

REFORMED ELECTIONS FOR ENHANCED DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSION (REDI)  
PROGRAMME

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (RFEOI)

<b>Reference Number</b>	REDI/RfEOI/2026
<b>Date of Issue</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2026
<b>EOI Submission Deadline</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
<b>Closing Time:</b>	5:00 PM (East Africa Time)
<b>Proposed Counties of Focus</b>	Nairobi, Kajiado, Kiambu, Uasin Gishu, Trans Nzoia, Nakuru, Kericho, Kisumu, Homabay, Kisii, Mombasa, Isiolo, Marsabit, Garissa, Mandera, Nyeri, Laikipia and Bungoma.

### Introduction

Act Change Transform (Act!) is implementing the Reformed Elections for Enhanced Democracy and Inclusion (REDI) Programme (November 2025 – October 2028), which is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) through the Embassy of Sweden in Kenya. In Kenya, Sida ([www.sida.se/en](http://www.sida.se/en)) contributes to increased resilience to climate crises and reduced environmental degradation, democratic development and increased respect for human rights, gender equality and economic development for the benefit of all people.

Act! is a leading Kenyan Public Benefit Organisation (PBO) focused on enhancing the capacity and resilience of individuals and communities, empowering them to actively participate in decision-making and in managing their own development. Act! work is anchored in three core programming areas: **i) Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation; ii) Responsive, Inclusive and Accountable Governance; and iii) Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Governance.**

The REDI Programme aims to contribute to a stable and inclusive Kenya with trusted democratic institutions and citizens enjoying their rights. The envisaged outcomes and intermediate results are:

REDI Outcomes	Key Focus Areas
<p>1. <b>Outcome 1:</b> National Cohesion and Stability Maintained.</p> <p>2. <b>Outcome 2:</b> Electoral Institutions and Stakeholder Engagement Structures Strengthened.</p> <p>3. <b>Outcome 3:</b> Citizens' Participation in the 2027 Elections Enhanced.</p> <p>4. <b>Outcome 4:</b> Elections Monitoring and Observation Strengthened</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Cohesion</u> - Support to political violence early warning systems to minimise risks of politically instigated violence &amp; promote cohesion.</li> <li>• <u>Trust Building</u> - Facilitate trust building between citizens and the election institutions.</li> <li>• <u>Election Integrity</u> - Enhance the integrity of the elections among political competitors.</li> <li>• <u>Inclusion &amp; Participation</u> - Youth, women, PWDs, and special groups effectively participate in the key electoral and democratic processes.</li> <li>• <u>Civic &amp; Voter Education</u> - Access to credible electoral information, countering of mis/disinformation.</li> </ul>

### Request for Project Expression of Interest & Submissions

Act! is inviting interested entities, national and sub-national civil society organizations (NGOs, CBOs, and other local non-profit organizations) to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for innovative and viable projects and/or initiatives that would contribute to the REDI outcomes and results described in this document.

The applicants must be registered or domiciled in Kenya, working nationally or in any of the proposed counties of focus. The county-based organizations must have a strong local presence in the community and already be implementing grassroots-based initiatives to address electoral conflicts or enhance electoral outcomes.

The issuance of this EOI does not constitute a commitment by Act! or the funding organisation to award sub-grants. Furthermore, Act! makes no commitment to reimburse applicants for costs incurred in responding to this EOI call. Participation in and response to this Request for EOI is solely at the expense of the applicants. Act! is also not obliged to provide reasons for its decision regarding the outcome of this EOI process.

## Pre-requisites

- 1) Appropriate legal registration in Kenya.
- 2) Presence nationally or in the County/ies of interest.
- 3) Demonstrate that they have an active board and/or oversight committee.
- 4) Physical office in the County or Sub-County of interest.
- 5) Participation in this expression of interest process.

## Capabilities

- 1) Experience in implementing sub-grants (projects) nationally or in the relevant County/ies, with demonstrable human resource capacity to implement sub-grants.
- 2) Experience in the design and implementation of women and/or youth-centred programmes.
- 3) Demonstrable potential for programming focused on electoral management initiatives and multi-stakeholder coordination. Membership of and/or working experience with the peace actors or other CSO networks would be an added advantage.
- 4) Recognised ability to comply with good programmatic, financial, and administrative practices (statutory and donor audits).
- 5) Experience and capacity in financial management and the management of and accounting for donor sub-grant funding.
- 6) Proven record in community citizens/engagement.

Applicants must demonstrate that they are legally registered and have experience working nationally or in the priority focus counties- demonstrating capacity and presence in the county(ies) of choice. The proposed projects and interventions must directly advance REDI's main objective: a stable, inclusive Kenya with trusted democratic institutions and citizens exercising their rights.

