



Rakhine Programme Call for Concept Notes

December 2020



Livelihoods and Food Security Fund



managed by  UNOPS



LIFT

Rakhine

Programme Call for

Concept Notes

Ref no: CfP/LIFT/2020/1/Rakhine

Release date: December 9, 2020

Deadline: February 15, 2021, 13:00 Myanmar time

Title: Rakhine Programme

Budget: USD 11.5 million

Duration: Maximum 30 months, not starting later mid 2021



1. Background

The Livelihoods and Food Security Fund (LIFT) is a multi-donor fund established in Myanmar in 2009. Operating under the management of the United Nations Office for Projects Services (UNOPS), LIFT aims to strengthen the resilience and sustainable livelihoods of poor households by helping people reach their full economic potential. This is achieved through increasing incomes, improving the nutrition of women and children, and decreasing vulnerabilities to shocks, stresses and adverse trends. LIFT is also working to encourage diversification in agriculture, more microfinance financial services, gender equality, social protection initiatives, safe migration, and skilling people for new jobs.

LIFT support amounts to USD 509 million and has reached around 14.5 million rural people, roughly 33 per cent of the country's rural population. LIFT finances projects implemented by partners, and provides technical expertise, targeted research and its position of oversight to improve programme design and cohesion for better overall impact.

LIFT's partners include local and international non-government organisations, UN agencies, civil society actors, academic and research bodies, and the private sector. LIFT also provides technical support and guidance to the government of Myanmar.

LIFT has received funding from altogether 15 international donors since it was established. The current donors are the UK, the EU, Australia, Switzerland, the US, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand and Norway.

[LIFT's refreshed strategy for 2019-23](#) has at its heart 'leaving no one behind' in Myanmar's rural transition, with a greater focus on inclusion and social cohesion, intensified commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, increased geographical focus on ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas, enhanced efforts to bring displaced persons and returnees into LIFT's development programmes, expanded support for underserved urban and peri-urban areas and broader engagement with Government at all levels on targeted policies that achieve gains in these areas.

At the same time, LIFT will continue to support a diversity of livelihood strategies that assist:

- Households with land, labour or commercial potential to **'step up'** through increases in labour and land productivity and enhanced capacity to market production.
- Rural households or individuals to **'step out'** of agriculture into the local non-farm economy or to take advantage of opportunities further afield.
- Highly vulnerable households to **'hang in'** and use agriculture as a safety net, improve their food security and nutrition outcomes while building their capacity to move out over time.

LIFT will work toward the achievement of these outcomes through innovation, piloting and the generation of evidence-based interventions organised into four thematic programmes:



Nutrition; Financial Inclusion; Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems; and Decent Work and Labour Mobility. For more details visit www.lift-fund.org.

2. Objectives of the Call for Concept Notes

LIFT's programming in Rakhine is guided by the LIFT strategy 2019-2023. LIFT's purpose is **to strengthen the resilience and sustainable livelihoods of poor and vulnerable groups in Myanmar**, particularly women, internally displaced people and returnees, migrants, smallholder farmers, landless people, people with disabilities and those vulnerable to trafficking and forced labour.

LIFT seeks to contribute to this purpose through three impact-level outcomes:

- **Improved nutritional status, particularly of women and children**
- **Increased household income and assets, with greater control by women**
- **Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks**

Rakhine State is one of the least developed areas of Myanmar, with an estimated 78 percent of people living on less than USD 1.25 a day. According to UNICEF, nearly 50 per cent of children under five suffer from stunting. Unemployment rates are three times the national average and labour force participation is the lowest in the country, with just under 59 per cent of the population aged over 15 economically active, compared to 67 percent nationally. Rakhine is generally far behind the national averages.

About 125,000 people, mainly muslim, remain displaced in camps after intercommunal violence that erupted in 2012¹. In 2017, more than 742,000 people fled to Bangladesh to escape the military operations in Maungdaw District. Most muslims in Rakhine are denied citizenship rights and the related formal and informal movement restrictions result in denied access to basic public services and limited livelihood options, which results in a high dependency on assistance for food, hygiene and other basic household needs. Significant barriers remain to identifying sustainable and durable solutions for those in camps and for host communities who need livelihood support to reduce this dependency, build resilience and offer prospects for greater dignity.

Intercommunal tensions remain high and call for a more effective participation of affected populations and participatory community planning as a pathway towards peaceful coexistence and peace building. Issues of housing, land and properties² for internally displaced persons crystallise many of the barriers to their return, resettlement and access to services. Until now these issues have been largely overlooked. If not properly addressed,

¹ CCCM (Camp Coordination Camp Management) data 2020.

² Houses being burnt, squatters on their lands and/or in houses of origin, insufficient documentation before displacement.



they will continue to undermine efforts and potential gains made towards increased social cohesion and a more peaceful coexistence.

