



NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC
INSTITUTE
FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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Washington, DC 20001

**Request for Proposal: Social and Behavioral Change
Research & Intervention Design**

Issued: January 19, 2024

Responses Due: February 12, 2024 by 6:00 pm ET

Vendors may email questions and responses to the following: Jessie Steinhauer at jsteinhauer@ndi.org and/or Maleeha Coleburn at mcoleburn@ndi.org

I. About NDI

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that works in partnership around the world to strengthen and safeguard democratic institutions, processes, norms and values to secure a better quality of life for all. NDI envisions a world where democracy and freedom prevail, with dignity for all.

NDI receives grants and cooperative agreements to pursue its mission from U.S. Federal agencies, including the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of State (DOS), as well as grants and service contracts from private and international donors such as the United Nations Development Fund, the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank, among others.

Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to establish and strengthen political and civic organizations, safeguard elections and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. NDI works on five continents with political parties, governments, parliaments and civic groups to establish and strengthen democratic institutions and practices. The Institute uses a multinational approach that reinforces the message that while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies. That philosophy has been applied in more than 132 countries since NDI's founding. NDI has been a pioneer in the use of technology as an integral component of democratic development. The Institute has helped citizens create and refine tools to advocate, organize and mobilize in ways that encourage governments to be more accountable and create opportunities for citizen-led social and political change.

II. Introduction

The National Democratic Institute is conducting a program to improve the design and impact of democracy and governance programs in contexts at risk of violent extremism through the development and socialization of evidence-based social and behavioral change tools and resources that promote pluralistic and sustained youth mobilization in P/CVE.

Background:

The marginalization and exclusion of youth by political elites and institutions is a key driver of violent extremism. As such, P/CVE programs that effectively mobilize pluralistic youth participation within vulnerable communities and at the national level are critical to reducing the

appeal of violent extremist voices and ideologies.¹ However, these programs are unlikely to achieve sustainable and transformative outcomes without tackling the behaviors and norms that reinforce systems of youth exclusion, particularly young people from the most at-risk and marginalized identities, such as individuals from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, ethnic and religious minorities, persons with disabilities, and women and gender-diverse communities. These exclusionary norms and behaviors are reinforced and influenced by the perceptions, attitudes, and stereotypes that political elites hold about young people, and that young people hold about themselves, particularly young people of diverse identities. Therefore, effective P/CVE initiatives must better understand and encourage normative and behavioral changes that lower barriers and open decision-making spaces and avenues for pluralistic and sustained youth participation.

To foster more effective P/CVE, NDI will develop evidence-based social and behavioral change tools and interventions that can be integrated into a broad range of democracy and governance programs in contexts at risk for violent extremism. Case study research in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo will be used to inform the design and testing of a framework and tools. The case studies will examine the prevailing stereotypes, perceptions, norms, and behaviors that prevent sustained and pluralistic youth mobilization in decision-making processes to prevent and counter violent extremism. The tools and interventions will be piloted and tested in the case study countries before their broader dissemination across the Institute and with democracy assistance practitioners.

III. Scope of Work

The National Democratic Institute seeks a research firm, hereafter referred to as the Vendor, to support the development of evidence-based social and behavior change (SBC) tools and approaches that enhance preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) outcomes by promoting pluralistic and sustained youth political participation.² This is part of a cross-regional program that aims to 1) build an evidence base and theoretical model that identifies the prevailing stereotypes, norms, and behaviors that inhibit young people's pluralistic mobilization in the prevention of violent extremism and other types of violence that are contributing to violent

¹ Sommers, Marc, "Youth and the Field of Countering Violent Extremism," *Promundo*, 2019, pgs. 12-13 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331961090_Youth_and_the_Field_of_Countering_Violent_Extremism Human Rights Council, Human Rights Impacts of Politics and Practices Aimed at Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, Forty-Third Session, 2020, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3872336>, p 8; Van Metre, Lauren, and Linda Bishai, "Why Violent Extremism Still Spreads," *Just Security*, <https://www.justsecurity.org/63169/violent-extremism-spreads/>

