

# **INFORMATION NOTE FOR THEMATIC NGO CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

## *Job Creation and Skills Development for Youth in Africa*

**GRØNNE INVESTERINGER, JOBS OG LIGE MULIGHEDER (GJL) /SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS, JOBS & EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

**SEPTEMBER 2020**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

The African continent is characterized by high youth unemployment as well as a shortage of skilled workers. Without jobs, the large population of youth constitute a significant challenge for Africa. Every year at least 12 million young people enter the African labour market, while only three million new jobs are created. The official unemployment rates are relatively low, but according to ILO 55% of the working population in Africa can be categorized as “working poor”. In absolute numbers this corresponds to 250 million people. The informal economy, which employs 86% of the workforce in Africa, is especially challenged in regards to underemployment and low productivity.

According to ILO, 95% of the un-educated workforce in Africa is employed in the informal economy. In comparison, 70% of people with a higher education are employed in the formal sector. As such, education has a direct impact on the chances for getting employment in the formal economy. In spite of this, in many countries, skills development is undervalued and the integration of effective skills development strategies into wider employment policies is still a work in progress. Many education systems and skills programmes in the developing world are not fit for purpose. People trained through these existing systems do not acquire the right skills and competences due to several limiting factors. Particularly the lack of private sector involvement in the training and missing linkages to formal and informal businesses are often cited as a challenge. Furthermore, the systems are often inaccessible to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Addressing these challenges requires clear priorities and resources.

In line with Sustainable Development Goals 4, 8 and 10 (“quality education”, “decent work and economic growth” and “reduced inequalities” respectively), the Danish Government has an ambition to enhance the prospects for a better future in Africa for the African youth. At the centre of this ambition is a wish to address some of the main challenges in relation to growth and employment. To this end, a task force was established earlier this year to identify issues, opportunities and challenges in relation to skills development and job creation for youth in Africa. The work of the task force has led to a White Book, presenting seven main issues to be addressed. These are:

1. Too few obtain a relevant education
2. Individual income is insufficient
3. Jobs are scarce and young people in particular have difficulty finding a foothold in the labour market
4. Working conditions on the labour market are poor
5. Women's opportunities are particularly challenged
6. Changes relating to climate and the environment challenge living conditions and job creation
7. Framework conditions for job creation and vocational education and training are inadequate

The next step will be to address these challenges through specific approaches with the aim of enhancing opportunities for skills development and job creation for youth in Africa. The idea is that these approaches will inspire others by building on Danish experience in the field, drawing on the Danish tradition for social dialogue and involvement of civil society organizations in technical and vocational training and skills development.

## **2. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITY ISSUES**

The **purpose** of this Call for Proposals (CfP) is to engage relevant civil society partners in solving the problem of skills development and job creation for youth in Africa. Taking as its point of departure the task force White Book, the CfP will be instrumental in bringing to the table tailor made solutions in response to one or more of the seven issues identified. Overall, the CfP will contribute to the provision of more young people in Africa with better vocational skills, thus enhancing their opportunities for getting better jobs - either by starting their own businesses or by taking up decent employment in key African growth sectors, not least in relation to green transition.

Based on this, the **developmental objective** of the CfP is to reduce poverty by contributing to the creation of more and better jobs with a focus on skills development and improved employability of youth in East Africa.

The **specific objective** of the CfP is to engage Danish and local actors in innovative solutions focusing on: a) the provision of quality and demand-responsive skills development (public and/or private) and b) making sure that this provision leads to sustainable (formal and informal) employment opportunities, including for the most vulnerable groups.

Project proposals received in response to this CfP will be evaluated based on their relevance in relation to the following **priority issues/criteria**:

- The proposal clearly addresses skills development/technical and vocational education and training (TVET) as a clear and measurable means to provide more and better job opportunities for the youth in Africa.
- The provision of more and better jobs for youth in Africa can be directly and measurably attributed to the proposal.
- The proposal presents a convincing response to one or more of the seven issues identified in the task force White Book.