The armed conflict between the Tatmadaw and the Arakan Army takes a heavy toll on the civilian population and adds further complexity to the relations between the Union Government, the State Government and the populations living in Rakhine. 105,090 individuals are displaced in 205 sites or host communities in Rakhine and Chin State³ and now depend on humanitarian assistance to cover their basic needs. Recurrent military and police scrutiny, arrests and increasing protection incidents hamper the population's well-being, trust in local authorities and an already limited social cohesion.

Due to high levels of vulnerability, Rakhine State will pay a heavy price in the socio-economic crisis arising from the consequences of COVID-19, unless mitigated. Rakhine has the highest poverty rate⁴ in the country and capacities to cope with the socio-economic shocks brought by the pandemic are limited. Trade, value chains, household livelihoods and food security have been affected from the onset of the pandemic resulting in losses of incomes. Across the country, including Rakhine, communities have reported that "two-thirds of the households in their communities experienced a decline in income" between January and June 2020⁵. For vulnerable households, such as internally displaced persons, main coping strategies have been to reduce expenditures, including on basic needs, and resorting to using savings and going into debt. Extended measures put in place to limit contaminations have had the adverse effect to reduce purchasing power, decrease access to food and augment the risks that vulnerable households resort to harmful strategies.

The nutritional status of children in Rakhine is among the worst in the country, with 38 per cent of children aged under five stunted and 14 per cent wasted.⁶ With health resources prioritised for the COVID-19 response, the delivery of basic health and nutrition services has been affected, particularly in rural areas and camps for internally displaced persons. These are additional compounding factors to worsen the nutritional status of mothers and young children.

Poverty is expected to "rise above its pre-pandemic level with many poor households likely to be persistently and more deeply impoverished in 2020".⁷ Remittances from migrants - vital in normal times to support small businesses and families' basic needs - are drying up. This is expected to result in a nationwide rise of the poverty rate by up to 7.5 percentage points⁸. With more than two million internal migrants originating from Rakhine⁹, the loss of remittances will hit Rakhine hard economically.

³ Humanitarian Updates for central Rakhine State & Paletwa, Chin State from 13 to 26 November 2020, OCHA.

⁴ 78 per cent compared to a national rate of 37.5 per cent, 2014 World Bank poverty data review.

⁵ Community perceptions of the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 in Myanmar, Insights from a National COVID-19 Community Survey (NCCS) - June and July 2020, IFPRI, Myanmar, September 2020.

⁶ Myanmar Demographic Health Survey, 2016.

⁷ Assessing the impacts of COVID-19 on household Incomes and poverty in Myanmar, A microsimulation approach, Xinshen Diao and Kristi Mahrt, IFPRI, July 2020.

⁸ Assessing the Impacts of COVID-19 on Myanmar's Household Incomes and Poverty from Declines in Remittances, Xinshen Diao and Kristi Mahrt, May 27, 2020, Draft.

⁹ ILO, 2014 census analysis.



This economic slowdown is a severe threat for the most vulnerable groups and adds to the significant challenges already brought by protracted conflicts. Internally displaced persons are very poorly equipped to cope with and recover from the pandemic. Available financial resources are hardly sufficient for them to maintain access to basic needs, and options to secure income are rare. Many small and micro business owners in camps and host communities are at risk to sell their productive assets and to be left with no capacities to make an income. Current levels of access to health-care for Muslims and for those living in areas of armed conflict is extremely limited and constrains capacities to prevent and control infections. Many displaced people have underlying medical conditions and chronic diseases, putting them at a high risk of suffering serious effects from a degradation of their food intake, nutrition or health status. For the most vulnerable in Rakhine State, in particular internally displaced persons, COVID-19 has further exacerbated the prevailing lack of meaningful occupations. With limited prospects to experience more dignified living conditions, there are also accrued risks of gender-based violence, exploitation and human trafficking.

The Rakhine Programme for 2021-23 is positioned within a **COVID-19 recovery framework**. The programme will take into account the experience of Rakhine communities during the COVID-19 crisis, the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, the need to build back better and to build resilience for the most vulnerable and marginalised groups. LIFT's 2019-2023 strategy works to increasingly bring displaced and conflict-affected persons into LIFT programming and an increasing focus on inclusion and social cohesion. This also means identifying durable solutions for the resettlement of internally displaced persons and camp closure.

The programme will explicitly and intentionally contribute to **LIFT's strategic shifts** in Rakhine, in particular:

- **Strengthening civil society as key agents of durable change:** Building on recent increased engagement with civil society organisations in Rakhine, LIFT will further promote local leadership to strengthen and increase capacities, networking, research, advocacy and service delivery. Increased communication, coordination and collaboration between civil society organisations, international actors and the Government will also be promoted.
- **Gender equality and women's empowerment:** LIFT's gender-responsive programming will require gender responsive policies and programmes, equal participation so that women's voices are heard, increased stakeholder capacities and understanding of gender issues and support for women to take up leadership roles within their communities. Targets and data will be gender disaggregated and activities will mainly benefit women. Gender analysis will provide recommendations to address the barriers that women face in accessing information, training, resources and services.
- **Conflict sensitivity and social cohesion:** LIFT will place emphasis on mitigating conflict and strengthening (or rebuilding) social cohesion as a step towards peace-building. LIFT will work at the required levels with local communities and stakeholders and within the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.



