I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

During the last 15 years, India has made extraordinary progress in terms of economic growth, with more than 271 Million people having been lifted out of poverty. However, high growth rates have not translated into equitable development, particularly for the most marginalised and disadvantaged communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the gender and economic disparity.

UNDP leverages its comparative advantage as a catalyst and knowledge leader to strengthen institutional linkages between enterprise and skills-training providers, identify synergies between national programmes and missions, and support the government's efforts to assist marginalised groups access skills, jobs, livelihoods and productive assets. UNDP focuses on addressing institutional, societal, and economic barriers that preclude the realization of inclusive growth through:

- Creating scalable integrated development solutions to support the poor in their moving beyond subsistence, and towards sustainable livelihoods.
- Confronting the significant barriers and stigma faced by women and girls.
- Replicating the enabling conditions by which women are better able to become active agents in development, through education, training opportunities, counselling, and advice.
- Research, analysis, and policy advocacy.

The ultimate goals of the programme are to a) enhance agency, capacity, and access to decent jobs - create sustainable livelihood opportunities for women, youth and tribal populations through innovative and scalable solutions to reduce socio-economic inequalities; and b) promote inclusive development that leads to transformational change in people's lives and leaves no one behind.

II. OBJECTIVE

This is a Request for Information (RFI) from national and/or international CSOs/NGOs/CBOs, referred to as Service Provider (SP), for potential partnership with UNDP to carry out activities under UNDP's Inclusive Growth unit with expertise and experience in the following thematic areas:

1. Facilitating Education to Work Transition and Enhancing Access to Employment Opportunities
2. Inclusive and Sustainable Livelihoods Promotion
3. Social Protection
4. Advocacy and Policy Research
5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Organizations can apply for one or more of these thematic areas. The geography chosen under this RFI is Pan-India.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected service provider is expected to support UNDP in across the broad thematic areas mentioned below. This support will be at three levels, depending on the requirement – a) Micro Level- Support for implementation of project activities on the ground directly with communities; b) Meso Level- Support to build

capacities of other agencies, collectives of farmers/artisans, government bodies, etc.; and c) Macro Level-Support to provide technical assistance to state and central government departments.

1. **Facilitating Education to Work Transition and Enhancing Access to Employment Opportunities**
UNDP's work in this area focuses on provision of career guidance and counseling to enable young people to make informed career decisions, enabling access to technical skills, provision of employability skills, exposure to the world of work, liaising with industry to ensure market-aligned skilling, placement in jobs/apprenticeships/internships as well as post-placement support.

Under this component, the service provider will be expected to have expertise in and support UNDP in **Career Guidance and Counselling (CG&C)** including capacity building of faculties of educational institutions (schools/colleges/ITIs, etc.) and roll out of psychometric assessments, **provision of employability skills** (preferably using UNDP's 100-hour module but not limited to) and/or **facilitating access to technical skills**, **exposure to the world of work and industry connect** by facilitating guest lectures from employers, industry associations as well as exposure visits to help beneficiaries understand the world of work, **linking beneficiaries to jobs/internships/apprenticeships** and provision of **post-placement support**. The service provider should be able to think out of the box on the employment related challenges faced by employers as well as job seekers from poor, marginalized and excluded communities and should be able to support UNDP with innovative solutions for strengthening the whole employment ecosystem.

2. **Inclusive and Sustainable Livelihoods Promotion**
UNDP's work in this area focuses on promotion of inclusive and sustainable livelihoods mainly with women and youth but also includes communities from marginalized and vulnerable communities like people with disabilities, people living with HIV, transgenders, tribal populations and ultra-poor communities. UNDP works on creation and acceleration of sustainable nano/micro enterprises as well as MSMEs and connects collectives of primary producers such as farmers and artisans with finance as well as the market and leveraging government schemes to create public infrastructure to support value additions for farm and non-farm segments UNDP has created innovative knowledge products like Biz Sakhi, Women Business Manager and Women Sourcing Manager curricula to strengthen capabilities of both farm and non-farm sectors.

2.1 Entrepreneurship Promotion
Training, mentoring, and hand holding aspiring and existing nano and micro-entrepreneurs, MSMEs and youth innovators to start/scale their enterprises are UNDP's focus in this area. UNDP uses its Biz Sakhi curriculum which covers aspects related to leadership, business management and psychosocial support is used to train local community members as business mentors. Through Entrepreneurship Awareness as well as Entrepreneurship Development Programmes, UNDP reaches out to potential and existing entrepreneurs and helps them set-up/scale-up their enterprises.

Under this component, the service provider will be expected to have expertise in and support UNDP in **enterprise creation and enterprise acceleration**, including provision of business advisory support (including but not limited to business planning, credit linkages, market linkages and linkages with govt schemes) for nano, micro, small and medium enterprises. The service provider should be able to support the UNDP implementation of entrepreneurship promotion programs ranging from supporting subsistence enterprises to growth enterprises in different contexts and geographies.