- The proposal draws clearly on innovative partnerships and approaches, including engagement of key Danish stakeholders from civil society and the private sector. This includes, but is not limited to, social dialogue partners (businesses, interest organizations, unions etc.), Danish companies, youth organizations as well as TVET institutions, authorities and systems.
- The proposal must demonstrate a clear potential for replicability and scaling up once sustainability has been assured.
- The proposal must include clear and measurable rights based and gender sensitive approaches to activity implementation.
- The geographical scope of the proposal must focus on the African continent with clear preference given to Danish priority countries in East Africa. The proposal may only focus on implementation in one country unless there is well-documented justification for a cross border approach in a neighboring country or community.
- The proposal must include a clear and realistic results framework (including clear and attainable output and outcome targets, indicators and means of verification), reflecting qualitative and quantitative attributes of achieving the ambition of job creation and skills development for youth in Africa.

### 3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The eligibility of the application/Lead Applicant will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1) Proposals must be submitted by a single Lead Applicant or by the Lead Applicant representing a consortium. In order to be eligible for a grant, the Lead Applicant must be a non-governmental organisation. For-profit entities can be part of the consortium, but cannot be the Lead Applicant.
- 2) The Lead Applicant is a **recipient of development funds from Danida**, including through pools such as CISU, at the time of application. This is to ensure that the applicant is continuously monitored in accordance with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' financial monitoring obligation.
- 3) The Lead Applicant has undergone a formal **capacity assessment** (review or financial monitoring visit) within the **last five years** to demonstrate its capacity to manage financial contributions from Danida.
- 4) The Lead Applicant is **partnering with a local organization** for the implementation of the proposed activities. A Local Partner Description (of maximum two pages) is a mandatory annex to the proposal.
- 5) The Lead Applicant has **conducted communication and information activities in Denmark** within the **last five years**. This is to support Danida's efforts to strengthen Danish public commitment to development assistance.

### 4. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation of the proposal will be based on the following criteria:

### **1) Relevance and Coherence**

- How well is the proposal aligned with the purpose, objectives and priority issues described in the CfP?
- How convincing is the additionally of the proposal?
- How relevant is the proposal to the needs of the recipient country and beneficiaries as reflected in local strategies, plans and policies?
- How well is the proposal harmonized with other relevant development initiatives and investments in order to reap synergy benefits and avoid duplication?
- How does the proposal align with the overall priorities and strategic planning of the lead applicant?

### **2) Project Design**

- How clear is the Theory of Change (ToC)/intervention logic behind the proposal? The ToC will be assessed on it being simple and logic and on how well its causalities and assumptions are aligned with the results path as laid out in the Results Framework.
- How clear and logic is the Results Framework - i.e. the results hierarchy and its interconnections (from baseline over outputs through outcomes to impact)? The Results Framework will be assessed on it being simple, yet comprehensive with few and simple but SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) indicators.
- How clear are the innovative aspects and elements (ToC, partnerships etc.) of the proposal?
- Does the proposal design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?
- Does the proposal demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in its overall design by making sufficient and demonstrable use of the principles behind new aid management concepts like “Doing Development Differently” and/or “Adaptive Aid Management”.
- Does the proposal sufficiently integrate issues like environmental considerations, climate change, gender equality, human rights, youth etc?
- How well does the proposal present and analyse risk and risk mitigation?
- How clear is the budget (output based) of the proposal and how efficient is the proposal in achieving its objectives and targets?
- How sustainable is the proposal in terms of continuation of intervention benefits?
- How well is the exit strategy of proposal activities described?

### **3) Local Partnerships**

- How well is the choice of local partner(s) aligned with the purpose, objectives and priorities (theme/sector/area) described in the CfP?
- What is the quality of the local partnership(s) based on the Partner Description(s)?
- How clear is the added value of the local partnership to the proposal?
- Are there clear roles and division of labour in terms of involvement of the local partner?
- How innovative are the local partnership(s)?

### **4) Capacity (Operational and Financial)**

- How strong is the lead applicant's capacity in relation to compliance with the Aid Management Guidelines (AMG) of Danida/Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs?
- How obvious is the comparative advantage of the lead applicant in relation to the project and geographical area, including previous experience with the proposed type of activities as well as documented relevant experience, capacity and expertise?

