

Democracy International, Inc.
Armenia Protection, Inclusion, and Empowerment Activity
Request For Quotation

Request for Quote (RFQ) No.:	PIE-RFQ-102
Issue Date:	June 22, 2023
Questions Due:	June 29, 2023, at 6 p.m., Yerevan local time
Quote Submission Due Date:	July 6, 2023, at 6 p.m., Yerevan local time

Dear Sir/Madam,

Democracy International (DI) hereby solicits a Request for Quotation (RFQ) for the following service:

Fieldwork for Political Economy Analysis (PEA) in the Sector of Social Protection in Armenia

DI requires the provision of services as per the requirements outlined in the solicitation from qualified local organizations. DI anticipates awarding a fixed-price subcontract with a duration of four months from the date of award as a result of this solicitation. Competition under this procurement will be limited to local organizations that are legally organized under the laws of Armenia and can provide the requested services.

Content of quotations to be submitted in English language, and detailed in Section D, include:

- The **Technical offer** requires the following:
 - Application form
 - The Service Provider's relevant experience to this quotation, such as publications and/or links to publications on the field of social protection developed by applicant organizations.
 - Comments/suggestions on the RFQ, if any.
- The **Financial offer** requires the relevant proposed budget.



Procedural questions regarding this opportunity must be submitted electronically by June 29, 2023 at 6 p.m., and *finalized quotations* with the required content in this RFQ, must be submitted in a single email (the application form, the budget form, and in a zip form relevant experiences with publications) by July 6, 2023 at 6 p.m. to mferguson@democracyinternational.com stating “**Submission to RFQ No. PIE-RFQ-102**” in the subject line.

All submitted documents must conform to the requirements outlined in the solicitation. Quotations received after the deadline shall be considered late and shall not be evaluated. Those that do not meet the eligibility criteria or are not relevant to the requested RFA shall not be considered. DI intends to award the contract no later than July 15, 2023.

SECTION A:

A.1: BACKGROUND

The Protection, Inclusion, and Empowerment Activity in Armenia, implemented by DI and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), aims to improve the lives of disadvantaged and marginalized populations through needed legal-regulatory framework changes, improved services, and intensified cooperation between the government and non-governmental actors to address the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Given the multifaceted nature of the Activity's goals and the complexity of the issues involved, DI is determined to perform a comprehensive PEA and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) assessment between July and September 2023.

The PEA and GESI assessment combines analytical tools, such as power mapping, stakeholder analysis, systems thinking, and behavioral science, to inform programming that can catalyze long-lasting change. The study will cover 10 marzes and Yerevan; data should be collected from each marz and within Yerevan.

SECTION B: SERVICES AND PRICE/COSTS

B.1 PURPOSE

DI seeks to contract the services of a locally registered Armenian research and polling organization to conduct data collection in the area of social protection using DI's methodology, interview guides, and approach pertinent to the 2023 PEA and GESI assessments.

B.2 CONTRACT TYPE

The contract type will be a fixed-price subcontract.

B.3 CONTRACT PRICE

The final and total price of the contract will be determined based on the evaluation of offers received and final negotiations.

SECTION C: DESCRIPTION / SPECIFICATIONS / STATEMENT OF WORK

C.1 STATEMENT OF WORK

The purpose of this Statement of Work is to utilize the PEA methodology as a structured and comprehensive approach to better understand how foundational factors, rules of the game, and relevant “here and now” issues work together (dynamics) in the development context of Armenia to create an understanding of underlying power dynamics and relationships in which following activities will take place. The proposed research will largely focus on the areas of the social protection sector, vulnerable, marginalized, and displaced groups within Armenia, and crisis response and preparedness. The PEA assessment will identify and address specific needs and challenges faced by marginalized and excluded groups in Armenian society to ensure their voices are heard and their rights are respected. Key elements of the PEA will include an institutional review, historical analysis, power mapping, and stakeholder analysis to understand institutional, behavioral, interest, interaction, influence, and impact factors, as well as conduct behavior mapping to identify specific behaviors needed to overcome an identified problem and develop steps needed to facilitate target behaviors. GESI is incorporated into the research methodology design for understanding equal opportunities and inclusion for all individuals in Armenia regardless of their gender, class, ethnicity, geography, religion, age, ability, and other forms of social and cultural identity. Since the program’s objective is to improve the lives of marginalized, vulnerable, and displaced groups in Armenia by finding ways to strengthen the social protection system, incorporating a GESI lens into our PEA ensures the portrayal of the distinct experiences of particular groups, especially women, girls, men, boys, and gender non-conforming people.

The Service Provider will complete the following main activities:

1. Familiarization with DI’s Methodology and Interview Guides: The Service Provider must familiarize itself with the interview guides and research design delivered by DI.
2. Participant Recruitment and PEA team confirmation: The Service Provider will be responsible for recruiting participants who meet DI's selection criteria. DI will provide the criteria for participant selection.
3. Preparation of action plan: The Service Provider will develop the overall approach and design of the action plan taking into consideration all necessary staff and other resources.