- **Identification and local ownership of durable solutions.** Internally displaced persons and host-communities will be given a stronger voice in decision-making, including on the resettlement of internally displaced persons and camp closure. LIFT will build on its former support to rights-based programming and advocacy to support advocacy work with relevant stakeholders at different levels, including communities, the Government, civil society and international actors. LIFT will promote people-centered approaches which respect the rights, dignity and safety in particular in decisions that impact access to essential services and livelihoods

Details of the scope of the concept notes, including objectives, intervention areas, target groups, operating principles can be found in Annex 1.

The proposed activities should aim to start by mid 2021 and end before 30 December 2023. All applicants need to ensure that their concept notes are gender sensitive in line with LIFT's Gender Strategy. For further explanations see the guidelines on gender sensitivity in Annex 4.

3. Partnerships

LIFT encourages partnership and consortium projects that aim to address the dynamic nature of Rakhine by using innovative and integrated approaches to achieving results across the objectives and expected outcomes of this call. This includes initiatives that engage the private sector, CSOs, government working across sectors/components and geographies to benefit the most vulnerable. Partnership quality will be a key consideration during the evaluation of the proposals. Applicants should demonstrate that their organisation and proposed partners have relevant expertise and a proven approach based on evidence from the field.

Given the high conflict sensitivity of the context, LIFT will favour partners that can demonstrate sufficient contextual understanding, including knowledge of local institutional structures and key government departments, civil society stakeholders. Identified partners should have already built trusted relationships with relevant local stakeholders and have interventions that are supportive of local institutions, whether formal or informal. A due diligence process will be in place for all projects, with particular attention to risks related to the conflict sensitive environment.

LIFT aims to award 20% of the total budget in direct funding to local organisations. National NGOs and civil society organisations are therefore encouraged to apply. Please note that LIFT also reserves the right to reach out directly to address specific elements of the programme where relevant gaps have been identified.

International organisations with no presence in the target areas, but with relevant and demonstrated expertise in one of more of the programme components and/or type of



interventions are encouraged, but not limited, to consider capacity building initiatives and technical backstopping for other partners operating in the field.

4. Budget Allocation

The provisional allocation for LIFT's work in Rakhine is set **up to USD 11.5 million**. Please note that this includes research and policy engagement related initiatives.

5. Requirements for the concept note submission

Key documents for the preparation of submissions are:

1. Annex 1: Scope of the Call for Concept Notes (including target population and components summary description)
2. Annex2: Format and requirements for concept notes
3. Annex 3: Selection criteria to be used by LIFT
4. Annex 4: Guidelines on gender sensitivity

Please note the following requirements for submissions:

- Concept notes must be prepared in the English language according to the format requirement presented in Annex 2.
- Concept notes must be received by email at the following address: (lift.proposals.mmoc@unops.org) on or before **13.00 Yangon time (GMT+6:30) on February 15, 2021**. Please do not submit your documents to any email address other than the secure email address provided above or your concept note will be considered invalid. The size of individual emails, including email text and attachments, must not exceed 5 MB.
- Please note that the cost of preparing a concept note, a subsequent proposal and of negotiating a grant agreement, including any related travel, is not reimbursable nor can it be included as a direct cost of the assignment.

Any requests for clarification should be referred to lift@unops.org as per the schedule of events outlined in section 7 below. Clarifications will be provided on the following websites:

- <http://lift-fund.org>;
- <https://www.ungm.org/public/notice>

Successful applicants will be expected to conform to LIFT's Operational Guidelines, which are available at <http://www.lift-fund.org/guidelines>. The guidelines specify LIFT's rules in relation to inter alia reporting, procurement, inventory management, record management and visibility.



6. Concept notes selection and appraisal procedures

An Evaluation Committee (EC) will complete a technical and organisational capacity assessment of each concept note. As a part of its appraisal process, LIFT may elect to discuss technical, cost, or other aspects of the concept notes with applicants. The EC will proceed to the selection of the concept notes through two stages:

1. Short listing:

- The EC will appraise each concept note using all the criteria listed in Annex 3. Concept notes that do not align sufficiently with the LIFT strategy, the components set out in this call or which have shortcomings regarding the criteria outlined in Annex 3, will not be shortlisted.
- The appraisal of the shortlisted concept notes will be submitted to the LIFT Fund Board¹⁰, with a summary of recommendations from the Fund Management Office.
- At this stage, LIFT may consult with an advisory group¹¹ composed of government and civil society actors to provide feedback on the shortlisted concept notes.

2. LIFT Fund Board decision:

- The Fund Board approves which selected concept notes are to be developed into full proposals and advises on the set of recommendations to be provided to the applicants by the FMO.

