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## United Nations Capital Development Fund

# Defining and Assessing Financial Health of Women SHGs and Enterprises in Odisha, India

### FAQ Responses-Part I & II

- 1. In the RFA, it is written that the grant payments will be reimbursed for funds spent by the grantees. Is our understanding correct that it is not a case of reimbursement and in essence the firm will receive payment for the services rendered and not for the funds spent? Please confirm.**

Response: A performance-based grant implies that grant amounts that are contingent on the successful achievement of pre-determined milestones. Achieving a milestone will therefore trigger a grant payment. Grant payments will be reimbursements for funds spent by the grantees, according to the project implementation plan and pre-agreed milestones. The Grantee will be responsible of providing a comprehensive and compliant financial report reporting all the financial transactions relating to grant. The Grantee will need to keep supporting documents related to these transactions to justify all actual costs incurred.

- 2. The RFA mentions that the 'UNCDF contributions may range up to INR. 90 Lakhs'. Kindly clarify.**



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Finance for the Poor**

Response: UNCDF will provide a grant to the selected applicant who is technically compliant in accordance with the Eligibility and Evaluation Criteria as set out. A Performance-Based Agreement (PBA) will be signed between the selected applicants and UNCDF. The applicants are required to propose the financial cost for this partnership. UNCDF's contribution may be up to INR 90 lakhs. Applicants are encouraged to share part of the total cost they estimate.

**3. The Agreement format mentions USD as the currency. Kindly confirm.**

Response: Please refer to the template for the budget and workflow template and provide all information in 'INR'.

**4. Being a for profit organization, we can submit a bid where it is a service contract. We would like to know whether it would be awarded as a service contract, or will it be given as a grant?**

Response: This is an RFA and will be signed as a Performance-Based Agreement (PBA), which is a grant agreement. From UNCDF's side, we can sign these agreements with for-profit companies. It will be not possible to sign a service contract.

**5. Regarding the partnership agreement, the prescreening questionnaire mentions that we need to upload a Partnership Agreement. Can we upload a Letter of Association LOA for the same?**

Response: Yes

**6. Regarding Financial Grant Agreement under clause 3.3, regarding submission of audited financial statements (last item of the tabulated data). It is mentioned that this is to be**



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Finance for the Poor

**done within 120 days of the fiscal year annually. Can you edit it to make it 120- 180 days as AIPL statutorily (under Companies Act) has a time limit of 180 days?**

Response: Okay. Please consider this as 120-180 days.

**7. Is it compulsory to have a micro financing partner in a consortium?**

Response: This is not compulsory. You are free to choose your consortium partners. They can be any kind of organizations (education institutes, research institutions, think-tanks, consulting firms, market research firms, donors/ grant providers, financial institutions etc.). You can propose any kind of partners to the consortium, if the consortium meets the eligibility criteria as laid down.

**8. Can a startup with fintech innovation and technology incubator be a feasible consortium?**

Response: Yes

**9. Do we need to submit the hardcopy of the proposal?**

Response: No

**10. Is the intervention to be designed by the consultants based on findings from Activities 1 and 2 or will it be designed by UNCDF based on recommendations made by the consultants?**

Response: The applicant will present their recommendation for the intervention to UNCDF and incorporate the suggestions of UNCDF to come up with the final intervention design.



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We at UNCDF look at this engagement as a co-creation of interventions, ideating together to deliver the best solutions for the women SHGs and micro-enterprises.

- 11. The impact assessment surveys are expected to be carried out in the four blocks of the districts of Ganjam and Sambalpur in the state of Odisha. Please clarify whether this means four blocks each in the districts of Ganjam and Sambalpur or four blocks in total.**

Response: 4 blocks in each district i.e., 8 blocks in total

- 12. Should surveys and qualitative research and development of a financial index cover all districts in Odisha or does UNCDF have focus districts to be included in the sampling strategy for Activities 1 & 2?**

Response: Ganjam and Sambalpur district. With respect to the index, it has to be set-up in a way that it could be applied across the state.