#### 5) Information Activities/Engagement of Danish Actors

- How well does the proposal demonstrate innovative ways of engaging relevant parts of Danish civil society and private sector?
- How convincing is the description of planned information and outreach activities in Denmark?

### 5. DURATION, GRANT SIZE AND NUMBER OF PROPOSALS TO BE SELECTED

The planned duration of the proposal must not be less than 24 months and must not exceed 48 months.

The overall indicative amount made available under this Cfp is DKK 25 million. The minimum grant amount to be requested under this Cfp is DKK 5 million. The maximum grant amount to be requested is DKK 10 million.

A maximum of five proposals will be selected.

### 6. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Cfp application and selection process entails only one step in which the full proposal is submitted right away.

In accordance with the format presented in Annex 1, the Lead Applicant is invited to submit an elaborated project proposal in the form of a fully fledged and final project document, including the following annexes:

- 1) An output based Budget.
- 2) A Results Framework, detailing outputs, outcomes and impact and their corresponding targets (yearly and end-of-project), indicators and means of verification (maximum three outcomes with maximum three outputs each). The results Framework should be simple, yet comprehensive with few and simple but SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) indicators.
- 3) A Risk Management Matrix.
- 4) A Partner Description.
- 5) Documentation clearly confirming that the Lead Applicant has undergone a formal Danida partner capacity assessment within the last five years and thus live up to the Danida Aid Management Guidelines.
- 6) Documentation demonstrating selected relevant examples of communication and information activities undertaken by the Lead Applicant within the last five years.

**Applications are solely selected on basis of the project document and annexes.** It is of utmost importance that the documents contain all the relevant information needed for the selection process.

The deadline for the submission of the proposal is **2 November 2020 at 12.00 noon Danish Time.**

The proposal should be addressed to Cfp Secretariat at **gjlstud@um.dk**

Lead Applicants can only send **one** application under this Cfp.

Questions in relation to the specific Cfp from potential applicants may be submitted in writing only to the Cfp Secretariat no later than **14 October 2020 at 16.00** Danish Time. For the sake of transparency, all answers to questions received in writing from potential applicants will be published on the Cfp MFA website by **16 October 2020**. No individual replies will be given to questions received from potential applicants.

A Danida Assessment Team will be established to assess the proposals received.

Firstly, the Assessment Team will ascertain whether the application is within the Eligibility Criteria listed above in Section 3. If the application/Lead Applicant is unable to meet the necessary criteria, the proposal will be considered ineligible and the application will be disqualified.

Secondly, the Assessment Team will assess the proposal based on the Evaluation Criteria listed in Section 4. The proposal will receive an overall score out of a possible total of 25 points. The score of three is considered acceptable. Accordingly, a total score of less than 15 points (i.e. the average score of three points under each criteria) is considered unacceptable and the proposal will be disqualified.

In the final selection of proposals, the Assessment Team will include consideration of the thematic and geographic diversity and complementarity of all applications in order to end up with a balanced portfolio of proposals to be approved.

Danida/the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs will make the final selection and approval of applications based on the assessment of the Assessment Team. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reserves the right to reject a project if it assessed as ineligible and therefore cannot be approved.

The indicative timetable for when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will inform the Lead Applicant if the application has been approved or not is 15 November 2020. Lead Applicants with approved applications will also be informed about the level of funding.

All instructions regarding the project proposal and annexes **must** be adhered to. **Otherwise the applications will not be accepted for review and assessment and will hence be regarded as rejected on technical grounds.**

## **7. ADMINISTRATION AND DIALOGUE WITH MFA**

The CfP and the subsequent project/grant will be managed by GJL. The grant will be administered according to guidelines for single projects: [Guidelines for Single Grant Projects](#)

The successful Lead Applicants will engage in annual consultations with GJL on project progress, learnings, results, synergies etc. The annual consultations may vary in format. They may involve the Lead Applicant (and consortium) only or they may be held jointly with other successful Lead Applicants (and consortia) under this CfP. GJL will share information about scope and format each year.