**UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (UNCDF)**

**Jobs, skills and finance (JSF) for women and youth programme in The Gambia**

**Gambia fintech challenge**

**Expression of Interest**

Deadline for submissions: June 23, 2020

1. **Description of Project**

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) makes public and private finance work for the poor in the world’s 47 least developed countries (LDCs). 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. UNCDF’s financing models work through three channels: **inclusive digital economies**, connecting individuals, households, and small businesses with financial eco-systems that catalyze participation in the local economy, and provide tools to climb out of poverty and manage financial lives; **local development finance**, that capacitates localities through fiscal decentralization, innovative municipal finance, and structured project finance to drive local economic expansion and sustainable development; and **investment finance**, that provides catalytic financial structuring, de-risking, and capital deployment to drive SDG impact and domestic resource mobilization.

UNCDF is leveraging its expertise from 2 Global flagship programs for The Gambia: The Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility (LoCAL) which combines performance-based climate resilience grants (PBCRGs) with technical and capacity-building support to provide demonstration effects to trigger further flows for local adaptation, including national fiscal transfers and global climate finance for local authorities, through their central governments; and YouthStart (YS) which supports youth financial inclusion to better manage school-to-work transitions and access economic opportunities and to increase access to finance for low-income youth in LDCs, by developing approaches to offer youth tailored financial and non-financial services. To date, through YouthStart (YS), a regional pilot in Sub-Saharan Africa, UNCDF granted access to savings accounts to over 880,00 young people (of which 47 percent are young women and girls), trained over 1 million youth in financial education; and provided loans to over 282,000 young entrepreneurs (54 percent young women). These young clients have accumulated over US$24 million in savings while the outstanding loan portfolio to young entrepreneurs is US$43 million.

UNCDF is bringing this experience to The Gambia to implement the **“Jobs, skills and finance (JSF) for women and youth” programme funded by the 11th European Development Fund**. This programme will contribute to stabilizing the economic, social and security situation of the country during the democratic transition by facilitating social inclusion and employment of the youth and women, with a specific emphasis on promoting gender equality and addressing climate change. It will do so through two components:

* Component 1: Job creation for the youth, women and local communities and equal access to employable skills development.
* Component 2: Improved access to finance.

Under component 2 of the JSF programme in the Gambia UNCDF has been actively working to increase financial inclusion through piloting different approaches combining financial and complementary non-financial services while using digital as an accelerator. UNCDF is addressing financial inclusion as a key contributing factor to unlock the potential of vulnerable segments such as youth and women in driving sustainable and inclusive development. Improved financial capability and access to financial services have the potential to integrate youth and women as drivers of innovative economic growth and job creation in their own communities.

Moreover, UNCDF believes that there are ways in which we can use technology as a more efficient delivery channel for financial and non-financial services. Technology holds indeed some promise to help contribute to innovative and efficient solutions. The spread of connectivity enables populations to connect as never before. Broadband enables youth to seek and receive information to connect with employment opportunities or build a business. Smart technology can also offer lower cost methods of training and education online. The combination of smart technology and connectivity offers an opportunity to bundles the services needed: information, training, remittances, payments, savings and credit.

The Gambia, however, present unique challenges to financial inclusion, in particular, to fintech-driven innovations. Geographically concentrated economic activities, limited economic infrastructure, vulnerability to external shocks make economic progress difficult. Among other challenges lack of institutions and the infrastructure required to offer suitable financial services to people living in rural areas. Therefore, the potential of digital technology solutions is even more relevant in this context, where it can help reach the last mile and overcome the specific challenges of remoteness and limited physical infrastructure. In addition, the cash-based nature of The Gambia economy is highlighted even more by the Covid19 pandemic. With social distancing measures, FSPs have difficulties reaching out to rural communities, and businesses are struggling to keep a form a continuity and clients.

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THE FINTECH CHALLENGE**

The purpose of this challenge is to select partners such as **FinTechs committed, ready and able to develop and test innovations that increase access to finance for youth and women in The Gambia, with the following objectives:**

* The innovations **should create jobs for women and youth** and should provide them with **skills building opportunities to be able to perform those jobs.**
* The innovations should **solve issues related to digital transformation acceleration and the usage of digital financial services**.
* Enable digital innovators in The Gambia **to develop new products/business models.**

Particular attention will be given to applicants willing to:

* use new and digital technologies (e.g. microfinance correspondents, remote banking and mobile banking) and/or are willing to partner with others to provide digital financial services
* institutionalize the innovations and services developed beyond the programme
* serve youth and women, in remote or rural (underserved) areas of The Gambia
* co-invest with UNCDF in the development of the innovations

The designed innovations would be tested with implementing partners and target beneficiaries of UNCDF Programme in The Gambia (JSF Programme). It will then be scaled up with other target clients.