4. Acquisition of research ethics certificate: All the Service Provider's research-related staff members must participate in the research ethics training program to be detailed by DI and submit certificates of completion to DI.
5. Testing Interview Guides: The Service Provider will test the interview guides for clarity, understandability and duration.
6. Participation in PEA training workshop: The Service Provider will ensure the participation of all recruited staff in a 3-day training workshop to receive PEA/GESI training, review the interview guides, confirm methodology, clarify questions of interest, and finalize the implementation plan.
7. Data collection: In close collaboration with DI, the Service Provider will conduct data collection through face-to-face interviews in the Armenian language across all regions of Armenia between June and August in a timeframe agreed upon and approved by DI.
8. Data transcription: After completing each individual interview and data collection, the Service Provider will ensure that transcribers accurately transcribe audiotaped data into digital doc format. The design of the format will be provided by DI.
9. Data translation: The Service Provider will ensure that transcribed data will be accurately translated into the English language. In coordination with DI, all field terms will be reflected in a Glossary to ensure a unanimous approach to the translation of terms.
10. Draft of initial findings for each interview: Technical experts in close collaboration with Field researchers, will analyze each transcribed interview and focus group discussion and draft the initial findings.
11. Submission of transcribed and translated data to DI: The Service Provider will submit the transcripts and translations of each interview and focus group discussion within three days after conducting them, along with the draft of initial findings both in Armenian and English languages. The submission Guide will be provided by DI.
12. Submission of drafted initial findings: The Service Provider will ensure the submission of accurately drafted initial findings in Armenian and English languages along with the transcribed and translated data.

C.2 SPECIFIC TASKS/APPROACHES/PRINCIPLES

Main approaches and principles behind the research design include:

- Recruited research staff must be qualified based on DI's selection criteria;
- Data collection will take place in all marzes and Yerevan in a timely and quality manner;
- DI will provide interview guides, and other documents informing the types of information being sought;
- Interviews will be conducted in the Armenian language;
- Audiotaped records will be transcribed into the desired format of DI;
- Transcripts and translations of each interview and focus group discussion will be submitted within three days after conducting them.
- A glossary of terms under DI's supervision will be developed with the cooperation with the translators to be followed.

Recruited staff should include:

- Technical experts on social protection
- Field researchers on social protection
- Technical experts on gender equality and social inclusion
- Field researchers on gender equality and social inclusion
- Technical experts on stakeholder analysis and power mapping
- Technical experts on social and behavioral change
- Administrative assistants
- Transcribers
- Translators

The interview guides and research design will be provided by DI to the Service Provider, followed by the training workshop. Before proceeding with the data collection, the Service Provider must test the interview guides to ensure the wording of every question is clear and understandable to those being interviewed, that the questions elicit appropriate responses, and that the length of time required to conduct interviews is reasonable. Closely cooperating with DI, the Service Provider must share any findings from the test, after which the DI will incorporate relevant updates and changes, and submit the final version of guides to the Service Provider.

Once the final guides are approved and provided, the Service Provider must conduct data collection through face-to-face interviews across all regions of Armenia. Interviews must be conducted between June and August in a timeframe agreed upon and approved by the DI. The research methodology must ensure national representation of the actors involved in the sector of social protection and representatives from marginalized, vulnerable, and displaced groups in Armenia. Under DI's oversight, the Service Provider will identify and engage relevant stakeholders. The methodology must, at a minimum, include 230 individual in-depth interviews and 120 focus group discussions, covering:

- 1) Government officials at the national level, including the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, other governmental ministries and agencies related to the social protection (50 individual in-depth interviews and 30 focus group discussions)
- 2) Government officials at regional level (50 individual in-depth interviews and 30 focus group discussions)
- 3) Development partners and civil society experts (40 individual in-depth interviews and 20 focus group discussions)
- 4) Experts from academia, journalism, and think tanks (20 individual in-depth interviews)
- 5) Lawyers and legal experts (20 individual in-depth interviews)
- 6) Politicians (10 individual in-depth interviews)
- 7) Community-based organizations operating locally (20 individual in-depth interviews and 10 focus group discussions)

- 8) Leaders from the marginalized, vulnerable, and displaced groups the Activity is interested in (20 individual in-depth interviews)
- 9) Members from the marginalized, vulnerable, and displaced groups the Activity is interested in (30 focus group discussions)

DI will provide the list of target entities.

The main areas to be covered include:

- **Political Economy Analysis** - How does the social protection system function across Armenia and why? What factors impact the experience of marginalized, vulnerable, and displaced populations with Armenian citizenship, with the delivery of social services in Armenia and why?
- **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion** - What patterns of inclusion and exclusion emerged in the sector of social protection over time (in terms of gender, class, ethnicity, geography, religion, age, ability, and other forms of social and cultural identity)?
- **Stakeholders Analysis and Power Mapping** – What are the actors of the social protection sector and the distribution of power among stakeholders of the field.
- **Social and Behavioral Analysis** - What are the dominant behaviors in the sector of social protection?

