**EECAD Open Futures Fund**

**Programme Document for Year One (FY2016-17)**

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| **Summary** |
| The policy aim of the EECAD Open Futures Fund is to support development of stable, open and prosperous countries in the EECA region.  It will do this by:   1. Investing in future EECA leaders in the expectation that they will assume positions of influence in their countries, and help improve the quality of governance and civil society 2. Helping to maintain the space for civil society to contribute constructively to the creation of open and successful societies 3. Building capacity in civil services and government bodies, in order to build institutional resilience and enable development of effective governance   The Fund’s ODA funding for financial year 16/17 is £3.5m. |
| **Strategic Case** |
| According to the 2016 Freedom House rankings, the non-Baltic post-Soviet space continues to regress in terms of political freedoms and civil liberties.  The latest average annual score for the region is the worst in the post-Soviet period. Seven countries in the EECAD region are rated ‘not free.’  The political systems of five (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) are, according to Freedom House, among the 21 most repressive in the world. Of the Former Soviet Union (FSU)-12, only Armenia, Georgia and Moldova have higher scores in the Freedom House series than in 1992.Since 1992 the decline of Russia’s rating is worse than that of any other FSU-12 country  The UK strategies for the EECA region collectively set ambitious objectives for supporting the development of stable, open and prosperous countries. The Open Futures Fund is designed to support HMG’s capacity building activity in pursuit of those objectives, with specific focus on the role of civil society and civil services in that future development. |
| **Programme Approach** |
| In year one, activity in the region will be organised as three strands:   * **Future leaders**   To help build resilience and stability across the EECA region, we aim to support networks of capable and inspiring potential future leaders. Through scholarship- and fellowship-type programmes, the UK will invest in individuals who have the potential to help develop government and civil society in the near future. They will be brought to the UK to build professional knowledge and skills, expose them to UK democratic values and help develop a support network to assist in their future careers. Joining an active alumni network after the scholarship or fellowship will enable positive relationships to be maintained well in to the future.   * **Future Civil Society**   The environment for defending and promoting democratic rules and values has become restrictive in parts of the region, and continues to shrink. Civil society organisations have seen increasing difficulties in their ability to access funding and curtailment of their activities. By supporting their work through grant funding, the UK will help to support the role of civil society in decision-making and democratic processes, which is central to the development of successful societies.   * **Civil Service & Government Bodies**   Increasing resilience to threats to stability and economic growth is vital to future prosperity. Issues such as corruption and the lack of a fully independent judiciary undermine the establishment of effective governance and frequently contribute to undermining civil society. It is therefore important to have a civil service with capacity to tackle these issues and implement reforms where needed. With the UK’s strong tradition of public service founded on impartiality, transparency and accountability, the UK is well placed to support activity, which will be geographically tailored to suit the different environments in countries across the region.  This above three-pronged approach will aim to deliver a blend of country-specific and regional interventions and allow the piloting of new approaches and partnerships in the region. In parallel, further work will be undertaken to expand the research base and develop the design of the programme for the expected increased funding in years two, three and four (not yet approved).  Geographically, the programme will cover Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. With its discrete focus on preparing for the future, activity will be programmed to complement existing work funded through other programmes, for example on-going Good Governance Fund work in the region. A dedicated programme board will oversee development of the programme strategy and have responsibility for allocating funds, approving projects and monitoring risk. |
| **Theory of Change and Results** |
| The theory of change is as follows:  Impact  More open, stable and prosperous FSU countries  Types of interventions:   * Scholarships and fellowships * Building links between democratic institutions e.g. parliamentarians   Types of interventions:   * Scholarships and fellowships * Grant funding for NGOs * Legal awareness training * NGO networking and support events * Civil society capacity building activity   Outcome 1  Better equipped future leaders in touch with the UK and its values  Outcome 2  Present, resilient, constructive civil society  Outcome 3  Civil services and governmental bodies with the capability, capacity and culture to help build an open and prosperous future  Types of interventions:   * Scholarships and fellowships * Technical assistance for public administration reform * Technical assistance for judicial reform * Anti-corruption initiatives |