3. Full Proposal Development

- If the number of concept notes selected to shortlist and advance to full proposal is high (and higher than the number of projects likely to be awarded) then LIFT will launch a closed Call for Proposals for the final stage. If the number of shortlisted concept notes is smaller and all those shortlisted are likely to be awarded, then LIFT FMO will work with applicants to develop together (co-create) the final proposals
- A representative from the EC will meet with the selected applicants to discuss their concept note and the recommendations of the Fund Board.

The endorsement of the concept note or proposal by the Fund Board is not a guarantee to receive funding until the conditions attached to the approval have been fulfilled and the grant support agreement is signed. LIFT reserves the right to reject a proposal after Fund Board approval if it cannot reach an agreement with the applicant for contracting. Successful proposals will be implemented under a Grant Agreement with UNOPS as the LIFT Fund Manager. Please refer to the LIFT website for the template including the general terms

¹⁰ Fund Board will be provided with complete concept notes for all applicants.

¹¹ LIFT will aim at constituting a consultation group composed of government and CSO representatives to act as a sounding board, provide advice on key decisions, identify potential issues and risks before they arise and suggest appropriate courses of action to manage and mitigate risks.



and conditions (<https://www.lift-fund.org/guidelines>). Unsuccessful applicants can request feedback from the FMO on their submission.

7. Schedule of Events

Except for the due date of concept note submission to LIFT, the dates provided below are only indicative and will be updated if necessary. It is provided here for the applicants understanding of the overall contracting process.

Event	Date
Call for Concept Notes release date	December 9, 2020
Deadline for receipt of written inquiries	December 18, 2020
Last written responses distributed	December 22, 2020
Concept Note due date	February 15, 2021, at 13:00 (Myanmar time)
Appraisal and Concept Note selection	March 30, 2021
Launch of Closed Call for Proposals with selected applicants	April 1, 2021
Full proposal submission	TBC (early May)
Appraisal and final decision	TBC (end May)
Grant agreement negotiation	June-July 2021



Annex 1: Scope of Call for Concept Notes

The applicant will have to show how the proposed intervention will be aligned with LIFT's overall purpose and outcomes as defined in the [LIFT 2019-2023 Strategy](#).

Operating principles

Note in particular the LIFT gender strategy (www.lift-fund.org/guidelines), the LIFT accountability framework (www.lift-fund.org/publications) and the [LIFT Conflict Sensitivity Principles](#). Other LIFT guidance should be addressed as appropriate.

The Rakhine programme will be guided by the [LIFT Conflict sensitivity principles](#), the [LIFT conflict framework](#), [LIFT gender strategy](#) and the [LIFT accountability framework](#).

LIFT will engage with a wide range of state and non-state actors and will also be guided by the following principles :

- Upscale approaches that have demonstrated positive results across conflict lines to secure rights, improve livelihoods and access to nutrition, health and social protection services for disenfranchised groups, internally displaced persons, returnees, migrant workers and conflict-affected people.
- Promote community voices, work collaboratively and strengthen the capacities of civil society organisations (CSOs) to increase local ownership, transparency, collaboration, promote accountability, deliver remote programming and ensure sustainability. LIFT will promote inclusion of CSOs in relevant Rakhine-based coordination mechanisms.
- Contribute to pro-poor and inclusive policy change and implementation in relation to nutrition, protection, labour rights, migration, anti-trafficking, inclusive access to services¹², social cohesion and housing land and property rights (HLPs).
- Be flexible. Given the unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and of its impact, as well the fluidity of context and operational environment in Rakhine, flexibility within the programme will be provided to make required adaptive management.

Target populations

Overall, LIFT's strategy emphasises targeting of the most vulnerable households and individuals. Given the context of Rakhine this includes:

- Internally displaced persons living in camps, temporary settings or host-communities.
- Conflict affected people
- Women and children within the 1,000 day period
- Youth and in particular adolescent girls¹³
- Women and women headed households
- Internal and international migrants
- Migrant-sending households having only very elderly and very young members

¹² Including for health, nutrition, protection, WASH, social protection, safe migration, skills development...

¹³ Youth refers to people aged 15 to 35 years, while adolescent girls fall in the range 10 to 24 years.



- People with disabilities

Geographic focus

While there are no exclusions of areas, successful applications will need to:

- Target the most vulnerable groups;
- Demonstrate that they are not duplicating other interventions and investments in Rakhine (though complementarities and synergies are strongly encouraged)

The risks and opportunities now available for programming in Rakhine will be key factors influencing the specific geographic focus of the programme and the selection of partners. Following the LIFT conflict framework, LIFT will select partners, in particular local organizations, that demonstrate strong knowledge of the operating context, strong acceptance by local stakeholders including targeted vulnerable groups, the Government, civil society organizations and other development and humanitarian partners.