## Background information

Despite democratic gains since the 2013 General Election under the 2010 Constitution, Kenya has continued to experience setbacks in electoral processes, pluralism, civic space, and the proper functioning of electoral institutions. A substantial decline in trust in government institutions, from 58% in 2017 to 44% in 2022, serves as evidence of this trend. Reduced public trust in institutions has deepened apathy in electoral and political processes, as evidenced by the 2022 post-election reports from the IEBC and independent election observers.

Public participation in electoral and political processes, as measured by voter turnout, declined from 85% in 2013 to 80% in 2017 and 65% in 2022. Youth turnout hit an all-time low of 40% in the 2022 elections, likely due to inadequate public information, the erosion of information integrity amidst the spread of social media, and the ineffectiveness of CSOs in amplifying citizens' voices and fostering robust civic engagement. Special Interest Groups (SIGs), including women, youth, persons with disabilities, minority and marginalised groups, and the elderly, have been left behind in electoral and political processes. Women hold 23% of seats in the national assembly, while youth occupy less

than 6.5% of all elective positions. Of the more than 600 persons with disabilities who were candidates in the 2022 elections, only 7 (about 1%) were elected.

Despite recent youth protests and social media campaigns demanding government accountability and reforms, voter registration turnout under the IEBC has fallen short of expectations, underscoring the need for greater youth mobilisation to ensure electoral participation and the exercise of their democratic rights.

The limited inclusion of Special Interest Groups (SIGs), women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and other minority groups can be attributed to unfavourable socio-cultural norms and a political landscape skewed against SIGs. There is a need to address these issues through strategic investments, invigorating the electorate and strengthening advocacy efforts to help reverse the decline and achieve better outcomes for women, youth, PWDs, and minority groups.

An EU Election Follow-up Mission (EU EFM) to Kenya in 2025 assessed progress on electoral reforms and the implementation status of recommendations from the EU Election Observation Mission 2022 (EU EOM 2022). The report noted a lack of tangible progress in implementing the recommendations from the EU EOM in 2022. These recommendations included, among others, providing sufficient funding to the IEBC for ongoing voter education and implementing improvements in electoral technology through regular audits and stakeholder consultation. The observers had also vouched for operationalising the Election Campaign Financing Act to effectively regulate campaign expenditures, and for detailing the legal definition of hate speech in line with international human rights obligations.

Although the IEBC has been commended for its effective preparations and conduct of the recent by-elections, stakeholders have documented worrying signs as Kenya prepares for the 2027 elections. The by-elections were marked by significant violence, with the Kenya National Human Rights Commission (KNHRC) reporting human rights abuses, including three deaths, several serious injuries, destruction of property, cyber harassment and online bullying, illegal digital postings, open bribery, youth voter apathy, and the involvement of government and state officials in campaigns. Regarding the IEBC's election preparedness, concerns have been raised about the need for reforms in secretariat management, greater transparency in procurement processes, and thorough due diligence on electoral equipment.

Given the above, there is an urgent need for timely and robust support to safeguard public trust in elections as the legitimate mechanism for democratic transfer of power. Technical assistance to electoral stakeholders will be crucial in strengthening preparedness, protecting electoral integrity, and fostering more inclusive civic engagement.

## Indicative Theme/Outcome Areas

Selected applicants are expected to co-create and implement locally led activities that will contribute to enhanced citizens engagement & participation, peaceful campaigns & elections, inclusivity, effective collaboration between and among diverse stakeholders (including electoral bodies, citizens, civic and community groups, security agencies, media, and the private sector, etc.). Applicants may propose initiatives with a focus on one or more of the four themes or outcomes indicated below:

- 1) **National cohesion and stability:** Community cohesion and respect for the rule of law; National and county actors conducting electoral conflict mitigation and dispute resolution; reduction in election-related violence; building and strengthening EWER frameworks for social cohesion.
- 2) **Strengthening electoral institutions and stakeholder engagement structures:** Technical Assistance (TA) to IEBC on the 2027 elections operations plan, and media engagement; Reconstituting and capacity building of the Judiciary Committee on Elections; Providing Technical Assistance to Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP), Independent Policing and Oversight Authority (IPOA), Political Parties Dispute Tribunal (PPDT); Addressing pending electoral legal reforms, including electoral campaign financing.
- 3) **Citizens' participation in the 2027 elections:** Mobilising citizens to acquire identification documents and register as voters and candidates; Using Tech platforms, including new media, to harness citizens' voices, mobilise and engage and using media, digital tools, and channels for civic and voter education; civic education and election observation by CSOs; conducting advocacy for election reforms and independence of oversight institutions.
- 4) **Elections monitoring and observation:** Monitoring and reporting violence and other human rights violations; Media monitoring and support for balanced messaging and reporting; and conducting election observation.