2.2 Youth Innovation
One of the key focus areas under livelihoods promotion for UNDP is the creation of an enabling ecosystem for youth led social innovation and entrepreneurship to place young people front and centre to tackle society's most pressing problems through innovation, moving away from being a job seeker to a job creator.

Here, the service provider will be expected to have expertise in and support UNDP in **identification of youth innovation related themes** by conducting research followed by **conducting challenges/** competitions/ innovative outreach events on these identified themes. This will include but not limited to maximizing outreach of the call for applications, maintenance of a microsite, facilitating the application assessment

procedure by identifying and onboarding of independent experts and jury members, implementing a three-month incubation (springboard) programme for shortlisted innovators, and organizing the final event. Development of knowledge products and communication collaterals throughout the challenge will be an important area of work here. In addition to this, **broader research and consultations on youth innovation and social entrepreneurship** and ways and means to promote this will also be included.

2.3 Value Chain Development

As a part of its work with primary producers such as farmers and artisans, UNDP focuses on enhancing gender equality in the value chain and strengthening linkages, particularly market linkages, for farm and nonfarm collectives. UNDP builds the capacities of women as managerial cadre for collectives by leveraging its Women Sourcing Managers and/or Women Business Managers curriculum. It also creates/strengthens farmer and artisan collectives through capacity building of their board members and key functionaries on governance, leadership, management, operations, credit and market linkages, etc.

In this area, the service provider will be expected to have expertise in and support UNDP in **linking farmers, artisans and their collectives with finance and govt schemes** through provision of handholding support and guidance to access finance for working capital requirements as well as applying for and accessing relevant govt schemes. Secondly, support for **linking farmers, artisans and their collectives with the market** through provision of handholding support and guidance to link beneficiaries with market players such as institutional buyers, online platforms, social commerce, etc. This will include supporting operational requirements such as GST registration, other legal documentation, photography and listing for online platforms. The service provider should be able to support UNDP to strengthen the farm and non-farm sector with digital stack/ solutions integrated with dashboard with relevant nodal ministries and department.

3.   Social Protection

UNDP's aim is to ensure social safety nets are accessible for vulnerable populations in times of crisis by focusing on strengthening systems of social protection, creating awareness and facilitating linkages to government schemes. The service provider should be able to map the critical schemes operational in the state and local area with an approach of maximising access to benefits at household level.

Here, the service provider will be expected to have expertise in and support UNDP in understanding local social protection systems through secondary data and networks, and **enhance awareness of and access to network to social entitlements and government schemes such as** DBTs, access to ration cards, PDS, labor cards, credit linkages, access to government training and education facilities, etc. **Working in collaboration with local government departments** is critical to this intervention area**.** The service provider can use the GIS Enabled Entitlement Tracking System (GEET) platform (but not limited to) developed by UNDP in partnership with the CSOs to monitor the access of social protection schemes to the end beneficiary and support the local administration through innovative GIS based dashboard inbuild in GEET.

4.   Advocacy and Policy Research

UNDP constantly conducts policy advocacy and research based on its on-ground experience as well as current and long-term national priorities. This includes evaluation and impact analysis of government schemes, consultations bringing policy makers and other key stakeholders together on important developmental issues, development of research papers and policy notes, etc.

The service provider should have the ability to **collect data and evidence around flagship policies and schemes** through different tools so that advocacy is based on sound underlying data and evidence. The service provider should be able to support UNDP in **research on flagship schemes** of government departments like skills, entrepreneurship, agriculture, rural development, textiles, urban development, MSME, Women & Child Development, etc., **conducting policy analysis and creating briefs and reports** on flagship policies and schemes of government, **conducting events, workshops, seminars, webinars, round tables and other events** for consultation, dissemination of knowledge products around flagship policies and schemes of state and central government.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
UNDP believes in robust monitoring, evaluation and learning through baseline, mid-term and end-term assessments.

Under this thematic area, the service provider will be expected to have expertise in and support UNDP in **baseline, mid-term, end-term and impact evaluations** to document project/programme impact through quantitative as well as qualitative methods, including documentation of case studies as well as **creation of dashboards and IT solutions** around inclusive growth themes in partnership with government and private sector partners**.**

IV. EXPERIENCE

The NGO/CSO is expected to have the following experience:

- Experience of work in the State for which the NGO/CSO is interested to apply.

- Experience of working with government, UN and donor agencies.

- Experience in nurturing and capacity building of women and vulnerable communities in individual/ small groups/ large collectives' approach   for implementation of development activities (eg. SHGs, village/panchayat level committees/ municipal areas/ wards/ slums).

- The service provider should be in operation for a minimum of 5 years from the date of registration (Registration Certificate with organization profile to be submitted).

