the proposed project under the PRODIP grant. The applicant should also address gender equity, equality and empowerment (both economic and political) in the proposed project.

The applicant should identify specific geographic locations with justifications for each of the program components, to ensure the greatest outreach and multiplier effect on both the national and sub-national level. In proposing specific geographic locations the applicant should provide specific selection criteria and can consider working in any of the seven divisions (without exception) of the country.

The recipient will conduct activities in a comprehensive manner, engaging all levels of stakeholders (MPs, citizen groups, business associations, local government and local administration, etc.) in each community where it will implement the program. The detailed program description and activities are attached in (annex-1).

1.7 SUSTAINABILITY

The applicant’s response must include a sustainability plan. The applicant should put forth strategies and approaches that seek to facilitate Members of Parliament and CSO to work in a cohesive and coordinated manner to assist Parliament to become an effective and credible institution that takes account of citizen views and interests and welcomes public inputs in policy formulation and oversight. As a key component of the sustainability plan, the applicant is strongly encouraged to identify local partnerships with NGOs, Community based organizations (CBOs), media and other potential sub-partners in the implementation of program activities. The applicant should seek partnerships and make full use of the expertise and resources of leading Bangladeshi civil society organizations, networks and coalitions. The applicants are strongly encouraged to build the advocacy capacity of local citizen groups so they can act as a pressure group to advocate with MPs and other relevant stakeholders for policy changes that will enhance the democratic process of Bangladesh.

2. RULES FOR THE APPLICATION

2.1 APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURE

The Project Concept Note (PCN) and Project Proposal (PP) will be assessed by the PRODIP review committee. The committee will review each grant application on the basis of criteria that will include institutional capacity, internal governance practices, relevant program experience, integrity of the proposed activities, geographic location, consistency with the PRODIP program mandate and grant solicitation (including commitment to work constructively with parliamentary authorities to enhance the democratic process), and sustainability of the proposed initiative.

2.2 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATION

PRODIP grant support will be extended to NGOs and Media group.

Conditions of Eligibility for NGOs:
- Must have NGO-AB registration that allows receive foreign funds
- Non profit Organization
- Non-partisan
• Must have 8 to 10 years experience managing donor funds and have strong programmatic knowledge and good understanding to implement projects related to governance and democracy. Special consideration will be given to organizations who represent minority/indigenous group.
• Bangladeshi National
• Priority will be given to those who have experience in the field of governance and democracy as well have experience to work directly with MPs both at national and constituency level on policy legislation/advocacy.

Conditions of Eligibility for Media:
• Must have NGO-AB registration
• Non-partisan
• Must have organizational strength and technical expertise to work in the field of governance and democracy.
• Have access to parliamentary issues/affairs and demonstrated experience to work with the Parliament.
• Must have 3 to 5 years experience in managing donor funds.
• Have experience in innovative print and electronic media reporting, round table dialogues, television talk show development, features, series of episode on specific issues and activities focusing parliamentary and democratic process and political governance.
• Make a blend of practices and policies pertaining to democratic and governance reforms at the local and national level.
• Capable to undertake media advocacy in order to make parliamentary issues such as disseminating standing committee meeting minutes public by using the RTI Act. This will contribute towards making national parliament more open to citizens.
• Have experience combining different media techniques/technologies to design innovative public awareness activities to reach youth and other specific target audience.

PRODIP grant support may not be extended to following:
• Organizations that are involved in any political party and/or program promoting partisan politics and/or where the head of the organization holds an official position in a political party
• Academic Institutions
• Organizations that are not legally registered
• International Organizations
• Network/Coalition will be not funded directly
• No previous experience managing donor funds
• Organizations/Institutions that do not have and have no experience in managing governance and democracy projects
2.3. INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- To build physical infrastructure
- Exclusive service delivery, for example, initiatives dealing only with immediate needs without addressing the underlying causes of the problem and certain social transformation. For example, micro credit, sinking tube-well, direct health delivery, relief supply etc.
- Scholarship/stipend for personal study, participation in seminar, study tour, workshop or conference
- Activities/initiatives by an individual rather than grant organizations.
- Activities which consists exclusively or primarily of capital expenditure (e.g. land, equipment, vehicle), religious beliefs, etc.

2.4 STEPS FOR GRANT APPLICATION

PRODIP will provide grants to CSO (NGOs, Media and research organization) through a competitive process. For NGOS the funding period will be from 2 to 3 years depending on the project design, geographical coverage, and organizational capacity to work on democracy and governance the grant size is from $25,000 to $250,000 over a period of 2 to 3 years. It is important to note that, though the project period could be approved for 3 years, the fund disbursement for 2nd and 3rd year will depend on the results achieved in Year 1.

