



Call for Proposals

Gender Responsive Investment Projects: Inclusive and Equitable Local Development (IELD) Program in Bangladesh

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) invites Private SMEs, Companies, Local Government Institutions (LGIs), NGOs and any organizations engaged in women economic empowerment in Bangladesh to submit gender responsive proposals for funding under the IELD program. The application is for receiving technical assistance and financial support (in the form of development grants, soft loans and credit enhancements & guarantees) that advances Gender Responsive Investment for women's economic empowerment. Projects that offer direct economic benefits to women will be preferred.

About UNCDF:

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is the UN's capital investment agency for the world's 47 least developed countries. With its capital mandate and instruments, UNCDF offers "last mile" finance models that unlock public and private financial resources, especially at the domestic level, to reduce poverty and support local economic development. In Bangladesh, UNCDF is supporting initiatives designed to unlock the flow of domestic and private sector capital in order to invest in medium sized infrastructure and service projects needed to accelerate local economic development and private sector development. By strengthening access and flows of finance at the local level, UNCDF contributes to SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 11 (resilient cities), and SDG 17 (unlocking public & private finance for the poor at the local level) on the means of implementation by identifying those market segments where innovative financing models can have transformational impact in helping reach the last mile and address exclusion and gender inequalities of access.

About IELD:

The Inclusive and Equitable Local Development Programme (IELD) is a joint initiative of UNCDF, UNDP and UN Women that aims to address structural barriers that prevent women from participating fully and equally in the economy, including lack of adequate infrastructure and access to services and markets. IELD works with local governments to build their capacities on gender-responsive economic policy and budgets and identify, together with local stakeholders, practical and innovative solutions. At the same time, IELD engages with the private sector to expand economic opportunities for women. IELD identifies and designs a local pipeline of investable projects with women-led enterprises and gender-sensitive businesses which are large enough to have a transformative impact on the livelihoods of the communities and create jobs for women and men.

Call for Investment Proposals:

With this Call for Proposals (CfPs), UNCDF is inviting calls for investment project proposals in the following focus areas:

1. Women Economic Empowerment or Gender Responsive SMEs:

Investment projects owned or developed by women or projects with large derived benefits accruing to women, which address challenges faced by women such as employment and job creation, income generation, technical business skills, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

2. Local Economic Development:

Businesses that offer local government institutions, the private sector and local communities the opportunity to work together to improve the local economy by enhancing competitiveness, increasing sustainable growth and ensuring that growth is gender sensitive.

3. Public service delivery infrastructure:

Public Private Partnership (PPP) Projects that provide women with better business and income earning opportunities through improved infrastructure (i.e. preferential access to transportation, storage facilities, market structures, modern agro-processing machinery and energy infrastructure).

4. Value chain integration and trade:

Gender responsive SMEs that enable women to secure access to one or more components of value chain integration including logistics, operational support, warehousing, human resource development, procurement, communication, marketing & sales, printing & packaging services or other value chain additionalities, within the country and cross-borders.

What UNCDF offers to developers:

1. Project development support:

- Targeted technical project development and financing support to projects developers (e.g. enhanced project documentation, due diligence and financial structuring)
- Project investment documents in the format acceptable to commercial banks and investors
- Capacity building and technical assistance for business development, improved financial management, human resource management, compliance management, financial governance and transparency, product development and value creation additions

2. Link developers to financial institutions and investors:

- Support project developers in accessing funding from commercial and development finance institutions (e.g. identifying the right investor based on sector, size and type of finance required) and negotiating lending terms with prospective financiers
- For qualified projects, seed capital (development capital grants and soft loans) based on unique project requirements and investment criteria
- Provide credit enhancements and guarantee support e.g. partial loan guarantees for qualified projects which are eligible for borrowing from domestic financial institutions

3. Gender sensitive orientation & Impact implementation support

- Workshop for top level management on gender sensitive working environment, women economic principal (WEP) and HeforShe movement
- Extensive gender training to all staff on gender equality (GE), gender roles, gender stereotype, violence and sexual harassment at workplace
- Support in developing an action plan to support and promote gender equality (GE) and women's career mobility within the organization
- Support in developing a concrete monitoring framework on gender equality (GE) & women economic empowerment (WEE) for the organization
- Support management and the business to offer gender equality in benefits including equal pay for equal value, healthcare, sick leave, pension, disability, paid time off and stock ownership
- Assist management to establish policies for paid maternity/paternity leave, promote safe and discrimination free work environment, i.e. sexual harassment, risk assessments to address security issues, including women traveling to and from work