The learning questions that UNCDF would like to address with this project are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Learning Questions** | **KPIs** |
| What is the impact of digital innovations for youth and women? | Number of jobs created through digital innovations for youth and women |
| How digital innovation can help youth and women access further financial services and improve their lives? | Number of digital innovations created  Number and type of financial services the digital innovations are connecting the clients to  Uptake of the digital innovations, Percentage of Women and Youth (15 to 24 years of age) accessing and using the products. |
| What are the main and relevant use cases for youth and women to use digital innovations? | Number of proven Use cases |
| Can digital innovation lead to a sustainable economic model? | Sustainability of services offered  Business models to reach sustainability |

Applicants should include the following considerations in their proposal for the development of the solution:

* Should be committed to work on Human Centric Design studies.
* Should be able to address different groups and socio-economic categories of women.
* Should be committed to address needs of women and youth.
* Should be easy to use and should take into consideration low literacy levels (including overall literacy but also digital and financial literacy), lower rates of phone ownership, limited connectivity, and different local languages of end users.

1. **FINTECH CHALLENGE IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERABLES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Main activities** | **Deliverables** |
| **Phase 1: Boot camp / Prototype development**  The selected teams will be invited for a three-day long boot camp in Banjul, The Gambia. UNCDF will cover the participation of 2 team members per teams selected outside of Banjul [[1]](#footnote-1). The boot camp will provide a platform to work with UNCDF and its partner organizations to validate their ideas, build further prototypes and first-level testing of their solutions for specific design challenges.  During the event, and in collaboration with UNCDF’s partners, digital transformation challenge briefing sessions will be facilitated.  The participating teams will also have access to all the facilities of UNCDF’s partners (e.g. co-working space), access to more specific information about the country’s digital ecosystem and an opportunity to interact face-to-face with staff from UNCDF and potential partners, which might be willing to test the selected innovations in their organizations during the next phase. Additionally, UNCDF will facilitate a knowledge session on ‘fintech for financial inclusion.  On the final day, all teams will present their solutions to a panel of judges. The panel will have representatives from UNCDF, and industry leaders.  At the end of this phase, UNCDF will select 3 partners and will award up to USD 50,000 to each partner to go to the next phase. | * Innovations identification * Project Description Document for the innovation |
| **Phase 2: Accelerator and design of a Minimum Viable Product (MVP)**  During the third phase, selected partners are expected to conduct Human Centred Design (HCD) research to refine and pilot the MVP related to their innovation. This accelerator phase will last up to 6 months.  UNCDF will provide the necessary support during this stage to ensure that all local information and logistic is available to the innovators.  At the end of this phase, UNCDF will select the innovations that are worth scaling up and will award up to USD 100,000 to each selected partner. | * Results of HCD study * Local Implementing partners selection * Report highlighting the results of the pilot test * MVP Demo * Plan for the scale up |
| **Phase 3: MVP implementation and scale-up, Monitoring, quality assurance and supporting learning agenda**  During this phase, partners will scale up the MVP. They will be expected to monitor results in line with UNCDF’s learning agenda with all relevant information (demographic, regions, adoption user cases) that help to answer the learning questions. | * MVP implementation and scale-up * Knowledge sharing products (e.g. case study) on lessons learned and recommendations for digital transformation * Business case to maintain and scale up the product. |

UNCDF will provide tailored technical assistance to the selected partners to conduct customer centric research, prototyping, testing and scaling of the financial services developed for the beneficiaries of the programme. UNCDF will also support the selected partners to integrate financial and digital literacy trainings in their offering. The implementing partners will be responsible for putting all the necessary systems in place (i.e.. staff, devices, infrastructure, etc.) to ensure to the delivery of the integrated services. The selected partners will also be responsible for working closely with UNCDF to ensure that the products developed are institutionalized within their respective institutions.