These thematic areas are meant to guide Applicants as they prepare their EOI submissions. Further, Applicants are notified that in selecting the activities to implement, they should be guided by the context in which they will implement their various projects; as such, ***it would not be feasible for applicants to propose and implement activities under all thematic areas.***

## Categories of Classification of Submissions

The applying entities are divided into two categories: -

**Category 1:** Highly specialized CSOs (registered or domiciled in Kenya) with demonstrated technical expertise and capacity to operate at the national level. Interventions under this category will be implemented at the national level, contributing to outcomes 2 and 4. These organisations are expected to drive advocacy for electoral

reforms through policy engagements, systemic influence on election processes, strengthening institutional coordination frameworks, undertaking election observation and monitoring of human rights violations, and driving innovations in digital media monitoring.

**Category 2:** Local CSOs (with national or county-level potential) with demonstrable experience of implementing directly with beneficiaries, local stakeholders at the subnational or county level. Proposed interventions will be assessed for potential realization of local impact, facilitate community engagement, foster sustainability, and strengthen grassroots systems in line with REDI's Outcomes 1 and 3. These institutions will play a key role in translating national priorities into tangible results at the county and community levels.

## Clarifications & Submission

### Clarifications:

Please submit all questions concerning this RfEOI to the Act! Grants team ([redi-EOI@act.or.ke](mailto:redi-EOI@act.or.ke)) by Wednesday, **29<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 5:00 PM (EAT)**. Responses will be provided continuously with final ones to be posted on the website by Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 5:00 PM (EAT).

### Submission:

Please submit your EOI in the English language only as guided via the email address: [redi-EOI@act.or.ke](mailto:redi-EOI@act.or.ke), **clearly indicating in the subject of your email EXPRESSION OF INTEREST - REDI PROGRAMME/CAT No. 1 or 2**, whichever is applicable. Applications received after the set deadline **WILL NOT** be considered. They must be received by Act! no later than **5:00 PM (EAT)** on **4<sup>th</sup> May 2026**. All applications will be automatically acknowledged by an autogenerated system message.

## General Information

The application shall include the following:

- 1) Cover Page, Background, Capability Statement, Technical Approach, Inclusion Statement, Partnership and Linkages, Sustainability, M&E, key technical staff (max 3). Please also ensure the EOI is a maximum 9 pages; Font & size: Times New Roman, 12; Spacing: Single; and submitted in MS Word or PDF.
- 2) High-level budget; and
- 3) Copy of the organisation's legal registration documents.
- 4) CVs of the proposed project leader & Core team.

The submission should cover the following mandatory information/sections within the allowed maximum number of pages (non-compliance may lead to disqualification):

- 1) **Description of the issue(s) being addressed (background).** Provide a contextual analysis of electoral issues in the county your organisation(s) wishes to work in (or country, depending on coverage). What is the issue, and why is it important? What is

the cause of the problem(s), and what, if anything, has been done in the past to resolve them? What worked? What did not work, and why? What kind of project(s) has your organisation completed in the recent past that were aimed at addressing the issues? What was the change that happened as a result of your work? Tell us why your organisation is the right one to do the project that you are proposing.

- 2) **Brief description of the Applicant's project, which will address the issue(s).** What is your goal? What are your specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound (i.e., SMART) objectives for achieving that goal? What are the concrete and specific "innovative" activities and results the project seeks to implement and achieve? What impact will these results have on the larger issue being addressed?
- 3) **The application must articulate linkages and connections with other organisations and networks** and explicitly state how (*if at all*) the activities will strengthen or forge alliances among CSOs and with electoral stakeholders to build synergy and complementarity.
- 4) **How will your project involve women, youth and other minorities or special interest groups**, and how will it address their concerns? What specific interventions will be carried out and when? How will the projects actively and meaningfully involve them in the electoral activity, thereby building a real voice and achieving stronger, sustainable electoral outcomes?
- 5) **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** Explain how you will assess whether your project is achieving its intended results. Describe the data or information you will collect to track progress and determine whether your activities are making a meaningful difference for stakeholders and the community. Include a results framework for your project that outlines the Goal, Outcomes, Outputs, and Activities, along with clear indicators for each level. Also, identify the key assumptions behind your approach, potential risks that could affect implementation, and the practical strategies you will use to mitigate them.

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