Conflict sensitivity, coordination and sequencing

Ensuring that LIFT's investments in the Rakhine are conflict sensitive is of critical importance. This has implications for various strategic, technical and operational considerations. Applicants are required to demonstrate how they understand the context, assess risks, consult and coordinate as widely as possible, and how they are transparent and communicate clearly with and to relevant stakeholders the purpose and expected outcomes of the activities undertaken.

Components and Interventions

Three programme components have been defined for the Rakhine programme as priority. These are:

1. **Nutrition**
2. **Decent work and Labour mobility**
3. **Local leadership**

Component 1. Nutrition

Objective and outcomes

The overall objective of this component is to secure improved nutrition outcomes for internally displaced people and host communities, especially women and children, through the **adoption of improved practices, as well as access to improved nutrition-related services and nutritious foods**. This is expected to contribute to **LIFT Outcome 1: Improved nutritional status, particularly of women and children**.

Interventions

LIFT will expand on former investments made in supporting the roll-out of nutrition services (IMAM, IYCF, MCCT¹⁴) to address stunting and wasting, focusing on underserved communities in internally displaced persons camps, host and neighbouring communities.

¹⁴ IMAM: Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition; IYCF: Infant and Young Child Feeding ; MCCT: Maternal and Child Cash transfer.



LIFT is seeking concept notes that address one or several of the following specific areas:

- **Strengthening the community components of IMAM** to link vulnerable individuals with nutrition & health services (e.g SAM/MAM¹⁵ referrals & treatment, ANC/PNC¹⁶...), building on experiences during COVID-1. LIFT will work with stakeholders such as the Government (Department of Public Health, Department of Social Welfare), Access to Health partners and humanitarian actors and sectors to bridge identified gaps between services and communities, including in times of shocks or crisis.
- **Supporting the Government MCCT programme** in Rakhine to 1) be more inclusive and shock responsive, 2) strengthen complaint and feedback mechanisms, 3) be complemented by effective and efficient **nutrition SBCC**¹⁷. This will also include providing technical support to the Department of Social Welfare and Ministry of Health and Sports (NNC, HLPU, DPH).
- **Supporting the food security sector and nutrition clusters** to lead on evidence-based cross-sectoral contextual analysis and improve strategic planning and sectors responses in Rakhine. This will also be done by funding the placement of persons within the cluster/sector to reinforce and structure their capacities.
- Supporting multi-sectoral programming (e.g. MS-NPAN) so that the most nutritionally vulnerable are targeted and that sectors' responses converge to address the interrelated underlying causes of undernutrition. This will also mean ensuring active inclusion of civil society organizations (CSOs)¹⁸ in these processes.
- Interventions **that contribute to women's empowerment**, which directly impacts child nutrition and addresses a number of other nutrition pathways and barriers to wellbeing. This includes interventions that increase women's access to resources (including income, assets and financial services), decision making power at household, community or system levels and helps reduce stress (including psychosocial).
- Ensuring essential **WASH services and infrastructure** are available to all, in particular in displacement sites and host communities, as a pathway to addressing poor nutrition outcomes related loss of nutrients resulting from water-borne diseases or consumption of unhygienic food associated to lack of access to clean water, safe sanitation facilities or clean environments.

Component 2. Decent Work and Labour mobility

Objective and outcomes

The overall objective of this component is to **reduce vulnerability to exploitation and abuse of internally displaced people, host communities, and other marginalized groups through expanding opportunities for safe migration, access to community-based protection for human trafficking and coverage by labour rights protection for women and men workers.**

¹⁵ Severe Acute Malnutrition, Moderate Acute Malnutrition.

¹⁶ Antenatal Care / Post Natal Care

¹⁷ Social Behaviour Change Communication

¹⁸ SUN CSA.



This is expected to contribute to **Outcome 2: Increased household income and assets, with greater control by women**, and **Outcome 3: Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks**.

Interventions

LIFT is seeking concept notes that address one or several of the following specific areas:

- Expanding and providing access to **protection monitoring and community response systems**, increasing access to appropriate complaint, referral and case management mechanisms for labour rights abuses, human trafficking, forced labour, child labour, and gender-based violence, in both ethnic Rakhine and Muslim communities. This will require leveraging relations and networks with the required government institutions, community leaders, civil society organisations, labour organisations, the private sector and humanitarian actors.
- **Improving working conditions in key economic sectors** (e.g. fishery, construction) to reduce vulnerability of men and women to exploitation, promote inclusion, resilience and social cohesion and enable a more positive environment that generates sufficient economic benefits.
- **Building resilience within key supply chains**, businesses, employment to ensure they can be maintained during periods of economic shocks and downturn. Proposed interventions should place particular emphasis on women-owned and led businesses/networks/income generating activities as these tend to also be more affected by crises and shocks.
- Providing localized support and assistance to **increase freedom of movement**, provide legal assistance to resolve labour disputes and support worker organizing and collective bargaining to improve working conditions, protect labour rights and eliminate labour exploitation. Grass-roots worker associations in the informal sector and in locations where labour organizations are not traditionally active will be supported to ensure inclusion of women, ethnic minority groups, and other marginalized workers. The programme will also expand access to the local labour market for internally displaced persons and host communities through the establishment and expansion of local employment schemes for temporary and long-term jobs (e.g. to support infrastructural development).
- Developing more accessible and gender-responsive **labour migration systems** and enhance the quality and availability of safe migration information and support services for migrants and prospective migrants in Rakhine, in particular among internally displaced persons. Working with the government, CSOs, labour organizations and relevant peer networks, sustainable and inclusive service models will be established that provide outreach services to conflict-affected communities.

