



FUND FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Advancing Women's Political and Economic Empowerment

July 2009

Call for Proposals

UNIFEM is pleased to announce the first call for proposals for the **Fund for Gender Equality**, a multi-donor initiative dedicated to the advancement of high-impact gender equality programmes that focus on **women's economic and/or political empowerment** at local and national levels. Launched with an initial contribution of US\$65 million (EUR 50 million) from the Government of Spain, the Fund will accept applications from governmental and non-governmental organizations and/or partnerships between or within these sectors.

A Secretariat manages the Fund's activities at UNIFEM's headquarters in New York, USA. The Secretariat is guided by a **Steering Committee** comprised of a rotating group of representatives from donor and programme countries, NGOs and multilateral agencies. Proposals are assessed by **Technical Committees** comprised of regional experts in women's economic and political empowerment.

Grants from the Fund for Gender Equality are highly competitive. The Fund will prioritize a maximum of 30 innovative, impact-oriented programmes from around the world. **To apply for a grant please read the following guidelines carefully before filling out and submitting the appropriate online Concept Note Application Form.** Please check the Fund's website at http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund_for_gender_equality/ for updates and further details about the application process.

I. TYPES OF GRANTS

Potential grantees may apply for one of two types of grants:

1. Implementation Grants

Implementation Grants will range from **US\$2 million to US\$5 million** distributed over a period of two to four years. These grants will support programmes in countries with agreed upon national or local plans, policies or laws that advance gender equality and women's empowerment and that are ready for implementation. Examples of policies include specific laws or policies related to gender equality and women's human rights (e.g., an approved law on women's inheritance rights, a broad-based gender equality law, etc.) or gender equality provisions/commitments in existing National Development Strategies (e.g., poverty reduction strategies, electoral reforms, etc.). The application process for Implementation Grants will consist of two rounds. The first round involves submission of an Implementation Grant Concept Note by 30 September 2009. For round two, a selected number of applicants will be invited to develop full-fledged Programme Documents in December 2009. The final decisions for Implementation Grants will be announced in April 2010. To apply for an Implementation Grant, please fill in an Implementation Grant Application Concept Note.

2. Catalytic Grants

Catalytic Grants will range from **US\$100,000 to US\$500,000** distributed over a period of one to two years. A limited number of grants will be available where such implementation-ready plans, policies or laws do not yet exist. These grants will support the establishment of strategic coalitions or partnerships

to catalyze the development and endorsement of gender equality national or local plans, policies or laws. Catalytic Grant programmes could include taking steps to formulate and build consensus on a proposed gender equality law or plan, as well as collective efforts to ensure that mainstream policy and planning processes – from revision of electoral codes to strengthening the gender equality dimensions of specific labour policies – advance gender equality. Once a plan, policy or law is developed and endorsed, successful institutions will be eligible to apply in the future for a larger grant for programme implementation. Applicants for this type of grant need to submit a Catalytic Grant Concept Note by 30 September 2009. The final decisions for Catalytic Grants will be announced in December 2009. To apply for a Catalytic Grant, please fill in a Catalytic Grant Application Concept Note.

For both grants, proposed programmes can encompass global, regional, national or local initiatives, but each must make the case that it contributes to the implementation of commitments to gender equality at national and/or local levels that will generate concrete and measurable results in the lives of women and girls during the programme period.

II. TIMELINE

Concept Note submission deadline from applicants for both Catalytic and Implementation Grants	30 September 2009
Online Application period for Concept Note open	15–30 September 2009**
Invitation to submit full Implementation Programme Document (for selected Implementation Grants applicants only)*	December 2009
Notification of grant decisions (for Catalytic Grants)	December 2009
Notification of grant decisions (for Implementation grants)	April 2010

* *Invitation to submit a full Implementation Programme Document does not mean an award will necessarily be granted.*

***All Concept Note Applications must be submitted by 30 September, 11:59 pm Eastern Time, NY, USA. Concept Notes received after the deadline will not be considered.*

Please note that Concept Notes for both Implementation and Catalytic Grants are due on 30 September 2009. The online application form will open on 15 September at:

http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund_for_gender_equality/. In the meantime, you will be able to download a PDF version of the Concept Note Application to prepare in advance for the online application period. All information must be entered using the online application software.

