

HRDB programme guidelines

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

OSISA will seek to support interventions that -

- Ensure that there is, in each of the countries of the region, an effective mechanism and organization for monitoring human rights law and practice, publicizing violations and actioning protest work against human rights violations.
- Promote a focus on the rights of women, and of children.
- Contribute to effective human rights promotion and defence, including ensuring that citizens actively participate in civic formations and group interest coalitions that enable them to promote and protect their rights, and to prevent violation thereof.

OSISA will also support advocacy efforts and social action that will help build more plural and participatory electoral systems, greater civic awareness of and interest in local governance, and eliminate corruption in the national government, corporate and civic arenas.

CRITERIA

As an overarching principle, OSISA will support programmes where 'Human Rights Education' and Civic Education are not an end in themselves, but where they are creatively linked to advocacy and social organisation. Nor will (huge) human rights "bureaucracies" be supported, but rather interventions where the emphasis is on social action for change. Rather than support purely academic and individual 'specialist' research and other intellectual activities, OSISA will generally tend towards support for wide-membership activist efforts where, although built on solid research

knowledge, the intervention emphasis is on social action - mobilizing citizens for change.

In addition, OSISA will support programmes that satisfy the following criteria: -

- (Except in very exceptional circumstances), that the initiative is not limited to a small group of individuals, or an individual, but mobilises a significant cross section of actors through, (in decreasing order of preference) -
 - direct wider ownership and stakeholderhood, (that is, the project is actually owned by a wide membership-based organisation, and the members have control over its direction)
 - closely planned participation by different organisations or actors, reinforcing one another to achieve a common goal,
 - initiatives where a project that OSISA is already supporting is complemented or extended.
 - active networking, and other linkages.

- That the project incorporates effective participation of women in the entire project cycle, including that the baseline studies contain as much as possible disaggregated information on women and men; that the project design addresses gender related challenges emerging in the baseline; that the implementation teams involve both men and women in equitable roles and responsibilities including leadership; and that monitoring and evaluation indicators are as far as possible disaggregated.

- That, in addition to the above, the project strives to include young people and adults in effective participation and decision making,

including through the involvement of young people who are part of progressive youth movements, etc.

- That the implementing organization proposed in the project -
 - is a credible, and committed actor in the area of work in question, as could be suggested from peer reports, donor reviews, previous experience and reputation. Where the organisation is new, in place of the above OSISA would consider the organisation's clarity of vision, contribution of own time and mobilization of own resources.
 - is demonstrably committed to implementing within its own structures and work patterns, the ideals of open society, including gender equitable staff development and other human resource processes, free exercise by staff of labour rights, etc.
 - has strong accounting mechanisms to its board, wider stakeholders, and public. This will be demonstrated by the publication of annual reports and plans, the keeping of proper and accessible records of financial accounting and inventories, and platforms for stakeholders and related publics to influence strategic direction and priorities.

- That the project reaches rural and other communities that would not have traditionally been included in similar or related projects.
- That the project is innovative in its methodologies, and seeks to maximize impact through creative multiplier effects, rather than one-off events.
- That it articulates or develops ideas on sustainability beyond OSISA support.

AREAS OF SUPPORT

OSISA funding will be considered under the following content areas -

Human Rights

- Effective and participatory human rights monitoring activities, documentation and education.
- Programmes that have an emphasis on women's rights in the areas of
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 - protection against gender violence,
 - access to justice and equal protection before the law, and
 - participation and decision-making.
- Programmes that have an emphasis on children's rights, in particular -
 - against child sexual, physical and other forms of abuse,
 - for the rights of vulnerable children such as orphans and children on the street,
 - for victims of, and targets for, child labour, conscription and detention, and
 - with respect to access to education.
- Public interest litigation for human rights promotion.

Governance and Democracy Building

Elections and Electoral Systems

- Electoral advocacy aimed at ensuring more transparent and participatory electoral systems. In addition, OSISA will support advocacy towards more inclusive electoral systems, that is, systems

that ensure more balanced political leadership for women and men, more proportional representation, and stronger public scrutiny of political party agendas and policy.

- Elections monitoring and observation where this is not a one-off event, but a comprehensive and ongoing review and scrutiny of systems of voter registration and eligibility, media reporting and access, impartiality of election administrators, constitutional safeguards for effective multiparty participation, freedom from electoral violence, etc.
- Civic education as an integral aspect of advocacy and public action programmes.

Citizen participation and decision-making

- The organisation of citizens for effective interaction with Parliament and other platforms of governance and decision-making, (such as commissions, sectoral ministries and political parties.)
- Monitoring, reporting, and advocacy on democratic content and practice in national constitutions, national and sub-national law making and amendment, and key public policy making.

Local government and participation

- Advocacy and social action that builds and sustains public interest in local governance, including effective public and community demand -
 - for effective delivery of, and equity in, municipal services including health, water and sanitation,
 - for clean local government.
- Civic and voter education that is an integral aspect of advocacy and social action on local governance issues.

WHAT OSISA WILL NOT FUND

- Government appointed human rights, constitutional review, electoral and other such commissions.
- Promotion and protection of environmental rights.
- Welfare activities and service provision aimed at the identified marginalized groups or individuals.
- Research programmes, where such research is not causally and closely linked with social action and advocacy.
- Workshops on "awareness raising" such as workshops in civic education, or human rights education, where these workshops are an end in themselves.

METHOD OF APPLYING FOR SUPPORT FROM OSISA

An organization or individual interested in seeking possible support from OSISA will send a preliminary letter of inquiry of no more than two pages, outlining the proposer of the project, the scope and purpose of the project, the activities and methodology of the project, linkages with other initiatives, specific expected outputs of the project, as well as a summary of resources being applied for from OSISA.

If, after reviewing the letter of inquiry, OSISA is of the view that the project has the potential for support from OSISA, OSISA will seek to engage with the proposer of the project on a partnership basis, and this may include mutual discussions to explore what could be the most effective interventions to address the problem and need identified.

- The proposer will then submit a fuller proposal, which will contain, among other things -

- An explanation of the initiative, including what the problem or need is, and the external environment in which it will be implemented.
- The intended outputs and outcomes of the project, the broader or long-term impact, and indicators for measuring these.
- How the programme will be implemented, and the relationship to stakeholders, government, and/or other funders or implementers.
- Project costs and financing sources.
- A time frame for the issues and measures taken to ensure sustainability.
- Issues and risks in the project and how these will be addressed.
- An indication of the capacity within the organization to implement the project.

Accompanying information to the proposal

The following information should also be included -

- A copy of the organisation's Constitution or other governing instruments.
- A description of the organization's goals and objectives.
- A list of the organisation's Board members, management, and essential programme staff and membership (categories).
- Most recent annual activity and audited financial report.
- A detailed explanation of how the organization is addressing sustainability issues, as well as a list of current sources of funding.

- Other donors who have been approached to fund the project submitted to OSISA, including the name of the relevant individual at the donor agency, and their contact information.
- Guidelines for proposal writing are available on request.

Application documents should be sent to OSISA's office in Johannesburg. Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Although preliminary assessment and interaction regarding a proposal is the responsibility of the Programme Officer, the overall decision lies with the OSISA Board.

For further information contact:

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