Eligibility criteria:

Proposals must meet all of the following eligibility criteria(s):

I. Institutional profile:

- Significant number of women engagement in organisational structure and workforce which includes women representation amongst the Board of Directors, Management team and full-time staff
- The business has an explicit commitment to gender equality in employment
- The business makes explicit spending and program commitments that increase gender equality and support women's advancement (i.e. conducted gender related training will be considered as added value)

II. Commercial viability:

- Proposals that show ability to generate revenue and make profits will be given priority
- Companies with a successful track record of profitability in the last two years of operations will also be preferred. (*Applications should therefore be supported by a detailed description of the cost and revenue streams associated with the project*).

III. Project status:

- Priority will be given to existing projects that are looking for expansion. Project development activities must have passed a pre-feasibility stage beyond a concept note, i.e. *proposals should include as a minimum a completed business plan and all initial compliance steps (e.g. licenses, permits, titles, etc.)*.

IV. Company size & Project size:

- Medium sized companies/SMEs (as per Bangladesh Bank definitions) with **assets worth BDT 1 crores to 15 crores** with **total number of employees between 50 to 100** being engaged full-time is preferred

- Total cost for expansion project is between **BDT 50 lacs to 5 crores**
- V. Supply chain procurement:**
- The business provides price equality to male and female suppliers
 - Number of women involve in the value chain and the project's positive contribution to women's lives
- VI. Located in poorest districts:**
- Special consideration will be given to projects from the country's poorest districts which includes Kurigram, Dinajpur, Bandarban, Magura, Kishorganj, Khagrachari and Jamalpur or adjacent districts
- VII. Development impact:**
- Project that will generate positive economic benefits e.g. job creation, income generation, empowerment of women including trade and market access
- VIII. Qualified management:**
- The proposal must show evidence that the proposed management team has the necessary technical and managerial skills to run the project
- IX. Compliance:**
- Compliance with Bangladesh laws and regulations and UNDCF/UNDP Environmental & Social Performance Standards including industrial laws, human (labor & women) rights is a must

Selection process

Based on preliminary proposal and field visit information, an investment screening committee comprising of UNCDF management and other representatives from partner UN agencies (comprised of development and finance professionals) will score submitted proposals against the eligibility criteria mentioned above.

Documentation:

Shortlisted applicants will be requested to submit relevant documentation related to their businesses within 2 weeks (i.e. commencement of business certification, trade licence, etc).

Workshop for prospective applicants:

UNCDF will offer a half-day session to guide applicants on submission requirements. The purpose of this session is to allow applicants an opportunity to raise questions and for UNCDF to provide guidance on how to prepare proposals to increase the probability of meeting the eligibility and selection criteria. If you wish to participate, please send an email to asim.karmakar@uncdf.org indicating "IELD Pre-submission workshop" in the subject line of your email. You will only be allowed to participate in the workshop after receiving a confirmation email that you have been registered. Time and place will be communicated in due time to those who will request for participation via email. Please note that you are not required to participate in the session in order to submit a proposal. This is merely a courtesy provided by the UNCDF.

Instructions for submitting proposals:

Only completed submissions as per the above guidelines will be reviewed. A complete submission consists of the submission of the following:

1. Completed and Signed Call for Proposal Submission Form (Word template)
2. Copies of updated Trade License or Commencement of Business certification

The submission form **must** be submitted in their original formats (Word) along with any supporting documentation to the following recipient: **asim.karmakar@uncdf.org**. Size of the email should be limited to 10 MB. Only one application per entity and per proposal will be accepted.

Language of proposal: Proposals must be submitted in English or Bangla.

Deadline for submission: The deadline for submission of investment proposals is on **16 August 2018** at **5:00 PM**.

Please note: Applicants who do not submit the application template in the original format within the deadline will not be considered, and only successful applicants will be contacted within 2 weeks after the deadline.

Hardcopies should be submitted directly to the following address:

UN Capital Development Fund
E/8-A, IDB Bhaban, Level 7
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar
Dhaka 1207

OR

Softcopies emailed to: **asim.karmakar@uncdf.org**

For further information, please contact:

Asim Kumar Karmakar
National Program Officer - Investment Development
UNCDF Bangladesh
Phone: +88-02-9183471, Ext. 102
E-mail: asim.karmakar@uncdf.org