

United Nations Capital Development Fund REQUEST FOR APPLICATION FOR

Community of Practice on Financial Health and Innovations

SUMMARY

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) makes public and private finance work for the poor in the world's 46 least developed countries. With its capital mandate and instruments, UNCDF offers “last mile” finance models that unlock public and private resources, especially at the domestic level, to reduce poverty and support local economic development.

Hosted by UNCDF, the Financial Health (FH) and Innovation Portfolio aims to drive convening and thought leadership on the subject of financial health and making this global shift towards an outcome focus agenda. The platform is proposed to work as a convener, to bring together global, regional and local actors committed to using financial and digital solutions to improve the financial lives of low-income families—helping them climb - and stay - out of poverty. The portfolio creates space for thought leadership where best financial health practices and models are exchanged and lead to concrete action with governments and the private sector.

The portfolio is organized in three inter-linked pillars that focus on driving coalition building through advocacy and evidence generation; implementation that creates demonstration effect for markets to learn from and create lessons that can be scaled globally; financing that can catalyze the shift towards outcomes and also create incentives for players to mainstream the agenda.

One of the key objectives for the portfolio is to drive thought leadership in the space of financial health. This thought leadership is shaped through a variety of engagements, that will include partnerships with other global institutions including research universities/think tanks, evidence generated through the experiments set-up in the Living Labs or specific partnerships drawn to undertake a research activity.

This RFA is drawn to invite a global partner who could support in furthering the thought leadership efforts for the portfolio and develop tools that can be deployed publicly to drive overall agenda and assist to amplify the various projects especially i3 (interventions). The i3 (Innovate, Implement and Impact) programme funded by Metlife Foundation, supports thought leadership on the subject of financial health and making this global shift towards an outcome focus agenda. Working as a convener, to bring together global, regional and local actors committed to using financial and digital solutions to improve the financial lives of low-income families—helping them climb - and stay - out of poverty in Asia Pacific. Assist with messaging and managing of exclusive properties created for driving the agenda on FH globally. The eligible entities who could participate in this RFA need to have experience in driving convenings and managing platforms for building agenda around inclusive finance. Ability to shape narrative through messages and ideas that can hold attention with different group of actors from Government, Policy Makers, Private Sector, etc. and ability to combine design in the approach of driving advocacy efforts with stories and experiences, driven in both digital and non-digital forms.

Selected applicant will be signing a Performance-Based Agreement (PBA) with UNCDF.

UNCDF's contributions can be upto a maximum of USD 650,000 – 750,000. UNCDF will award 1 application depending on the readiness level to host and shape the Community of Practice along with the public good platform for i3.

Applicants may apply independently or in a consortium.

Inquiries to this request for applications may be submitted by email to financial.health@uncdf.org cc uncdf.rfa@uncdf.org by 27th October 2022

All applications must be submitted by 23.59 (IST) on 3rd Nov 2022 through UNCDF e-investment platform: https://apply.uncdf.org/prog/community_of_practice_on_financial_health_and_innovations

1. INTRODUCTION

Financial inclusion has been a focus of governments, central banks, public and private financial institutions, multilaterals, and non-governmental organizations for over a decade. Significant progress has been achieved but linkages between financial inclusion and definitive improvements in people's lives are still obscure. Continuing with just a focus on financial inclusion is limiting and poses the risk of providing access and usage to financial products and services without addressing the underlying barriers to financial security¹, financial control² and financial freedom³. Financial health is to uncover those barriers and enable financially healthy livelihood which is key to building economic resilience for communities and countries in a Post-COVID world.

UN system has been spearheading "Leaving No One Behind strategy in the Digital Era", with the goal to equip millions of people to use innovative services in their daily lives that will empower them and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It is to be done by accelerating the development of services leveraging finance enabled by digital and innovation as well as by providing the right balance of technical expertise and financial support to government, private & non-profit sectors and academia. The desired impact is driving economic empowerment measured by end-clients have improved financial resilience, security and freedom contributing to resilient societies and sustainable and inclusive economic development"

The financial health paradigm therefore builds on and goes beyond concept of client centrality to achieve impact and strengthen the vision of "Leaving No One Behind Strategy" where the focus remains impact of digital services on improving the lives of people. The programme will advance UNs and the sector's knowledge and understanding on how digital services and "non- digital services can reduce poverty, increases resilience and improves economic opportunities for women, youth, refugees, migrants, elders, disabled, rural population and micro-enterprises especially in developing countries with focus on least developed countries.