For Media the funding period will be for 1 to 2 years depending on the project design, capacity to build in different media technologies, relevance to PRODIP themes, innovation, cost efficiency, public outreach, and dissemination and documentation of learning strategies. The grant size is from $25,000 to $100,000 over a period of 1 to 2 years. It is important to note that, though the project period could be approved for 2 years, the fund disbursement for the 2nd year will depend on the result achieved in year 1.

The research project may be funded for 3 months to 1 year depending on the need of the PRODIP project. The scale and duration of the funding will also depend on the research topic and the geographical coverage (addressing hard to reach areas, hard core poor and specific indigenous or religious communities). The application for research grant will be circulated in the newspaper independent of media and NGO grant.

PRODIP shall encourage competition in the awards of grants in order to identify and support the best possible activities to support the program objectives. The deadline and timelines for the competitive solicitation and review of proposals will be clearly specified and advertised in newspapers, and shared in information meetings convened by the PRODIP Team in Dhaka. Under special circumstances, the PRODIP management may seek proposals (following the internal assessment procedures) from particular organizations or institutions based on the need of the project.

The grant approval process has two steps. The PRODIP team will seek a Project Concept Note (PCN) from all the grantees and then invite full proposal from those grantees who’s PCN has been accepted through a vigorous assessment process.

2.4.1 THE PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE (PCN)

The potential applicants will submit Project Concept Note (PCN) by following PRODIP prescribed format (annex-3). The PCN should contain the idea of full proposal and not the summery of a full proposal. In the Concept Note applicants must only provide an estimate of the total project costs. Only the applicants invited to
submit a full Proposal in the second phase will be required to present a detailed budget. Along with the PCN the potential grantee will also submit an organizational profile (mentioning the Executive Board, Senior Management, Board of Trustee, and organogram), Copy of NGOAB registration and major activities as per the format provided in (annex-3)

2.4.1.a Deadline for submission of Project Concept Note

The deadline for the submission of the Concept Note is within requested time period after posting the advertisement in the newspaper or requested by the PRODIP team. However, the PRODIP management may reject any application received after the effective date of submission of the PCN.

2.4.1.b PCN Assessment

The PRODIP review committee will screen each grant application on the basis of criteria that includes institutional capacity, internal governance practices, relevant program experience democratic governances, integrity of the proposed activities, consistency with the PRODIP program mandate and grant solicitation (including commitment to work cooperatively with parliamentary members) and sustainability of the proposed initiative. Concept notes must be submitted in the prescribed format for PCN accordance with the instruction guideline for Applicants. The PRODIP review committee will systematically process the application according to the organizations internal assessment process. If any of the requested information (mentioned in the guideline) is missing or incorrect, or the proposed activities do not meet PRODIP’s goal and objectives, the PCN shall be rejected on this sole basis.

2.4.2 PROJECT PROPOSAL (PP)

Applicants invited to submit full application following the pre selection of the PCN must follow the PP application form annexed to this guideline (annex-4). The PP should contain the idea and concept of original concept note and should include a more detailed project description. The proposal should describe overarching program elements, such as, the objective of the grant and linkage to PRODIP’s objectives, results and indicators for measuring results, and the activities, stakeholders and plan for disseminating activity deliverables. The PP should have a detailed budget. This detailed budget should not vary from the initial estimate by more than 10%. Along with the PP the potential grantee will also submit copy of the organization’s charter or by-laws, detailed implementation and monitoring plan, detailed budget, copy of last annual and financial report, and a detailed list of sub partners. For detailed information please refer to annex-4.

2.4.2.a Deadline for submission of Project Proposal

The applicant will be informed to submit a full proposal within a specific deadline mentioned by PRODIP management. However, the PRODIP management may reject any application received after the effective date of submission of the PP.

2.4.2.b Project Proposal Assessment

Upon receipt of a full project proposal the PRODIP review committee will process the application according to the organizations internal assessment process. The proposal must be submitted in the prescribed Project Proposal format and in accordance with the instruction guideline for Applicants. If any of the requested information (mentioned in the guideline) is missing or incorrect, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis and the proposal will not be evaluated further.
2.5 FIELD AND FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

A field and financial assessment will be conducted during the appraisal phase to assess the project feasibility, financial capacity and overall governance process of the organization. The PRODIP team will inform the applicants through letter or email about the time and date of the assessment. When the schedule of the assessment is confirmed, the assessment team will expect that the organization ensure its basic financial information and documents (policy documents, files, registers, vouchers, books of accounts, minutes, bank balances, bank statements, audit reports, etc) are available in the office premises for review. It is also important that all relevant finance staff and senior management is present to fully support the assessment team to answer questions.

