

THE  
CARTER CENTER



**Advancing Women's Right of Access to Information (AWRTI) Bangladesh  
Request for Applications**

**Subject Line: Priority Area – 1 or Priority Area – 2**

**Terms of Reference**

**1. Context**

The Carter Center (TCC) partners with governments, civil society, and international and regional bodies to enhance governance and transform lives through a meaningful right of access to information and justice for women. Women in Bangladesh face disproportionate challenges in exercising the fundamental right of access to information, which hinders economic empowerment and the promotion and protection of other human rights. Although the Right to Information (RTI) Act went into effect in 2009, the benefits of meaningful access to information for women have not fully been realized.

To address these challenges, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded funding to The Carter Center in 2023 to support the Advancing Women's Right of Access to Information (AWRTI) in Bangladesh Activity (the Project) in target districts. Under this project, the Center is working to implement three mutually reinforcing objectives, with a focus on assisting the most marginalized women:

- A strengthened legal and policy environment has enabled more sustainable access to information for women
- National and target local government have more effectively and equitably provided information to women in target districts, and
- Through civil society organizations, information liaisons, and youth in target districts, women advance their use of the right of access to information

Effective implementation of the RTI Act and other principles guaranteeing the right to information and transparency requires not only the adoption of sound policies but also a deep understanding of the social and institutional dynamics that influence behavior change. AWRTI will support critical research to identify policy gaps and implementation challenges, offering comparative insights and best practices to drive informed decision-making. This approach will facilitate a more responsive and transparent governance system, ultimately leading to improved access to information for women, particularly those from marginalized communities.

AWRTI is also keenly aware that recent political developments are likely to have a profound impact not only on the RTI landscape, but related issues of transparency, accountability, and citizen participation more broadly. The project is particularly interested in research efforts that incorporate this perspective of political and cultural change, what it may mean for RTI and related issues – especially their impact on women – and how advocacy efforts may be tailored to maximize the opportunities presented by this transitional context.

Given Bangladesh's large pool of skilled academics and researchers, there should be a steady supply of policy briefs to inform the government and lead to evidence-based policies in the RTI landscape. AWRTI seeks to build connections with research institutions and other organizations in Bangladesh to produce original research to

inform future policy interventions in the RTI and transparency area and document the impact of greater RTI and citizen influence. AWRTI also seeks to support research that identifies where and how open, transparent, and accountable governance efforts can have the greatest impact on women's lives.

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