Globally, women and girls face barriers in the enabling environment: their socio- cultural context and the supply of and in their demand for financial products and services. These issues collectively limit their access, usage and control over these products and services in ways that constrain their economic empowerment. Through the programme and specific interventions, it would work at the intersection of financial health leading to women economic empowerment.

UN through its programme and projects anchored globally with FH portfolio, would focus on the

¹ The ability to **meet ongoing commitments, now and in the future, and under adverse circumstances**. This includes a sense of preparedness for the expected (think retirement) and unexpected future (think COVID-19) - or financial resilience

² The feeling of control over one's finances. This includes a sense of self-efficacy and a general attitude to change one's financial life for the better

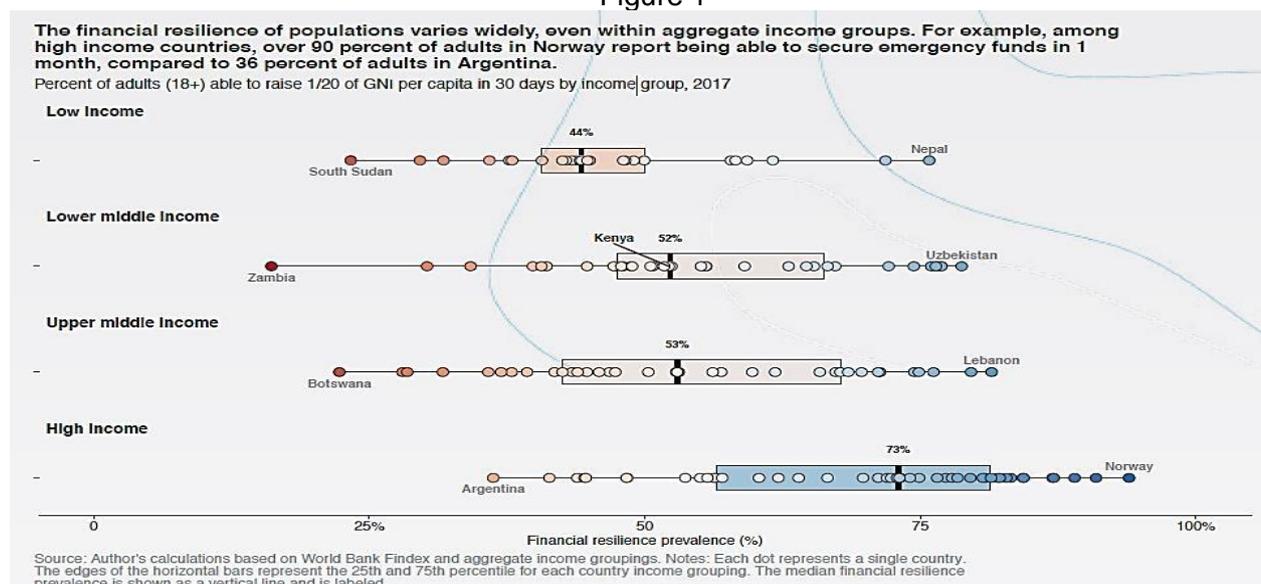
³ The ability to meet one's financial goals and enjoy life on one's terms. This is a step-up from financial security and includes individual financial goals and things one values.

end-outcome of improving Financial Health and well-being, for last mile customers, the intention is to create positive impact for people across different segments like women, gig workers and youth, micro-enterprises, farmers, aged, etc. across different occupational and non-occupational classes⁴. The programme delivers on these through a focus on three aspects: 1) Coalition Building, 2) Implementation, and 3) Investments and Capital. The engagement is proposed to be anchored by the setting-up a Global Centre, which could facilitate and function as a global impartial convener, innovation supporter, and knowledge hub on financial health. The portfolio will work in close collaboration with key stakeholders from public and private sector to create a shared understanding of financial health, a measurement framework, and complemented by living labs that will focus on a sector/segment or geographical cluster to “test and learn” with solutions and business models aligning to financial health outcomes. The programme would have a key focus on driving South-South cooperation and provide a platform for cross-market collaboration for driving learnings and partnerships. This programme document details these ambitions in enhancing people's economic empowerment and sustainable and responsible finance through a financial health lens with a view to contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Global Patterns of Financial Resilience⁵:

In 2017, among the 144 economies where the Findex survey was implemented, the prevalence of financial resilience ranges from a low of 16 percent of adults (18 years of age and older) in Zambia to a high of 94 percent of adults in Norway (Figure 1). The median financial resilience

Figure 1



prevalence in 2017 was 56.2 percent. Half of the economies surveyed had financial resilience prevalence between 45 and 75 percent. An estimated 2.9 billion adults worldwide were financially resilient in 2017. While there is some variation in financial resilience across broad country income groups, the variation within income groups is substantial (Figure 2). In 2017, median financial resilience prevalence among low-income countries (those with GNI per capita of between USD 260 and 742) was 44 percent compared to 73 percent among high income countries (those with GNI per capita of between USD 11,040 and 104,560). There is essentially no difference in the median financial resilience of lower and upper middle-income countries (which was 52-53 percent in 2017) despite mean GNI per capita being three times higher in upper versus lower middle-income countries.

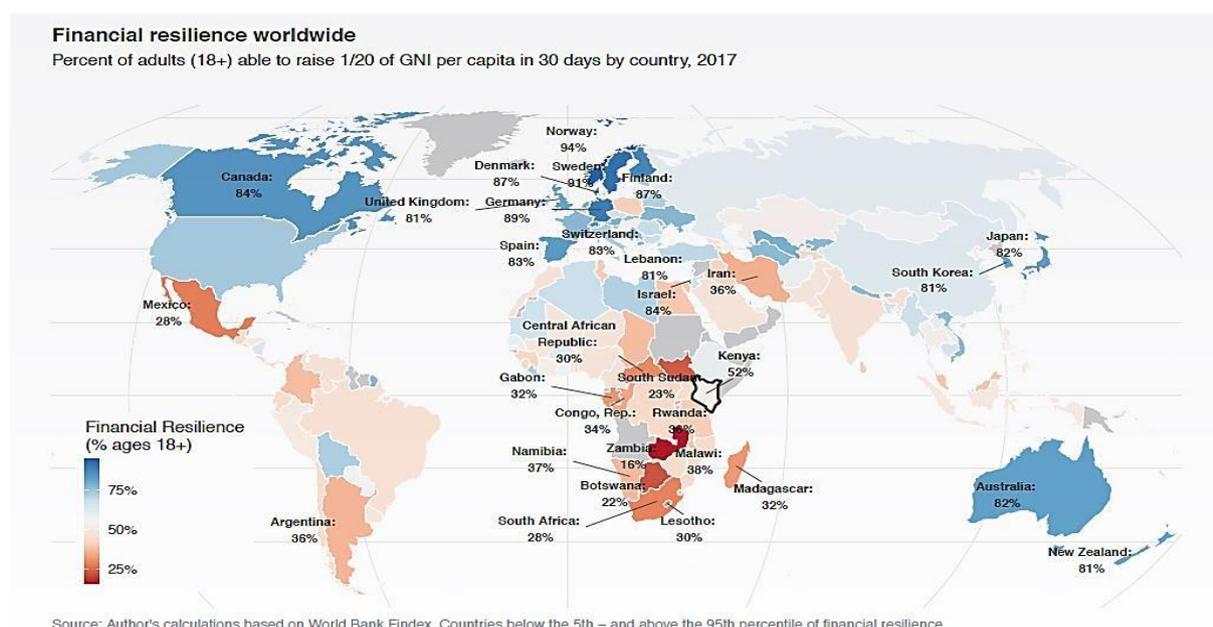
⁴ Based on existing commitments on living lab/in-country platform.

⁵ Drawn from the report titled, the prevalence and drivers of financial resilience among adults: Evidence from the Global Findex: FSD Kenya. 2020. Authored Paul Gubbins.

While the geographic distribution of financial resilience closely resembles the distribution of income per capita, there are some notable exceptions that are readily identifiable on the map above, such as Bolivia in South America, Ethiopia in East Africa and Poland in Europe. Among regions, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have the lowest median levels of financial resilience (44 and 47 percent in 2017, respectively) while North America (79 percent) and Europe & Central Asia (70 percent) have the highest median levels of financial resilience. The fact that LAC and SSA have similar levels of financial resilience despite LAC having nearly four times the mean GNI per capita in 2017 and financial sectors that are almost twice as developed on average, suggests the presence of regional factors (such as institutions, cultural norms, practices or market conditions) that either enhance financial health in SSA, reduce financial health in LAC, or both. There is a specific need to focus on bringing the outcome discussion in the mainstream conversation of least developed countries (LDCs) since most LDCs are in early to middle stage of achieving their financial inclusion goals, by broadening the conversations with them would allow the local stakeholders including government and industry will be more alert towards measuring end-customer outcomes right from beginning, while their ability to do so would depend upon the infrastructure readiness.

