



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

## Call for Proposals from NGOs

### I. BACKGROUND

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in 177 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations

This Call for Proposals (CFP) is specifically related to the UNDP Women's Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus.

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. For UNDP, creating equal opportunities for women and men is critical for equitable, sustainable development and poverty reduction. Hence, gender equality is in core of the UNDP mandate globally and nationally.

UNDP Armenia, within the past decade, has continuously implemented projects on women empowerment, gender equality and youth leadership in Armenia.

UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

“Women’s Economic Empowerment in the South Caucasus” Project (hereafter Project) is a newly commencing initiative of UN Women, supported by the Swiss Agency of Development and Cooperation and Austrian Development Agency in three countries of South Caucasus. The purpose of the project is to ensure that women, particularly the poor and socially excluded, in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are economically empowered and participate in relevant decision-making.

The Armenian segment of the project will be implemented by UNDP Armenia in partnership with RA Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development (RA MTAD) and in close collaboration UN Women Country Office in Georgia. Partnerships and synergies will be ensured with regional, local governments, private companies, civil society organizations, other women empowerment projects in the country and region.

The joint project will work in the following directions:

- ❑ Support women, particularly the poor and socially excluded, to use skills, economic opportunities and relevant information to be self-employed and/or to join the formal labour sector in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (grass-roots level)
- ❑ Support to legislative and policy frameworks in Armenia and Georgia to enable women’s economic empowerment (policy and legislation level)

- ❑ Support the Government and public institutions to develop and deliver gender-responsive programmes, public services, strategies and plans for women's economic empowerment in Armenia and Georgia (institutional level)

Throughout implementation of its projects, the partners will combine conventional and innovative approaches, allowing room for experimentation and testing of new solutions with application of design thinking and user-centric approaches.

## II. OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS/ DELIVERABLES

The objective of the present Call for Proposals is to seek proposals from NGOs with a strong track record in advancing gender equality, the women's economic empowerment and social work at grassroots level. The Call for Proposal focuses on Social Mobilization and Local Decision-making Processes.

UNDP is therefore looking to partner with organizations that have proven capacity to develop and implement an innovative and transformational programme to increase target women's vocational/entrepreneurial skills, economic opportunities, incomes and participation in local decision-making process in Shirak and Gegharkunik Marzes of the Republic of Armenia. The target communities are the following: Chambarak, Geghamasar, Shoghakat, Vardenis in Gegharkunik Marz and Akhuryan, Amasia, Ani, Arpi, Ashotsk, Marmashen, Sarapat in Shirak Marz.

The project is expected to be implemented by either one or more than one organizations in partnership (in which case they will have to show proof of the partnership at the time of submitting the proposals and clear indication of responsibilities/lead role). Private companies can apply in alliance with NGOs, but cannot be in the lead.

The proposed duration of the announced scope of work is 24 months. The interested NGOs are expected to submit the proposal covering this period.

With an overall outcome of **Women, particularly poor and socially excluded, use skills, economic opportunities, and relevant information to be self-employed and/or to join formal labour sector and participate in local decision-making**, proposals should address the following outcome and activities:

### **COMPONENT : Social Mobilization and Local Decision-making**

#### **Sub-Component 1. Social Mobilization**

Social mobilization seeks to facilitate change through the inclusion of a diverse set of actors engaged in interrelated and complementary roles. The project should use social mobilization (e.g. conducting participatory needs assessment, establishing self-help groups, mainstreaming gender responsive budgeting) to reach out and activate women, including the poor, socially excluded as well as economically relatively active rural women in Gegharkunik and Shirak Marzes of the Republic of Armenia within the indicated communities to obtain social support as well as information and knowledge on public services, educational and income-generating opportunities offered by the state, private and development partners.

The special emphasis should be made on economic empowerment and encouraging women's cooperation to improve the economic circumstances. The social mobilization approach information on the methodology *No one left behind: lessons learned from the grassroots social mobilization of women in Georgia* can be used as a resource, to be found at <https://tinyurl.com/yahteuef>.

#### **Sub-Component 2: Local Decision Making/Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB)**

Under this sub-component, the project should also support women and women's groups to be empowered to participate in local planning and budgeting. To strengthen women's concerns, voice and participation, the project will further improve the skills and capacities of socially mobilized rural women in the target regions to

**engage in local planning and budgeting processes** (GRB discussions). In more detail, under this component the following activities shall be implemented:

- Improve the skills, capacities and the civic initiative of socially mobilized rural women and women's groups in the indicated communities of Shirak and Gegharkunik Marzes of Armenia to engage in local planning and budgeting processes (GRB).

### **Sub-component 3: Capacity Building**

- Improve socially mobilized women's capacities in life skills (general competencies, CV writing, presentation skills, effective communication, IT literacy, job searching, etc.) to improve their employability.

#### **Final Beneficiaries**

Eligible proposals will be those focused on **260 women** (at least 30 per cent of whom are poor and socially excluded women) in both Marzes as the direct and final beneficiaries.