2.6 GRANT AWARD PROCESS

After the evaluation of the grant application by the PRODIP review committee the successful applicants will be informed about their status and will be offered a contract based on PRODIP’s standard contract. During this period, PRODIP management reserves the full right to discuss and negotiate program and budget in line with PRODIP’s overall goal and objectives. The contract will specify the agreed program activities, expected outputs, contribution to PRODIP learning requirements, reporting obligations, and financial management obligations. PRODIP Program Officers will be tasked with maintaining regular contact with the assigned CSO partner(s), making monitoring visits to project sites, reviewing narrative and financial reports, and ensuring that program experience is formally documented. When terms and conditions of contract are agreed to by both the parties, a contract will be finalized and funds will be disbursed according to PRODIPs financial guidelines.

2.7 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

After receiving the award, the grantees will jointly develop different reporting formats and program-monitoring tools through discussion and organizing workshops within the first six-month implementation period of the project. The grantees will submit all the reports to the PRODIP assigned personnel as described below;

i. Performance Monitoring Report

The Applicants will develop a Performance Monitoring Report on the progress towards agreed performance targets every three months, based on the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) to be further developed by the grantees in collaboration with PRODIP team. This report will include information on activities undertaking in the reporting period and those planned for the following 3 months.

ii. Annual Work Plan

The grantees shall submit a draft annual work plan for PRODIP approval within 45 calendar days of the effective date of this award. The work plan year will be consistent with PRODIP’s project fiscal year (March-April). The first work plan to be submitted will not necessarily be for a full year or may be for more than a full year, depending on the start date of the agreement. The recipient will prepare the work plan in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. Annual Work Plans shall include, at a minimum:

- Schedule of activities, including performance milestones
- Activity and events schedule
- Annual Budget

iii. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The grantees shall submit a draft Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (M&E) to PRODIP within one month of the finalization of the Annual work plan. They also need to submit their proposed project’s activities, output and expected outcome with indicator. The ME plan shall include, at a minimum:
• A Performance Monitoring Plan (annex-5) for measuring the results
• Discussion/description on the approach proposed to conduct annual performance assessments
• Specify the mode/methods of sharing the findings and data (through different project activities) among project stakeholders and with PRODIP team members

iv. Financial Report

In accordance with the PRODIP financial guideline the grantee must submit their financial report on a quarterly basis via electronic format to the PRODIP Grants Manager. The grantees must also submit two hard copies of the financial report to the Director Civil Society/Deputy Chief of Party.

v. Final Report

The grantee shall submit the original copy and one copy of the final report to the Deputy Chief of Party in electronic and hard copy:
• Via email
• Postal Service
• Via Fax

vi. External Evaluation

The Asia Foundation may conduct external evaluation(s) to assess and substantiate performance, targets, and overall achievement of the objectives of PRODIP. If The Asia Foundation chooses to perform external evaluation(s), these will be funded directly by The Asia Foundation and will not be included in the funding under this Agreement.
ANNEX
Program Description

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The program description outlines the Asia Foundation (Foundation), in partnership with the State University of New York Center for International Development (SUNY), five year institutional strengthening program Promoting Democratic Institutions and practices (PRODIP). The key objectives of the program are to strengthen the Bangladesh Parliament and to enhance the role of civil society in political governance. To achieve this goal, PRODIP will work closely with the Parliament of Bangladesh, MPs and civil society partners to implement a comprehensive, two pronged program to strengthen the democratic governance in Bangladesh. Over the course of the next five years, interventions under PRODIP will: 1) assist Parliament to improve its law making and oversight capability, strengthen its committees, increase public awareness of its functions; and create opportunities for increased public input into the development of national policy; 2) On the demand side: PRODIP will help civil society better understand how policies and laws are made, and how it can maximize its effectiveness in participating in the process.

Under the demand side of the program, PRODIP will provide support to create a more constructive role for Civil Society in democratic governance. In doing that, the PRODIP Team will support and facilitate networking and cooperation between civil society organizations, public interest groups, research institutions, the media, and other non-governmental stakeholders that share a common commitment to assist Parliament to become an effective and credible institution that takes account of citizen views and interests and welcomes public input in policy formulation and oversight. The strategy will draw on the Foundation’s unparalleled experience and nationwide connections with civil society in Bangladesh and other countries. It will engage and challenge civil society partners to adopt new approaches and to establish new working relationships—including public-private partnerships between civil society stakeholders and parliamentary authorities that link national and grassroots development issues and actors, and multi-pronged research, advocacy, oversight, and education initiatives that focus on key national development priorities.

