

## Request For Applications (RFA)

### Iraq Together / Ma'an

### RFA No. MAAN-RFA-2024-003

Issuance Date	October 24, 2024
Deadline for written questions	November 09, 2024– 23:59 BGD.
Workshop Call	November 10, 2024– 15:30 BGD.
Answers provided to questions/clarifications	November 12, 2024.
Application due date	November 24, 2024– 23:59 BGD.
Grant award (estimated)	January 07, 2025

Dear Applicant,

The Iraq Together/Ma'an (معا) Activity, hereinafter “Ma'an”, implemented by Chemonics International, registered locally as Sama Al Tatwor, is seeking grant applications for implementation of ‘*Conduct Open Innovation Competitions for Local Solutions to Locally Identified Problems*’. The grants will be awarded and implemented in accordance with USAID and US Government regulations governing grants under contracts and Ma'an's internal grant management policies.

**Written Questions and Clarifications.** All questions or clarifications regarding this RFA must be in writing and submitted to [iraqmaansolicitations@iraqmaan.com](mailto:iraqmaansolicitations@iraqmaan.com) no later than November 09, 2024 – 23:59. Questions and requests for clarification, and the responses thereto, will be circulated to all RFA recipients who have indicated an interest in this RFA.

Ma'an will hold a pre-application workshop on November 10, 2024, online from 15:30 to 16:30 Iraq Time. This workshop will allow eligible and interested applicants the chance to ask questions about the RFA and receive guidance on how to complete the application form. Interested applicants that meet the eligibility requirements defined in Section III below and would like to attend this workshop must confirm their attendance by sending the participant's name and the organization's name to [IraqMaanSolicitations@iraqmaan.com](mailto:IraqMaanSolicitations@iraqmaan.com). Email subject “**RFA No. MAAN-RFA-2024-003**”

Project and Chemonics employees may not ask for, and applicants are prohibited from offering, any money, fee, commission, credit, gift, gratuity, thing of value, or compensation to obtain or reward improper favorable treatment regarding this solicitation. Any improper request from a project employee should be reported to [BusinessConduct@chemonics.com](mailto:BusinessConduct@chemonics.com).

**Applicants can either submit their applications in Arabic or English.**

Annexes included with this Request for Applications:

- **Annex A** – Grant Application Form
- **Annex B** – Grant Application Budget Form
- **Annex C** – Implementation Plan Timeline
- **Annex D** – Grantee Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators and Results Form
- **Annex E** – Required Certifications – *For reference only, will be required during grant award*
- **Annex F** - Mandatory and Required as Applicable Standard Provisions – *For reference only, will be required during grant award*

- Standard Provisions for U.S. and Non-U.S. Nongovernmental organizations receiving a fixed amount award can be accessed through the following URL:  
<https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/references-chapter/303mat>

## SECTION I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### IA. OBJECTIVE

Ma'an will award grants to registered Iraqi organizations, local incubators, and accelerators to strengthen democratic and participatory governance within targeted Government of Iraq service delivery institutions in key sectors (including water, solid waste management, and sewage) to achieve the following activity objectives:

- Engage youth, women, and other local accountability ecosystem actors in identifying local issues in service delivery that can be addressed using innovative and creative means.
- Bolster community participation, especially targeting youth and women, in finding innovative solutions for local government decision-makers and service providers through innovation competitions.
- Create dialogue platforms through these innovation competitions whereby service providers and decision-makers come together to discuss climate related issues with civic actors and social entrepreneurs who will share and pitch their solutions.

Ma'an invites applications that address all or some targeted provinces (refer to section 1E).

### IB. BACKGROUND

Ma'an is a five-year project financed by USAID and implemented by Chemonics International. Ma'an supports select government entities in Iraq (national, regional, and local) to improve service delivery performance through use of technology and process standardization while increasing the availability of and access to information, particularly related to public services. Ma'an also fosters improved and inclusive relationships and engagement between the government and the communities they serve. Ma'an's goal is more equitable, efficient, and sustainable public services as well as improved government responsiveness to citizens' needs and demands, contributing to more accountable, transparent, and inclusive governance. Ma'an aims to achieve its goal through the following objectives:

- 1) Targeted Iraqi government entities improve and are more inclusive in-service delivery. The government improves services delivery through responsiveness to citizen needs, consultation with citizens, improved transparency and use of green practices technology.
- 2) Strengthened democratic and participatory governance of targeted Iraqi service delivery institutions. Citizen perception of government changes through increased participation in governance, improved access to government information, and stronger role of Iraqi NGOs in advocating for communities as well as increased public education regarding citizen roles and responsibilities.
- 3) Response to windows of opportunity for change. Gaps in expertise and information required to improve government service delivery and increase citizen participation are addressed.

