



# Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund



## Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) Skills and Vocational Training in Rakhine State

**Ref no:** LIFT/2015/6/Skills and Vocational Training in Rakhine State  
**Release date:** 23 December 2015  
**Deadline:** 29 February 2016, noon (1200h)  
**Title:** Skills and Vocational Training in Rakhine State  
**Duration:** Period of grant from second quarter 2016 not exceeding 36 months

### 1) Background

The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) is a multi-donor fund that was established in 2009 to improve the lives and prospects of poor people living in rural Myanmar. LIFT has received funding from 14 donors<sup>1</sup> to date. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is the Fund Manager (FM) to administer the funds and provide monitoring and oversight.

LIFT is active in the four main agro-ecological regions of Myanmar: the Ayeyarwady Delta, the coastal region of Rakhine State, the central Dry Zone (including Mandalay, Magwe, and the southern Sagaing Region), and the Uplands of Chin, Kachin, and Shan States.

LIFT aims to help poor rural households escape the cycle of poverty. The two main sources of cash income for the rural poor – and the two main paths out of poverty – are small-scale commercial agriculture and rural off-farm employment. Therefore, LIFT helps smallholder farmers with commercial potential to ‘step up’ the value ladder and participate in the growing market economy.

While agriculture (defined broadly) currently accounts for 40% of Myanmar’s GDP and employs around 60% of the population, experience from Asia and elsewhere suggests that agriculture’s share of both will need to fall for Myanmar’s economy to grow. LIFT’s new strategy therefore includes a focus on supporting people to “step out” of agriculture and into jobs that earn higher wages. The income people earn from off-farm

<sup>1</sup> As of February 2015, Australia, Denmark, the European Union, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America had contributed a total of \$206m. From the private sector, the Mitsubishi Corporation is also a donor to LIFT.

employment is an important means of diversifying household income and building resilience.

For most people, “stepping out” will mean finding jobs or starting businesses in the local non-farm sector. For others, “stepping out” is likely to mean migration to more distant urban centres, main cities or abroad. In both situations, the key to better employment and higher wages is a relevant skillset.

Myanmar’s formal and non-formal technical and vocational training is lagging behind market demands. Training modules, methodologies, and equipment are mostly outdated; the training capacity is weak, and content is not designed according to market needs. As in many other developing countries, the system is supply rather than demand oriented. At national level, the regulation and certification of qualifications face substantial backlogs. A major issue is poor access to training for Myanmar’s mainly rural and poor population.

LIFT aims to strengthen both the formal and non-formal training sector, with a particular focus on a supportive regulatory framework and involvement of the private sector.

## 2) Scope of Project

LIFT is searching for qualified organisations<sup>2</sup> to support skill and vocational training in Rakhine State.

The organisations are to have substantial operational experience in supporting skills and vocational training in Myanmar. The proposal needs to specifically point to past and ongoing projects. Organisations need to outline how LIFT’s support will be used to build upon previous work. **Organisations without extensive experience in skill training in Myanmar will not be considered.**

The proposed activities should start in the second quarter of 2016 and not exceed a period of 36 months. Applicants need to ensure that they have approval to work in Rakhine State.

LIFT is seeking projects that are able to deliver sustainable results for all or selected components listed below:

### **Component 1: Technical support for the government-run Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system in Rakhine**

Applicants need to consider that LIFT’s primary beneficiaries are poor and rural households. Hence, applicants shall support training facilities which have entry criteria that are feasible for this target group, e.g. such as the Technical High School in Sittwe. Both the Technical High School and the Government Technical Institutes offer short-term skill training courses which can be accessible to LIFT’s beneficiaries. LIFT is also

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<sup>2</sup> From LIFT operational guidelines, “Eligible implementing partners include the Government of Myanmar, international and national non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, other international organizations, academic or research institutions and private sector companies.” <http://www.lift-fund.org/guidelines>

seeking for solutions on how such short term courses can be decentralised and offered at township or village-tract level, as LIFT beneficiaries may not be able to afford the travel to and lodging at the current training sites. Equally, proposals need to demonstrate how they aim to cooperate with the private sector to ensure demand-based training and employment opportunities. Suggestions for testable approaches for job matching are encouraged. Applicants for Component 1 need to elaborate on how their work contributes to national level policies and regulations (see Component 3).

## **Component 2: Non-formal TVET approaches for local vocational training**

LIFT aims to increase the access to skills training in rural areas. The key evaluation criteria for this component is sustainability of interventions after the project closes. Applicants need to propose a viable business model which is replicable, and elaborate on why government or private sector actors would be interested to replicate and scale up tested models. A convincing exit strategy needs to be presented. Suggestions for testable approaches for job matching are encouraged. Applicants for Component 2 need to elaborate on how their work contributes to national level policies and regulations (see Component 3).

