



**REGIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 2
ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT
SUPPORT FOR
A) RESPONSE TO POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND
B) EXISTING ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS
IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

I. OVERVIEW

The Regional Assistance Program 2 (RAP 2) is seeking proposals from prospective partners to support one of the following two priorities:

- 1) response to urgent political developments; or
- 2) existing and ongoing advocacy campaigns for political, legal, social, and economic engagement in the Middle East and North Africa.

The purpose of this annual program statement (APS) is to identify the needs of civil society actors engaged in political developments or advocacy campaigns at the local, national or regional levels, inform and help design RAP 2 interventions to respond to those needs, and shape, support and enable projects to achieve their desired political, legal, social, or economic objectives.

II. ABOUT THE REGIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

RAP 2 is a grants and technical assistance mechanism to strengthen civil society organizations and support civil society actors working towards social and political engagement in the Middle East and North Africa. RAP 2 is funded by the U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative ([MEPI](#)) and is being implemented by the International Research & Exchanges Board ([IREX](#)). RAP 2 provides beneficiaries with financial and/or in-kind support combined with technical assistance, in areas such as capacity building, project management, advocacy, and gender auditing.

III. OBJECTIVE

This APS includes two priority areas:

Priority Area A: Prepare local organizations to respond to snap local and national elections and other emergent political developments.

Priority Area B: Enhance civil society organizations' ability to successfully complete an existing local or national political, legal or social campaign that would benefit the society and strengthen the relationship between governmental and non-governmental institutions.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK:

RAP 2 assistance for Priority Areas A and B may include, but is not limited to:

- o *Financial support* (e.g. subgrants) and, or
- o *Technical assistance* (e.g. training, mentorship, in-kind assistance) from RAP 2, its regional partners, or other IREX experts

IREX plans to award up to a total of eight grants in 2017-2018 for amounts ranging between US\$50,000-

250,000 to qualified applicants. **Proposed projects must respond to one of the priority areas described in this APS (Priority A or Priority B) but not both.** Proposed projects are intended to be of a limited duration, and must have a duration not exceeding 10 months. The grants will be awarded on staggered basis, approximately three times a year, according to availability of funds. *Please note:* This mechanism is not intended to be a standard grant funding mechanism for long-term projects.

In addition to collecting applicants' self-assessment of their own needs, IREX will also facilitate an organizational assessment using our own tools. This assessment may include (but is not limited to) remote and in-country evaluation sessions with the organization team, written surveys by staff and stakeholders, and phone interviews. Technical assistance interventions will be designed based on an analysis of results from both the self-assessment and the IREX assessment.

Priority Area A:

RAP 2 will provide assistance to civil society and non-governmental organizations working to respond to and participate in **emergent and/or rapidly developing** political processes and developments, including snap elections:

1. Activities aimed at working with government stakeholders to improve laws related to political participation such as engaging constituencies, support for political party capacity building, and voter mobilization.
2. Improving advocacy and accountability functions including pilot projects (for example, test a pilot project on the positive effects of election campaigning in tribal communities).
3. Increasing access for hard to reach and marginalized groups and in post-crisis contexts for approved political activities.
4. Election monitoring.
5. Political reconciliation activities.
6. Urgent time-sensitive or local needs not listed above, that are consistent with the priority area.

If at the end of each of three funding periods, a project addressing Priority Area A has not been identified and awarded, RAP 2 will provide assistance to one or more projects in Priority Area B.

Priority Area B:

1. Campaigns aimed at working with government stakeholders to improve laws related to political participation such as engaging constituencies, support for political party capacity building, and voter mobilization.
2. Campaigns aimed at introducing economic reform
3. Campaigns aimed at supporting gender equality and minority rights
4. Campaigns aimed at improving government accountability

Selected advocacy projects for this priority will:

- Establish or have already established broad-based coalitions around public interest causes, engaging policy makers, business interests, and a variety of stakeholders;
- Employ collaboration and dialogue among stakeholders, including government and non-governmental institutions, to identify sustainable solutions and affect mutually-beneficial change;

- Establish long-term partnerships across sectors, especially by strengthening the relationship between government and non-governmental institutions;
- Bring to the fore the voices of marginalized communities.

Under Priority Area B, project activities may include, but are not limited to:

- o Message development
- o Advocacy training and capacity-building
- o Awareness, information and outreach activities for constituents
- o Online and offline advocacy initiatives
- o Formation of alliances or coalitions, including the development of coalitions' internal governance
- o Digital tools for advocacy and citizen engagement, emphasizing existing digital platforms

V. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must be civil society organizations or NGOs. Assistance will be to organizations, rather than to individuals, that are working in: Algeria, Bahrain, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, West Bank, Gaza, and Yemen.

IREX recognizes that licensing and registration procedures and regulations for NGOs vary from country to country across the region, and is therefore open to receiving applications from organizations that are not registered as NGOs per se, but that are not-for-profit and fulfill the mission of and operate as CSOs.

Please inquire to IREX regarding any questions related to applicant eligibility or registration status.

VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW

Proposals will be reviewed according the following criteria:

Priority Area A (Responding to an Emergent Political Development):

- The proposed project responds to the Priority Area A description and objectives listed above in this APS;
- The applicant demonstrates experience in related issues and interventions, understanding of the context, and understanding of the obstacles and barriers to the proposed project, including legal, regulatory, social, political, and any other barriers;
- Clear understanding of the needs, challenges, and motivations of all stakeholders involved;
- Objectives are "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, and achievable within the time frame of the project)

Priority Area B (Advocacy Campaigns):

- The proposed project responds to the Priority Area B description and objectives listed above in this APS;
- The advocacy campaign is on-going: it has already been launched but can use support to reach its objectives;
- The campaign is built on a broad-based coalition of various stakeholders, and it works towards strengthening the relationship between government and non-governmental institutions;
- The applicant demonstrates experience in related issues and interventions, understanding of the context, and understanding of the obstacles and barriers to the proposed project, including legal, regulatory, social, political, and any other barriers;
- Clear understanding of the needs, challenges, and motivations of all stakeholders involved;

- Objectives are "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-oriented, and achievable within the time frame of the project)

VII. RESPONSE DEADLINE AND TIMELINE

All proposals must be submitted using this online application form by one of the following deadlines: 11/11/2017 (Round 1), 12/31/2017 (Round 2), or 2/28/2018 (Round 3). The RAP 2 Team will review received proposals within one calendar month of each deadline and reach out to selected respondents. Applicants are welcome to submit more than one proposal. Support for proposals submitted during the second or third round of proposal review will be contingent upon availability of funds. **Applicants are therefore encouraged to submit their proposals as early as possible.**

VIII. PROPOSAL FORMS

The English version of the online proposal form can be found at this link: [RAP 2 Proposal Application Form \(English\)](#). The Arabic version can be found here: [RAP 2 Proposal Application Form \(Arabic\)](#).

Please fill in the sections of the online proposal form that are relevant to your project and submit your completed application no later than **11/11/2017 (Round 1), 12/31/2017 (Round 2), or 2/28/2018 (Round 3).** **For any inquiries, please email mena-rap@irex.org no later than 14 days before the proposal deadline.** All questions will be answered in writing in one email copied to all applicants one week before the proposal deadline. Proposals may be submitted in English or Arabic.

Proposal Sections 1 and 2 are mandatory for all applicants. Fill in Form Section 3 if you intend to apply for a subgrant through RAP 2.