1.2 SITUATION ANALYSIS

In the three decades since Independence, Bangladesh has made tremendous progress in extending basic infrastructure, social services, and economic opportunities to a population of more than 145 million people. While the economy has grown at a consistent pace for the last decade, the benefits of economic growth have yet to extend to the entire population. Weak governance has stood as the greatest obstacle to broad-based national development and poverty reduction, through a combination of factors that include partisan political tensions, systemic corruption, and lack of public participation in decision-making. The December 2008 Bangladesh parliamentary election ended a two-year period of military-backed Caretaker Government (CG) rule. The election was the cleanest, best administered, and most issues-oriented election in the nation’s history, with the Awami League (AL) claiming 262 of 299 contested seats in a landslide victory. The past practice from election to election had been for ruling parties to adopt a winner-take-all approach that resisted compromise while marginalized oppositions abandoned Parliament and returned politics to the street. With parliamentary governance reinstated the degree to which political leaders have drawn lessons from the state of emergency and the period of CG rule and embraced the prospect of genuine political party or governance reform remains to be seen.

The Bangladesh Parliament or Jatiya Sangsad has traditionally received considerable attention at election time but, once convened, has fallen consistently short of its potential as the nation’s seat of legislative governance. Beyond the partisan tensions that have hamstrung successive parliaments, day-to-day parliamentary affairs are constrained by a combination of weak business practices, inadequate research and other facilities for Members of Parliament (MPs) and lack of capacity and understanding of democratic norms among MPs to press for the reform
of archaic systems and procedures. Professional staff turnover and limited competencies have weakened the support functions of the Parliament Secretariat, while the committee system has failed to achieve its intended role in shaping development priorities and monitoring policy implementation by government. Once elected, MPs have been content to leave primary lawmaking authority to the bureaucracy, while those assigned to committees have taken little interest in the government oversight functions that are normally performed by Westminster-style parliaments. They have preferred to focus their energy on constituency-level political and economic affairs in the feudal style of patron-client relations, consistently failing to meet their potential as national development partners.

For their part, ordinary citizens have historically taken little genuine interest in parliamentary affairs. While they vote in large number on Election Day, their expectations have tended to instantly fade as a succession of elected governments assumed power and demonstrated little interest in the needs and expectations of the electorate regarding development or other issues of concern. Bangladeshis are politically astute and can articulate the effects of weak governance on their personal lives and national development prospects, but demonstrate low individual or collective political efficacy. There are few opportunities for civil society leaders, business persons, or other interest groups at the sub-national level to collectively meet and interact with MPs beyond narrow patron-client relations.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) have played an important role in national development efforts. In recent years, some organizations have demonstrated an interest in governance through involvement in election observation, voter and civic education, and select advocacy initiatives. With its experience and national outreach, civil society has the potential to engage more substantively at the national and sub-national level through policy research and advocacy and parliamentary monitoring and oversight functions. Despite significant improvements in the quality of investigative and specialty reporting, partisan political loyalties intrude in media reporting, leaving considerable scope for improvement. Most importantly, relations between civil society, the private sector, and government are constrained by historical tensions that have undermined the prospect of good faith working relations and genuine public-private partnerships of the kind that have contributed to parliamentary and other governance reforms in Indonesia, the Philippines, and other Asian countries that share many political and other similarities with Bangladesh and where the most successful civil society organizations have recognized that legislative bodies matter.

Expectations changed with the 2008 election and the convening of the present Parliament. Voter and civic education initiatives challenged past campaign practices, while first-time candidates addressed substantive development issues and spoke of necessary changes in parliamentary practice, procedure, and substance. The new government moved swiftly to convene parliamentary committees and signaled a commitment to multi-party dialogue through All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs). The prospect of change is ultimately dependent on political will. Experience suggests that political parties and leaders will do no more than necessary to accept or initiate changes that require them to surrender traditional authority and power advantages or to work in cooperation with political rivals. At the same time, new MPs have signaled a commitment to political and parliamentary reform. While many challenges persist and expectations should be tempered to take realistic account of them, there is a unique political moment for USAID and the PRODIP Team to join hands with reform-minded political leaders and CSOs through a two-pronged, supply-and-demand focused effort to: (i) support MPs, the Parliament Secretariat, the committee system, and other parliamentary authorities; and (ii) to strengthen the capacity of CSOs, public interest groups and the media to contribute to parliamentary reform through a combination of policy research and advocacy, oversight and good faith feedback, thoughtful reporting, information sharing, and facilitation of grassroots democracy.

1.3 PROGRAM APPROACH

The challenges faced by PRODIP in bringing the Parliament and civil society of Bangladesh to work together constructively and effectively are significant, especially since recent history has shown that their interaction has sometimes been antagonistic or damagingly absent. PRODIP believes that the best hope for constructive
collaboration lies in focusing both groups on addressing issues of common concern to Bangladesh’s citizens. This will motivate and inspire MPs and members of civil society alike, providing space for them to discover the benefits of such cooperation. If the Bangladesh Parliament is to move from being a winner-take-all institution to becoming a legislature known for working together for the good of the nation, opposition members must play a substantive role in the policy process, if not in voting for specific legislation, at least in its development. Working through individual political parties, as well as through various cross-party initiatives, PRODIP will make a concerted effort to involve Members from all parties—and the CSOs which share their interests—in Program activities. CSOs can play a constructive role in bridging political party differences and bringing MPs together across party lines, at least in the important early stages of the policy development. PRODIP’s mandate has collaboration and broad public participation in policy and legislation at its core; the program’s legislative focus allows it to reflect this mandate in all phases of the policy process.