The answer to shifting beyond inclusion and bridging the impact gap could lie in financial health (FH) which takes the discussion away from outputs to outcomes and from business to

Figure 2



customers. Financial health is more comprehensive and as such, a nuanced, complex concept. The lack of a shared understanding of financial health hinders its mass adoption by the public and private sectors and stands as a contributing barrier to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To build the agenda UNCDF in partnership with Metlife Foundation started the i3 project which had a focus in Malaysia and China to deliver innovations and impact. While working at regional/global level with respect to mainstreaming learnings and insights.

This partnership was proposed in a two-focus interventions. Focus one was to anchor the work of i3 programme and amplify the stories while creating new messages that strengthen the discussion around financial health in Malaysia, China and region/global level. The focus one will work as inception of the partnership which will end by February 2023 as it will entirely focus on strategising the position of i3 programme and Metlife Foundation.

The focus two will establish the financial health narrative for global audience, especially supporting the engagements around G20 and mainstreaming financial health by building a robust

Community of Practice (COP). This engagement will be a deep dive on mainstreaming with additional focus on combining stakeholder and policy advocacy, executive communications, regional communication to anchor discussion around financial health outcomes. The current PBA will be drawn for an initial period of 12 months till Nov 2023 with major activities to be completed before June 2023.

Furthermore, to provide impetus to the build-up of Community of Practice, the engagement will facilitate hosting and managing of the Global Hub on Financial Health, a knowledge hub and interactive dashboard (prepared by UNCDF) including sub-segment convenings. The partnership would also develop, manage and maintain a digital platform that can enable innovation engagements around financial health including connecting enablers, innovators, investors, etc. The Global Hub will be a convening platform where global stakeholders will discuss, engage and enhance the evidence and thought leadership around FH.

The purpose of this RFA is to identify a partner who could establish and manage a community of practice on the financial health agenda and underlying thematic areas of thought leadership for the i3 project of Metlife Foundation. The COP aims to drive integrated advocacy/thought leadership and engagements including building network of stakeholders, thematic champions on FH, define narratives to support market players advocating FH and drive innovation to improve FH within gig and smart ageing agenda. The purpose of this partnership is to create a public good that can well carry beyond the project period and engages with broader development community, policy makers and private sector actors to inform, innovate and invest in FH.

The RFA partner would also create convenings that will drive conversations pertinent for G20 engagements around financial health within key government agencies and private sector. The partner will support in positioning Financial Health as a key driver to achieving the SDGs.

2. SCOPE OF WORK

The objective of the engagement is to amplify the work under i3 programme and build conversations that could lead to creation of broader FH thought leadership efforts that as a public good infrastructure can carry beyond the project life. A key focus of this COP engagement should be further building a community/convening that furthers the discussion around gig economy workers and ageing segment with specific focus on women. The community needs to work on connecting innovations, building dialogues, seeking partnership on the agenda of financial health, gig workers and ageing.

Under the current G20 Presidency with India, the COP partner will focus on initiatives to bring India at the forefront of driving the agenda on inclusive growth and sustainable development. With the technological advancement, India has demonstrated to the world how innovation can shape the last mile connect in achieving inclusion and deliver on the SDGs.

The strategy can be aligned to the following broad objectives of building a community of practice which will support knowledge sharing, learning and change living beyond the life of i3 project of Metlife Foundation:

1. **Global narrative** – position strategic conversations to strengthen FH agenda and underlying segment focus conversations with specific focus on aligning with G20 engagement. Set-up thematic round tables to bring together relevant stakeholders who would be instrumental in championing FH and drive global messaging.
2. **Impact Thought Leadership** – highlight the evidence built within i3 programme where resilience and security have been key determinants
3. **Innovation for good** – drive innovation, curate conversations focused on fintech innovation within gig and smart ageing and enable solution showcase as global best

practices and across border learning

4. **Knowledge hub** – digital platform to bring forward research, evidence, news and partners championing FH and also build separate smart ageing and gig knowledge centers
5. **Dissemination and outreach** – wider messaging, lessons shared and evidence sharing to impact FH mainstreaming.