² NDI defines social and behavior change approaches as activities and/or interventions seeking to influence the voluntary behavior of a population by addressing the factors facilitating or blocking a behavior that improves lives. Social and behavior change approaches apply interactive, theory-based, and research-driven behavioral insights and evidence to effect sustainable behavior change at the individual, community, and societal levels. As defined in the *Practitioner's Guide: Using Social and Behavior Change to Increase Youth Leadership and Political Participation* (Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening, 2022).

extremist risk (such as inter-ethnic, online, etc.); 2) develop a practical, accessible assessment tool that helps practitioners identify the core exclusionary perceptions, norms, and behaviors in a given context; and 3) develop and test evidence-based SBC interventions that promote pluralistic youth mobilization and meaningful participation in P/CVE community and civic processes. The Vendor would work with the Institute to design and conduct case study research in two countries, Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo, to design practical, evidence-based SBC tools and approaches that foster normative and behavioral changes that enhance pluralistic and sustained youth mobilization and participation in P/CVE. Based on the findings and lessons learned, NDI will develop programmatic guidance to support democracy and governance practitioners in designing and implementing SBC approaches and interventions in diverse contexts at risk for violent extremism.

Purpose

The Vendor will develop SBC tools and resources to better equip NDI staff and democracy assistance practitioners in designing and delivering SBC approaches that integrate into diverse democracy and governance programs. The SBC tools and resources will be specifically designed to promote greater understanding and foster normative and behavioral changes that promote sustained and pluralistic youth mobilization and political participation in contexts at risk of violent extremism.

The Vendor will design and oversee research conducted by and in consultation with in-country research firms, consultants, and/or NDI staff members. The case studies will analyze and catalog the prevailing stereotypes, attitudes, and beliefs among the target population. The research will also identify the core norms and behaviors, and the underlying stereotypes, attitudes, and beliefs held by and about youth, that perpetuate barriers and inhibit opportunities for sustained and pluralistic youth mobilization and participation in P/CVE. The findings from the case studies will be used to develop a theoretical framework, assessment tool, and intervention inputs, including a monitoring and evaluation logic model, that can be readily adapted and integrated into democracy and governance programming in contexts at risk for violent extremism. The Vendor will oversee the administration of the assessment tool in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo and small-scale testing of the intervention inputs.

Anticipated deliverables include the following:

Theoretical Framework: A framework that demonstrates how stereotypes, norms, and behaviors interact to create opportunities and barriers for pluralistic youth mobilization and participation in order to promote community resilience and the prevention of the drivers of violent extremist recruitment, including ethnic and religious-based violence, political violence, and online extremism. The framework should categorize and link the different stereotypes and norms, and the associated exclusionary power dynamics and behaviors. The framework would be informed

by the Vendor's history of work, P/CVE literature on youth engagement and programming, and NDI programming, specifically youth P/CVE and civic and political participation programming in relevant countries. The framework would be refined and finalized through the case study research.

Case Study Research: The Vendor will design a research methodology, data collection tools (questionnaire, focus group guides, surveys, etc.) and oversee the administration of case study research in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo in collaboration with NDI in-country staff and/or local researchers who will provide input and perform the data collection. The research would be conducted in areas where NDI has ongoing programming or long-standing connections to provide support for logistics and research. In Cote d'Ivoire, these cities include Bongouanou, Dabou, M'Bahiakro, and Gagnoa. In Kosovo, the target areas would be determined in collaboration with NDI following the design of the research methodology.