- The service provider should have an average annual turnover of Rs. 1 Crore or above in the recent 2 completed financial years (Audited statements of accounts; including Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account to be submitted).

- The service provider should have experience of working with private sector or have established partnerships with private sector in their domain area of expertise.

- The service provider should have proven domain expertise in thematic area selected in RFI.

Experience in specific areas of work is detailed in the table below:

#	Area of Work		Required Experience
1	Facilitating Education to Work Transition and Enhancing Access to Employment Opportunities		• The service provider should have at least 5 years of implementation experience in provision of career guidance and counseling and employability skills training to college students/vocational training aspirants with placement linkages. • The service provider should have demonstrated experience of linking beneficiaries with jobs/apprenticeships/internships. • The service provider should have a team of at least 10 professionals in the thematic area, each with a minimum of 5 years of experience after post-graduation.
2	Inclusive and Sustainable Livelihoods Promotion	Entrepreneurship Promotion	• The service provider should have at least 5 years of implementation experience in creation as well as scaling up of nano/micro enterprises. • The service provider should have demonstrated experience

			of provision of business advisory services to entrepreneurs as well as linking them with credit and markets. • The service provider should have a team of at least 10 professionals in the thematic area, each with a minimum of 5 years of experience after post-graduation.
		Youth Innovation	• The service provider should have demonstrated at least 3 years of previous experience and competence in conducting nationwide and multi state incubation programmes for social entrepreneurship. • The service provider should have a robust network of at least 10 organizational and institutional stakeholders (including govt, pvt sector and other CSOs) in the youth social entrepreneurship space. • The service provider should have a team of at least 10 professionals in the thematic area, each with a minimum of 5 years of experience after post-graduation.
		Value Chain Development	• The service provider should have experience of training farmers/artisans for at least 5 years in India. • The service provider should have demonstrated experience of linking farmers/artisans with the market. • The service provider should have a team of at least 10 professionals in the thematic area, each with a minimum of 5 years of experience after post-graduation.
3	Social Protection		• The service provider should have at least 3 years of experience in working on social protection/government programs and working with government line departments. • The service provider should have demonstrated experience of working with households on providing information and access to social entitlements and government programs. • The service provider should have a team of at least 10 professionals in the thematic area, each with a minimum of 5 years of experience after post-graduation.
4	Advocacy and Policy Research		• The service provider should have experience of creating knowledge products and conducting research in inclusive growth thematic areas for at least 5 years in India. • The service provider should have a team of at least 10 professionals in the thematic area, each with a minimum of 5 years of experience after post-graduation.
5	Monitoring and Evaluation		• The agency must have at least 5 years of experience in conducting evaluation studies for skilling, entrepreneurship and livelihood projects (farm and non-farm). • The service provider should have a team of at least 10 professionals in the thematic area, each with a minimum of 5 years of experience after post-graduation.

V. INFORMATION REQUESTED

Interested CSOs/NGOs are requested to fill out the questionnaire enclosed as *__Annexure-1__*, attaching all supporting documentation where specifically requested. If you are an international NGO, please provide information and documentation relating to your permits and licenses for your local presence in this country.

Please note that attachments should be provided to support each answer to the questions. All questions must

be answered directly and clearly. Extraneous information that are not directly responding to the questions will only constrain the ability of UNDP to positively assess the CSO/NGO's alignment with UNDP requirements.

All CSOs/NGOs are requested to provide information and supporting document as per Capacity Assessment Checklist (CACHE) form enclosed as **_Annexure-2_**, to enable UNDP to conduct a Capacity Assessment. Based on the results of this Capacity Assessment Checklist (CACHE), **UNDP will determine if the CSO/NGO may be placed on a roster for a period of three years**, for rapid engagement when required.

In **_Annexure-_3**, the organization should specifically mention the thematic area in which they have expertise and are applying for under this RFI. Interested organizations can select more than one thematic area.

VI. DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED

A completed RFI must be submitted along with following documents:

1. Annexure – 1 (duly filled)
2. Annexure – 2 (duly filled)
3. Annexure – 3 (duly filled)
4. Supporting documents for Annexures 1 and 2

VII. SUBMISSION OF RFI AND CLOSING DATE

RFI must be submitted in the online e-tendering system: https://etendering.partneragencies.org by the closing date indicated on the portal, using your username and password. If you have not registered in the system, you can register, using below mentioned generic User ID and password:

Username: event.guest
Password: why2change

For registration, submission of RFI and other guidance, you may please click on the link below to access UNDP e-Tendering User Guide for Bidders and video guides for registration and bid submission: http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/procurement/business/procurement-notices/resources/

You are kindly requested to indicate whether your organization intends to submit RFI by clicking on **"Accept Invitation".**

It shall remain your responsibility to ensure that RFI is submitted into the system by the deadline. RFI submission deadline appearing on e-Tendering portal will be FINAL and prevail on the ones appearing on any other website/s. Kindly ensure that documents uploaded are in the .pdf format (preferably), and free from any virus or corrupted files.