The COP partner will assist undertaking actions listed in the above-mentioned objectives and propose strategies to achieve the same. New action items can also be suggested by the partners while submitting their proposal.

The broader engagement should focus on devising a clear strategy and deliverables that will allow amplification of the work under i3 programme and share among stakeholder groups at regional and global levels. The strategy should allow to host discussions, showcase innovation and create messages to drive participation, help create broader advocacy efforts around mainstreaming financial health and strengthen messaging for G20 engagements for global audience. The partner can also propose innovative ideas to allow better engagement with stakeholder groups (Policy Makers, Government, Private Sector (Financial Services), etc). The partner can propose to create discussion forums (digital and non-digital), networks, thematic groups, workshops, thought leadership pieces and collaterals to help achieve the RFA objectives. The partner in collaboration with other industry players can submit to amplify the i3 learnings, build global digital knowledge assets for common good and leverage regional presence to improve FH messaging.

Deliverables:

	Goals/objectives	Deliverables (min nos)
1	Global narrative	Digital-Hub (Product Enhancement and Management) - Video (1) - Newsletters (4) - Knowledge management (12 updates on new content posted on the Digital Hub)
		Global Convening Towards Financial Health (1) - Global physical event
		- Satellite Events (e.g 2 events organised in key markets across the regions like in Singapore/Mexico/Kenya/Uganda/West Africa)
		Learning Workshop based on i3 projects - 2 Day workshop with focus discussions on various interventions - Building conversations with private sector players
2	Impact thought leadership	1 Round table dialogues with Policymakers (aligning with other multilateral platforms like G20)
		1 Round table dialogues with Private Sector (aligning with other multilateral platforms like G20)
		6-8 Briefing and Policy Notes, Research (incl primary and/or secondary research) related to broader agenda of FH with a global/APAC outlook. Some suggested topics are below and will be finalised in consultation with the selected partner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Driving shift from financial inclusion to financial resilience 2. Financial capability as a driver of FH

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Addressing FH of gig economy/informal workers 4. Building social protection for creating financial security for the ageing population 5. Digital platforms as a step to improve livelihoods of women micro enterprises 6. Addressing FH of women micro entrepreneurs with focus on rural/urban 7. Savings as a pathway to building resilience
		At least 2 new publications with industry leaders
3	Innovation for good	<p>Masterclasses for innovators (2 regional) with global reputed speakers</p> <p>Training and skilling for policymakers and senior leadership in private sector on financial health (2)</p> <p>Design thinking and innovation toolkit – development, hosting and launch (1)</p> <p>Market place platform to connect innovators, enablers and investors (1)</p>
4	Knowledge Hub	Launch of Knowledge Centre on smart ageing and gig economy with specific focus on women (2 Knowledge Centres)
5	Dissemination and outreach	Social media, digital outreach to drive COP and i3 programme (12 detailed monthly reports)

The numbers mentioned against the deliverables are minimum numbers to achieve. The deliverables will require dedicated Technical Assistance, research and communication engagement and should be planned with all considerations to achieve the desired goals.

2.1 Areas of intervention

For this request for applications (RFA), UNCDF invites applications from registered entities that can offer to create public goods based on the proposed scope as above.

Areas of intervention	Challenges/ Problem Statement and Objectives for solution
Making Financial Health A Discussion Agenda (Stakeholder and Policy Advocacy Plan)	<p><i>Challenges:</i> The areas related to financial health outcomes are still new to the developing world context, while some of the early work has started in developed markets. In-order to place this in mainstream conversation it is important that the agenda is supported by evidence and can itself present the case on why and how it could be executed in different context and various stakeholder groups, towards accelerating the achievement of SDGs.</p> <p><i>Objectives:</i> The Community of Practice partner would work to anchor the agenda through an integrated advocacy strategy and developing knowledge hubs, that would allow the work undertaken by UN or other agencies globally to build the case. The focus would be to start highlighting the work within the realms of i3 programme supported by Metlife Foundation. It will broaden out to assist different stakeholders make decision to encourage their adoption and learning on financial health outcomes for their customers or populations through convenings and hosting dialogues at regional and global levels. The partner is expected to develop a n d manage different public good channels, platforms and resources that can be used to disseminate</p>

	<p>the messages and get to take actions, across variety of stakeholder groups. These will support in further strengthening the narrative for G20 engagement where financial health is to be proposed as an agenda.</p>
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The examples of solutions in the identified areas of intervention are not exhaustive.