1. **AGREEMENT PARAMETERS**

**Agreement to participate on Phase 2:**

Duration: 6 months

Amount: USD 50,000

**Agreement to participate on Phase 3:**

Duration: 18 months

Amount: up to USD 100,000

1. **PARTNER SELECTION PROCESS**

**A –ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

* Applicant Fintech, start-ups with an innovative technological solution related to digital transformation.
* Not be in a state of repair or have been the subject of bankruptcy, liquidation, legal settlement, safeguard, cessation of activity or any other similar situation resulting from '' a similar procedure
* Eligible and not in the UN’s Ineligibility list, the UN/PD list, or the 1267/1989 lists
* Have fulfilled the obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the obligations relating to the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions in force in the country of incorporation
* At least twelve (12) months in operations in the country of incorporation
* The proposal must be in English in a Word format and must not exceed 5 pages (excluding annexes)
* The proposal must be sent by email to: jsf.gambi@uncdf.org mentioning the subject of the message " **Name of your organization + *FINTECH CHALLENGE*** ";

**Please make sure your application meets all the criteria for selection and eligibility before submitting** and includes the following:

1. Cover letter in Annex 1, providing written confirmation that the organization has reviewed UNCDF’s grant agreement template (available upon request via email at jsf.gambia@uncdf.org) and is ready to sign it without revision to the standard language
2. Application form duly filled in (Annex 2)
3. 3 minute video presentation of the digital innovation
4. Supporting documents:
   1. Article of incorporation
   2. Updated License for operating in the country from the relevant authority, e.g. Central Bank
   3. CV of staff who will be involved in this program

**B. EVALUATION PROCESS**

**1. DESK REVIEW:**

*UNCDF will conduct a desk review to screen the candidates and will evaluate the expression of interest as follows:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Part I: Bidder's qualification, capacity and experience[[2]](#footnote-2)** | | **Max Points** |
| 1 | Organization's mission and experience in Sub-Saharan Africa | 30 |
| 2 | 3mn Video presentation | 40 |
| 2 | Business model: explanation of value proposition of the candidate (unique value proposition in line with project objectives) | 50 |
| 3 | Vision and plans regarding expanding and improving products and services through the project | 30 |
| 4 | Organization’s experience in producing digital products for the most vulnerable segments in particular women and youth living in rural areas | 50 |
| 5 | Organization’s experience in digital transformation | 50 |
| 6 | Organization’s approach to product development | 60 |
| 7 | Organization’s approach to monitoring and collecting data of clients | 60 |
| 8 | Key figures of past performance | 30 |
| **Total Part I** | | **400** |
| **Part II: Approach and implementation** | |  |
| 1 | Description of the digital innovation | 100 |
| 2 | Approach to the development of the innovation | 150 |
| 3 | Activities and timelines | 100 |
| 4 | Adequacy of the plan to scale up the strategy proposed | 50 |
| 4 | Adequacy of projections of Key Project Indicators (KPIs) | 50 |
| 5 | Key Project Risks | 50 |
| **Total Part II** | | **500** |
| **Part II: Personnel** | |  |
| 1 | Team members: qualification of members of the organization to be involved in this project | 50 |
| 2 | Staff time allocation: level of effort and time allocated of the staff members mobilized | 50 |
| **Total Part III** | | **100** |
| **TOTAL** | | **1 000** |

Candidates receiving a score equal of above 800 in the desk review will be shortlisted and invited to participate to the fintech challenge.

**Clarification of Applications**

To assist in the examination, evaluation and comparison of applications, UNCDF may, at its discretion, ask any applicant for a clarification of its proposal.

UNCDF’s request for clarification and the response shall be in writing. Notwithstanding the written communication, no change in the prices or substance of the proposal shall be sought, offered, or permitted, except to provide clarification, and confirm the correction of any arithmetic errors discovered by UNCDF in the evaluation of the Proposals.

Any unsolicited clarification submitted by an applicant in respect to its proposal, which is not a response to a request by UNCDF, shall not be considered during the review and evaluation of the proposals.

**A tentative calendar of the selection process is as follow:**

* + - 1. June 8, 2020: Launch the request for Expression of Interest to participate in the FinTech Challenge
      2. June 15, 2020: deadline to submit questions to jsf.gambia@uncdf.org mentioning the subject of the message "***FINTECH CHALLENGE*** ";
      3. **June 23, 2020: deadline for submission of the expression of interest to**  [jsf.gambia@uncdf.org](mailto:jsf.gambia@uncdf.org) mentioning the subject of the message **"Name of your organization + *FINTECH CHALLENGE”***
      4. June 24- July 10: Review of the applications, ensuring that all questions and requests for documents are duly completed; shortlist of candidates.
      5. July 15, final selection of the applicants to participate in Phase 1 of the Fintech Challenge.