Linkages between MPs and CSOs must occur both at the center and locally if this process is to succeed. Through District Public Policy Forums (DPPFs) designed to engage Members of Parliament, government officials and CSOs, media, youth and women leaders, community leaders in discussing a range of policy issues, PRODIP’s CSO grantees will forge these linkages at the District and local levels. Many MPs and CSOs seek ways to demonstrate their value to their respective constituencies; PRODIP’s DPPFs will help meet this need by providing a venue for local groups to bring issues to public attention, develop them into policy, and shepherd them through the legislative process, offering excellent opportunities for both MPs and CSOs to elevate their public profiles by working with PRODIP. PRODIP will use issues identified in the DPPFs as themes for the democratic governance grants which will improve Bangladeshi CSOs’ capacity to participate more constructively and more effectively in the development of public policy and legislation.

1.4 ACTIVITY GUIDELINES AND EXPECTED RESULTS

PRODIP will provide grants to CSOs to create a more constructive role for citizens to engage in the process of democratic governance and identify constructive mechanism to bridge the differences and bring MPs together across party lines, at least in the important early stages of policy development. The CSO are further encouraged to take active initiative to critically engage grass root citizen groups, coalitions and similar initiatives to work in a cohesive and coordinated manner to assist Parliament to become an effective and credible institution that takes account of citizen views and interests and welcomes public inputs in policy formulation and oversight. Furthermore, through its democratic governance grant making, PRODIP will support innovative print and broadcast media initiatives to engage and educate citizens, communities, and elected officials in parliamentary democracy.

The applicant is strongly encouraged to consider related development projects on democratic governance specifically focusing on policy advocacy, experience to work in print and broadcast media on democratic governance (specifically for media grantees), experience to work with parliamentarians, previous achievements and lessons learned while designing the proposed project under the PRODIP grant. The applicant should also address gender equity, equality and empowerment (both economic and political) in the proposed project.

The applicant should identify specific geographic locations with justifications for each of the program components, to ensure the greatest outreach and multiplier effect on both the national and sub-national level. In proposing specific geographic locations the applicant should provide specific selection criteria and can consider working in any of the seven divisions (without exception) of the country.
The applicant will conduct activities in a comprehensive manner, engaging in all activities in each community where it implements a program. Over the project period, the applicant will develop their implementation strategy and program based on the following activities and results:

**NGO:**

- **Strengthened institutional capacity of CSOs** - enhance organizational and advocacy capacity of the local CSO, CBO and the media to advance public participation in the field of governance\MDGs both at national and sub-national level.

- **More informed public policy making and monitoring of policy implementation at the national and sub-national level** - Engage and promote sustainable citizen engagement by creating District Public Policy Forums (DPPFs), which will work as a platform for local NGOs and other key stakeholders to raise local policy development issues and discuss solutions with MPs (see annex-2 for DPPF guideline). The DPPF members will be engaged in constant dialogue with respective stakeholders either through town hall meetings or public dialogues to raise their demands.

- **Conduct independent research and coordinate with other national-level research institutions that produce policy and oversight materials for various parliamentary authorities to advocate for introducing policy for Bangladesh’s disenfranchised and vulnerable minorities, specifically giving priority to women.**

- **Increased citizen “voice” for transparent and accountable governance.** To sustain public expectations for, and insistence on, greater accountability and transparency in parliamentary governance, and to raise citizen confidence and readiness to engage in direct democracy. The grantees should identify activities to support CSOs and other relevant stakeholders to undertake public education programs. Program design should aim for optimal synergy at all levels, and preference will be given to public education initiatives that link with select development policy research and advocacy themes supported by PRODIP.

**MEDIA**

- **Television and radio:** Different studies and reports conducted by PRODIP will provide reliable feedback on current television talk shows, newscasts, and other electronic news services to guide the refinement of existing shows or the design of new cutting-edge formats. Emphasis will be placed on television programs that feature PRODIP program themes, including highlights of direct democracy activities undertaken through DPPFs. PRODIP will also support innovative radio programming to advance program themes.

- **Print media:** The grantees are encouraged to introduce innovations in print media reporting, advocacy, roundtable dialogues, and other activities that focus on parliamentary affairs, democratic process, and priority to national development issues.