Component 3. Local leadership

Objective and outcomes

The overall objective of this component is to empower internally displaced persons and neighbouring host communities, especially women, to exert **greater ownership over decisions related to themselves**, their children and their housing, land and property. This is



expected to contribute to **LIFT Outcome 1: Improved nutritional status of women and children, Outcome 2: Increased household income and assets, with greater control by women, and Outcome 3: Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks.**

This will be achieved by working with civil society organizations and promoting local leadership to strengthen and increase capacities, networking, research, advocacy and service delivery. 20% of the programme budget is reserved for **civil society organisations** (as per LIFT Fund Board approved parameters).

Interventions

LIFT is seeking concept notes that address one or several of the following specific areas:

- Working with local communities, the government and land working groups to collaboratively identify solutions to issues related to **housing, land and property rights** for internally displaced persons, particularly women. This will include increasing understanding and knowledge of the operational, institutional and legal contexts to identify programmatic openings for LIFT and possibly other stakeholders.
- Supporting high-level analytical research, increased political economy analysis and contextual understanding, systematic capacity-building of civil society organisations, local NGOs and international actors to conduct participatory and gender sensitive research for **rights-based programming and policy engagement.**
- Increasing and improving communication between civil society organisations, international actors and the Government at local and national levels will also be promoted.

Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning

LIFT places a high priority on the generation of evidence to demonstrate effectiveness, inform improved practice and contribute to policy processes. To achieve this, LIFT relies on commissioned research, project and programme evaluations and evidence generated by implementing partners through their own research and MEAL Plans.

The overall programme MEAL approach will be developed in collaboration with Implementing Partners and relevant stakeholders during the course of proposal development and the programme/project inception phase. This will include:

- Co-constructed Programme Level Theory of Change:
- M&E Stakeholders Analysis
- Measurement framework (in alignment with the LIFT results framework and including additional context-specific and conflict-related indicators).
- Evaluation design, Strategic Evaluation Questions and Policy and Learning Questions (PLQs)
- Reporting requirements
- Processes and mechanisms to support knowledge management and policy influence

LIFT Strategic Evaluation Questions are:



- To what extent has LIFT helped target beneficiaries to become more resilient and improve their livelihood, nutrition and vulnerability status?
- To what extent has LIFT contributed to furthering equity and empowerment for traditionally excluded and voiceless groups - particularly women, people with disabilities, and minorities?
- To what extent has LIFT contributed to strengthening the capacity of civil society, Ethnic Service Providers and local government, to achieve impact, at the local, regional and national levels?
- To what extent has LIFT proved to be effective and responsive to conflict dynamics when working in conflict affected areas (and on issues prone to conflict)?
- To what extent has the LIFT strategy been implemented in an integrated manner and tapped into synergies and complementarities across themes, geographies, actors and other ongoing investments and development interventions?
- To what extent has LIFT contributed to strengthening policy and systems change in Myanmar and how has it leveraged its work at project and programme to support this at national level?
- To what extent has LIFT identified and established sustainable and scalable models or approaches for achieving policy and programme outcomes after LIFT support ends?
- To what extent have LIFT interventions demonstrated value for money where material / tangible benefits are measurable?

Annex 2: Format and structure of the concept notes

The concept note must be complete and conform to the format requirements presented below. Submissions must be made electronically as outlined in the main part of this call for concept notes. The concept note must not exceed 14 pages plus title page and preamble (12 point Times New Roman Font and a minimum of 1 inch margins all around). Pages should be numbered.

The concept note may include annexes with additional details regarding approach, methodologies, references, maps, etc. Annexes must not exceed 10 pages. Electronic submissions must not exceed 5MB in size. LIFT will consider only applications conforming to the above format and page limitations. Any other information submitted will not be evaluated. Applicants should include all information that they consider necessary for LIFT to adequately understand and evaluate the project being proposed. The remainder of this section describes the information that LIFT considers essential for all applications.