The team at UNCDF is open to hearing from potential applicants their out-of-box thinking to help achieve the objectives of the RFA, as long as the scale, commercial viability and impact objectives are aligned.

2.2 How UNCDF works with partners

UNCDF takes a tailored approach to engagement with partners, working with each throughout to identify business and customer needs, and helping to design, pilot and scale up the solution along the way. Some examples of the ways in which UNCDF works with partners include:

- **Product Research:** Sharing market research and knowledge to deepen partners' understanding of customers' behaviours, needs, constraints and aspirations. This also includes providing transaction data analysis and training to the business teams.
- **Product design:** Providing human-centred design expertise to better understand the customer journey – physical and financial – for better product design and use-case development tailored to the needs of low-income customers and their families. The efforts may also involve analysing the transaction data from a customer lens.
- **Provisioning:** Providing technical assistance to help design, pilot, deploy, and scale up solutions for impact. Technical assistance is provided by digital finance experts who are experienced in product design, business model development and go-to-market strategies in some of the most challenging markets in Africa and Asia.
- **Partnerships:** Facilitating strategic partnerships with stakeholders – including cross-border payment hubs, mobile network operators, financial institutions, and non-bank financial institutions – to enable partners to reach last-mile customers, and to grow sustainably. UNCDF is uniquely positioned to be a neutral broker of partnerships and has a record of building strong relationships with private and public organizations across Africa, Asia, and Pacific.
- **Policy and Advocacy:** Convening efforts to support an enabling environment and build policy and advocacy capacity for human-centered products and services to be piloted and potentially scaled.

In the RFA, applicants may identify and suggest areas where the technical support from UNCDF and its network of expertise is sought.

2.3 Expected results

All applications must include targets on the indicators in the table below. The targets must be disaggregated for the selected target groups. Applicants who are not able to report on one or multiple indicators or provide disaggregated data should include a note with the reason.

The targets will be considered in the evaluation of the applications. During the negotiation process of the performance-based agreement, selected applicants and UNCDF shall develop a monitoring framework. This may include additional indicators and targets, tailored to the scope of the proposed solution, activities and expected results.

Indicators	Disaggregation
Number of convenings, workshops, events and launch and management of Digital Hub to mainstream FH agenda	Total:
Number of roundtables/conversations to align with other multilateral platforms like G20 and thought pieces developed to improve COP	Total:
Number of masterclasses conducted, trainings and skilling sessions executed and platform to engage market players	Total
Develop, maintain and manage the Digital Hub and Knowledge Centers, prepare social media outreach and engagements to drive COP	Total:
Number of global and regional convenings conducted and participated	Total:
Number of innovators, individuals and institutions signed-up for smart ageing and gig economy Community of Practice	Total

Please note that during the negotiation process of the Performance based- Agreement, applicants shall be required to integrate the monitoring framework with additional KPIs.

3. ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICATION AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Only applications that meet the eligibility requirements and minimum criteria for the submission will be scored.

3.1 Eligibility requirements

Entity registration

- The applicant/ lead applicant must be at least 10 years old registered entity with deep experience in leading convenings, building community around inclusive finance space.

Country of operation

- The lead applicant can be based anywhere globally/duly registered and having at least one year of operations in the space of advocacy and communications. Their partnership should cover markets like Asia Pacific.

Consortiums (when applicable)

- Applicants can apply only once under this RFA, whether independently or in a consortium.
- Joint applications between market players in the target country or countries are encouraged if the solution proposed will expand the advocacy and agenda mainstreaming in multiple geographies along with G20 focus of Indian market.

Exclusionary criteria:

- Applicants shall not have been the subject of bankruptcy, liquidation, judicial settlement,

safeguarding, cessation of activity or any other similar situation resulting from a similar procedure.

