

Gender Innovation Lab of the World Bank's Africa Region
Gender Practice's **Request for Expressions of Interest:**
**Seeking organizations and teams with projects in Africa
designed to improve economic opportunities for men and
women**

Summer 2013

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If your organization or team has been wanting to do – or to have someone else do – a rigorous impact evaluation of your work, and/or develop gender innovative programming, this opportunity is for you.

This request for expressions of interest (EOIs) is for organizations and project teams who would like to work with the Gender Innovation Lab (GIL) on impact evaluations of their projects.

Our focus is exclusively on Sub-Saharan Africa, and is also exclusively on programs that aim to increase women's, or men and women's, agricultural productivity, entrepreneurship, employment, and economic voice and empowerment.

With financial support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), GIL is issuing this call for Expressions of Interest to identify and select up to 14 project teams. Selected project teams will work with GIL's impact evaluation and gender experts, and outside researchers,¹ to design and carry out an impact evaluation of their project and to develop gender innovative programming; receive financial support for all or part of the impact evaluation's data collection costs; and will have the opportunity to apply for a small amount of funding to support the implementation of an innovative intervention targeting gender issues.

The deadline for the expressions of interest is:

5pm US Eastern Daylight Time, Monday 8 July 2013

Note: Please feel free to circulate this request for expressions of interest widely.

¹ An "evaluation team" for each project will be assembled, subject to the approval of the project team. The evaluation team will include (a) at least one GIL staff researcher, (b) *optional*: researchers identified by the project team in their EOI application, and (c) *optional*: research collaborators with subject matter and technical expertise, identified through a "call for researchers" that will be issued once the project teams have been selected.

1. Background

In partnership with units across the World Bank, aid agencies and donors, governments, non-governmental organizations, private sector firms, and researchers, GIL carries out rigorous impact evaluations and designs gender-innovative interventions in the areas of agricultural productivity, entrepreneurship, employment, and economic empowerment, in Africa. GIL aims to build the evidence base on how to close the gender gap in earnings, productivity, assets, property rights, and agency.

GIL's aim is to increase take-up of effective policies and programs that can address the underlying causes of gender inequality in Africa. GIL aims to do this by producing and delivering a new body of evidence on what does and does not work in promoting gender equality, to decision-makers in both governments and the private sector. This new evidence will deepen capacity for gender-informed policy-making, and will help guide investments and policymaking towards supporting effective programs and policies that promote women's economic and social empowerment.

The existing body of evidence, synthesized in the 2012 World Bank's World Development Report (WDR), which focused on gender and equality, does a good job of laying out women's underlying and primary constraints. Following on this, the next step is to develop and test practical interventions and policy solutions for alleviating these constraints. This will involve tweaking existing interventions to enhance their effectiveness, testing whether interventions successful in one setting are similarly successful when replicated in a new setting, establishing the comparative cost effectiveness of competing interventions, and, when needed, coming up with new interventions. GIL's work places a particular focus on the underlying causes of "sticky" domains of gender inequality that persist even in the presence of economic growth, including constraints in the domains of markets, institutions, and households, which limit women's achievement in terms of economic opportunities, agency, and endowments.

All GIL impact evaluations are collaborations between project teams that have a project they would like to test, external researchers who are interested in the research question, and Lab staff who have significant impact evaluation, sectoral, regional, and gender expertise. Since its founding, GIL has undertaken more than 20 impact evaluations.

2. Why Apply?

Benefits to organizations and project teams that partner with GIL include:

- Gaining important insight into and a quantitative assessment that is scientifically sound of how your program or project is working, and why.

- Gaining valuable experience conducting rigorous impact evaluations using mixed quantitative and qualitative methods.
- Being matched with highly skilled and experienced GIL and external researchers who will, on a pro bono basis,
 - work with you to identify the questions your organization/team would like to answer through impact evaluation; work with you to develop a strong and viable impact evaluation design for your program; and will lead an impact evaluation of your project (including design and analysis);
 - provide training for your organization/team on impact evaluation;
 - work with you to strengthen your project’s design towards more effectively serving women, using existing evidence.
- The Gender Innovation Lab has funding to support costs associated with a) the impact evaluation design stage, aka “concept note development”, b) all or part of the data collection costs, and c) for select projects a small amount of funding to support the implementation of a innovative intervention that targets gender issues.

4. Timeline and Steps

- 1) Interested project teams should submit their expression of interest (EOI), answering all of the questions included in the EOI form below. EOIs should be submitted as a word document by email, to Katherine Manchester (kmanchester@worldbank.org). The deadline for EOIs is 5pm US Eastern Daylight Time on Monday 8 July 2013. There is no specific word or page limit, but we ask that EOIs be no longer than 15 pages.
- 2) From amongst the submissions to the EOI, GIL’s steering committee will select a maximum of 14 projects. This will take place in late July.
- 3) An “evaluation team” for each of the up to 14 projects will be assembled by GIL, subject to the approval of the project team. The evaluation team will include (a) at least one GIL staff researcher, (b) *optional*: researchers identified by the project team in this EOI, and (c) *optional*: research collaborators identified through a “call for researchers” that will be issued once the project teams have been selected². This will take place in August.

