



The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) in Lesotho

Terms of Reference – Civil Society Organization(s)

Upscaling Women-led Enterprises Programme Removing Barriers for Upscaling Beekeeping and Wool and Mohair Products in Lesotho

1. Background

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the GEF, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and it is executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Grants are made directly to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) including national and local Non-Governmental Organizations with priority for Community Based Organizations, Farmers Associations, Scientific Community, Women Groups and Youth and Children Organizations and other recognized community entities. The SGP recognizes the key role CSOs play as a resource and constituency for environment and development concerns. These entities should be involved directly or indirectly in natural resources management and other activities that support livelihoods, empower communities and most importantly contribute towards environmental protection.

Experience of the implementation of the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) globally over a period of 25 years, points to the fact that nature-based businesses – such as those involving the land, forest, garden, or rural environment – are industries with significant growth potential and that a large portion of SGP projects include an element of entrepreneurship as an alternative income activity and that many of them are led by women. However, according to *UN Women*, women continue to participate in labor markets on an unequal basis with men: women are paid less than men, bear disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work, work in vulnerable, low-paid, or undervalued jobs, and are more likely than men to work in informal employment. To close this glaring gap and to capitalise on the vast experience generated over the years, and also in a bid to uphold the SGP's goal of "inclusion and innovation for greater impact", the SGP has launched an Innovation Programme for OP 6 Strategic Initiatives, targeting *Women-led Enterprises*, Lesotho is among the ten countries selected to pilot the *Women-led Enterprises* programme.

2. The Women-led Enterprises Innovation Programme

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), empowering women to participate equally in the global economy could add \$28 trillion in GDP growth by 2025. WEF also highlights that societies with greater gender equality not only offer better socioeconomic opportunities for women, but also tend to grow faster and more equitably with gains in poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, consumer choice, innovation and decision-making on a wider set of issues.

Similarly, UN Women highlights that when more women work, economies grow. However, women continue to participate in labour markets on an unequal basis with men: women are paid less than men, bear disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work, work in vulnerable, low-paid, or undervalued jobs, and are more likely than men to work in informal employment. For example, in the agriculture sector women make up about 43% of the labour force, yet less than 20% of the world's landholders are women. Climate change, natural disasters, and environmental degradation also affects women differently than men, due to their lower social status and lack of access to education and decision-making. The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation tend further limit already constrained access.

This situation is no different in Lesotho. Other than caring for the families and engaging in non-cash activities like tilling the land and with local beer brewing bringing in a little income, rural communities, especially women and girls do not engage in economic activities and remain overly dependent on men, a situation that exacerbates child marriages and utter hopelessness. Among the key developmental challenges identified by the National Strategic Development Plan is unemployment, estimated at 32.8% but recorded as higher for females and youths estimated at 39.9% and 32.3% respectively, compared to males at 26.2%. On the other hand, the agricultural sector's performance whose contribution to the GDP has declined from 15.2% (1984) to 5.2% remains an important sector supporting lives of more than 70% of the total population residing in rural areas.

The Innovation Programme is thus aimed at supporting expansion of existing nature-based women-led enterprises for exponential growth. In the Lesotho case, the targeted enterprises are Beekeeping and Wool and Mohair Tapestries.

This call for proposals is open to civil society organizations in Lesotho (NGO, association, foundation) operating at the national level with a regional and global network. The structure must demonstrate good experience and have skills related to the areas of innovation and social / green entrepreneurship in Lesotho and meet the following criteria:

The Table below provides the priority themes and eligibility criteria:

Priority themes for the Innovation Programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business management training • Technical training • Product development and design training • Business development and business management counselling • Marketing training • Financial training and finance facilitation • Business women's networks and business networking – regional, national, and international • Creating enabling and access to markets
Eligibility Criteria: Applicant organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization must have a model in operation or a platform established as a basis for supporting social and green enterprises; this call for projects is not intended for small associations enjoying neither national nor international roots. • Supports small- and medium-sized businesses run by women and the most vulnerable populations • Promotes and strengthens organizations such as women's cooperatives, self-help groups and associations • Acts as incubator for local businesses in partnership with the private sector • Has a network of partners that can offer specific support adapted to the companies it supports. • Partnerships with local chambers of commerce, unions, large cooperatives, local public-private organizations, etc. • Capable of mobilizing the resources and partners needed to replicate and scale up the project at national, regional and international level. • Be able to mobilize partnerships and concrete co-financing for this innovation program targeted at women and women. entrepreneurship

The Women-led Enterprises Innovation Programme – Key Activities

The overall objective of the project in Lesotho is to “*Harness and safeguard the entrepreneurship skills of women in order to strengthen their participation in nature-based businesses such as those involving biodiversity conservation and value addition to agricultural products, as well as to support resilient livelihoods thus contributing to economic growth,*” with the following key outcomes envisaged:

- Women Beekeepers and Tapestry Weavers in thriving nature-based enterprises
- Resilient livelihoods for beekeepers and wool and mohair tapestry weavers

- Growing population of Honey Bees for improved honey production and ecological benefits

The following activities will be undertaken to achieve the stated results:

a) Consultations and scoping process

- ***Communications and outreach about the Women Enterprises Innovation Programme*** - to explain the purpose of the programme and the rational and criteria for selection of the targeted products
- ***Multi-stakeholder consultations*** - This consultation process should include relevant partners from government, civil society, UNDP Accelerator Labs, the private sector, Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC), National University of Lesotho Innovation Hub and others, in order to get buy-in and support from key actors and the SGP National Steering Committee.