- Applicants and any of their staff or member of their board of directors shall not be included in the United Nations financial sanctions lists,⁵ particularly in the fight against the financing of terrorism and against attacks on international peace and security⁶; and
- Applicants must not be involved in any of the following activities⁷
 - Manufacture, sale or distribution of controversial weapons or their components, including cluster bombs, anti-personnel mines, biological or chemical weapons or nuclear weapons
 - Manufacture, sale or distribution of armaments and/or weapons or their components, including military supplies and equipment
 - Replica weapons marketed to children
 - Manufacture, sale or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products
 - Involvement in the manufacture, sale and distribution of pornography
 - Manufacture, sale or distribution of substances subject to international bans or phase-outs, and wildlife or products regulated under the CITES
 - Gambling including casinos, betting etc. (excluding lotteries with charitable objectives)
 - Violation of human rights or complicity in human rights violations
 - Use or toleration of forced or compulsory labor
 - Use or toleration of child labor
- Applicants shall have fulfilled all the obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or obligations relating to the payment of taxes in accordance with legal provisions in force in the country of incorporation

UNCDF will conduct due diligence on selected applicants. Applicants must have documents ready for confirmation that they meet the eligibility criteria including certificate of compliance with the tax authorities and any other documentary evidence that might be requested by UNCDF besides the application form.

3.2 Evaluation criteria

The Evaluation Committee will score the applications according to the below evaluation criteria. Only applications that score at least 70 out of 100 will be considered successful and move to the due-diligence stage.

	Criteria	Max Score
1	<u>Organization/consortium profile and experience</u> <i>Score the applicant's profile, track record, reputation, experience in building narratives, policy advocacy, similar projects and in the country/region, also if the applicant has successfully implemented focused projects in partnership with government, multilateral, impact investors, etc.</i>	30
2	<u>Team</u> <i>Score if the applicant's proposed team structure and experience is suited for the purpose of the RFA (skills for management, technical know-how, regional and global networks in inclusive finance sector)</i>	15
3	<u>Methodology</u> <i>Score the applicant's proposed methodology and approach: if it is suited for the purpose of the RFA, if the workplan is realistic and backed with similar work background, that the project strategy covers risk management, quality control, reporting and other project management good practices.</i>	15

4	<u>Prior UN and/or Metlife Foundation engagement</u> <i>Score the applicant against its prior experience of working with UN agencies and/or Metlife Foundation towards building global narratives on inclusive finance</i>	20
5	<u>Additionality</u> Score if UNCDF funding to the applicant will create: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Non-financial value: Value that the private sector is not currently offering and which will lead to better outcomes e.g. by providing or catalyzing knowledge and expertise, promoting social or environmental standards or fostering good corporate governance.</i> - <i>Impact: Faster, larger or better development impacts than the applicant would be able to achieve working alone.</i> 	10
6	<u>Gender perspective</u> <i>Score if the applicant has foreseen a gender focus in the proposed intervention, to have women both external (users) and internal (staff) benefited equally to men.</i>	5
7	<u>Result Measurement</u> <i>Score if the applicant has provided coherent success matrix and strategy plans.</i>	5
TOTAL		100

UNCDF will also assess the value for money of the submissions using the following formula: Amount of grant requested (A)
Advocacy Influence (B)
Value for money A / B

3.3 Eligible costs

The criteria for eligible expenditure determine whether a cost qualifies for funding under UNCDF rules and procedures.

The general criteria for eligibility of costs under UNCDF funding include the following.

- Eligible costs must be incurred by the applicant during the project (after the signature of the Performance-based Agreement and up to the end of the Grant period).
- Eligible costs should be indicated in the estimated overall budget of the action attached to the Performance-based Agreement.
- Costs must be identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the applicant and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the lead applicant is established.
- Costs must comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation.
- Costs must be reasonable, justified and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.
- Technical assistance and consultancy costs – the RFA will require technical assistance to build impactful narrative on FH agenda, build research and knowledge insights to develop resources and manage convenings/host discussions. The costs must be

justified with information provided on their expertise, organisational affiliations, partnerships, normal daily fee and number of days expected. This will also include the estimated cost of event hosting, food and beverages. The services may not be offered by employees of the organization applying for the grant.

- Research costs – the development and management of digital hubs and knowledge centers will require research and insights to help the platforms become meaningful for global stakeholders. Research services are to be rendered by people with specific skills and expertise and who may or may not be part of the organisation applying for the grant. Cost for research expertise and skill-set can be included in the budgeting. This will also include the estimated expenditure on publication materials and dissemination.
- Innovation and training expenditure (financial education, digital education, cross-learning) for the project’s stakeholders is eligible. If applicable, this will include all related expenditure, such as the cost of the venue, digital platforms, participant travel, and so on.
- Communication and outreach – for robust communication and outreach strategy and impact, lead agency can partner with resources outside its regular employees. Costs incurring to deliver on digital and non-digital comms and outreach can be mentioned separately in the budget along with any logistic requirement.
- Investment costs directly attributable to the project, relating to research and innovation, are allowable.