² Potential research collaborators who apply through the call for researchers will be considered based on their regional and/or subject matter and/or methodological expertise, their willingness to work effectively with the implementing agency, and their publication record.

- 4) Each “project team” and “evaluation team” pair will work together to come up with a design for an impact evaluation, as well as any innovative interventions targeting gender issues that the project team would be interested in carrying out. This design will be described in an “impact evaluation concept note”.³
- 5) Once a project team and evaluation team pair thinks their impact evaluation concept note is ready, they will submit it to GIL’s **Technical Review** Panel, which will either approve it, or will ask for a “revise and resubmit”⁴. We anticipate that most (if not all) projects will eventually receive approval.
- 6) Simultaneously with step 5, each project team and evaluation team pair will request from GIL the funding they would like to support data collection⁵ and gender innovative intervention costs associated. GIL funds will be allocated across the projects.

Given our experience with how long the impact evaluation design stage typically takes, we imagine that baseline surveys would take place in early 2014. Fast tracking of projects whose designs are already well-advanced may be possible after projects have been selected.

5. Selection Criteria for Expressions of Interest

The selection process is designed to identify promising, scalable, and replicable interventions for testing through impact evaluations. The following selection criteria will be used:

- a. **Geographical fit:** The Lab’s work is focused exclusively on Sub-Saharan Africa. The goal is not to work in all countries, or in a specific subset of countries, but to build an evidence base with lessons for the region.
- b. **Sectoral fit:** The Lab is focused on creating evidence on how to close the gender gap in earnings, productivity, and assets. We focus our analysis on those factors that give rise to persistent gender inequalities: market failures, institutional constraints, social norms, and interactions within households. We group our work into two broad categories:

³ In addition to a more refined and detailed version of the information contained in the initial expression of interest, the concept note must include the central questions the evaluation will address, the key indicators to be used, the identification strategy, the source(s) of data, any necessary institutional review board approvals, the initial evaluation team members and their responsibilities, the timeline for activities, and a budget.

⁴ The Technical Reviewers will consider whether the research question(s) is well specified, the identification strategy, the sample size, whether the team has adequate expertise, whether the team is realistic in its assumptions, difficult measurement issues, etc.

⁵ Each impact evaluation team will be able to decide upon and organize who and how they will carry out their data collection.

agricultural productivity, and non-agricultural entrepreneurship and employment. Eligible projects must fall within this focus.

- c. **Potential value added contribution to the existing body of evidence:** The Lab’s research portfolio is designed to generate a body of evidence that will guide investments aimed at promoting women’s economic and social empowerment. The Steering Committee will not only seek to select strong individual projects, but a collection of projects that work together to answer important questions. Each project will be considered based on its potential to contribute to either “proof of concept” or “generalizability” impact evaluations.
- i. **Proof of concept:** Does the intervention address an underlying constraint on women’s economic opportunities about which little or nothing is known? Budget permitting, is the project team willing to experiment with implementation arrangements, interventions, and/or target groups?
 - ii. **Generalizability:** Is the proposed project environment sufficiently diverse from existing evidence so as to add significant knowledge about the efficacy of this intervention in different settings? Is the design similar enough so as to allow comparison with the original intervention?
- d. **Project partner’s capacity and risk factors:** Does the project partner have proven capacity to successfully carry out the type and scale of project that it is proposing? Does the project partner have funding already secured to carry out the project? Is the environment going to be sufficiently secure within the timeframe of the project so as to not present a danger to the research team?
- e. **Organizational commitment to learning:** Partnering with researchers for a rigorous impact evaluation requires a sustained and deep-seated commitment, including buy-in from the project partner’s senior leadership, program managers, and sometimes, key stakeholders, including donors. It also requires a true interest in learning how one’s programs are working and to let this information become publicly available when the results of the impact evaluation are published and presented⁶. Finally, the organization

⁶ GIL impact evaluation results are published in policy briefs that are made openly and freely available; as academic working papers and journal articles; and within synthesis papers summarizing evidence across multiple impact evaluations. GIL presents results to relevant World Bank project teams (including in the private sector development and agricultural groups), partners, government counterparts, and decision-makers at development agencies, both at international fora and in the countries where GIL is working.

and project implementation team must be willing to work constructively on an impact evaluation, including potential changes to implementation plans.

f. **Other practical criteria**

- i. Is there at least one potential viable comparison group that will allow for credible impact evaluation results? Will some set of impacts be measurable and observable within three years?
- ii. Are there sufficient technical skills and infrastructure in the potential study location to carry out the data collection needed for the impact evaluation?
- iii. Will enough beneficiaries be part of the program to allow an impact evaluation to statistically detect the anticipated impacts?