- 13. Please clarify whether “Submission Format” refers to the application format (Submission letter, Technical Proposal & Budget of the Action) or if it is a document/ attachment different from the RFA.**

Response: Refers to the submission letter, technical proposal, CV template, budget and workflow template. These can be found on the UNCDF website

<https://www.uncdf.org/article/6952/rfa-defining-and-assessing-financial-health-of-women-shgs-and-micro-enterprises-in-odisha-india>



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Finance for the Poor

- 14. Does UNCDF expect the consultants to propose the evaluation design for the impact evaluation at this stage? This will be challenging as we don't know the exact nature of the interventions and their scope.**

Response: We don't expect the proposal to contain the exact nature of the impact evaluation at this stage, but we would like to understand the approach to the impact evaluation, suggestive methodology / tools / approach the applicant envisages to apply.

- 15. The survey areas (four blocks of the districts of Ganjam and Sambalpur in the state of Odisha) for Activity 3(the assessment of the impact of specific financial and digital intervention) are listed in the RFA. What about the survey area(s) for Activity 1 (quantitative and qualitative research on the financial, business, and social lives of women in SHGs) and Activity 2 (comprehensive financial health survey)? Please make a suggestion/description.**

Response: Ganjam and Sambalpur district

- 16. The sample size for Activity 1, Activity 2, and Activity 3 is not specified. Please specify. It helps us to prepare the work plan and budget.**

Response: UNCDF has not specified the sample size. The applicants are free to share the sample size along with the methodology and rationale for the sample size and its distribution.



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Finance for the Poor

**17. The RFA mentions that the 'UNCDF contributions may range up to INR 90 Lakhs'. How will UNCDF decide its contribution (%) from the total budget proposed by RFA applicant? Kindly clarify.**

Response: This will be dependent basis the applicant's overall proposal and budget.

**18. The RFA mentions 'undertaking comprehensive baseline and end line surveys' as Activity 3 in the RFA. When will the baseline survey be conducted? Is this before or after Activity 2?**

Response: The baseline can be conflated with the quantitative and qualitative deep dive in Activity 1. The end line will be done in Activity 3. However, the proposed plan should ensure that the impact of the proposed intervention is highlighted through the research and baseline-end lines.

**19. Since the actual interventions have not been identified, can the proposed methodology for impact evaluation be at a broader level and based on certain assumptions? As well, since we will not be aware of the sample size for baseline, midline and end line surveys, should we also base the budget on assumptions that can be re-evaluated at a later stage?**

Response: Impact evaluation methodology can be proposed basis assumptions at this proposal stage. The sample sizes can be ascertained as a part of the proposal. The budget should be made basis the proposed plan. The contribution of UNCDF with regards to the plan will be a fixed amount.



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**20. The suggested payment schedule mentions lower tranche payments upfront, and a major portion (40%) is allocated for year 4. Is this negotiable?**

Response: The payment terms will be guided by the policy of UN. The tranche percentage will be finalized as part of the process with the chosen partner. Though we would like to ensure that the proposed payment tranches as proposed in RFA is followed.

**21. Under specific experience for the assignment, is it necessary to quote only completed projects or can we also mention ongoing projects?**

Response: On-going projects that have already started can be referenced. Projects won but have not started cannot be referenced.

**22. Under Section 1, specific experience for the assignment, states max 5 projects can be stated in the past 5 years. We request you to kindly allow us to cite project max 5 projects from the last 10 years (given that COVID-19 has affected project timelines).**

Response: We are accepting this request. All applicants can share max 5 projects from the last 10 years across all questions. The project start date should be later than April 2011. Please refer to the amended technical proposal template.



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Finance for the Poor

**23. Given that the project cannot go beyond 2025, is there a minimum duration that has been set for the interventions, so that we can account time accordingly for the rest of the activity?**

Response: There is no minimum duration specified.