3.4 Ineligible costs

The following costs are ineligible and not accepted:

- Returns on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary;
- Debt and debt service charges;
- Provisions for losses or debts;
- Interest owed;
- Costs declared by the applicant in the framework of another action receiving a grant financed from another donor;
- Indirect costs, also called overheads.

4. AGREEMENT PARAMETERS

Applicants shall give evidence that their solutions are aligned to the following parameters.

4.1 Applicants

Eligible candidates can apply alone or as lead applicant in a consortium of firms, as long as they comply with the eligibility requirements set forth in section 3.1 in case of a consortium of entities applying to the RFA, the lead applicant shall comply with the eligibility requirements. The lead applicant will be responsible of:

- Submitting the application form on behalf of the consortium.
- Ensuring that each partner is fully aware of the composition of the partnership and of the contents of the Application Form.
- Signing the Performance-based Agreement with UNCDF.
- Fulfilling all obligations set out in the Performance-based Agreement.
- Ensuring the allocation and the fulfilment of the funds amongst the partner in the consortium in compliance with the Performance-based Agreement.
- Ensuring the allocation and the fulfilment of the tasks amongst the partner in the consortium in compliance with the Performance-based Agreement.

4.2 Target segment

The target segment for this Community of Practice engagement is Government, Policy Makers, Private Sector Businesses, Media, etc.

4.3 Geographical scope

Global specifically Asia Pacific Region, Latin America, Africa.

4.4 Project duration

The current PBA would be drawn for a period of 12 months. Activities are expected to be terminated no later than 11/23. Final and assessment reports will have to be submitted no later than 12/23

4.5 Language

The deliverables and any correspondence between the applicant organization and UNCDF must be in English.

4.6 Budget

UNCDF will provide a grant to the selected applicants in accordance to the Evaluation Criteria as set forth in section 3.2.

UNCDF contributions may range from USD 650,000 to 750,000.

Specific projects will be financed based on business needs. Depending on the maturity of the solutions and the success of the pilot, UNCDF would be able to continue its support for the mobilization of investment capital (loan and guarantee) and further technical assistance.

Applications will need to describe how applicants will deploy the Grant and if any technical assistance or mentorship services are being sought. Additional technical assistance services will be provided by UNCDF through a separate budget line.

5. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

5.1 Structure of the application

- The applicant must submit a complete application form online
- Please be sure to have prepared the following documents
 - Submission Letter (using UNCDF's template)
 - Certificate of incorporation
 - Last three years of audited financial statements
 - Technical Proposal (using UNCDF's template)
 - Budget and workplan (using UNCDF's template)
 - CV form (using UNCDF's template)
 - In case of applying as a consortium, partnering agreement documents to be submitted

Only applications that follow the Submission Formats and include all the necessary documentation will be considered. All submissions must be completed in English.

5.2 Application deadline

All applications must be submitted by 23:59 (IST) on 3/11/2022

5.3 Selection process:

- Step 1: Eligibility screening – eligibility will be assessed according to the eligibility requirements as set forth in section 3.1.
- Step 2: Evaluation of eligible applications based on the evaluation criteria set out in section 3.2.
- Step 3: Due diligence – due diligence on the applications and their applicants will be conducted on applications that receive the minimum qualifying score (70/100).
- Step 4: Notification of applications – all applicants will be notified of the status of their applications.
- Step 5: Pre-Grant negotiation and Performance-based Agreement – the selected applicants will finalise the scope of the grant and finalise budgets, indicators and targets, workplan and disbursements of the Grant that will be released on achievement of each milestone.
- Step 6: Approval of the selected applications by the Investment Committee will be reviewed, discussed and approved by the Investment Committee. Any further due diligence requirements, risk analysis or milestone recommendations from the Investment Committee will be followed in later steps.
- Step 7: Notification of applications - all applicants will be notified of the status of their applications after final approval from UNCDF Board / Investment Committee.

5.4 Timeline

19/10/ 2022	Application window opens
27/10/2022	Deadline for questions/queries
03/11/2022	Deadline for submission

5.5 Real-time assistance from UNCDF

For requests and queries, send an email to financial.health@uncdf.org cc uncdf.rfa@uncdf.org UNCDF will publish a FAQs document based on the clarifications/queries received by the applicants at: <https://www.uncdf.org/article/7985/rfa-community-of-practice-on-financial-health-and-innovations>