- **Innovative technology:** Design innovative public awareness activities that are designed to reach youth and other specific target audiences using new technologies.

**1.5 SUSTAINABILITY**

The applicant’s response must include a sustainability plan. The applicant should put forth strategies and approaches that seek to facilitate Members of Parliament and CSO to work in a cohesive and coordinated manner to assist Parliament to become an effective and credible institution that takes account of citizen views and interests and welcomes public inputs in policy formulation and oversight. As a key component of the sustainability plan, the applicant is strongly encouraged to identify local partnerships with NGOs, Community based organizations (CBOs), media and other potential sub-partners in the implementation of program activities.
The applicant should seek partnerships and make full use of the expertise and resources of leading Bangladeshi civil society organizations, networks and coalitions. The applicants are strongly encouraged to build the advocacy capacity of local citizen groups or DPPF so they can act as a pressure group to advocate with MPs and other relevant stakeholders for policy changes that will enhance the democratic process of Bangladesh. The sustainability plan must include a detailed plan about the exit strategy of the program emphasizing the continuation of citizen groups/ DPPF after the completion of the project.
Guideline for District Public Policy Forum (DPPF):

PRODIP will support DPPFs facilitated by CSO partners to provide a diverse range of citizens with the opportunity to raise and discuss governance related policy advocacy and local development issues with MPs and local government officials and to identify solutions. The membership of DPPFs will be drawn from a cross-section of the community—including civil society, the private sector, elites, the poor, women, youth, religious and ethnic minorities, and the public at large. Committee members will liaise with MPs, local government officials, political parties, candidates, and other stakeholders to encourage their participation in program activities on democratic governance. The DPPF activities at the constituency level will serve two purposes: first, in nurturing “demand” they will provide community members/constituents with information and motivational messages; second, in stimulating “supply” they will provide MPs, Local Government Officials, political parties and candidates with information on the broader governance related development issues, encouraging them to reach out to their respective constituencies.

Basically the formation of DPPFs at the sub national and local level will:

- Improve understanding of existing knowledge and perspective of the sub-national level actors and community leaders regarding the policy reforms issues
- Establishment and enhanced capacity of District Public Policy Forum (DPPF) to create efficient channels of communication between sub-national and national level stakeholders
- Recognition of DPPF forums as a functional platform for the sub-national level to engage with the national level decision makers on key policy issues affecting the communities
- Increased confidence and engagement of women elected representatives at the sub-national level in raising issues through DPPFs and to participate in policy dialogue at the national level

The CSO facilitators will build group cohesion in a tested process that reviews past citizen activism, its shortcomings, and the DPPF approach. The CSO with technical support from PRODIP will provide different training to the DPPF. Members will learn about governance structures, MP roles, and advocacy strategies on governance related issues, including effective interaction with government officials and media. Through this training the DPPF will also understand the simplified approaches for developing citizen “report cards” on key public services at sub national level, which will include special efforts to engage women, youth, and minority communities.

The first DPPFs will be established primarily in districts that include the home constituencies of key parliamentary committee chairs and/or members. Other factors to be considered in district selection will include the presence of active CAPTA (Citizen Alliance for Promotion of Transparency and Accountability) committees established under the EWG national election program with DRL funding. The DPPF will also be formed at the district, upzila and selected union level to gain an in-depth understanding of citizen issues at the grass root level.

The DPPF will consist of different representatives from different organizations and related interest groups, as well as representatives from a wider forum. The probable members of the DPPF are following:

- Social Leaders (Teachers, Religious Leaders, Community Leaders, etc)
- Private Sector Representatives
- Professionals (Journalists, Lawyers, etc.)
- Cultural Activists
• Representatives of indigenous, minority and disabled persons
• Youth Representatives
• Women Leaders
• Local Elected Body Representatives
• Representatives of Civil Society Organizations/NGOs
• Government Officials

The detailed activities of the DPPF will be identified and designed jointly by the CSO and DPPF members.

Following are some highlights of potential activities for DPPF:

• To hold periodic discussion with DPPF members and MPs, Upazila and union level officials and local CSOs to identify local issues.
• Creation of a citizen monitoring mechanism within DPPF to monitor gaps of different government policies at the sub national level.
• Dissemination of information on DPPF initiatives through different channels including electronic and print media.
RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR PROJECT CONCEPT NOTES (PCN):

- The PCN must be submitted in English.
- The PCN must be 3-5 pages (please use Times New Roman 11 size font)
- Please note that each organization can submit only one PCN
- Only relevant information should be attached with the PCN as organization profile and major activities of the organization
- Copy of NGO AB registration/ other legal government registration that allows receive foreign funds must be attached with the PCN.
- All Concept Notes must be submitted to TAF office within the given timeframe
PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE FORMAT

1. Basic information:

   *To be filled out by the applicant*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the organization:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone No:</td>
<td>Fax:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Contact person’s Name and Designation:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Status of the Organization or other legal government registration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Registration:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. The rationale/background of this project

   [Please identify the problem that the grant activities propose to address and specify how the proposed activities will be addressed/mitigate the stated problem. Please include gender dimensions while mentioning the above.]