## **Component 3: Work on national policies and regulations**

This Call for Proposals is specifically designed for Rakhine State; however, interventions to improve vocational training in Myanmar are relevant at various levels of the system. Of particular relevance is the development of occupational standards and the testing and certifying of skills. This component therefore supports designated work on national policies and regulations which support improved skill training in Myanmar. Applicants for Components 1 and 2 can propose activities for this component in order to facilitate their work in Rakhine State and to support the transfer of policy relevant experiences from State to Union level.

## **Component 4: Skills training for Internally Displaced Persons in IDP camps**

LIFT encourages proposals which suggest viable and feasible skills training activities in IDP camps in Rakhine State. The proposal needs to elaborate on the demand for skills training, particularly among youth, and propose a strong rationale for envisaged training modules. Applicants need to provide proof that they have approval to work in the IDP camps on skills training activities. Component 4 is the smallest in terms of funding of the four components, in order to initially observe the acceptance and demand for skill training in the camps.

### **Funding allocation:**

The provisional allocation for LIFT's work on skills and vocational training in Rakhine State is currently set at up to USD 6 million.

### 3) Selection and appraisal procedures

A Technical Appraisal Committee (TAC) will complete a technical, capacity, and financial appraisal of each project proposal. As a part of its appraisal process, LIFT may elect to discuss technical, cost, or other aspects of proposals with applicants. The TAC will proceed to the selection of the proposals through two stages:

1. Short listing:
  - The TAC will appraise each proposal using the criteria listed in Annex 2.
  - Applicants whose proposal has been short listed will be asked to present their approach and respond to questions from the TAC in an interview.
2. Proposal revision
  - LIFT may determine that one or more of the short listed proposals require further clarification and possible revision. The applicant will have a maximum of two weeks to revise their proposal based on TAC questions and comment.
  - The TAC will update its appraisal based on the revised proposal.

Successful proposals will be implemented under a grant agreement with UNOPS as the LIFT Fund Manager. Unsuccessful applications will not be returned to the applicant.

### 4) Proposal submission:

Key documents for the preparation of submissions are:

- a) Annex 1: Format and requirements for proposals
- b) Annex 2: Selection criteria to be used by LIFT

Please note the following requirements for submissions:

- Proposals must be prepared in the English language or in Myanmar language according to the format requirement presented in Annex 1.
- Proposals must be received by email at the following address: ([lift.proposals.mmoh@unops.org](mailto:lift.proposals.mmoh@unops.org)) on or before **12.00 (noon) Yangon time (GMT+6:30) on 29 February 2016**. Please do not submit your proposal to any email address other than the secure email address provided above or your proposal may be at risk to not be considered. The size of individual e-mails, including e-mail text and attachments, must not exceed 5 MB.
- Proposals must also be submitted in hard copy at LIFT Fund Management Office, 12(0) Pyi Thu Lane, 7 Mile, Mayangone Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Hard copies should arrive on or before the same date. Unless both electronic and hard copies are received on or before the deadline, proposals will be rejected.
- Please note that the cost of preparing a 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](mailto:lift@unops.org). Clarifications will be provided on the LIFT website: <http://lift-fund.org/> and the UNOPS website <https://www.unops.org/english/Opportunities/suppliers/Pages/Grant-advertisement.aspx>.

Also note that 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.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Call for Proposals release date	23 December 2015
Deadline for receipt of written inquiries	15 January 2016
Written responses distributed	22 January 2016
<b>Proposal due date</b>	<b>29 February 2016, 1200hours / noon (GMT+6.30h)</b>
Grant agreement negotiation and contracting	March 2016

## **Annex 1: Format and requirements of the proposals**

The proposal must be complete and conform to the format requirements presented below.

- Submissions must be made both electronically and in hard copy as outlined in the main part of this call for proposals.
- The proposal must not exceed 20 pages (12 point Times New Roman Font and a minimum of 1 inch margins all around). Pages should be numbered. The proposal may include annexes with additional details regarding approach, methodologies, references, maps, etc.
- Annexes must not exceed 20 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.

Proposals must consist of the following:

### **1. Title page**

Project title, name and contact of the applicant, partners, geographical area, expected project duration, start and finish dates and total budget.

### **2. Preamble**

Include a table of contents, a list of abbreviations, a map, a summary.

### **3. Project background and rationale**

Outline how the proposed project links to the LIFT strategy and the components listed in this Call for Proposals, and explain how lessons from previous experiences and studies inform the design of the project. Identify any gaps in the available knowledge. Explain how it aligns with the development plans/priorities of the GoUM (if not, why not), and other development partners working in the same field.

Outline the results of key discussions which have taken place in preparation of the proposal, including:

- Who was consulted (e.g. other development partners, government departments, NGOs, etc.),
- Any issues raised pertinent to the project's rationale and design approach, and
- A summary of the views of other key stakeholders.

#### 4. Activities, technical approach, methodology and scope

An activity and methodology description needs to be sufficient to identify **what** will be done, **how** it will be done, **who** will do it, **when** it will be done, and **where** it will be done. This should include a clear description of what will be done to produce the expected results along with explanation of the technical approach and methodology.