**Only complete applications will be considered. Please make sure that ALL annexes are submitted**

**APPENDIX 1: Canvas for the application**

**[Insert: location]**

**[Insert: Date]**

**To: Maria Perdomo, Youth Finance Global Specialist**

**Dear Madame:**

We the undersigned *[insert: name]* as candidates for the JFS project in accordance with your Request for Application related to the development of financial products and services targeting women [insert: date]. We present our application, which includes the technical proposal.

We hereby declare that:

a) All information and statements made in this application are true and we accept that any misrepresentation contained therein may result in our disqualification; and

b) We have no outstanding bankruptcy or ongoing litigation or any legal action that could adversely affect our business

c) The management of the organization is committed to execute this project applying the best quality standards

We confirm that we have read, understood and accept the duties and responsibilities that are requested in this Request for Expression of Interest, as well as the standard language of UNCDFs performance-based agreements (PBAs), including the public good requirements and knowledge products to be shared. Therefore, if our request is accepted, we will be ready to sign and accept the legal language, without modification, of the UNCDF Grant Agreement (PBA).

We fully understand and acknowledge that UNCDF is not obliged to accept this request, that we will bear all costs associated with its preparation and submission, and that UNCDF will not be responsible for these costs, regardless of the conduct or results evaluation.

We remain at your disposal,

Regards,

Authorized signature [In full and initials]:

Name and title of the signatory:

Company Name:

Contact Details:

[Please mark this letter with your corporate seal, if available]

**ANNEX  2 : Application Form**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE CANDIDATE** | |
| Exact Name of the Organization (as it will appear on the agreement): |  |
| Type of Organization (for example, for-profit commercial enterprise, non-profit organization, etc.): |  |
| Year and Country of registration: |  |
| Ownership (name and %) |  |
| Please name your external auditors if applicable |  |
| Brief description of litigation history (disputes, arbitration, claims, etc.), indicating current status and outcomes, if already resolved |  |
| In case of Joint Venture (JV), legal name of each party |  |
| Are you in the UN Ineligibility List? ☐ YES or ☐ NO |  |
| Attached are copies of original documents of:  ☐Letter in Annex 1 signed  ☐Complete CVs of all the team members involved in the assignment  ☐ Staff time allocation spreadsheet per activity  ☐Evidence of similar products produced under similar assignments if applicable (this can be links in a website, for example).  ☐ Article of incorporation  ☐ License for operating in the country |  |
| Licensing model of the Applicant (if applicable):  Please specify the cost structure of the licensing models to access the platform that will be created. |  |
| Other grants: Outline in this section your organization is receiving technical assistance services from other donors, which are the areas of intervention, if there are opportunity for synergies or risk of overlapping |  |
| Regions of operations |  |
| Number of branches and point of services (agency banking) in targeted regions |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SECTION 2: Experience of the Organization | |
| Organization's mission and experience in SSA |  |
| Please provide a 3mn video as a short presentation of your organization, the innovation you propose and the issue it is addressing. |  |
| Business Model Please provide a brief outline of the business model (Max 20 lines] Explain your value proposition (in line with EOI objectives)) |  |
| Vision and plans regarding expanding and improving products and services through this project |  |
| Organization’s experience in producing digital products for the most vulnerable segments in particular women and youth living in rural areas |  |
| Please describe your organization’s experience in digital transformation |  |
| Please describe your organization’s approach to product development |  |
| Please describe your organization’s approach to monitoring and collecting data of clients |  |
| Key figures in the past three years of operations [in case it is a start-up, provide current figures and projections].  Explain also if your institution can provide sex and age disaggregated data on platform users. | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Main Performance indicators\*** | **2019** | **2018** | **2017** | | Net Income, USD |  |  |  | | Savers |  |  |  | | % women |  |  |  | | % youth (18-35) |  |  |  | | Borrowers |  |  |  | | % women |  |  |  | | % youth (18-35) |  |  |  | | Savings volume, USD |  |  |  | | Gross outstanding portfolio, USD |  |  |  |   \*Add as you deem fit for the purpose of the project |