The Vendor will design a research methodology and oversee the administration of case study research in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo to identify and categorize the determinants and decision-making pathways that influence the behaviors that inhibit or promote ethnic and religious pluralism among youth in contexts at risk for violent extremism. In each context, the research would identify which drivers are most relevant for the target behavior(s), determine any causality in the relationships between the drivers, and identify different stages in the emergence or maintenance of core behaviors. In particular, the research should examine the political elite power dynamics that manipulate or create barriers and opportunities for pluralistic youth participation and the in-group youth dynamics that reinforce or perpetuate marginalization and exclusion. The research should also explore the stereotypes, attitudes, and perceptions that influence the core behaviors.

The research, which would be conducted in close collaboration with NDI in-country staff and/or local researchers, would further inform and validate the youth pluralism behavioral change model, identify a global theory of change, and the development of an assessment tool to support localized research and SBC intervention design in other programmatic contexts. NDI has staff and research partners based in all localities under study in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo, who have familiarity with local dynamics and stakeholders, and who will be engaged with as resources for this project. The Vendor should provide a plan for engaging local staff and researchers in the research methods and design, while ensuring a rigorous, standardized approach to data collection and analysis across teams. The Vendor should also discuss its capacity building approaches, including evaluating local research capacity and offering targeted training.

Training & Co-Creation Workshop(s): As necessary, the Vendor will conduct two or more training sessions in each country and provide coaching and guidance to in-country NDI teams and/or local research consultants or firms on data collection techniques and research ethics,

including trauma-aware and gender-sensitive research methods. In addition, the Vendor will facilitate workshop(s) with local researchers and in-country NDI teams to validate and adapt the research methodology and data collection tools and plan.

Comprehensive SBC Report: The Vendor will produce a comprehensive report of the case study methodology and analysis of the findings. In addition to identifying the core exclusionary behaviors and norms that inhibit pluralistic and sustained youth mobilization in P/CVE and the corresponding attitudes, stereotypes, or beliefs, the report should present the theory of change and map intervention opportunities and strategies.

Social and Behavior Change Assessment Tool: Informed by the youth pluralism framework and case studies, the Vendor will design a practical, evidence-based assessment tool, which will be piloted and tested in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo. The tool would support localized research by democracy and governance practitioners and civil society partners to identify the basic decision-making pathways that influence a target behavior related to ethnic and religious pluralism among youth.

The tool would highlight the primary behavior of interest and identify and prioritize the most influential (individual, societal, structural) behavioral determinants and drivers at play for that behavior and within the local context. The Vendor will train NDI in-country staff and/or local researchers in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo to administer the tool and will refine the tool based on the evaluation.

SBC Interventions & M&E: The Vendor will design targeted social and behavior change prototype interventions or tools that can be modified and integrated into democracy and governance programming to advance inclusive youth participation and strengthen community pluralism in contexts at risk of violent extremism. Practitioners should be able to use the youth pluralism model, the assessment tool, and a standard monitoring and evaluation framework to design and adapt the interventions to a specific behavior and relevant drivers of that behavior in their context, given programming objectives and resources. The Vendor will develop a terms of reference for each activity that describes the methodology, agenda, participant criteria, and resource materials. The Vendor will also develop a corresponding global theory of change, monitoring and evaluation logic framework, and standard indicators to equip NDI staff and civil society partners in monitoring and evaluating the results and outcomes.

SBC Guidance: A practical, global guidance document for NDI staff and civil society partners on how to adapt and incorporate the SBC model, assessment tool, interventions, and M&E into democracy and governance programming.

Presentations & Debrief Sessions: The Vendor will present the findings at a maximum of two Institute-sponsored discussion session with relevant experts and debrief and evaluation session(s) with in-country NDI teams and case study researchers. NDI will provide input and feedback on the presentation outline.

Small-Scale Testing of Interventions: The Vendor will design and oversee small-scale testing of the SBC interventions in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo before they are scaled up and piloted in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo in follow-on programming. Potential activities could include feedback sessions with NDI in-country staff, local stakeholders, and/or expert practitioners.

Time Frame

This program is operating under a compressed timeline. The deliverables outlined in the scope of work must be completed by October 31, 2024.