Applications may be submitted in Arabic, English, French, Russian or Spanish. The Fund will not accept applications submitted via e-mail, regular post and/or facsimile. The Fund for Gender Equality Secretariat will acknowledge receipt of the online application through a confirmation e-mail. You will be able to access your application and view updates on your status with the user id name you will create when you start your application. Due to the high volume of inquiries, the Fund for Gender Equality cannot respond individually to those not selected for further consideration.

If you experience problems with the online application or have questions, please contact the Secretariat (New York, USA) by email at fund.genderequality@unifem.org, or visit our website http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/fund_for_gender_equality/ for updates and announcements.

III. ELIGIBILITY

Governmental and non-governmental bodies with programmes in countries and/or territories in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States are eligible to apply for a grant from the Fund for Gender Equality. Each organization or agency is permitted to submit only one grant application per cycle.

The following **are** eligible to apply for funding from the Fund for Gender Equality:

- **Governmental bodies:** these include, but are not limited to: Ministries of Gender Equality, Finance, Labour and Justice; regional inter-governmental agencies*; human rights and electoral commissions; local governments; parliamentary caucuses that advance women's rights; and others. Government actors (including within partnerships) are required to provide proof of financial contributions** for the programme, as delineated in Section VI below.
- **Non-governmental bodies and civil society:** these include, but are not limited to: women's NGOs and civil society networks; women's community-based organizations; women's research centres; workers' organizations; human rights organizations; and others*. Applicants must be legally registered in the country of implementation.

International organizations, regional organizations, and regional inter-governmental agencies **are eligible to apply, but they must make the case that their programme is aligned with national development priorities in a specific country.*

*** Required governmental contributions will be assessed relative to the governmental agency's total annual budget and will be considered a reflection of level of commitment to the programme's sustainability.*

- **Partnerships:**
 - Between governmental and non-governmental organizations
 - Among several non-governmental organizations and/or civil society networks
 - Among several government entities

If selected, funds can be disbursed to a maximum of two lead organizations of the proposed partnership, but the programme can have as many partners as needed. If the partnership involves only civil society and NGOs, at least one of the lead partners in the application must be legally registered in the country or countries participating in the programme. Partners will be required to detail the purpose and process of forming the partnership, the roles and responsibilities of each organization, and the budget distribution and management for the (two) lead organizations.

- New initiatives and existing programmes that build upon efforts to develop or implement plans, policies or laws are both eligible for funding.

The following **are not** eligible to apply for funding from the Fund for Gender Equality:

- Multilateral organizations (UN organizations, international financial institutions, etc.)***
- Private sector entities***
- Individual public authorities or private citizens

****Multilateral and private sector entities can be partners in the proposed programme.*

- Additionally, the Fund for Gender Equality will not consider programmes with an *exclusive* focus on ending violence against women (as these are supported by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, see: http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/trust_fund.php).

The Fund for Gender Equality will **prioritize** the following:

- Programmes that have a clear plan to implement a law, policy or strategy that has been agreed upon through a consultative process
- Programmes that integrate local or national gender equality priorities, including CEDAW, with National Development Strategies (NDSs), sector programmes, and/or MDG-based poverty reduction strategies, particularly for Implementation Grants
- Programmes built on strategic partnerships
- Programmes that delineate the changes that will result for specific groups of women and girls
Proposals should be specific with regard to:
 - Attention to particular groups, especially those who are most excluded (e.g., informal sector workers, migrant women workers, domestic workers, women affected and/or infected by HIV/AIDS, women from racial and ethnic groups, women heads of households, etc.)
 - Location (e.g., urban, rural, etc.)
 - Age (e.g., adolescent girls, older women, etc.)
- Innovative programmes that involve important constituencies for attaining women’s rights, including men, young people and faith-based organizations
- Programmes with funds secured from other donor sources and/or with high levels of government contributions and commitment
- Programmes that advance the role of civil society in expanding political dialogue and/or develop a participatory and consultative process for civil society in the creation, implementation, and accountability mechanisms for policies that affect women and women’s rights
- Sustainable plans/strategies that can be achieved in a reasonably short period of time
- Programmes in which both women’s rights and mainstream actors are involved. For example, where national mechanisms for women or women’s NGOs are taking the lead in an application, the extent to which the plan involves mainstream actors – ministries, parliamentarians, etc. – will be a key criterion for determining support. The reverse will also be true: where plans are submitted by a mainstream institution, the extent to which women’s rights entities have a key role will be a criterion for determining support.