Expression of Interest Application Form

There is no specific word or page limit. Please use the space that you need to answer the questions fully. We ask that no EOI be longer than 12 pages⁷. Clarity of thought and expression is prized above presentation. In your EOI application, please replace the text below that is in black with the text of your answer.

1. **Project Name:** (a) Name of Project
2. **Project Team:** (a) Name of organization(s)/team⁸ that is or will be implementing the project to be evaluated – i.e. the “Project Team”. (b) If multiple, list all and explain the respective roles of each. (c) For World Bank projects only, list the name of the TTL and any co-TTLs. (d) If a team separate from the Project Team is submitting this EOI, please list and describe the relationship between the two.
3. **Contact information:** Name, title/position, email address, and phone number (including country code), of the person we should contact for questions about this EOI, particularly questions that include the activities of the project.
4. **Project Description:** (a) What “interventions”⁹ is the Project is made up of? (b) Describe the intensity, duration, and timing of each¹⁰ (c) If relevant, describe whether you think of the interventions within the project as complements or substitutes to each other, and why. (d) If the Project is comprised of multiple interventions bundled together, are you willing to deliver the interventions separately? (e) Is the Project Team willing to experiment with implementation arrangements, interventions, and/or target groups?
5. **Geography:** (a) What country(ies), region(s), district(s), province(s), towns, etc. will this project take place in? (b) To what extent is this fixed or flexible?
6. **Timing considerations:** The timing of the Project may be influenced by factors such as commitments made to donors, agricultural cycles, the rainy season, political cycles, etc. (a) Please describe any such considerations pertaining to this Project. (b) When is the planned Project start date. (c) If there are any plans for phased roll-out, describe. (d) For World

⁷ If you need extra space, please attach additional content as an appendix.

⁸ Given that many organizations have many divisions and teams within them, please also clearly explain which division/team prepared this EOI, and where it fits within the organization

⁹ For example, a Project may include a classroom based vocational training component, a cash transfer component, and a mentorship component. Each of these is an “intervention”.

¹⁰ An example is “A one 3-hour class per week for 16 consecutive weeks”. Another example is “A \$100 cash transfer upon completion of the training course”.

Bank projects only, please list your expected or actual World Bank board date. (e) For DFID projects only, please state the (expected) date of Business Case approval.

7. **Gender:** (a) Describe the extent to which the Project targets men and/or women. (b) Describe any ideas you have about how the program may work differently for men and women. (c) If applicable, describe any measures or innovations taken to tailor the Project to better meet men’s and women’s specific needs and/or to address gender related issues.
8. **Impacts and Beneficiaries:** (a) Briefly describe the Project’s overall impact objectives, and the specific impacts you expect each intervention to have. (b) Describe who the Project is targeted to directly benefit, as well as anticipated indirect beneficiaries¹¹ (c) Describe the anticipated number of direct beneficiaries, including any funding constraints.¹² (d) For World Bank projects only, include the PDO and the indicator(s) for tracking the PDO. (e) For DFID projects only, please include the Theory of Change and Logical Framework.
9. **Comparison Group:** Impact evaluations often compare a “treatment group” of program beneficiaries to a comparison group of non-beneficiaries. Have you already identified how you might create treatment and comparison groups for an impact evaluation of your Project? If yes, briefly describe. (If the team has not done this, this will be a critical part of the early work of the evaluation team with the Project Team).
10. **Project Team’s capacity:** (a) Briefly describe the Project Team’s qualifications and experience to successfully carry out the Project at the proposed scale. (b) Describe the status of the funding that will support the Project.¹³
11. **Risk factors:** Describe any organizational, environmental, political, or other threats that may keep the project from starting; from going as planned; or from finishing. Please also describe your plans for protecting the project from these threats.
12. **Organizational commitment to learning and to a potential partnership:** (a) Describe who on the Project Team and at the Project Team’s organizations knows about and supports this EOI. (b) Describe the Project Team’s motivation for wanting to partner with GIL.

¹¹ For example, these may be beneficiaries’ households, neighbors, communities, etc.

¹² I.e. the project has funds to serve x people, but the organization/team is seeking funds to serve an additional y people.

¹³ Here we are asking about the funding for the project the project team will run – i.e. the project interventions. We are not asking about funding for the impact evaluation.

13. **Funding for the impact evaluation's data collection:** The major cost of an impact evaluation is for data collection (i.e. baseline and endline surveys). Has the Project Team already identified and/or secured funding for these data collection costs? If yes, describe. If no, just indicate.
14. **Preferences to work with specific researchers (optional):** If you already have specific researchers in mind, who you would like to work with on the impact evaluation, please list their names and institutions here. These researchers will not have to apply through the call for researchers – their inclusion on this EOI is enough.
15. **Any other thing:** If there is any other thing that you would like us to know, please include it here.