|  |
| --- |
| **SECTION 3: APPROACH AND IMPLEMENTATION (max 3 pages) (if the work or part of it is delegated, please specify the rational, roles and responsibilities)** |
| 3.0. Description of the digital innovation: Describe the current situation; outline what is the problem, issue or also opportunity that your organization would like to tackle with the proposed innovation in accordance with the EOI objectives. Outline what is the scope of work for this innovation, what are the long-term and short-term objectives to be achieved. |
| 3.1. Approach to the development of the innovation: Please provide a detailed description of the methodology for how the organisation/firm will achieve project outputs, of a Minimum Viable Product to be implemented, keeping in mind the appropriateness to local conditions and project environment. **Please make sure you address all the specificities listed under the paragraph “Objective of the FinTech Challenge”.** |
| 3.2. Activities and Timelines: The Applicant shall submit a Gantt Chart or Project Schedule indicating the detailed sequence of activities that will be undertaken and their corresponding timing, specifying timelines, and time devoted to each activity.   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Phase/Activity** | **Main Deliverables** | **Responsible Party** | **Planned date** | | **Phase 1- Activity 1** |  |  |  | | **Phase 1- Activity 2** |  |  |  | |
| 3.3 Adequacy of the plan to scale up the strategy proposed: please provide a tentative plan (“exit strategy”) to ensure sustainability and institutionalize the services once the grant agreement is over. |
| 3.4 Key Project Indicators:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Main Performance indicators** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | | # of beneficiaries impacted by the digital transformation |  |  |  | | # of jobs created |  |  |  | | % women beneficiaries |  |  |  | | % young beneficiaries (between 18 and 35) |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |   \*Add any relevant indicator to make your proposal stronger |
| 3.5 Key Project Risks   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Description of risk** | **Likelihood** | **Impact** | **Mitigation measure** | |  | High probability | Negligible |  | |  |  | Marginal |  | |  |  | Critical |  | |  | High probability | Catastrophic |  | |  | Medium probability | Critical |  | |  | Low Probability |  |  | |
| **SECTION 4: PERSONNEL (max 3 pages)** |
| 4.1 Team Members: Briefly describe the qualifications of members of your institution who will be involved in this project (for example, financial services promoter for youth, director of market research or new products, etc.)   |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Organization** | **Name** | **Function** | **Responsibility in the project** | **Full/part time** | **Contacts** | |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | |
| 4.2 Staff Time Allocation: Briefly provide the level of effort and time allocation of the staff members mobilized.   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Project team** | | | | | | **Name** | **Function** | **Responsibility in the project** | **Full time/ Part time** | **Contact details (email/tel)** | |
| 4.3 Qualifications of Key Personnel. Provide CVs for key personnel (team leader, management and general staff) that will be provided to support the implementation of this project. CVs must demonstrate qualifications in areas relevant to the outputs to be produced. CVs must not exceed 5 pages and should follow the format below:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Name:** | |  | | | **Position for this Contract:** | |  | | | **Nationality:** | |  | | | **Contact information:** | |  | | | **Countries of Work Experience:** | |  | | | **Language Skills:** | |  | | | **Educational and other Qualifications:** | |  | | | **Summary of Experience:** *Highlight experience in the region and on similar projects.* | | | | | Relevant Experience (From most recent): | | | | | **Period: From – To** | **Name of activity/ Project/ funding organisation, if applicable:** | | **Job Title and Activities undertaken/Description of actual role performed:** | | *e.g. June 2019-January 2020* |  | |  | | *Etc.* |  | |  | | *Etc.* |  | |  | | **Referencesno.1 (minimum of 3):** | *Name*  *Designation*  *Organization*  *Contact Information – Address; Phone; Email; etc.* | | | | **Reference no.2** | *Name*  *Designation*  *Organization*  *Contact Information – Address; Phone; Email; etc.* | | | | **Reference no.3** | *Name*  *Designation*  *Organization*  *Contact Information – Address; Phone; Email; etc.* | | | | **Declaration:**  I confirm my intention to serve in the stated position and present availability to serve for the term of the proposed grant agreement. I also understand that any wilful misstatement described above may lead to my disqualification, before or during my engagement.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Signature of the Nominated Team Leader/Member Date Signed | | | | |  | | | | |

1. If the COVID-19 situation prevents people from flying to The Gambia and/or participate in social gatherings, UNCDF will facilitate the Boot Camp remotely. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Women-Led FinTechs receive 5 extra points in this section [↑](#footnote-ref-2)