This concept note aims at suggesting a unified framework for a KAICIID small grants scheme to address the Covid-19 crisis. These guidelines aim at complementing the existing small grants and operational procedures already implemented in the Centre. They outline (i) the background and objectives of the scheme, as well as (ii) the potential thematic areas, and (iii) target groups. They also describe the (iv) process and modalities the (v) selection criteria and financial threshold, along with the (vi) grants management process, including responsibilities, risk management, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, communication and visibility, etc.

I. Background and objectives:

Following the Covid-19 outbreak, the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) developed a Contingency plan to address the crisis and adapt its programming accordingly, based on a rapid assessment of the potential impact on its activities at global and country levels. The suggested measures include, among others, to increase and re-direct the resources allocated to the small grants schemes to support Religious and community actors, while retaining the focus on IRD. The idea is to use faith as a basis to raise awareness and communicate health precautionary measures within their local communities. This idea is based on the assumption that religious leaders do have influence on local communities and must play a crucial role in time of crisis. To this end, and building on the value-addition that religious actors could bring to the fight against the outbreak, KAICIID intends to launch a unified call for proposals to support local and global interfaith initiatives contributing to address the situation. The allocated resources will be managed under the different programmes, but through an integrated small-grants scheme, based on a consistent approach, taking into account the specific mandate of the Centre.

The suggested grants scheme aims at achieving the following objectives:

- Raise awareness among faith communities about the Covid-19 outbreak and contribute to disseminate the preventive measures;
- Counter any kind of stigma or discrimination linked to the outbreak;
- Support interfaith initiatives promoting solidarity amongst the target communities;
- Build religious actors capacities to address the virus outbreak and its potential consequences on social cohesion;
- Promote volunteerism and active citizenship to face the crisis;
- Support the involvement of religious actors in the formulation and implementation of the national response to the crisis;
- Encourage partners and beneficiaries to adhere to and comply with local and national regulations that are in place regarding the Covid-19 crisis.
II. Thematic areas:

The grants scheme should prioritize the following topics, due to their relevance to the Centre’s mandate, as well as to the current challenges posed by the virus outbreak:

- **Awareness-raising** activities through traditional media, publications, TV and radio, and without involving physical meetings; Short video messages by high-level religious and community leaders, using local languages to reach out to more people. This might also include the publication of leaflets or awareness-raising tools on how to avoid contamination, etc.

- **Social media** campaigns to sensitize and encourage people to stick to the measures taken by the authorities of the concerned countries.

- **Joint interfaith activities**, such as interreligious response awareness activities, fasting and prayers to mobilize people against the Covid-19 outbreak.

- **Training** of religious actors (online trainings) on how to address the Covid-19 outbreak, taking into account the appropriate security precautions. Online trainings and similar modalities that don’t imply physical contacts should be prioritized until the situation allows otherwise.

- **Countering stigma**, discrimination, and Hate Speech related to Covid-19: The current situation is causing fear, anxiety and stressful times for people and communities, which can lead to stigma and discrimination towards people, countries or regions. People might associate this disease with nationality or ethnicity. Moreover, people who have been quarantined might face societal stigma, which could lead to social avoidance, rejection, denial to access services and to physical violence.

- **Promoting volunteerism and active citizenship** in the lens of Covid-19 response: People’s commitment is critical to stop the spread of the virus. In such a context, it is important to support the community-engagement initiatives and tools in order to strengthen opportunities for sustained public health impact.

- **Health communication**: The purpose is not to produce the information, since it is already available from reliable sources (WHO, governments), but rather to channel it and disseminate health precaution measures through religious leaders and within religious communities.

- **Involving faith leaders and communities** in the Covid-19 response strategies: Covid-19 is a multi-faith, multicultural challenge in our society that is best addressed by a united community. Therefore, it is important to support the involvement of communities of faith and faith-based service organisations as a key part of the response strategies.