VIII. WHO CAN APPLY

RFI are invited from **CSO/NGO only**. RFI submitted by "for profit" organizations will not be accepted.

IX. CONTACT PERSON
For any query, please write to manikandan.srinivasan@undp.org

Questionnaire

Topic	Areas of Inquiry/ Supporting documentation	Response
1. Proscribed organizations	a) Is the CSO/NGO listed in the UN's list of proscribed organizations, UNDP Vendor Sanctions List, or indicted by the International or National Criminal Court? b) Is the CSO/NGO banned by any other institution/governments? If, yes, please provide information regarding the institution/Government and reasons.	
2. Legal status and Bank Account	a) Does the CSO/NGO have a legal capacity to operate in the UNDP programme country, and does it comply with the legal requirements of the country to register and operate an NGO/CSO? Please provide copies of all relevant documents evidencing legality of operations. b) Does the CSO/NGO have a bank account? (Please Submit proof indicating latest date)	
3. Certification/ Accreditation	a) Is the CSO/NGO certified in accordance with any international or local standards (e.g., ISO), such as in: • Leadership and Managerial Skills • Project Management • Financial Management • Organizational standards and procedures • Other	
4. Date of Establishment and Organizational Background	a) When was the CSO/NGO established? b) How has the CSO/NGO evolved since its establishment? (no more than 2 paragraphs) c) Who are your main donor/ partners? d) Please provide a list of all entities that the CSO/NGO may have an affiliation with. e) In how many cities/provinces/regions/ countries do you have capacity to operate in? Please provide a complete list and indicate the size of the offices in each location.	
5. Mandate and constituency	a) What is the CSO/NGO's primary advocacy / purpose for existence? b) What is the CSO/NGO's mandate, vision, and purpose? (no more than 2 paragraphs) c) Is the CSO/NGO officially designated to represent any specific constituency?	

6. Areas of Expertise	a) Does the CSO/NGO have expertise in any of the key areas identified above in this RFI? b) What other areas of expertise does the CSO/NGO have?	
7. Financial Position and Sustainability	a) What was the CSO/NGO's total financial delivery in the preceding 2 years? Please provide a financial statement for the last 2 years. b) What is the CSO/NGO's actual and projected inflow of financial resources for the current and the following year? c) Please provide a list of projects with description, duration, location and budget over the past 2 years (arrange from biggest budget to the lowest).	
8. Public Transparency	a) What documents are publicly available? b) How can these documents be accessed? (Pls provide links if web-based)	
9. Consortium	a) Do you have the capacity to manage a consortium? b) Do you currently, or have you in the past, managed or been involved with a consortium? If yes, provide a list of all consortia, the list of partners in the consortia, the role in the consortia, and the total financial budgets involved. c) Do you have a formal alliance with other CSOs/NGOs? If yes, pls. identify and provide details.	

Capacity Assessment Checklist (CACHE)

Topic	Areas of Inquiry **Please Attach Supporting Documentation for Each Question**	Response
1. Funding Sources	a) Who are the CSO/NGO's key donors? b) How many projects has each donor funded since the CSO/NGO's inception?	
2. Audit	a) Did the CSO/NGO have an audit within the last two years? b) Are the audits conducted by an officially accredited independent entity? If yes, provide name.	
3. Leadership and Governance Capacities	a) What is the structure of the CSO/NGO's governing body? Please provide Organogram.	
4. Personnel Capacities	a) What are the positions in the CSO/NGO that are empowered to make key corporate decisions? Please provide CVs of these staff. • Which positions in the CSO/NGO lead the areas of project management, finance, procurement, and human resources? Please provide CVs of these staff. • CVs of 10 professionals with at least five years of domain expertise in applied thematic area	
5. Infrastructure and Equipment and Digital Capacities	a) Where does the CSO/NGO have an official presence? Please provide details on duration and type of presence (e.g. field offices, laboratories, equipment, software, technical data bases, etc.) b) What are the digital solutions available with the organization related to the thematic areas applied for?	
6. Quality Assurance	Please provide references who may be contacted for feedback on the CSO/NGO's performance regarding: • Delivery compared to original planning • Expenditure compared to budget • Timeliness of implementation • Timeliness and quality of reports • Quality of Results	

#	Thematic Area		Applied for (Yes/No)
1	Education to Work Transition & Employment Ecosystem		
2	Inclusive and Sustainable Livelihoods Promotion	2.1 Entrepreneurship Promotion	
		2.2 Youth Innovation	
		2.3 Value Chain Development	
3	Social Protection		
4	Advocacy and Policy Research		
5	Monitoring and Evaluation		