**24. In case the project teams have substantial experience and prior field experience in similar domain areas, can a timeline shorter than 4 years be proposed?**

Response: Yes. As long as all the intricacies of the engagement are met. We would encourage the applicants to view this opportunity as an opportunity to co-create sustainable, long-term solutions that result in concrete change in the lives of people. While the level of all team members can vary along the four years, the specific activities will have to adhere to as specified in the timelines to ensure all stakeholders work together. We don't envision it will take a period lesser than four years but if the applicants can demonstrate a shorter time period through their proposal, they are free to do so.

**25. Indirect costs are shown as completely ineligible. In case an applying org is bearing its cost can it be shown as one of the line items of the organization's monetary contribution to this project?**

Response: In this case the overheads can be shown. But other ineligible costs will not be considered.





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Finance for the Poor

**26. What all is considered in the applicant's co-contribution?**

Response: Those cost items that are not part of the ineligible cost, except overhead cost list as per the RFA can be considered.

**27. Will the intervention specifically target, or priorities women led SHGs which work in a certain sector or industry?**

Response: The intervention(s) designed will target both farm and non-farm sectors SHGs and micro-enterprises under the purview of Mission Shakti.

**28. Assuming the beneficiaries are women-led SHGs supported by Mission Shakti Living Lab: what are the tentative selection criteria for these SHGs to be given the treatment? (Only small enterprises (< Rs.10 crore investment in plant and machinery or equipment and < Rs. 50 crore in annual turnover, according to GoI), and not micro enterprises; industry-wise fixed quota (food processing, agriculture, handlooms, terracotta, and handicraft); only SHGs that carry out independent activities (in food processing, agriculture, handlooms, terracotta, and handicraft), or also to include SHGs that converge with other government departments like ICDS (for hot-cooked meal/take-home ration production), or paddy procurement; If the latter is to be included, will the same financial health tools be provided to both kinds of SHGs, or do we need to tailor the tools for each kind separately) Will the same financial health tools be provided to both kinds of SHGs, or do we need to tailor the tools for each kind separately?**



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Finance for the Poor**

Response: The enterprise can be in any of the categories as provided as long as they are single / multiple women owned micro-enterprises. The SHGs will be the ones under the purview of Mission Shakti. The applicant can provide the selection criteria they will use to segmentize the enterprises and SHGs. As for the financial health tools they will have to address the gaps identified through the research and will be co-created with the UNCDF and partners.

**29. Is there a source to refer to for activities undertaken by Mission Shakti Living Lab/any existing systems/programs/schemes that are going to be aligned with/absorbed into the Living Lab?**

Response: Please refer to the Mission Shakti website at this link  
<https://missionshakti.odisha.gov.in/>

**30. Can we know which blocks will be selected for the intervention in Sambalpur and Ganjam districts? Are there specific criteria being used/to be used to select these blocks?**

Response: This is not pre-defined. Applicants can suggest the methodology of selection.

**31. For the social norms mapping exercise (under Activity 1), the RFA mentions that UNCDF will be collaborating with CGAP to map the social norms, but mentions that the selected partner will be briefed on how to execute the mapping and the methodology: does this mean that our proposal should not include any qualitative methodology/approach at all for the social norms mapping? What will the exact nature of CGAP's contribution be to the social norms mapping exercise?**



Unlocking Public and Private  
Finance for the Poor

Response: CGAP's diagnostic toolkit provides guidelines for how to conduct the field research within a market systems development framework. The methodology is defined within the guidelines and will be adapted to the project context. The research firm is expected to assist UNCDF in developing a research plan, designing the analytical framework and qualitative research tools in line with the social norms diagnostic as well as conducting interviews, data analysis and documentation. In this light, the applicant is expected to suggest key questions for exploration considering the project's objectives, a tentative analytical framework, the qualitative methods/tools that they expect to use, and the sampling frame and sample size for the research. It must be noted that the field work for this research will be staggered including a scoping study to identify and validate the behaviors and norms, and a longer data collection process for a norms deep dive.