Ma'an utilizes an Accountability Ecosystems Approach grounded in inclusion and localization to improve service delivery and build trust. The approach mobilizes Iraqi government entities, civil society organizations, emerging civic movements, issue-based groups, media, and the private sector to co-create interventions. This approach allows diverse local partners to exercise their rights and responsibilities, learn by doing, analyze performance data, and scale what works.

This Request for Application (RFA) aligns with and supports the achievement of the first two objectives mentioned above.

## **IC. DETAILED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Through this grant program, Ma'an will partner with registered Iraqi organizations, local incubators or accelerators to organize an open innovation competition titled "Innovating Iraq's Service Delivery: The Climathon Challenge" The goal is to create and accelerate solutions to service delivery and community mobilization challenges. Strategic communications highlighting the competition winners and outcomes will help strengthen local innovation ecosystems.

The purpose of the Climathon is to address and co-design solutions for locally identified challenges in water, sewage, and solid waste management service delivery. These solutions should include elements related to climate change mitigation and adaptation with potential expansion to data and information transparency. The grant(s) will also support innovative start-up ideas generated from these competitions through prizes, mentorship, and coaching. Grantee(s) will be asked to develop various implementation approaches for the respective geographic areas they are responsible for managing. This will be achieved by forming strong partnerships with local civil society organizations (CSOs) to ensure comprehensive coverage across multiple provinces. Engaging these local CSOs will enhance community involvement and leverage local expertise, leading to more effective and sustainable project outcomes.

The grantee(s) will provide the required training course(s) on design thinking methodology and solution prioritization to enable Climathon participants to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical way. They will support Climathon participants to apply the methodology in ideating, prototyping, and testing solutions to challenges like inadequate water treatment, raw sewage effluents, and polluted landfills. Participants will learn how to use the methodology in an applied environment through a 3-to-5-day workshop to co-design new ideas for solutions to address the identified challenges. To ensure high attendance from the targeted

provinces, the selected grantee(s) will organize the training sessions in each province through engaging a local (provincial) partner. The Climathon will conclude with evaluation panels (comprising local accountability ecosystem actors, partners, and program staff) who will select up to three winners in each province according to pre-defined merit criteria. Each winner will receive in-kind prizes of up to IQD 2,640,000 each.

Winning teams will be invited to attend a one-day pitching competition to pitch their solution ideas for the chance to receive funding and longer-term design and testing support from Ma'an. The grantee(s) will pay for the pitching teams' trip (up to 3 representatives per team) for this competition. Teams will refine their early-stage ideas into a 3–5-minute pitch that will be judged by an evaluation panel. The grantee(s) will provide technical support to the teams to prepare them for this competition. Three winners at the final competition will receive additional in-kind prizes of different amounts with a total sum of IQD 13,200,000 (6,600,000, 3,960,000, 2,640,000). The grantee(s) will also provide technical support to the winners for further design, testing, and piloting efforts to explore the viability of their ideas.

Ma'an and local innovation ecosystem partners will support these teams through longer-term engagement if, and when, possible. Ma'an will facilitate "pipeline" relationships with local incubators so that the winners will have automatic (or fast tracked) acceptance into these other support networks. In this way, they will have ongoing support from local groups that will go beyond the life of the activity. The Ma'an team can also facilitate connections to potential funders and partners for the winners that can lead to follow on funding. Ma'an will also consider forming a network of champions with the winners that Ma'an will continue to work with after the life of the intervention. Ma'an will also collaborate, when possible, with relevant governmental entities to validate and support the implementation of the developed solutions.