III. Target groups:

The COVID small grants scheme targets organizations and institutions, as well as individuals (KAICIID Fellows and trainees), who can support interfaith efforts to respond to the Covid-19 crisis. More specifically, these partners include the following entities:

- Interfaith/interreligious dialogue platforms, organisations and networks;
- Religious leaders and faith-based organisations (FBOs);
- Youth and women organizations and other civil society organisations;
- KAICIID trainees, Fellows and national chapters;
- Social media influencers and bloggers (particularly those who have been trained previously by KAICIID).

IV. Process & modalities:

The COVID-19 small grants scheme will be managed according to the following modalities and timeframe:

1. Modalities:

The small grants scheme might be launched based on two different modalities, as follows:

- **Modality 1. Pre-identified partners:**
  - The idea is to establish a list of previous partners, with which the Centre has already had the opportunity to work in a satisfactory way. The list should be suggested by the Programme manager, in close consultation with the field experts and IRD Platforms, if relevant, and vetted by Review Committee, based on specific criteria.
  - This modality will enable the Centre to save time and speed up the disbursement processes. The total duration of the allocation process, from the preparation to the release of funds, will be reduced, in this case, from 30 to 14 days only (see below).
  - This modality is more relevant to the Fellows, the IRD Platforms and other well-established local partners that have proven operational capacities, in terms of implementation within short timeframes, proper financial management and reporting.

- **Modality 2. Open calls for proposals:**
  - This is the regular modality to launch the small grants schemes, allowing every potential partner to apply on a competitive basis.
  - The allocation process takes up to 30 days, due to the time needed to complete the selection of the grantees and their projects. Although it is more transparent, such a modality is also riskier, since KAICIID has no guarantee regarding the operational capacities of the selected partners. This process is more relevant to engage small local partners, with whom the Centre hasn’t had a previous experience or that have limited operational capacities.

2. Timeframe:

The grants management cycle should be fast-tracked to the extent possible, to quickly release the allocated funds and help the Centre’s stakeholders to address the current crisis. This process includes the following steps:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main steps</th>
<th>Suggested timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Modality 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fast-track procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 1. Preparation process</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Drafting the Concept note &amp; budget</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review &amp; approval</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Launch of the small grants schemes (time to apply)</td>
<td>8 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Screening of the applications & selection process
   Consulting with the Review Committee (in case of a pre-identified partner)
   - 4 days

5. Fine-tuning the selected projects (technical support)
   4 days  4 days

6. Contracting & transfer of funds
   2 days  4 days

| Total duration Phase 1 | 14 days | 30 days |

**Phase 2. Implementation & reporting**

| 7. Implementation of the projects | 3 to 6 months | 3 to 6 months |
| 8. Monitoring | Continuous | Continuous |
| 9. Reporting & documentation | 15 days | 15 days |

| Total duration Phase 2 | 3 to 6 months | 3 to 6 months |

V. Selection criteria and threshold:

The selection of the grantees should be based on a clear set of criteria, in order to identify the best indicatives and partners. To this end, it is suggested to consider the following criteria, that might be adapted to the context of the different programmes and countries:

- **Main criteria**: These criteria are required for all projects and they will not be selected unless they meet all of them. They include the following considerations:
  - Relevance and potential impact of the projects;
  - Alignment with KAICIID’s mandate: Focus on interfaith initiatives engaging communities from different faith communities, religious diversity and interreligious collaboration, rather than humanitarian relief or delivery of health supplies;
  - Collaboration across religious lines;
  - Clarity & Practicality;
  - Operational and networking capacities (of the applicant).
  - Use of relevant methods to reach the target audience within different contexts.

- **Complementary criteria**: these criteria are optional and will be used to score the eligible applications and projects. They include the following requirements:
  - Gender inclusiveness;
  - Sustainability & replicability;
  - Innovation;
  - Institutional links (of the applicant);
  - Link with other KAICIID's initiatives.
  - Security and safety criteria to be observed during the current crisis.