A Work Plan should be presented in graphical form (table, preferably LIFT template) and can be attached as an Annex. It should indicate the sequence of all major activities and implementation milestones, including targeted beginning and ending dates for each step and key deliverables. Provide as much detail as necessary. The work plan should show a logical flow of implementation steps, indicating that all the things that must happen have been carefully thought through from the start to the end of the grant project. It should consider seasonality and/or other major constraints. Please include in the work plan all required milestone reports and monitoring reviews.

#### 5. Organisational background of the applying organisation, staffing, governance / coordination and partnerships

It should be clearly demonstrated that the proposing organisation has the experience, capacity, and commitment to implement the proposed project successfully. The following should be covered:

- Type of organisation – Is it a community-based organisation, national NGO, international NGO, research or training institution?
- Organisational approach (philosophy), purpose and core activities of the organisation, and relevant experience.
- Length of existence and legal status - registration with government approved authority.
- Expertise mobilised from within and outside the organisation.
- A description of partnerships, how long they have been in place and for what purpose.

An overview of the organisational structure of the project should be provided, including the CVs of senior personnel (national and international), (e.g. chief of party, project director, senior technical advisor and chief financial officer).

The proposal should explain how the expertise required for project implementation will be made available (i.e. from within the organisation, through external consultancy, and partnerships) along with a description of implementation roles. It should also explain who the partners are, how they have been identified and what their contribution is to be. A letter from the main partners may be provided stating that they have contributed to the project design and are willing to collaborate with the applicant.

The section should include the governance and coordination arrangements, and how the project will maximise local ownership.

#### 6. Cross-cutting issues

This section should outline the key cross-cutting issues, how they may impact on the project and how they will be addressed (e.g. gender, nutrition, migration, human rights including disability, and the environment).

## 7. Risks to successful implementation

Identify and list major risk factors that could result from project activities and/or the project not producing the expected results. These should include both internal factors (e.g. the technology involved fails to work as projected) and external factors (e.g. government policy changes). Outline mitigation strategies and/or how risk will be identified and assessed in the design. Include key **assumptions** on which the proposal is based.

## 8. Measurement Framework

This section should follow the guidelines provided in LIFT's MEAL guideline ([www.lift-fund.org/monitoring-and-evaluation-learning-and-accountability-meal-guidelines-ips-upcoming-proposals-and](http://www.lift-fund.org/monitoring-and-evaluation-learning-and-accountability-meal-guidelines-ips-upcoming-proposals-and)). All projects need to provide an MEAL Framework including 3 main components: (1) a project Theory of Change; (2) project Evaluation and Learning questions; and (3) a project Measurement Plan<sup>3</sup>.

## 9. Project budget breakdown

The development and management of a realistic budget is key to developing and implementing a successful project. Careful attention to issues of financial management and integrity will enhance effectiveness and impact.

The budget template available on the LIFT website must be used.

The following important principles should be kept in mind in preparing a project budget:

- Include only costs which directly relate to efficiently carrying out the activities and producing the outcomes which are set forth in the proposal. Other associated costs should be funded from other sources. Refer to the LIFT operational guidelines on what LIFT can and cannot fund.
- The budget should be realistic.
- The budget should include all costs associated with managing and administering the grant project. In particular, include the cost of monitoring and evaluation.
- Indirect costs are allowable up to six per cent of the total direct costs, not including investment capital funded by LIFT.
- The budget line items in the budget template are general categories intended to assist in thinking through where money will be spent. If a planned expenditure does not appear to fit in any of the standard line item categories, list the item under other costs, and state what the money is to be used for.
- The figures contained in the budget sheet should agree with those on the proposal header and text.
- The budget needs to be accompanied by detailed assumptions on costs (e.g. how many computers are required for how many staff, how per diems are calculated, etc.).

Financial and technical proposals should be sufficiently linked to enable LIFT to conduct a reasonable Value-for-Money assessment of the proposal. Proposals that demonstrate

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<sup>3</sup> A measurement plan replaces LIFT's previous use of project logframes and identifies the project outcomes, outputs, indicators, targets, milestones and means of verification. A template is available in the MEAL Guideline, which is on the LIFT website.



that LIFT's funds will leverage other funds, as well as proposals that demonstrate clear progress towards financial sustainability, are encouraged.

## **Annex 2: Selection criteria to be used by LIFT**

A Technical Appraisal Committee (TAC) will review applications. Proposals will be evaluated 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 team will seek clarifications with the submitting organisation if the proposal otherwise meets the main criteria.

The technical and financial proposals, which have a maximum value of 80 points and 20 points respectively, will be evaluated using the following criteria:

### **Technical evaluation criteria**

1. Past experience and role in skills and vocational training in Myanmar (40 points)
2. Technical approach (20 points)
3. Staffing (20 points)
4. Financial proposal and Value for Money (20 points)

22/12/2015