The grantee(s) will provide a detailed timeline and action plan as well as detailed deliverables for each milestone. The entire implementation period should not exceed 5 months.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

- Engagement of youth, women, other underrepresented groups, and other ecosystem actors in finding solutions for local challenges.
- Networking among accountability ecosystem actors.
- Creating platforms for engagement and trust-building.
- Soliciting innovative and creative ideas to solve local service provision and community engagement issues.
- Providing in-kind support to a number of winning ideas to ensure kickstarting them or providing exposure to other donors and implementors.

### **ID. INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION:**

The grantee must actively promote and facilitate the involvement of underrepresented groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented communities, in all aspects of training, competitions, and pitching events. The grantee must ensure that representatives from these groups are meaningfully engaged in evaluation panels, as well as in the communication and outreach efforts of the

intervention. This approach aims to create a more equitable and diverse environment, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment for all participants.

## **IE. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS:**

Applicants have the flexibility to cover one province or multiple provinces, depending on their capacity and scope. Applicants are strongly encouraged to form partnerships with local entities to ensure comprehensive coverage across multiple provinces under a single grant application through a lead organization. The lead organization will be responsible for coordinating efforts, ensuring compliance, and delivering on the project's objectives across all designated regions.

- Mahmudiya and Adhamiya districts in Baghdad province
- Habbaniya and Ramadi districts in Anbar province
- Kufa and Najaf districts in Najaf province
- Zubair and Basrah districts in Basrah province
- Kut Center and Noamaniya districts in Wasit province
- Karbala Center and Hur districts in Karbala province

## **IF. MONITORING, EVALUATION, RESEARCH, LEARNING, AND ADAPTING (MERLA) REQUIREMENTS AND TARGETS TO BE ACHIEVED:**

Ma'an MERLA requirements, to be provided by applicants, include:

- 1- For each task, grantees are expected to list proposed success measures in the implementation plan which, as part of grant negotiation, will then be incorporated as part of milestones in the grant agreement.
- 2- For grant indicators, please refer to and complete Annex D.

## **IG. AUTHORITY/GOVERNING REGULATIONS**

Ma'an grant awards are made under the authority of the U.S. Foreign Affairs Act and USAID's Advanced Directive System (ADS) 302.3.5.6, "Grants Under Contracts." Awards will adhere to guidance provided under [ADS Chapter 303](#), "Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations" and will be within the terms of the USAID Standard Provisions as linked in the annexes, as well as the Ma'an grants procedures.

ADS 303 references two additional regulatory documents issued by the U.S. Government's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the U.S. Agency for International Development:

- 2 CFR 200 [Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Subpart E](#) (U.S. applicants are subject to 2 CFR 200 in its entirety)

Full text of 2 CFR 200 can be found at [http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl) and 2 CFR 700 at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=531ffcc47b660d86ca8bbc5a64eed128&mc=true&node=pt2.1.700&rgn=div5>. *Iraq Ma'an* is

required to ensure that all organizations receiving USAID grant funds comply with the guidance found in the regulations referenced above, as applicable to the respective terms and conditions of their grant awards.

Under the Ma'an grant program, USAID retains the right at all times to terminate, in whole or in part, Ma'an grant-making authorities.

## SECTION II. AWARD INFORMATION

Ma'an anticipates awarding one or more grants. The final grant amount will be dependent upon the proposed grant activities and final negotiations. Applicants are strongly encouraged to form partnerships with local entities to ensure comprehensive coverage across multiple provinces under a single grant application through a lead organization. The lead organization will be responsible for coordinating efforts, ensuring compliance, and delivering on the project's objectives across all designated regions. The duration of any grant award under this solicitation is expected to be no more than **five months**. The estimated start date of grants awarded under this solicitation is January 07, 2025.

## SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY

### IIIA. ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

- Applicants may only submit one application per prime organization under this RFA.
- Applicants must be a registered Iraqi organizations, local incubators or accelerators formally constituted, recognized by and in good standing with appropriate Federal Iraq authorities, and compliant with all applicable civil and fiscal regulations.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate successful past performance in implementation of integrated development programs related to Ma'an's priority areas.
- Applicants must have established outreach capabilities with linkages to the beneficiary group(s) identified in the program description. This should be reflected by the incorporation of the beneficiary perspective in the application.
- Applicants must display sound management in the form of financial, administrative, and technical policies and procedures and present a system of internal controls that safeguard assets; protect against fraud, waste, and abuse; and support the achievement of program goals and objectives. *Ma'an* will assess this capability prior to awarding a grant.
- Applicants must sign certain required certifications prior to receiving a grant. The certifications are attached to this solicitation (Annex E) and Ma'an will review them with applicants prior to the grant award.
- For any grant award(s) resulting from this solicitation equivalent to \$25,000 USD (IQD 33,000,000.0) or more, and has no anticipated subawards, grantees will be required to provide a **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)** at the time of award. If the applicant already has a UEI number, it should be included in their application. Otherwise, applicants will be expected to get a UEI number before an award is made. Ma'an will assist successful applicants with this process. More information on UEIs can be found [here](#). Any applicant requesting more than \$25,000, or whose cumulative funding exceeds this amount when combined with other USAID projects, will need to be vetted by Ma'an.
- The project will work with the successful grantee to draft a marking and branding plan which will be annexed to the grant agreement.
- Faith-based and community groups will receive equal opportunity for funding in accordance with the mandated guidelines laid out in ADS 303.3.28 except for faith-based organizations whose objectives

are for discriminatory and religious purposes, and whose main objective of the grant is of a religious nature.

Ma'an encourages applications from new organizations who meet the above eligibility criteria.

## SECTION IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### IVA. INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

Applicants must propose strategies for the implementation of the program description described above, introducing innovations that are appropriate to their organizational strengths.

#### IVA1. PRE-AWARD RISK ASSESSMENT

All organizations selected for the award are subject to a pre-award risk assessment conducted by Ma'an, to ascertain whether the organization has the minimum management capabilities required to handle US government funds.

#### IVA2. GRANT APPLICATION

Templates to be utilized when developing the grant application are provided in Annex A-D. Applicants shall present their technical application and budget in the formats provided and shall follow the instructions and guidelines listed in these annexes.

##### **Budget Narrative**

The budget notes/narratives should act as a justification that provides detailed estimated costs for implementing the activities listed in the technical application narrative. The combination of cost data and narrative must be sufficient to determine whether the estimated costs are reasonable.

The applicant should indicate if program funds come from other sources. To avoid double financing/billing, Ma'an will require full disclosure by all involved parties and will maintain contact with co-funders to verify their contributions. Budgeted amounts must also be supported by justification, and the applicant must be able to provide **such backup to Iraq Ma'an when requested.**

All grant activity costs must be within the normal operating practices of the Applicant and in accordance with its written policies and procedures. For applicants without an audited indirect cost rate, the budget may include direct costs that will be incurred by the Applicant to provide identifiable administrative and management costs that can be directly attributable to supporting the grant objective.

The application must be signed by an authorized agent of the Applicant.

#### IVA3. INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Ma'an grant funds may not be utilized for the following:

- Construction or infrastructure activities of any kind.
- Ceremonies, parties, celebrations, or "representation" expenses.

- Purchases of restricted goods, such as: restricted agricultural commodities, motor vehicles including motorcycles, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, contraceptive products, used equipment; without the previous approval of Ma'an, or prohibited goods, prohibited goods under USAID regulations, including but not limited to the following: abortion equipment and services, luxury goods, etc.
- Covered telecommunication and video surveillance equipment or services – per the standard provision entitled “Prohibition on Certain Telecommunication and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment”, grant funds including direct and indirect costs, cost share and program income may not be used to (1) procure or obtain; (2) extend or renew a contract to procure or obtain; or (3) enter into a contract (or extend or renew a contract) to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems that use covered telecommunications equipment or services (“CTES”) as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system. This prohibition covers certain telecommunications equipment and services, including, but not limited to, phones, internet, video surveillance, and cloud servers, produced or provided by Huawei Technologies Company, ZTE Corporation, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities) unless Ma'an has determined that there is no available alternate eligible source for the CTES. For fixed amount awards, this restriction is only applicable if any of the milestones are for telecommunication or video surveillance services or equipment.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Purchases of goods or services restricted or prohibited under the prevailing USAID source/ nationality (Cuba, Iran, North Korea and Syria).
- Any purchase or activity which has already been made.
- Purchases or activities unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by the Ma'an.
- Prior obligations of and/or, debts, fines, and penalties imposed on the Grantee.
- Creation of endowments.