Outputs

- A short report documenting the consultation and scoping process highlighting the key components for further and deeper assessment – Validation by the SGP Joint National Steering Committee

b) Inventories and Baseline Assessments

The process will be informed by the consultations and scoping exercise which will have laid the foundation for deeper and more focused assessments. The objective of the baseline assessment is to inform i) *establishment of a database and mapping of target entrepreneurs*, ii) *development of a compact of strategic partners and existing opportunities and synergies*, iii) *capacity needs and development of a costed capacity and skills development programme*, iv) *establishment of entrepreneurship conglomerations for targeted products*, v) *adoption/development of quality control mechanisms* and vi) *confirmation of priority areas of focus for the project*.

Baseline Assessment will identify key challenges, technological, financial, infrastructural, coordination, and marketing and market access issues and the legal framework, and chart the way forward for addressing the challenges.

Output:

Baseline Assessment process report presenting the baseline analysis and the elaboration of the results framework and modalities for implementation of the charted way forward. This will be presented to the SGP Joint National Steering Committee for validation.

c) Comprehensive Research on the targeted products/business models

Once the Baseline Assessment process has been completed and agreed, targeted research will be undertaken in partnership with key stakeholders that have done research on these products to identify areas that need further research and development.

d) Partner coordination arrangements

Through the consultations and scoping and Baseline Assessments processes, strategic partners and areas for synergy and collaboration identified to inform formation or reinforcement of existing coordination mechanisms to support project implementation.

e) Establishment of Conglomerations of target entrepreneurs

One of the findings from the preliminary stakeholders' consultations is lack of capacity of entrepreneurs to meet supply/demand requirements. The CSO(s) will, using the developed database and map of target entrepreneurs, facilitate the process for establishment of vibrant conglomerations of target entrepreneurs, with support from the identified strategic partners.

f) Capacity and skills development

Development of the programme for capacity building and skills development will be informed by the baseline assessment and research on the target products/business models and will target the established conglomerations of entrepreneurs. This will involve tailor-made training and skills transfer, acquisition and adoption of appropriate technologies, branding and packaging, and through established partnerships acquisition of requisite infrastructure/facilities for production processes.

g) Development/Adoption of Quality control Mechanisms

The Baseline Assessments will have identified what are the requisite legal frameworks and quality control mechanisms or if they are existent or not and what needs to be done within the scope of the project. A programme of action will be developed and its implementation facilitated by the CSO(s)

h) Marketing and Market access

Through the comprehensive research including market research conducted for the target products, a market niche and requisite linkages, locally and regionally, will be established through among other things, participation of the women entrepreneurs in local and regional trade fairs, trade expos and other networking and South-South interactions.

The following are the expected results of the project:

- At least 10 women led business will be strengthened in production, processing and certification of apiculture and wool and mohair products.
- Network of women led green businesses will be created
- Quality control mechanism will be in place in at least 10 enterprises
- At least 10 Women led businesses will have enhanced access to local, national and international markets

3. Scope of the assignment:

The CSO (s) will undertake all of the activities elaborated in the preceding sections for delivery of the stipulated outputs, in a professional and timely manner. Preparations for and facilitation of the envisaged consultations, assessments, research and documentation thereof, is the responsibility of the CSO(s).

The CSO(s) will work closely with the SGP National Coordinator and National Steering Committee following the SGP rules and procedures throughout the project cycle.

4. Duration

The project will be implemented over a period of 24 months with the possibility of being extended for a further 12 months depending on need and availability of funds. Please provide a detailed timeline as part of your proposal.

5. Who may submit proposals:

Civil society organizations in Lesotho (NGO, association, foundation) operating at the national level with a regional and global network. The organization must demonstrate good experience and have skills related to the areas of innovation and social / green entrepreneurship in Lesotho. Submissions should include a detailed account of the experience and track record of the CSO, their paid staff complement and physical address, Constitution and letters of support from Partners.

6. Competencies Required for the project:

- Demonstrated capacity for development and operational effectiveness and strategic thinking and analysis
- Respect for diversity and experience in working with community-led initiatives as well as experience in community and stakeholder participatory processes.
- Experience working with and empowering small and medium-sized businesses led by women and vulnerable communities
- Knowledgeable about global environment and sustainable development issues, particularly those affecting mountain communities, especially women
- Ability to act as an incubator for local businesses in partnership with the private sector
- Capable of mobilizing the resources and partners needed to replicate and scale up the project at national, regional and international level.
- Ability to mobilize partnerships and concrete co-financing for this innovation programme targeted at women and women entrepreneurship
- Ability to network with partners that can offer specific support adapted to the women-led groups it supports - *partnerships with local chambers of commerce, unions, large cooperatives, local public-private organizations, etc.*
- Proven capacity to produce high quality qualitative research and ability to absorb, analyze and synthesize large amounts of complex information within tight deadlines.
- Strong presentation and facilitation and writing skills

7. Budget:

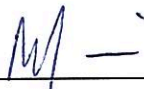
The maximum amount for the grant award for the entire project will be limited to \$150,000, with applicants required to provide a detailed budgetary estimate. The SGP thrives on partnerships and thus it is a requirement that the CSO(s) provide a detailed breakdown of co-financing to match or exceed the grant award.

8. Annexes to the Terms of Reference

- Proposal Template
- SGP OP6 Brochure

9. For more information, contact:

Nthabiseng Majara, National Coordinator, GEF Small Grants Programme, Lesotho at the following address: nthabiseng.majara@undp.org Tel: 22228000 ext. 8122 Mobile +266 58753319 during working hours. **Completed proposals should be received by the SGP National Coordinator no later than December 6, 2019.**

Signed:  _____

Nthabiseng Majara, National Coordinator, UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme Lesotho