C.3 DELIVERABLES

The awarded Service Provider should complete the following deliverables;

1. Action plan (Within a week after award of the RFQ)
2. Findings of tested interview guides for their refinement purposes (Within a week after award of the RFQ)
3. Certificates of completion on research ethics for all recruited staff members (Within a week after award of the RFQ)
4. Glossary of terms in relation to social protection
5. Accurately transcribed interviews and focus group discussions in digital format in the Armenian language with the design requested by DI (75% to be carried out and submitted by the end of August and the remaining 25% by 15 September).
6. Accurately translated interviews and focus group discussions in digital format in the English language (75% to be carried out and submitted by the end of August and the remaining 25% by 15 September).
7. Accurately drafted initial findings for each interview and focus group discussion both in Armenian and English languages (75% to be carried out and submitted by the end of August and the remaining 25% by 15 September).

C4. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Service Providers should be legally registered to operate in Armenia with available resources and infrastructure to effectively conduct the proposed activities. Service Providers must attach a copy of their current business registration to the application.

The following entities are **not** eligible for funding:

- Political parties and their subsidiaries or affiliates
- Organizations that appear on the System for Award Management (SAM) List and Non-Procurement Programs, U.S. Government's "Excluded Parties List System" (EPLS), found at: www.sam.gov or the UN Consolidated Sanctions List
- Organizations that promote or engage in illegal activities or anti-democratic activities
- Faith-based organizations* whose objectives are for discriminatory and/or religious purposes, and whose main objective of the grant is of a religious nature
- Entities operated by Democracy International employees
- An organization that prohibits the participation of minority groups, including ethnic, sexual, and religious minorities, or expresses what is referred to as hate speech

C4. LOCATION AND CAPACITY ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Service Providers must have an active registration, human resources, and other operational capacities to operate throughout Armenia and must comply with Armenian laws and regulations.

C.5 AWARD CRITERIA

- Quality of the offer (%), including:
 - Expertise in a given field (25%);
 - Capacity to meet the required deadlines (review of the Service Provider's available resources around Armenia to enable them to perform the work) (25%)
 - Capacity to adapt to the context (review of Service Provider's approach to day-to-day operations and reporting to DI) (20%).
- Financial offer (30%).

C6. BUDGET

The Service Provider must submit an itemized budget to support costs for the proposed activities. The final budget, along with the schedule of payments, will be determined in consultation with the Service Provider based on the scope of work.

The vendor must submit an itemized budget to support costs for the proposed activities. The final budget will be determined in consultation with the vendor based on the scope of work.

Evaluation Criteria:

DI will consider the following evaluation criteria:

- Review of the vendor’s available resources around Armenia to enable them to perform the work: 30%
- Review of vendor’s proposed management plan, including proposed personnel’s qualification and experience: 20%
- Review of vendor’s proposed budget: 30%
- Review of vendor’s approach to day-to-day operations and reporting to DI: 20%

SECTION D: TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL OFFERS REQUIREMENTS

D.1 TECHNICAL OFFER REQUIREMENTS

- Service Provider’s legally registered name, physical address, and contact information
- Legal Status and registration number in Armenia
- Organizational structure
- Technical Approach: this should demonstrate Service Provider’s understanding and approach to performing the listed activities above
- Management Plan: this should include the Service Provider’s management plan, information about the proposed staffs’ qualifications, and roles and responsibilities. This section should also include information about the time each proposed staff has worked with the Service Provider, and their experience with similar activities
- Activity Equipment and Resources: this should include Service Provider’s human resources, equipment, and other resources that will be utilized to undertake the activity
- Past performance as well as similar studies completed

D.2 FINANCIAL OFFER REQUIREMENTS

- The itemized budget should be presented in Microsoft Excel using the following template.

Itemized budget should include a description for each line item, a unit cost, quantity,	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total	Justification
---	-----------	----------	-------	---------------

description of quantity, total cost, and a justification for each line item to support fairness and reasonableness of the proposed cost.				
--	--	--	--	--

Offers should be submitted electronically on or before 6 p.m. Yerevan local time, on July 6, 2023, to DI at mferguson@democracyinternational.com. DI intends to award the contract no later than July 15, 2023.

Announcement Disclaimer:

This announcement does not constitute any commitment on the part of DI and/or USAID. Nor does it commit DI or USAID to pay for costs incurred by the applicant in the submission of this or any application. DI reserves the right to reject any or all applications received. DI reserves the right to incrementally fund activities over the duration of the program, if necessary, depending on program length, performance against approved program indicators, and availability of funds.

Democracy International, Inc., Protection, Inclusion, and Empowerment Activity, nor USAID demands or charge any fees/charges from potential applicants for considering their application at any time prior to award, during the evaluation process, nor have we authorized any individual, agency or firm to do so on our behalf.

In case of the slightest suspicion about the source and credentials of any individual/agency claiming to be our representative, you may immediately report the same to our office or the local police authorities