#### **IVB. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Applications shall be submitted in English or Arabic, Applications (including the budget and supporting documentation) should be submitted in electronic copy to the Ma'an email address below and should reference “**RFA No. MAAN-RFA-2024-003 – Organization Name**”. Applications must be submitted no later than 23:59 local time, on November 24, 2024. Late or unresponsive applications will only be considered at the discretion of Iraq Ma'an.

The application package should be submitted to :

[IraqMaanSolicitations@iraqmaan.com](mailto:IraqMaanSolicitations@iraqmaan.com)

In addition to the application forms and budget (**Annex A – D**), applicants should submit the following to Ma'an:

- CVs of the Key Personnel
- A copy of the Applicant's valid legal registration
- Organization's Bank Account
- Tax clearance certificate, if applicable



- Audit Report and/or Annual Financial Statement

## SECTION V. APPLICATION MERIT REVIEW CRITERIA

All applications will be reviewed by an internal review panel comprised of Ma'an technical implementation staff.

Full applications will be evaluated against the merit review criteria in the table below.

#	Merit Review Category	Rating (Points)
1	Technical Approach, Innovation and Impact	60
2	Sustainability and Financial Viability	20
3	Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms	10
4	Organizational Capacity and Management	10
	<b>Overall Rating (out of 100 points)</b>	<b>100</b>

- A) Technical Approach, Innovation and Impact (60 points):** The quality and feasibility of the application are assessed based on the viability of the proposed technical approach, including methodology, innovativeness, and the implementation plan for achieving project objectives. The approach should produce significant impacts on equitable, efficient, and sustainable public services and improve government responsiveness to citizens' needs in Iraq. It must contribute to the Ma'an Program's expected results in governance, community engagement, and performance, measurable under one or more of the program's indicators mentioned in section I (Program Description). Both proven effective approaches and new promising ones are appraised, with a particular emphasis on robust and innovative methodologies. Integrating gender considerations as part of the technical approach is critical. Additionally, the proposed activity should align with the needs of the target group(s) and directly benefit them, bringing about meaningful and measurable change, and stimulating other organizations and resources to support Ma'an's objectives.
- B) Sustainability and Financial Viability (20 points):** This criterion evaluates the extent to which the funded activity will build and strengthen the capacity of the community and local organizations, ensuring sustainability or promoting organizational strengthening. The degree to which budgeting is allocated, cost-effectiveness of strategies, and the clarity and accuracy of the financial plan are also evaluated.
- C) Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms (10 points):** Applications should propose a plan for monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, going beyond the indicator mentioned in the RFA to track progress and results accurately. Please refer to Annex D.
- D) Organizational Capacity and Management (10 points):** Evidence of the organization's capability to undertake and accomplish the proposed activities. The application should demonstrate effectiveness in internal structure, technical capacity, and key personnel. Adequate financial

management capability is essential. Moreover, the evaluation focuses on the background, qualifications, reputation, appropriateness, and skills of key personnel, as well as the organization's track record, reputation, and achievements. The organization's previous or ongoing experience in implementing similar activities in the last 3-5 years is considered. *Ma'an team encourages capacity-building workshops to support organizations in managing expectations and transferring knowledge on working with the government and compliance issues. This support request can be included in the proposed budget, encouraging new partnerships and reaching a wider audience.*

Additionally, Ma'n will ensure environmental soundness and compliance in design and implementation as required by 22 CFR 216.

## SECTION VI. AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

All grants will be negotiated, denominated and funded **in Iraqi Dinars**. All costs funded by the grant must be allowable, allocable, and reasonable.

Issuance of this RFA and assistance with application development do not constitute an award or commitment on the part of Ma'an, nor does it commit Ma'an to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, Ma'an reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received and reserves the right to ask further clarifications from the offerors. Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision made regarding their application.

***In case of any discrepancy between the English and Arabic language versions, the English version shall prevail.***