IV. Proposal Guidelines and Submission Process

Potential vendors should submit a written proposal to NDI by the deadline for full consideration. Proposals should include the following:

- Vendor Proposed Approach, Background and Qualifications (maximum 8 pages)
 - Proposed approach for completing the SOW, including a description of a proposed plan to facilitate and oversee the administration of the in-country case study research;
 - General information and background on the Vendor, including CVs of key personnel, an organizational/corporate profile;
 - A description of the Vendor's expertise and experience with related work and/or experience in the regions of focus;
 - A list of previous projects with a similar scope;
 - Any other major contractual commitments that would prevent reasonable completion of any deliverables during the performance period; and
 - At least two references for past work or similar engagements.
- Budget
 - Daily rates for each individual proposed to support this RFP and any other costs;
 - Personal and estimated level of effort (number of days) and total cost to complete each of the deliverables identified in the table in Annex 1.
- Sample Resource Materials (3 different materials max):
 - Samples of training agendas or other resource materials on past deliverables that illustrate the Vendor's expertise in the subject matter.
- Disclosure Requirements

- Bidders must provide disclosure of any known past, present or future relationships with any parties associated with NDI. For example, applicants should disclose if a member of their Board is also a member of NDI's Board currently or in the past. The bidder also certifies that the prices offered were arrived at independently and without the purpose of restricting competition with other offerers, including but not limited to subsidiaries and that prices have not been and will not be knowingly disclosed to any other offerer unless required by law. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in NDI having to re-evaluate the selection of a potential bid.

V. Criteria for Vendor Selection

NDI will evaluate bids based on the Vendor's ability to meet the description of services needed within the stated time frame, experience, and price. Preference is given to Vendors that can effectively demonstrate expertise and an established history of work designing and conducting SBC research activities in culturally diverse and conflict-affected contexts. Potential Vendors should demonstrate expertise in applying research to develop practical and accessible SBC tools and interventions. In addition, proposals will be evaluated with a focus on the stated ability to meet the timetable while maintaining a high degree of integrity in the design and oversight of the research activities.

NDI may request meetings or calls to discuss proposals and reserves the right to reject any and all bids. NDI reserves the right to consider bids for modification at any time before a contract is awarded. NDI is not liable for any costs associated with the preparation, transmittal, or presentation materials submitted in response to the RFP. NDI makes no certification as to the accuracy of any item and is not responsible or liable for any reliance on or use of the information or for any claims asserted therefrom. If the execution of work to be performed by a vendor requires the hiring of subcontractors, the vendor must clearly state this in their proposal. NDI will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors, however, NDI retains the right to refuse the subcontractors selected by a vendor. Bids are expected to be valid for up to six months from the publication date of the RFP. Please note that selected vendor(s) would be expected to use NDI's standard contract template, a copy of which is available upon request.

All final proposals should be submitted via email to Jessie Steinhauer at jsteinhauer@ndi.org and/or Maleeha Coleburn at mcoleburn@ndi.org (same as above) at the National Democratic Institute by **6:00 pm ET on February 12, 2024**.

Annex 1

Deliverable	Purpose & Illustrative Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth Pluralism Behavioral Change Framework 	<p>A behavioral change conceptual framework that maps out the drivers of behavior, including cognitive/emotional, social, and structural factors, that promote or inhibit ethnic and religious pluralistic youth participation in contexts at risk of violent extremism.</p> <p>Incorporating insights from neuroscience, psychological, behavioral science, and the social sciences, the framework will categorize and present the relationships between the individual, societal, and structural forces that influence core behaviors related to youth pluralistic participation. The framework will depict the various determinants or drivers of individual and collective behaviors that inhibit or promote pluralistic youth participation.</p> <p>Rather than being prescriptive, the model would serve as a tool that democracy and governance practitioners can use to understand the type of system they are operating in and to begin to think through the levels of intervention, including a theory of change, expected results, stakeholders, and content, when designing social and behavior change approaches and activities to promote pluralistic youth participation and mobilization. The specific design and adaptation of social and behavior change approaches and interventions would follow localized research and testing.</p> <p>Potential activities include desk research, a review of a landscape assessment/literature review, a review of relevant NDI youth, P/CVE, and civic and political participation programming in select regions, and targeted interviews or facilitated discussions with NDI staff and/or external experts.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Case Study Research Methodology and Administration (Cote d'Ivoire 	<p>The Vendor will design a research methodology and oversee the administration of case study research in Cote d'Ivoire and Kosovo to identify and categorize the determinants and decision-making pathways that influence the behaviors that inhibit or promote ethnic and religious pluralism among youth in contexts at risk for violent</p>