LIFT calls for concept notes that respond to the components set out in this Call for Concept Notes. Applicants can apply to respond to a whole component, a part of a component or one or more elements that cut across multiple components. Concept notes should be in alignment with the scope of the Rakhine programme and the LIFT Strategy. In addition, concept notes should:

- Adhere to [LIFT's conflict sensitivity principles](#)



- Target the most vulnerable
- Be gender, youth and disability responsive and address women's empowerment
- Strengthen relations and joint efforts between government, civil society organisations and communities
- Demonstrate integration, complementarities and synergies across sectors and actors
- Build on a track record of establishing relationships of trust and confidence with key actors
- Indicate the roles of CSOs and/or private sector
- Leave a legacy of enhanced capacity and accountability for inclusive and conflict sensitive development in the region

Note that LIFT aims as far as possible to award 20% of the total budget in direct funding to local organisations. National NGOs and civil society organisations are therefore encouraged to apply.

Concept notes must not exceed 14 pages in length and should be structured according to the following headings (indicative page lengths are presented in parentheses):

1. Title page

Project title, name and contact of the applicant, partners, geographical area, expected project duration, start and finish dates, selected component(s) that the concept note responds to, and estimated total budget. Note that the title page is not counted in the concept note page limitation.

2. Brief description of intervention focus and rationale. What will it achieve and for whom? Where will it be implemented and with which actors? How will it work? (5 pages)

This section should clearly describe the outcomes that the intervention expects to contribute to, in which target geographies (being as specific as possible) and for which specific target groups (including target numbers of beneficiaries reached). It should also clarify how these changes will be brought about, the key actors that the project seeks to influence/engage with and their roles and the key types of activities, intervention strategies, methodologies and technical approaches that will be used to achieve this. While a detailed breakdown of activities is not required, this section should clearly justify how the proposed activities are a viable means of achieving the intended outcomes. Whether or not the concept note is responding to a single element within a component, a full component or elements that cut across a component, this section should outline how integration will be achieved.

3. Nature of existing presence and relationships in the area. (1 page)

Applicants should demonstrate that they have the experience, capacity, and existing relationships required to implement their proposed project successfully. This section should provide a short background to the organisation and its approach/focus and describe the history of involvement and activities in the target geographies, nature



and extent of relationships with key local actors (including government, targeted communities, CSOs and the private sector).

4. Strategy and approach to working across conflict lines. (2 pages)

This section should provide an analysis of the operating context and drivers of conflict, what population the project will target and the effect of conflict on this population, key stakeholders and the power relations between them. Based on this analysis it should describe how the project will work across conflict lines.

5. How will the project support the most vulnerable and support their empowerment? (max 1 page)

This section should indicate the key vulnerable groups that the project is targeting, and describe their key characteristics, highlighting the factors that drive their vulnerability, exclusion and/or disempowerment. It should also clarify how the project will ensure that these target groups are reached and that key barriers to their participation and attainment of desired outcomes will be addressed. Particular attention should be given to how empowerment of target vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth, will be addressed¹⁹.

6. How will the project seek synergies and complementarities with past, ongoing and proposed initiatives in the region? (1 page)

This section should outline how the project seeks to build on previous investments in the target geographies, leverage resources developed or made available through other ongoing or proposed projects, agencies and investments in the region and strengthen integration between different actors and sectors. This section should clearly demonstrate the applicant's knowledge of opportunities for integration and willingness to operate in a collaborative manner to enhance collective impact.

7. What is innovative in the approach? What learning will be generated, or models and approaches demonstrated? (1 page)

This section should highlight how the project will introduce innovative approaches to address issues and develop solutions. Innovations may be related to new ways of working (partnerships, involvement of private sector, institutional arrangements), new models or approaches to addressing persistent issues, or initiatives that are addressing new issues that have not received attention to date. The applicant should also indicate how the project will ensure a systematic approach to generating evidence on the proposed models and how this will be used.

8. How will sustainability and/or scalability be addressed from the outset? What will the legacy be? (1 page)

Sustainability and scalability are key concerns for LIFT. Applicants should demonstrate how the sustainability and/or scalability of key outcomes and approaches will be

¹⁹ Note that a full gender analysis will be required as part of project implementation.



addressed from the outset. Specific attention should be given to articulating how project dependency will be avoided by developing the required capacities, engaging with markets, and/or creating more enabling operating environments (policies, budgets, incentives, etc.).

9. What are the key risks associated with the project and how will they be managed/mitigated? (1 page)

Strong risk management will be a central feature of successful projects in Rakhine. Applicants should provide an overview of the major risks related to their proposal and describe in brief how they intend to manage and mitigate these risks.

10. Estimated budget and VFM (1 page)

The concept note budget should include best estimates and provide a provisional breakdown of costs at sub-heading level (see budget template on the LIFT website)

Concept notes that demonstrate how LIFT's funds will leverage other funds, as well as concept notes that demonstrate clear progress towards financial sustainability, are encouraged. The concept note should demonstrate good Value-for-Money. Some questions to consider may include:

- Have partners and communities been involved in identifying which outcomes have the greatest value to them, and where savings can be made?
- Can contributions be leveraged from other sources?
- Is the proposed concept providing value for money per beneficiary or target group?
- What options are there for achieving more value for the same/less resources?
- Are there multiplier effects from the intervention, or benefits from replication or scaling, that strengthen the value for money of the intervention?