- **Threshold**: The grants should be allocated within the following limits:
  - **Individual grants**: Individuals are often less reliable than organizations. This is why the ceiling should be lower: from Euro 500 to 5,000 by project, depending on the scope and nature of the activities to be implemented. In case of joint proposals submitted by several applicants, the total amount will be increased accordingly, from Euro 1000 to 10,000, depending on the number of applicants.
  - **Institutional grants**: The threshold depends on the reliability of the partner organisation (or consortium), as well as on its networking and operational capacities. It is suggested
to be within a range from Euros 4000 to 20,000 by project, depending on the nature and
the scope of the activities (local, national, regional or global level).

VI. Management process:

1. Responsibilities:

The grants management involves responsibilities at different levels, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases</th>
<th>PM/Grants manager</th>
<th>Field Expert</th>
<th>Grantee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Design, planning &amp; overall oversight</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Provide inputs</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Launch of the calls for proposals</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Screening of the applications</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Provide inputs</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Selection process (technical support)</td>
<td>x (liaise with the Review Committee)</td>
<td>Provide inputs</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Fine-tuning the selected projects</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Follow-up on the implementation</td>
<td>Send reminders</td>
<td>On site monitoring</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Reporting</td>
<td>Quality assurance + consolidated reporting</td>
<td>1st review of the reports</td>
<td>Prepare the draft reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Documentation, communication &amp; lessons learned</td>
<td>Liaise with COMD</td>
<td>Collect data, pictures, etc.</td>
<td>Provide data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Risk management:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified risks</th>
<th>Nature of the risk</th>
<th>Potential impact</th>
<th>Mitigation measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mismanagement of funds</td>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Conduct a thorough assessment &amp; reference check of the selected grantees. Include several instalments for larger grants. Make sure that the grant agreement clearly stipulates the terms of payment and when each payment is released, based on clearly stipulated deliverables. Close follow-up and reporting on a regular basis. In case funds are sent to one partner who is to further distribute them on to other partners (in consultation with KAICIID), the agreement must stipulate that any further transfers should be done, to the extent possible, through bank transfers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictions of movements that might limit the access to the participants</td>
<td>Administrative Logistical</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Consult with the selected partners to adjust the projects if need be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security &amp; safety of project staff and beneficiaries</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Make sure that the activities are implemented in a secure way, avoid physical contacts to the extent possible and/or wearing masks, gloves, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of proper reporting</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Provide a reporting template to be used by the implementing partners. Provide technical support and quality assurance to make sure that reports are up to the standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delays in the implementation of projects</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Close follow-up to prevent potential delays and address them on time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Reporting and M&E:

The primary responsibility in terms of reporting lies at the level of the grantees/beneficiaries, which are expected to prepare and submit reports, as per signed agreements. The reports should describe how the activities have been implemented, and the main results achieved. A standard template will be provided to this end. The field experts are also, if relevant, expected to contribute through an initial review of the reports, which should be finalized by the Programme Managers/SPMs.

The PMs/SPMs are also expected to cluster the reports received from the implementing partners in the various thematic focuses, as well as to identify key lessons learned. The reports will be used, in close consultation with DKH and COMD, to identify best practices to be replicated and for visibility purposes, through various publications (for example IRD Hub grants on Covid-19, lessons learned from RL engagements).

It is of a critical importance to closely monitor the implementation of the initiatives under the Covid 19 small grants scheme, as well as to measure their impact through a set of key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs should be clearly mentioned in the proposal, according to the standard project template.

4. Communication & visibility:

The grantees are expected to collect relevant material for communication purposes, including pictures, video recordings, etc. A communication plan should also be developed by each programme to showcase the achieved results and increase the Centre’s visibility. It might include, among other tools, thematic or country booklets, short-videos or documentaries, infographics, etc. Visibility guidelines, including the use of KAICIID’s logo, should also be prepared in close consultation with COMD.