Call for Proposals - Entrepreneurship

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: The required services section lists that we should develop a sustainability scheme/pricing model to reach the targeted beneficiaries ensuring financial sustainability. Is it within the scope of the project to allow participants to cover a portion of the training cost?

Answer: Participants may cover a portion of the training cost. Please note that proponents may apply to implement some or all the required services. We require that each proponent comes up with a sustainability plan/pricing model to ensure the sustainability of the training sessions; cost strategies can be a part of this.

Q: The required services section lists that we should provide support and/or grants (financial and/or in-kind technical assistance to women). Is it within the scope of the project to offer seed funding to women entrepreneurs? If so, is there a financial threshold either for the grants themselves or for the overall budget for this scope?

Answer: Yes, seed funding for a selected number of women entrepreneurs (without equity requirement) could be within the scope of the program. The financial threshold is to be proposed by the applicant as part of the overall budget. Mechanism and selection criteria for seed funding must be included where applicable.

Q: The target group specifies women entrepreneurs. If an enterprise consists of mixed gender individuals, but training and project-specific services only target the women representatives, would that be acceptable?

Answer: UN Women is targeting women entrepreneurs, including women-led or women-owned businesses.

Q: What is the geographic scope of the program?

Answer: The program will be implemented in 5 Governorates that will be validated and approved by the Steering Committee. UN Women is looking for a balance between urban centers (Greater Cairo, Alexandria), as well as Upper Egypt and Delta for the whole of the program. If an applicant is applying only for part of the required services (hence, part of the program), their geographical scope may be smaller, but the results will feed into the overall program. Regarding the location for the training sessions (whether the implementing partner will go out to the beneficiaries or bring in participants to Cairo), that depends on the specific strategy of the applicant and justification for whichever modality is chosen (make sure the budget is appropriate).

Q: Who is eligible to apply for the program?

Answer: All Civil Society Organizations, including academia, are eligible to apply, regardless of whether they have been UN Women implementing partners in the past or not.
Q: What is the start-up stage and size of the women entrepreneurs?

Answer: UN Women would like to target women entrepreneurs of different stages; hence applicants may choose to focus their approach according to their experience and level of comfort working with different types of entrepreneurs including potential women entrepreneurs or existing ones who wish to expand or scale up.

Q: Can the submission forms be sent to proponents in word document format so we can fill them in and submit them with our proposal in soft copy format?

Answer: Yes, UN Women will try to upload the submission forms online to the webpage.

Q: Are all the documents listed as mandatory in Annex A-5 required to be submitted with the proposal, or upon proposal review and award?

Answer: Annex A-5 Capacity Assessment minimum Documents should be submitted part of the proposal.

Q: Page 4 indicates that the financial proposal must be submitted as per the template in Annex 3, but Annex 3 is not included in the full document. Can you please share the financial proposal template the bidders need to abide by?

Answer: Please note that “Annex A-3 Financial proposal submission form” is the mandatory form to be filled. You may develop your own financial proposal according to your template.

Q: Since the deadline for questions is May 20th, can UN Women kindly extend the deadline for this proposal a few days after 12am on May 28th, so that proponents are able to incorporate UN Women’s responses to clarifications into the proposals and budgets please?

Answer: Please review the link again, the deadline has been extended to June 7, 2020.

Q: We rely on local community-based organizations for outreach and have people hired under their entity as part of our team. Under this grant, are we allowed to sub-contract/pay other organizations? If so, must they be listed from the proposal stage or can we just budget for their activities?

Answer: Yes, you would be allowed to sub-contract according to UN Women rules and regulations. This should be a part of the proposal, including as detailed information as you can provide.

Q: Can the same beneficiary benefit of different proposed activities, such as different training programs? In which case, would a person count as the same target or different targets based on services received?

Answer: Yes, it is possible that the same beneficiary benefit from two complementary training sessions to increase her capacity overall. This person would count as one.
Q: Please clarify “Online Reference system for women entrepreneurs to serve as a single source of comprehensive information and assist with navigating available resources.”

Answer: Women entrepreneurs know there are many services in the Egyptian start-up ecosystem to help them, though there are differences among them: eligibility requirements, costs, duration of programs, etc. We want to help women entrepreneurs by creating an online platform that will unify information on all incubators, accelerators, BDS hubs, training providers, etc. that will be possible to filter by eligibility criteria, free or for-cost, or other search criteria. This will be a constantly updated service.

Q: Target sectors are as explained sectors such as agri-business, ICT, and creative industries. In addition, the program would like to respond to employment needs emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic such as food processing & retail, healthcare and other sectors that will be further be validated by the Project Steering Committee. Thus, we can propose other sectors?

Answer: Yes, this is possible with proper justification as part of a COVID-19 mitigation approach. Please still include the initial sectors as well.

Q: We need clarification for this statement: “Strengthened individual and collective agency of women in the sectors of focus”; Enhanced capacity of Government to mainstream gender in public policies and programs requires government interventions.

Answer: These are two of the program outputs. Please focus on the required services section and apply for some, or all of them, if eligible.

Q: There is no designated maximum fund regarding the proposal. Kindly clarify the following statement: The cost of preparing a proposal, attendance at any pre-proposal conference, meetings or oral presentations shall be borne by the proponents, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the CFP process. Proposals must offer the services for the total requirement; proposals offering only part of the services will be rejected.”

Answer: (1) the applicant will submit a comprehensive budget to implement the proposed activities, this budget shall not include cost of preparing the proposal or any other pre-proposal activities; (2) in this particular case, as specified in the Terms of References, applicants may submit offers to implement some or all of the required services, hence proposals offering only part of the services will not be rejected, because it is specified so in the TORs.

Q: Can UN Women fund a specified amount for Micro-credits (loans) in the project?

Answer: No, UN Women cannot give micro credit (loans) or grants for equity in this project.