Read more at this link:

<https://www.findevgateway.org/blog/2021/04/collaborative-effort-diagnose-effect-social-norms-womens-financial-inclusionv>

- 32. One of the areas of inquiry on the financial health learning agenda (under Activity 2) requires comparison of financial health outcomes of women entrepreneurs (WEs) who have “access to a particular basket of financial products and services (e.g., savings+ formal credit + insurance)”, and those who have access to one or no such product: does UNCDF/Mission Shakti have such WEs/WSHGs in their network currently, who do use multiple financial products and services? If not, will the selected partner have to carry out this comparison separately at the individual level with women entrepreneurs operating in Sambalpur and Ganjam? This could affect study design and budget. By definition, WSHGs have access to at least one product: savings; does UNCDF/Mission Shakti have stand-alone WEs in their network who do not use financial products? (Perhaps through SRLM?) Or do we have to find such WEs externally?**



Unlocking Public and Private  
Finance for the Poor

Response: The SHGs and micro-enterprises under the scope are the ones under the purview of Mission Shakti. The applicant will not have to scout for SHGs and enterprises separately as only those associated with mission shakti are to be considered.

**33. We understand from the portal that we first need to submit the pre-screening form. Could you let us know after submission of this form, how much time does it take for UNCDF to approve the same? Could you share the full Application format for reference?**

Response: After you submit the pre-screening form and in case you are eligible, you will automatically see a main application tab on the left of your screen. The main application requires responses to a few basic questions such as website address, organization address etc. followed by uploading your technical proposal, workflow and budget. The templates of the technical proposal, CV, submission form budget and workflow are provided on the UNCDF website. These are very extensive documents, and you can plan your time accordingly. The link to the request for application is here <https://www.uncdf.org/article/6952/rfa-defining-and-assessing-financial-health-of-women-shgs-and-micro-enterprises-in-odisha-india>

**34. We understand certification of incorporation is required only for the lead applicant, and other consortium partners need not provide the same. Can you please let us know if our understanding is correct?**

Response: Yes



Unlocking Public and Private  
Finance for the Poor

**35. There is a mention of “Detailed Budget” in the RFA Document (ref: Page 24) as part of the application documents. Will this be any different to first sheet of Annex 3: Budget of Action? If yes, what additional information is expected?**

Response: No

**36. There is a mention of “List of Similar Research Projects completed by the applicant” in the RFA Document (ref: Page 24) as part of the application documents. We will be furnishing those details as part of Section 1 of Annex 2. Will this then suffice the need?**

Response: Yes, response to section 1 of Annex 2 will suffice.

**37. For Activity 2 in the scope of work, will the research be related to develop a financial health index only for individual women and women entrepreneurs or also financial health index for SHGs as a group?**

Response: For individual women enterprises, micro-enterprises and SHGs.

**38. Whether the initial study has to be cover entire state or any specific geographical area**

Response: Specific area as defined in the RFA.

**39. What is the % or number of beneficiaries has to be covered during study (Activity 1,2&3)**



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Finance for the Poor

Response: Applicants can suggest as a part of their proposals.

- 40. As mentioned in the page no 20 (section - Rating the Financial Proposal (FP)) that Applicant is co- contributing resources towards the project research cost – Kindly let us know the % of co-financing required from the applicant**

Response: UNCDFs contribution may be a maximum of INR 90 Lakhs. Applicants can determine the remaining cost basis the proposed budgets of their proposals.

- 41. As mentioned in the page no 4, applicant has to sign a Performance-Based Agreement (PBA)2 with UNCDF, achieving a milestone will therefore trigger a grant payment and in page no 23 mentioned payment will be released 10% after signing agreement and further payments will be after completing Activity 1,2& 3 (20%, 30%, 40%) – Please clarify which one we have followed.**

Response: Both of these statements are correct. The payment tranches will be paid as defined and will be based on the achievement of milestones of the engagement.

- 42. Have the interventions undertaken by Mission Shakti and UNCDF already started?**

Response: No

- 43. Can foreign academic institutions apply for this?**

Response: Yes. As long as there is a registered Indian applicant in the consortium.



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**44. We could possibly incorporate the cost of faculty time (that would otherwise accrue to the Institute) towards cost sharing on our part?**

Response: Yes, you can.

**45. Will the budget to be submitted is till 2025?**

Response: Yes