3. Brief description of the project

   [Please follow PRODIP’s program description guideline, and see Annex-1]
   - **Title of the project**
   - **Goal**
     [Expected to contribute through this project intervention]
   - **Objectives**
     [What are the specific objectives the project intents to achieve within the timeframe- all must be linked with PRODIP objectives.]
   - **Output**
     [Tangible products achieved through the accomplishment of the project activities]
   - **Activities**
     [Please describe the main and sub task of the proposed project. Also specify your gender focused activities that you plan to accomplish within given timeframe. The particular needs of the women, children or other socially disadvantaged groups/community should be reflected in the design and implementation of the initiatives.]
• **Duration of the project**
  
  [Year of implementation]

4. **Geographic location of the project (Not applicable for media organizations)**

[Please mention which constituency will be covered and where the project will be implemented. The applicant should identify specific geographic locations with justification for each of the program components, to ensure the greatest outreach and multiplier effect on both national and sub-national level]

5. **Target audience or stakeholders of the project**

• **Primary Stakeholders:**

  [Primary stakeholders/project beneficiaries are those people and groups who are ultimately affected by the project. It is important to explain how the primary stakeholders are involved in the process, and how gender is addressed in the selection and identification process of primary stakeholders. Also specify the scope of work and coordination with Government institution/MPs.]

• **Secondary stakeholders:**

  [If applicable are there individuals/groups who will indirectly benefit from the project.]

6. **Project implementation strategies**

[Please mention which approach/strategies will be undertaken for the proposed project and how it will be implemented. If project is implemented through partnership, please specify who will be the potential partners of the project? Selection process of the sub partners, nature of the partnership]

7. **Organizational capacity**

• How many staff are currently being deployed with the organization
• How many projects are currently being implemented
• Management structure and list of key personnel
• Numbers of Donors providing funds

8. **Sustainability Plan of the Project (Not applicable for media organizations)**

[Please refer to annex 1]

9. **Approximate budget:**

• What is the total cost of the project?

**Following attachments must be attached with the PCN**

Attachment 1: Organizational profile (mentioning the Executive Board, Senior Management, Board of Trustee and organogram)
Attachment 2: Copy of NGOAB registration
Attachment 3: List of the major activities
**PCN REVIEWING PROCESS**

**Step I**  The submission deadline must be met. If the deadline has not been respected the PCN will automatically be rejected.

**Step II**  The Concept Notes satisfies all the criteria specified in the guideline, if any of the requested information is missing or incorrect, the Concept Note may be rejected by the review committee on that sole basis.

**Step III**  The Concept Notes that are approved by the committee will be considered to be assessed. The review committee reserves the right to skip the assessment of concept notes at any stage of assessment process.

**Step IV**  Whenever the concept notes are approved the applicants will be requested to submit a full proposal.

**PCN EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Following major criteria will be considered in reviewing the PCN;

- Institutional capacity
- Internal governance and practices
- Relevant program experience
- Integrity of the proposed activities
- Consistency with the PRODIP program mandate
- Grant solicitation (including commitment to work constructively with parliamentary authorities to achieve policy and legislative related to democratic governance)
- Sustainability of the proposed initiative
ANNEX-4

Project Proposal

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR PROJECT PROPOSAL (PP):

- The PP must be submitted in English
- The PP will be 10-15 pages maximum (please use Times New Roman 11 size font)
- Only relevant information should be attached with the PP refer to the guidelines
- The situation analysis of the proposed project must be detailed
- Geographical coverage including constituency and upazila information should be clearly mentioned in the PP (Not applicable for Media organizations)
- NGO AB registration or other legal government registration that allows receive foreign funds and the copy of organization’s constitution must be attached with PP
- The PP will be submitted to the TAF Office according to the time frame mentioned by PRODIP team

PROJECT PROPOSAL FORMAT

1. Basic Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the organization:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Phone, Fax &amp; E-mail)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Contact person’s Name &amp; Designation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Status of the Organization or other legal government registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of and Registration no.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Introduction

The Rationale/Justification and Background of the project

[Please identify the problem that the grant activities propose to address and specify how the proposed activities will be addressed/mitigate the stated problem. Please include gender dimensions while mentioning the above.]