- At the end of the 24 months, the total of 260 women (at least 30 per cent of whom are poor and socially excluded women) in both Marzes should be mobilized
- At the end of the 24 months, a total of 6 successful advocacy initiatives facilitated by women beneficiaries to overcome their socio-economic challenges need to be in place (among the 2 regions).
- At the end of the 24 months, total of **200 women** (at least 30 per cent of whom are poor and socially excluded women) in both Marzes should state increased knowledge regarding women's rights and policies through advocacy initiatives
- Incumbent to propose the # of women beneficiaries who will contribute to local planning and budgeting (GRB discussions) aimed at addressing their socio-economic concerns.

### **Sub-Component 4 (OPTIONAL): Capacity Building on Business Development**

To build the capacities of the target women, the project envisages **capacity building on business development** activity - to offer trainings and other capacity development opportunities the same target group for starting and upscaling existing businesses. In total 260 women (at least 30 per cent of whom are poor and socially excluded women) in the indicated communities of both Shirak and Gegharkunik Marzes will obtain skills to start or further develop existing businesses and to improve their employability. The trainings and tailored business-related technical assistance will be provided by private companies, service providers in cooperation with the selected NGO(s). The following activities shall be included:

- Build capacities of socially mobilized women to start or further develop existing businesses (vocational trainings in the areas but not limited to financial literacy, business management, marketing, record keeping, financial planning);
- Build capacities of socially mobilized women who work in subsistence farming or own small agricultural business to expand their production by acquiring the information on more contemporary methods of agricultural production and management;
- Support start-ups and the establishment of women-owned small businesses, and expansion of existing businesses by establishing the small grants program among other means;
- Encourage formations of networks of local women who are engaged in business activities seeking the common resolution of existing problems (eg sharing the storage facilities, seeking the new buyers, splitting the agricultural equipment expenses, supplying more diverse products through cooperation etc), encourage the cooperation with the small grants program, if relevant; Improve the access to vocational education and job-placement opportunities for mobilized women in Armenia.

This component is optional to the present Call for Proposals. The applying NGO(s) may consider including this component into application package. Alternatively, in case the application is submitted without Component 4, the NGO(s) shall be ready to collaborate with company/organization, selected by UNDP on this activity.

The interested NGOs may apply in a consortium with a private service providing organization, where the lead organization should be an NGO with at least 5 years of experience in a similar initiative.

### III. PROPOSAL

Proposed Methodology, Approach, quality assurance plan and Implementation Plan – this section should demonstrate the NGO’s response to the Terms of Reference by identifying the specific components proposed, how the outputs/ delivery shall be addressed, as specified; providing a detailed description of the essential performance characteristics proposed; identifying the works/portions of the work that will be subcontracted.

Moreover, the proposal should demonstrate how the proposed methodology meets or exceeds the TOR, while ensuring appropriateness of the approach to the local conditions and the rest of the project operating environment. This methodology must be laid out in an implementation timetable and a quality assurance.

Management Structure and Resource (Key Personnel) – This section should include the comprehensive description of the management structure and information regarding required resources including curriculum vitae (CVs) of key personnel that will be assigned to support the implementation of the proposed methodology, clearly defining the roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the proposed methodology. CVs should establish competence and demonstrate qualifications in areas relevant to the TOR.

### IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA & METHODOLOGY

#### a) Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 1) Sound technical proposal that includes innovative and replicable inclusion mechanisms to maximize the value transfer to the beneficiaries.
- 2) High impact interventions directly targeting and responding to the needs established in the ToR.
- 3) Size of budget requested commensurate with the organization’s proven administrative and financial management capacity.
- 4) Participatory monitoring and evaluation that will contribute to building a sense of ownership among the beneficiaries to promote the sustainability of the interventions.

Summary of Technical Proposal Evaluation Forms		Score Weight	Points Obtainable
1.	NGO Eligibility and qualifications	30%	300
2.	Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan	40%	400
3.	Management Structure and Key Personnel	30%	300
Total			1000

Detailed sub-criteria are provide in Annex 1

#### b) Duration

Start date and end date for completion of required services/results should be within the 24-month period.

The amount requested in the proposal should be commensurate with the organization’s administrative and

financial management capabilities. In principle, project duration will not exceed 24 months.