IV. **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE FUND FOR GENDER EQUALITY**

Significant advances have been made in securing national, regional and international commitments and corresponding strategies, plans, policies and laws to foster greater gender equality and women’s empowerment. However, progress in implementing these commitments and ensuring resources to implement them is uneven. The **Fund for Gender Equality** aims to assist partners to convert these commitments and plans into concrete action at the country level with a focus on women’s economic and political empowerment.

The Fund is in line with the Monterrey Consensus (2002), the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), and the Accra Agenda for Action (September 2008), and follows the Development Assistance Committee Guiding Principles for Aid Effectiveness, Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (December 2008). The Fund is designed to maximize national ownership, harmonization and alignment by supporting nationally-owned and holistic strategies for accelerating progress on gender equality and advancing commitments to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Beijing Platform for

Action, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and other global and regional agreements.

UNIFEM's *Progress of the World's Women 2008/09* and many other assessments of progress on the MDGs and gender equality have highlighted key gender dimensions of women's economic and political empowerment that are lagging behind in almost every key indicator. Worldwide, 60 percent of unpaid family workers are women (UNIFEM, p. 13) and eight out of ten women workers in Africa and Asia are in circumstances of vulnerable employment (UNIFEM, p. 54). This situation has been exacerbated by the current economic and financial crises that – combined with the food and climate change crises – are putting significantly greater strain on poor communities, with gender-specific consequences. In addition, the MDG indicator on the proportion of women in national legislatures has stimulated interest in enhancing women's political participation. Yet, as of 2009, only 24 countries have achieved or surpassed 30 percent representation of women in single/lower houses of parliament, and the global average has only advanced from 11.3 percent in 1995 to 18.3 percent by end of 2008 (*Women in Parliament in 2008*, Inter-Parliamentary Union, p. 1).

The Fund for Gender Equality will support strategic programmes that address the negative impacts on women resulting from the economic and financial crises – as well as the link of these crises to climate change and food insecurity – by fast-tracking implementation of policies and laws that lead to women's economic and political empowerment at the national level.

In order to address these concerns, the Fund for Gender Equality aims to:

- Increase the financial and technical resources available at the country level for implementation of locally- and nationally-owned priorities and plans to advance women's economic and political empowerment;
- Promote harmonization and alignment of efforts among and between national partners and donors to increase the potential for national ownership to strengthen women's empowerment and gender equality institutions and networks as drivers of action and accountability.

V. FOCUS AREAS

The following are possible categories of long- and medium-term results within the areas of women's political and economic empowerment that can be proposed for Catalytic or Implementation Grants:

Women's political empowerment enhances women's participation and increases women's voice, leadership and influence over decision-making in all spheres of life. It advances women's civil and political rights, which create a fair distribution of power and translate gender equality policies into concrete systems for implementation. It also transforms institutions and promotes access to gender justice. Key results in this area could include, but are not limited to:

- **Enhancing women's access to and participation in decision-making:** Increased women's share of seats and leadership in national parliaments, local bodies, political parties, government, private sector, and community; increased percentage of women – particularly women from excluded racial and ethnic groups – in decision-making; reduced impediments to women's ability to run for and retain political positions (including increased financing, security/safety, tenure in politics and access to media); etc.
- **Strengthening women's influence in decision-making:** Increased effectiveness of parliamentary caucuses that promote women's empowerment and gender equality; increased capacity of political leaders in gender-responsive budgeting and public policy formulation; enhanced gender dimensions of e-governance and other right-to-information initiatives; strengthened ability of women's networks and movements to promote and increase

- accountability for implementing gender equality commitments; improved ability of women's associations as well as national women's machineries to work with and track progress of political decision-makers in implementing gender equality commitments; women leaders of other social movements already in positions of power are able to advance gender equality and justice; etc.
- **Transforming institutions and ensuring gender justice:** Expanded and improved legal services for women (including legal literacy for men and women and public interest litigation to address gender-based injustices); enhanced capacity of judicial and law enforcement personnel to implement gender equality laws and directives (including CEDAW); capacity of women's machineries and rights activists to monitor justice mechanisms to ensure gender justice is enhanced; sustainable partnerships with customary and formal justice systems to enhance alignment with women's rights and international human rights standards; judicial reform in line with constitutional and legal guarantees of women's rights is achieved; etc.