and Kosovo)

extremism. In each context, the research would identify which drivers are most relevant for the target behavior(s), determine any causality in the relationships between the drivers, and identify different stages in the emergence or maintenance of core behaviors. In particular, the research should examine the political elite power dynamics that manipulate or create barriers and opportunities for pluralistic youth participation and the in-group youth dynamics that reinforce or perpetuate marginalization and exclusion. The research should also explore the stereotypes, attitudes, and perceptions that influence the core behaviors.

The research, which would be conducted in close collaboration with NDI in-country staff and/or local researchers, would further inform and validate the youth pluralism behavioral change framework, identify a global theory of change, and support the development of an assessment tool to facilitate localized research and SBC intervention design in other programmatic contexts.

Potential activities include developing a research methodology and data collection tools, which may include surveys, focus group discussion guides, and/or key informant interview questionnaires. This also includes coordinating and overseeing the implementation of data collection missions, conducted by in-country researchers, and ensuring quality and integrity in the data received. This would likely include developing data collection plans, timelines, reviewing and/or providing guidance on the hiring and/or training of in-country researchers/data collectors and/or NDI staff, and providing guidance and troubleshooting data collection challenges.

In addition, this would likely include designing and delivering training workshop(s) for NDI staff and/or in-country research teams to support the effective administration of the case study research. The specific topics covered in the trainings would be finalized based on the final research methodology and the needs identified in discussion with NDI country teams and in-country researchers but should at a minimum include:

- Data collection protocols, techniques and coaching;
- Research ethics;
- Data storage and confidentiality methods;
- Do No Harm and conflict-sensitive research methods;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Trauma-aware research methods; and ● Gender-sensitive research methods. <p>The training workshops with in-country teams and partners should also include opportunities to validate and adapt the methodology and data collection tools to the local context.</p> <p>This deliverable also includes the development of a comprehensive analytical report that comparatively analyzes the case study findings as well as any desk research on relevant comparable examples to identify cross-cutting exclusionary behaviors and norms that inhibit pluralistic and sustained youth participation and mobilization and the corresponding attitudes, stereotypes, or beliefs. The report should also present a refined theory of change, map intervention opportunities and strategies, and issue initial recommendations for SBC interventions/tools that can be adapted and integrated into democracy and governance programming. The report will inform the finalization of the youth pluralism framework, an assessment tool, and the design of SBC interventions and tools. NDI in-country staff and/or local researchers will contribute data from the case studies. The Vendor will provide opportunities for NDI staff and/or local researchers to provide input and validate the draft report.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social and Behavior Change Assessment Tool 	<p>An evidence-based, practical assessment tool (such as a questionnaire, focus group guides, and/or community exercises) that can be adapted and administered in diverse contexts to inform the design and integration of SBC approaches and interventions into democracy and governance programs.</p> <p>Building on the Youth Pluralism Behavioral Change Framework, the assessment tool would support localized formative research to identify the basic decision-making pathways that influence a given behavior/situation related to pluralistic youth participation. The tool would help democracy and governance practitioners identify the primary behavior of interest and identify and prioritize the most influential (individual, societal, structural) behavioral determinants and drivers at play for that behavior and within the local context. Practitioners would use this information to design and implement social and behavior change interventions in their programs to influence the key behavioral drivers. The tool would also help practitioners</p>