## **V. SELECTION PROCESS:**

The UNDP will review proposals through a five-step process: (i) determination of eligibility; (ii) technical review of eligible proposals; (iii) scoring and ranking of the eligible proposals based on the assessment criteria outlined in the previous section to identify highest ranking proposal; (iv) round of clarification (if necessary) with the highest scored proposal; and (v) Responsible Party Agreement (RPA) signature

## **VI. ELIGIBILITY AND SUBMISSION PROCESS**

The applicant organization shall have proved track record on the following thematic areas:

- Gender equality
- Women's economic empowerment
- Social mobilization in communities with different social groups
- Capacity development activities in communities of Armenia

The proposed project shall cover 24 months implementation schedule and full scope of work in three or four mentioned sub-components;

Geographical coverage of the target communities mentioned above in Shirak and Gegharkunik Marz

### **1. Experience**

- Proved track-record in implementing programmes on gender equality, or grass-root level social work;
- Experience working in the target regions/communities;
- Having presence (an office with staff capacity) in the target regions/communities is an asset. Alternatively, applicants should demonstrate that they have existing partnerships or clear plan of establishing partnerships with CSOs/NGOs based in the target districts. In such cases, applicants will indicate potential partnerships and will subsequently need to enter into an MoU as part of this engagement.
- At least five years of experience in implementation of similar programmes, namely: social mobilization to reach out and activate women, including the poor, socially excluded, as well as economically relatively active rural women; and raising awareness on the local governance processes;
- Knowledge of Gender Responsive Budgeting fundamentals is an asset.

Applicants shall bear all costs related to proposal preparation and submission.

Applicants must submit their proposals in one envelope to:

- **14 Petros Adamyan street, 0010, Yerevan**

The following documents must be submitted in order for the submission to be considered:

- 1) Project Application (See Annex 1)
- 2) Project Budget (See Annex 2)
- 3) State Registration Certificate
- 4) Audited financial statements for past two years, including management report and footnotes that accompany the financial statements
- 5) 2 references from donor agencies/partners

Only one submission per organization is allowed. Once the application is complete and submitted, revised versions of proposal documents will not be accepted.

### **Submission Deadline**

Proposals, with supporting documents, should be submitted by **April 15 on 16:00**.

Potential applicants should refer to the "Frequently Asked Questions" posted in UNDP's website.

For additional questions about the Call for Proposals Guidelines or application forms, please e-mail Ms. Yelena Minasyan at [yelena.minasyan@undp.org](mailto:yelena.minasyan@undp.org)

*Note; UNDP reserves the right not to fund any proposals arising from this Call for Proposals*

### **Estimate Competition Timeline**

Below is an estimated timeline for this Call for Proposals.

*March 25, 2019:* Call for Proposal opens and relevant documents are posted online.

*April 15, 2019:* Deadline for organizations to submit proposals under this Call.

*April 20, 2019:* Assessment and selection processes will take place.

*April 22:* Selected applicants will be notified.

### **IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

UNDP implements a policy of zero tolerance on proscribed practices, including fraud, corruption, collusion, unethical practices, and obstruction. UNDP is committed to preventing, identifying and addressing all acts of fraud and corrupt practices against UNDP as well as third parties involved in UNDP activities. (See [http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Transparency/UNDP\\_Anti\\_Fraud\\_Policy\\_English\\_FINAL\\_june\\_2011.pdf](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Transparency/UNDP_Anti_Fraud_Policy_English_FINAL_june_2011.pdf) and <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/procurement/protestandsanctions/> for full description of the policies)

- Organizations can submit proposals for work in either one or two of the indicated Marzes.
- Proposals should reflect partnerships among civil society organizations and Government institutions. Special attention will be paid to organizations with a demonstrated record of working with local women's organizations, especially at grassroots level, as well as specialized Women's Economic Empowerment networks;
- In case organizations apply in consortium, the lead organization will be required to have at least 5 years of experience in a similar initiative.
- Proposals from more than one organization or entity must clearly indicate which organization will take lead responsibility for project management and contractual obligations;
- UNDP will sign contracts with and disburse funds to the leading organization only;
- Eligible organizations currently partnering with UNDP may apply under this call for proposals.
- Women-led NGOs are encouraged to apply.

### **Non-eligible applicant organizations**

The following are **NOT eligible** to apply to this call for proposals:

- Government agencies or institutions
- UN agencies
- Bilateral or multilateral organizations, financial institutions, development agencies
- Private sector entities can apply only in consortium, but not in lead.
- Private individuals

In responding to this Call for Proposals, UNDP requires all Proposers to conduct themselves in a professional, objective and impartial manner, and they must at all times hold UNDP's interests paramount. Proposers must strictly avoid conflicts with other assignments or their own interests, and act without consideration for future work. All Proposers found to have a conflict of interest shall be disqualified. Without limitation on the generality of the above, Proposers, and any of their affiliates, shall be considered to have a conflict of interest with one or more parties in this solicitation process, if they:

\* Are or have been associated in the past, with a firm or any of its affiliates which have been engaged UNDP to provide services for the preparation of the design, Terms of Reference, cost analysis/estimation, and other documents to be used in this competitive selection process;

\* Were involved in the preparation and/or design of the programme/project related to the services requested under this Call for Proposals; or

\* Are found to be in conflict for any other reason, as may be established by, or at the discretion of, UNDP.

In the event of any uncertainty in the interpretation of what is potentially a conflict of interest, proposers must disclose the condition to UNDP and seek UNDP's confirmation on whether or not such conflict exists.