Women's economic empowerment strengthens women's voice, leadership and influence over economic policies and programmes to ensure the promotion and protection of equal opportunities and rights in both the public and private spheres. It enhances women's abilities to articulate their priorities, organize, and generate collective action to improve their livelihood options and supports asset-based community development to reduce the gender-differentiated impact of poverty. It ensures gender justice, from recognition of the value of unpaid care work to social protections for women, including those related to the current economic and financial crises and their linkages to climate change and food insecurity. Key results in this area could include but are not limited to:

- **Enhancing women's access to economic resources and opportunities:** National or local plans and policies that take into account the voices and situations of the most excluded women (e.g., rural women, migrant women, women heads of household, indigenous women and women from other racial and ethnic groups, domestic workers, informal sector workers, and women affected by and living with HIV/AIDS, etc.) are adequately funded and implemented; livelihood options are increased and made more secure for women in formal and informal economies (including a focus on women entrepreneurs, their lack of access to financial services and other impediments to joining the formal economy); enterprise development for women (including access to skills, business and management training, productive technologies, and sustainable agriculture) is improved; etc.
- **Strengthening women's influence on economic policy-making and decision-making:** Women's leadership in community economic development is enhanced (including in farmers' organizations, in councils and bodies that determine local economic development and decentralization policies, and in bodies that determine environmental and food security policies); temporary special measures or accreditation programmes that increase the influence of women in executive positions in the private sector are instituted; capacity is built to adopt and implement public administration and fiscal policies that build on gender-responsive budget analyses of allocations, expenditures and revenues; capacity-building for Ministries of Finance, parliamentary finance committees, or similar bodies to monitor and enforce integration of gender responsive budgeting in sectoral development budgets is enhanced; comprehensive capacity-building programmes for Ministries of Women's Affairs and other gender machineries to strengthen management, resource mobilisation and gender capacities (gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation) in order to influence national gender equity policies implementation are strengthened; women's economic priorities and interests are incorporated in regional trade agreements; etc.
- **Transforming institutions and ensuring gender justice and social protection for women in the economic sphere:** Women's land, property and inheritance rights are guaranteed and implemented; gender inequality in employment is eliminated by enhancing social protection for women in the informal sector (including unpaid work) and/or closing gender gaps in earning

and occupational segregation in the formal sector; regional, national and local employment policies are aligned with international labour standards and agreements; social protection guarantees for women in economic stimulus packages are secured and applied; etc.

VI. BASIC REQUIREMENTS AND ATTACHMENTS

Concept Note Applications will be eliminated in the early stages if they fail to meet the following requirements***:

Requirements Implementation Grants	Requirements Catalytic Grants
<p>Identification of <u>an existing plan, policy, law</u> or other framework that advances gender equality and women’s empowerment that has been agreed to at the local and/or national level and which will be the focus of implementation. Note that the identified plan, policy or law must be attached to the application. Include any other supporting information, including budgets, resolutions, etc., to show that multiple stakeholders have agreed to the policy. Examples include, but are not limited to, a national plan for gender equality or a gender equality law and/or one of its key components; commitments to gender equality in a National Development Strategy or a poverty reduction strategy that are ready for implementation; an agreed upon policy to introduce temporary special measures to increase women’s political participation; a law guaranteeing women’s property or inheritance rights or the economic rights of excluded groups of women (migrant women, Indigenous women, women infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS, etc.); recommendations to a country contained in the CEDAW Committee’s Concluding Comments that have been agreed upon as a priority for implementation at the national level; etc.</p>	<p>Identification of an opportunity to promote, revise, develop and/or propose a plan, policy, law for gender equality at the local or national level. Such opportunities could include the establishment of a partnership/coalition and/or consultative processes for civil society to participate in the creation, implementation and accountability mechanisms of policies that affect women and women’s rights. Examples include proposing national legislation to guarantee women’s land or inheritance rights; developing a national action plan to implement concluding observations of the CEDAW Committee; strengthening the voice and leadership – and supporting the formation of coalitions and/or movement building efforts of — women in rural areas and in informal sector employment to secure commitments to their priorities in economic stimulus packages or national development plans; etc.</p>
<p>Fully completed Concept Note submitted by 30 September 2009 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time, NY, USA</p>	<p>Fully completed Concept Note submitted by 30 September 2009 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time, NY, USA</p>
<p>A focus on a critical aspect of women’s economic and/or political empowerment</p>	<p>A focus on a critical aspect of women’s economic and/or political empowerment</p>
<p>A letter of endorsement from a country-level gender equality coordination mechanism (governmental, non-governmental or multi-stakeholder) and/or UN Country Team gender thematic groups (where these exist) that indicates awareness of the application and/or willingness to support efforts to achieve stated</p>	<p>A letter of endorsement from a country-level gender equality coordination mechanism (governmental, non-governmental or multi-stakeholder) and/or UN Country Team gender thematic groups (where these exist) that indicates awareness of the application and/or willingness to</p>

goals	support efforts to achieve stated goals
One letter of endorsement from another key stakeholder (such as a previous beneficiary of the applying organization's programmes) not directly involved in the proposed programme	One letter of endorsement from another key stakeholder (such as a previous beneficiary of the applying organization's programmes) not directly involved in the proposed programme
For NGOs that are lead organizations in the application: proof of legal registration and articles of association in the country of operation	For NGOs that are lead organizations in the application: proof of legal registration and articles of association in the country of operation
For Government Agencies: a written statement and, when possible, a financial statement showing the government's financial contribution toward co-financing the programme. Financial contributions are required from Governments (including in partnerships) but not from NGOs. In-kind contributions (e.g., office space, staff, conference facilities, and media outlets) can be included, but must be monetized and should not constitute more than half of the total contribution. The Fund for Gender Equality will consider contributions, relative to the agency's annual budget, a reflection of level of commitment to the programme's sustainability.	For Government Agencies: a written statement and, when possible, a financial statement showing the government's financial contribution toward co-financing the programme. Financial contributions are required from Governments (including in partnerships) but not from NGOs. In-kind contributions (e.g., office space, staff, conference facilities, and media outlets) can be included, but must be monetized and should not constitute more than half of the total contribution. The Fund for Gender Equality will consider contributions, relative to the agency's annual budget, a reflection of level of commitment to the programme's sustainability.
For NGOs: the organization's annual reports and external audited financial statements for the last two fiscal periods	For NGOs: the organization's annual reports and external audited financial statements for the last two fiscal periods
For Government Agencies: annual reports/state of accounts to the Treasury Departments and/or to the Central Banks of the Country (for the last two fiscal years) where the Programme would be implemented	For Government Agencies: annual reports/state of accounts to the Treasury Departments and/or to the Central Banks of the Country (for the last two fiscal years) where the Programme would be implemented
Organogramme or other chart or table showing applying entity's location in the government (for government agencies) or the structure of the organization (for NGOs)	Organogramme or other chart or table showing applying entity's location in the government (for government agencies) or the structure of the organization (for NGOs)

***Required attachments should be scanned in advance and uploaded online during the application period. If this is not possible, these documents (**but not the Concept Note Application**) can be sent by air mail, **but these attachments must be postmarked by 20 September 2009 or earlier to ensure receipt before the deadline**. It is highly recommended that these documents be prepared in advance to avoid missing the deadline for submission of the Concept Note Application. Concept Notes without these documents will be considered incomplete and will be withdrawn from the application process.

VII. UNIFEM'S INVOLVEMENT WITH THE FUND

UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. It was established in 1976 and has, for over three decades, promoted gender equality and women's empowerment with government, non-governmental, multilateral and bilateral partners in over 100 countries.

UNIFEM will bring its network of programmes and offices worldwide, its longstanding partnerships with champions of gender equality around the globe, and its work with wide-ranging UN system partners to its role as manager of the Fund for Gender Equality (for more information about UNIFEM, visit: www.unifem.org).