



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
USAID/Armenia
Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE)**

Program/Project/Activity Data:

Activity/Project Name:	Promoting the human rights of LGBTI people in Armenian society		
Assistance Objective:	Reduce discrimination in policies, laws, societal norms, and practices by challenging the dominant discourse of inequality and institutionalized discriminatory practices against LGBT people in Armenia.		
Program Area:	Human Rights		
Country(ies) and/or Operating Unit:	Armenia/E&E		
Originating Office:	Democracy, Health and Social Reform Office	Date: May 11, 2016	
PAD Level IEE: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCN of Original RCE/IEE:	DCN:	
Supplemental IEE: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCN of Amendment(s):		
RCE/IEE Amendment: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
If Yes, Purpose of Amendment (AMD):			
DCN(s) of All Related EA/IEE/RCE/ER(s):			
Implementation Start/End:		LOP: June 2016 – May 2019	
Funding Amount:		LOP Amount: \$370,000	
Contract/Award Number (if known):	TBD		
IEE Expiration Date (if any):	May 2019	Reporting due dates (if any):	
Recommended Environmental Determination:			
Categorical Exclusion: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Determination: <input type="checkbox"/>		
Negative Determination: <input type="checkbox"/>	Deferral: <input type="checkbox"/>		
Additional Elements:			
Conditions: <input type="checkbox"/>	Local Procurement: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Government to Government: <input type="checkbox"/>	Donor Co-Funded: <input type="checkbox"/>		
Sustainability Analysis (included): <input type="checkbox"/>	Climate Change Vulnerability Analysis (included): <input type="checkbox"/>		

1. Project and Activity Description

1.1 Purpose and Scope of RCE: The purpose of this Activity level IEE is to analyze potential environmental impacts and to recommend environmental determination for promoting the human rights of LGBTI people in Armenian society (Activity) to reduce discrimination in policies, laws, societal norms, and practices by challenging the dominant discourse of inequality and institutionalized discriminatory practices against LGBT people in Armenia. The proposed Activity consists of technical assistance: surveys, trainings, and advocacy, and communication/public awareness campaigns.

1.2 Project Overview: The activity is initiated by “Public Information and Need of Knowledge” (herein after PINK Armenia) NGO and is designed by a working group composed of Armenian partner

organizations: Women’s Resource Centre NGO, Helsinki Association NGO, “New Generation” Humanitarian NGO, “Socioscope” Societal Research and Consultancy Centre and Bekum Democracy Support Centre NGO. The project intervention strategy is based on partner organizations’ expertise and LGBTI community needs assessments provided by them.

Overall objective of the activity is to reduce manifestations of discrimination in policies, laws, societal norms, and practices by challenging the dominant discourse of inequality and institutionalized discriminatory practices against LGBT people in Armenia, as well as by empowering LGBT individuals subjected to discrimination.

The specific objective of the activity is to advocate for the adoption and effective implementation of legal and political instruments that advance the application of human rights and equality standards in relation to sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex (intersex).

The project will lead to the creation of a strong network of CSOs working on LGBTI and/or general human rights, gender issues, or minority rights. A strong network of LGBTI HRDs/CSOs created as a result of the project will be ready to react effectively to any kind of human rights violation. The CSOs are expected to upscale their activities in order to prevent human rights violations or to provide viable remedies. At the same time, the action will contribute to a higher level of understanding of LGBTI human rights among different stakeholders and the general public through capacity development, studies, participatory planning of long-term advocacy strategy and awareness raising activities. All of this will contribute to better visibility and inclusion of LGBTI persons in Armenian society as well as by challenging and changing the mainstream discriminatory narrative on LGBTI. The key stakeholder groups of the action are CSOs, including LGBTI community organizations and LGBTI related organizations, focusing on those in Armenia. The action will further target law enforcement bodies, public figures, public defenders’ office, media and the general public.

The budget for the activity is \$370,000 and the expected life is 36 months.

Project Description: To fulfill the objectives of this project the following activities will be implemented.

Defined and illustrative activities under the Result— Long-term advocacy strategy for reducing homophobia and improving protection of HR/LGBTI rights being elaborated in Armenia.
1. Build internal skills and knowledge on effective strategies to perpetuate social change, particularly emphasizing strategic communication.
2. Draft social-historical study on sexuality and its forms of representation in the Armenian context.
3. Conduct a comprehensive study among decision and opinion makers to find out their attitude towards LGBTI issues, how to sensitize decision makers towards LGBTI issues, as well as their potential involvement in LGBTI rights protection sphere.
4. Advocate for national laws and policies to ensure that legal gender recognition, sex reassignment health care services are a quick, transparent and accessible process for all transgender people through litigation and evidence-based advocacy at national level, strategic litigations.
5. Monitoring the activities and attitude of MPs, Senior Government officials and Party leaderships on LGBTI issues.