2.1 Definitions, Acronyms, Abbreviations and Reference

[Enter the full name of any initials or short forms for words and write down any sources of information, telephone numbers, faxes and letters etc. used to create this document]
2.2 Current Programs of the Organization:
[The following table identifies the current (major) programs of the organization]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Area</th>
<th>Project Goal</th>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Summary Description of Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

3. Brief Description of the Project
[Please follow PRODIP's program description guideline, and see Annex-1]

3.1 Title of the Project

3.2 Project Goals/Objectives
[Write down the project Goal and main project objectives. Describe how the project objectives are addressed in the national development strategies and policies. All must be linked with PRODIP objectives.]

3.2 Expected project results
[Describe the overall results that the project is expected to achieve within the stated timeframe. The results should be specified year wise output and achievements. It should also highlight whether there may be unintended effects of the project, and how these possibilities will be addressed.] Please fill up the following format under this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal:</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Project Activities Against Stated Objectives</th>
<th>Expected Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective-1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective-2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective-3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Impact
[Please explain what the expected impact of the proposed project will be on the social, political and economic situation of the beneficiaries/stakeholders and other persons involved]

3.4 Duration of the Project [year of implementation]

3.5 Project Activities and Work Plan
(Please follow the following format and provide year 1 activity schedule with results)

YEAR 1 Activity Schedule with Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Year Activity</th>
<th>No. of Events</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>First year time frame</th>
<th>1st Year Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
<td>Note: Identify few key results comprising all the activities of year one</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Geographic location (Not applicable for media organizations)
[Please mention which constituency will be covered and where the project will be implemented. The applicant should identify specific geographic locations with justifications for each of the program components, to ensure the greatest outreach and multiplier effect on both national and sub-national level]
5. **Project Implementation Strategy**

Please mention which approach/strategies will the undertaken for the proposed project and how it will be implemented. If the project is implemented through a partnership, please specify who will be the potential partners of the project? Selection process of the sub partners, nature of the partnership.

6. **Target Group or stakeholders of the project**

Primary stakeholders are those people and groups who are ultimately affected by the project. It should also discuss how intended stakeholders have been involved in project design, and their expected role in project implementation and evaluation. How gender is addressed in the selection and identification process of primary stakeholders. Like specific committees, group formation, etc. Please specify the scope of work and coordination with Government institution/MPs.

6.1 **Sub-partners**

Describe how many sub-partners will work with this project and where. Please provide each sub-partner name, Organizational profile (mentioning the Executive Board, Senior Management, Board of Trustee) working area and major thematic intervention. Sub-partners terms of reference should be attached as an annex to the project proposal.

6.2 **Project Management**

Describe the management process to be used for the project lifecycle i.e. project’s staffing, organogram and job description of the project staff.

6.3 **Monitoring & Evaluation**

This section should discuss proposed mechanisms and procedures for monitoring of project operations to ensure that activities occur as planned, that they remain directed towards stated objectives, and that appropriate corrective action is taken if required.

(Please refer to annex 5)

7. **Sustainability Plan of the Project** *(Not applicable for media organizations)*

(Please refer to annex 1)

8. **Budget**

[Insert budget details here; ensure all activities in the work plan are reflected in the budget]

**Following attachments must be attached with the PP**

Attachment 1: Organizational profile (mentioning the Executive Board, Senior Management, Board of Trustee and organogram)
Attachment 2: Copy of NGOAB registration
Attachment 3: List of the major activities
Attachment 4: Project Monitoring Plan (PMP)
Attachment 5: Detailed Budget
Attachment 6: Last Financial Audit Report
Project Proposal Assessment Process by PRODIP team members:

The received PP will be assessed through the following selection procedure.

Step I: After the PP is received a preliminary review will be done through a checklist, which includes both a qualitative and quantitative assessment.

Step II: Potential PPs will be analyzed further through a scoring checklist

Step III: A Program and a financial field assessment will be conducted by the PRODIP program team for the selected organizations, largely to review the organizational capacity, existing staff capacity, community acceptance, existing financial system (to assess their management and budget handling capacity, transparency and accountably)

Step IV: After the program and financial assessment is completed the review committee will do an overall assessment based on a checklist and submit their recommendation (with justification) to the final approval committee.

Step V: After the grant has been approved by the final approval committee, the applicants will be informed and contract will be signed.

PP EVALUATION CRITERIA

Following major criteria will be considered in reviewing the PP;

- Institutional Capacity
- Internal Governance and Practices
- Relevant Program Experience
- Integrity of the proposed activities
- Consistency with the PRODIP program mandate
- Grant Solicitation (including commitment to work constructively with parliamentary authorities to achieve MDG policy and legislative objectives)
- Sustainability of the proposed initiative
Performance Monitoring plan (PMP):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative Summary</th>
<th>Objectively variable Indicator (OVI)</th>
<th>Means of Verification MOV</th>
<th>Assumption</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
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<td>Objectives</td>
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<td>Activities</td>
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