Annex 3: Selection criteria to be used by LIFT

An Evaluation Committee (EC) will appraise applications in accordance with the selection criteria identified below.

Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: a) identify the significant issues that applicants should address in their applications; and, b) to set standards against which all applications will be evaluated.

If there are ambiguities/unclear explanations, or further need for details, the LIFT evaluation committee will seek clarification from the submitting organisation if the concept note otherwise meets the main criteria.

Evaluation criteria

The evaluation committee will have to answer the following questions to justify their final appraisal:

- **Completeness:** Is the information provided in the concept note complete and sufficient for the appraisal?
- **Relevance:** Is the problem definition and rationale for the project clear and does it address critical issues and target groups relevant to the LIFT strategy and the Rakhine Programme scope?
- **Approach and methods:** Is the project approach and methodology innovative, feasible and appropriate? Are the methodologies based on previous experience and evidence-based knowledge? Is the idea technically feasible and likely to achieve the stated results? Does it embody good practice and lessons?
- **Stakeholder analysis:** have the relevant stakeholders been identified and have clear and realistic roles been identified for them? Is it clear how the project will work with communities, government, civil society organizations, private sector and humanitarian actors & sectors ?
- **Context analysis and conflict sensitivity:** Is the project based on a good understanding of the context in Rakhine and in particular the target area proposed? Will the project operate in a conflict sensitive area? Does the concept note provide confidence that the applicant has sufficient knowledge of its operational environment and any conflict dynamics relevant? Will the project be managed according to a sound conflict-sensitive strategy?
- **Gender, inclusion and empowerment:** Does the project include a clear explanation of how it will reach and support the most vulnerable? Is there a clear, ambitious yet realistic approach to women's empowerment? Are mechanisms for increasing citizen voice given due consideration?
- **Sustainability and/or scalability:** Does the project demonstrate a good case for sustainability and/or scalability of the proposed approaches, outcomes and impacts beyond the funding period?
- **Risk management:** What risks might adversely affect the activities, and what mitigation factors will be taken to avoid them?



- **Learning and Policy dialogue:** Does the project give scope to contribute to evidence-based knowledge and policy dialogue?
- **Capacity:** Does the proposed implementing organisation and its partners have the necessary technical expertise and capacity to implement the project?
- **Partnership:** Are partnership relationships with any or all of the local government, civil society organisations built on long term trust relationships? Is the governance and coordination system between stakeholders and partners appropriate? Is the role and involvement of the sub-partners clear and sound?
- **Budget:** Does the budget demonstrate value for money for the project, in particular in relation to the expected results?

Annex 4: Guidelines on gender sensitivity

1. Why do LIFT's proposals have to be gender sensitive?

LIFT is strongly committed to contributing to greater gender equality and women's empowerment through all its projects and programmes. LIFT strives to achieve the following four outcomes related to gender:

- Increased understanding of gender dynamics in the project communities;
- Increases in women's access to, and control over, resources;
- increases in women's participation in decision-making;
- increases in women's knowledge and skills; and
- improved focus on gender within livelihood and food security policies.²⁶

An important step to achieving these goals is to ensure gender sensitivity is considered in the formulation and planning of projects.

2. What does gender sensitivity mean for LIFT?

Gender sensitivity means that in each action and process, gender norms and roles, and the impact gender has on access to, and control over, resources are considered and addressed. Suggested guiding questions for assessing gender sensitivity are:

- **How does the proposal attempt to address existing gender inequalities?**
- **How does the proposal strive to include women as both equal participants and as equal beneficiaries of the planned interventions?**

Projects should not only propose equal numeric participation by gender but also strive for participation of equal quality. The latter is more difficult to assess than merely counting the number of women and men beneficiaries, and often requires specific supportive actions to empower women.

3. Where do LIFT's proposals have to be gender sensitive?

Gender sensitivity should be woven into all stages of projects and programmes. Every project proposal includes a mandatory section on gender where the project is required to answer the question: "*How is gender considered in the project...?*" Here, the proposal



outlines the gender sensitivity, and the alignment with LIFT's gender strategy and how the proposed intervention contributes to LIFT's four gender programme outcomes stated above.

Gender must also appear explicitly in the project's TOC to reflect gender-related goals and outcomes of the project.

4. What portion of the project budget must be allocated to gender equality and women's empowerment activities?

Gender budgeting forms an integral part of LIFT's gender equality and women's empowerment strategy. **Proposals must commit at least 20% of the budget (including management costs)** to activities which contribute to the achievement of these objectives. Reporting on specific activities and expenditure in relation to this target will need to be included in semi-annual and annual progress reports.

²⁶ LIFT's Gender Strategy https://www.lift-fund.org/sites/lift-fund.org/files/uploads/Guidelines/LIFTGenderStrategyJan2017_FINAL.pdf