Sub-result: Engage multiple members of civil society and other interested actors in the advocacy of reducing homophobia.

- a) Organization and implementation of public events on raising the awareness on sexuality related issues;
- b) Prepare and distribute social videos/animations on LGBTI-phobia with engaging different activists and opinion makers, online TV programs, as well as TV programs on LGBTI issues in different regional channels, participation to different talk shows in national TVs on LGBTI related issues;
- c) Raise the awareness of LGBT community on human rights, mechanisms of human rights protection and human rights protection bodies;
- d) Sensitize law enforcement and other relevant actors to LGBTI issues through educating authorities and decision makers, party speaker (spokesperson) about sexuality, gender to reach full acceptance of LGBT people and their rights protection, raise their competences in addressing the LGBT and discrimination issues;
- e) Communication with political parties and their youth branches; negotiate with them to engage the human rights issue as one of the core components in their agenda;
- f) Organize working meetings between law-enforcement bodies and LGBTI organizations and other CSOs, stakeholders.

2. Justification for Categorical Exclusion Determination

All activities under the Grant to PINK Armenia NGO to promote the human rights of LGBTI people in Armenian society will not have an effect on the natural or physical environment and are among the classes of activities listed in 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2). Therefore, under §216.2(c)(1), neither an IEE nor an EA will be required for these activities. Instead, a categorical exclusion threshold determination is recommended for the activities 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 under §216.2(c)(2)(xiv). Studies, trainings, advocacy campaigns and other activities aim to develop the capability of civil society organizations, public officials and other recipients to advocate for human rights protection of LGBTI people in Armenia and to reduce the level of homophobia in the Armenian society.

3. Limitations of the Categorical Exclusion Determination:

This categorical exclusion does not cover classes of actions normally having a significant effect on the environment under §216.2(d):

- i. Programs of river basin development;
- ii. Irrigation and water management;
- iii. Agricultural land leveling;
- iv. Drainage projects;
- v. Large scale agricultural mechanization;
- vi. Resettlement projects;
- vii. New land development;
- viii. Penetration road building and road improvement;
- ix. Powerplants;
- x. Industrial plants; and
- xi. Potable water and sewerage projects

In addition, this categorical exclusion does not cover activities that:

- Support project preparation, project feasibility studies, engineering design for activities listed in §216.2(d)(1);
- Affect endangered species ;
- Provide support to extractive industries (e.g. mining and quarrying);
- Promote timber harvesting;
- Lead to construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or renovation work;

- Support agro-processing or industrial enterprises;
- Provide support for regulatory permitting;
- Lead to privatization of industrial facilities or infrastructure with heavily polluted property;
- Assist the procurement (including payment in kind, donations, guarantees of credit) or use (including handling, transport, fuel for transport, storage, mixing, loading, application, clean-up of spray equipment, and disposal) of pesticides or activities involving procurement, transport, use, storage, or disposal of toxic materials--pesticides cover all insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, etc. covered under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act; and/or
- Procure or use genetically modified organisms.

Any of these actions would require a Europe and Eurasia Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO) approved amendment to the categorical exclusion.

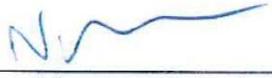
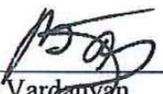
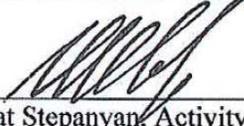
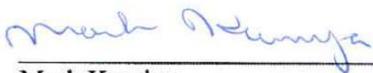
4. Mandatory Inclusion of Environmental Compliance Requirements in Solicitations, Awards, Budgets, and Work Plans

- Appropriate environmental compliance language, including limitations defined in Section 4, shall be incorporated into solicitations and awards for categorical exclusions.
- The implementing partner shall ensure annual work plans do not prescribe activities that are defined as limitations in Section 4.

5. Revisions

Under §216.3(a)(9), if new information becomes available that indicates that activities covered by the categorical exclusion might be considered major and their effect significant, or if additional activities are proposed that might be considered major and their effect significant, this categorical exclusion determination will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the Mission Environmental Officer (MEO) with concurrence by the BEO. It is the responsibility of the USAID Contract Officer’s Representative (COR)/Agreement Officer’s Representative (AOR) to keep the MEO and BEO informed of any new information or changes in the activity that might require revision of this determination.

6. Recommended Determination for Categorical Exclusion Clearances:

Approval:	 _____ Naren Chanmugam, Acting Mission Director	<u>May 19, 2016</u> Date
Clearance:	 _____ Marina Vardanyan, Mission Environmental Officer	<u>May 19, 2016</u> Date
Clearance:	 _____ Tatshat Stepanyan, Activity Manager	<u>May 19, 2016</u> Date
Concurrence	 _____ Mark Kamiya E&E Bureau Environmental Officer	<u>05/19/2016</u> Date

Distribution:

IEE File
MEO (to also provide a copy to AOR/COR)