	<p>establish a baseline on the key drivers to track and evaluate progress and change over time.</p> <p>NDI in-country staff and/or local researchers will pilot and test the assessment tool in target communities in Cote d’Ivoire and Kosovo. The Vendor will provide guidance and oversee the testing to capture robust feedback. The Vendor will refine and update the assessment tool based on the feedback.</p>
<p>12. Assessment Tool Training</p>	<p>Training workshop(s) to support the piloting of the SBC assessment tool in target localities in Cote d’Ivoire and Kosovo. Specific topics are subject to change but could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feedback sessions to refine and finalize the assessment tool; ● Survey administration data collection protocols, techniques and coaching; ● Research ethics; ● Data storage and confidentiality methods; ● Do No Harm and conflict-sensitive research methods; ● Trauma-aware research methods; and ● Gender-sensitive research methods.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SBC Strategies & Interventions 	<p>A minimum of two social and behavior change prototype interventions or tools that can be modified and broadly integrated into democracy and governance programming that aims to advance inclusive youth participation and strengthen community pluralism in contexts at risk of violent extremism. Each activity should include a terms of reference that describes the methodology, agenda, target audience criteria, and a monitoring and evaluation framework. Each activity should be accompanied by the relevant resource materials (e.g. discussion/facilitation guide, evaluation form, or group exercise guide). In addition, the terms of reference should describe a global theory of change, monitoring and evaluation logic framework, and include several standard indicators that can be modified to different contexts and objectives to support NDI staff and civil society partners in monitoring and evaluating the results of the social and behavior change interventions.</p> <p>The prototype social and behavior change interventions will be informed by the Youth Pluralism Behavioral Change Framework, case study research, and assessment tool findings. The activities should be</p>

	<p>designed to target perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs that influence common behavior(s) that inhibit or enable ethnic and religious pluralism among youth. Depending on the findings and need, the activities should be designed to promote change at the individual or societal levels. The activities will ultimately be determined by the research but some illustrative examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and mass media campaigns, such as radio or theater shows or strategic communication campaigns. - Role-specific workshops/training to identify and shift internal beliefs and biases and behaviors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Global Youth Pluralism Social and Behavior Change Guidance Document 	<p>A maximum 30-page document with practical, globally-applicable guidance and recommendations for NDI staff and civil society partners on how to design and integrate social and behavior change approaches and interventions into democracy and governance programs to promote pluralistic and sustained youth mobilization and participation, particularly in contexts at risk of or experiencing violent extremism. The content should be finalized based on the outcomes of the previous deliverables, but should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2-5 page presentation and description of the Youth Pluralism Behavioral Change Framework; ● 2-5 page presentation and description of the SBC Assessment Tool; ● Guidance on adapting and administering the assessment tool and how to use the results to design appropriate SBC strategies and activities; ● 2-8 page presentation and description of the SBC activities or tools; ● 1-2 page description of a global theory of change; ● 1-2 page monitoring and evaluation logic framework, and several appropriate standard indicators; and ● Best practices and common challenges in designing and implementing social and behavior change approaches and interventions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small-scale Testing Plans 	<p>Small-scale testing plans to evaluate and refine the prototype SBC interventions and tools before they are scaled up and piloted in Cote d’Ivoire and Kosovo in follow-on programming. Potential activities could include feedback sessions with NDI in-country staff, local stakeholders, and/or expert practitioners. The Vendor would develop</p>

	the plans, coordinate the implementation of the small-scale tests in collaboration with NDI in-country staff, and evaluate the results.
● Presentations	2 Virtual presentations of the research findings and intervention strategies and tools. NDI would support the organization and facilitation of these activities. Potential activities may include internal presentations and debrief and evaluation sessions with the NDI case study in-country teams and researchers and other NDI teams and public roundtable discussion with expert practitioners.