ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS RECEIVED REGARDING THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS "FEMINISMS, EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF GIRLS AND ADOLESCENTS"

**Question 1**: We are unable to download the budget model and the explanatory note to fill it in.

**Answer 1**: These two documents can be downloaded separately from the call for proposals on the AFD website: [AFD and the Support Fund for Feminist Organizations (FSOF) | AFD - Agence Française de Développement](https://www.afd.fr/)

**Question 2**: Can a structure that is autonomous in its functioning but housed by a United Nations agency and financially and administratively dependent on one of these agencies be a member of the consortium?

**Answer 2**: Only Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) can be members of the consortium, i.e. "(...) any public interest organization that is not under the authority of a State or an international institution. AFD has identified several criteria that constitute a CSO: 1) the private origin of its constitution, 2) its financial independence (membership fees, donations, etc.), 3) its political independence, 4) the non-profit nature of its activities (often characterized by its status as an association under the Law of 1901 for French CSOs), 5) the inclusion of the notion of public interest in its activities, and 6) close ties with local civil society. International and national NGOs are included in this category.".

Thus, a structure dependent on a UN agency cannot be considered a CSO. It is possible for the Consortium to contract with service providers beyond the Consortium members, provided that the responsibility for the expenses is borne by the Consortium. Any contracting will be considered as a use of services and will be subject to [Procurement guidelines for AFD-financed contracts in foreign countries | AFD - Agence Française de Développement](https://www.afd.fr/)

**Question 3**: Can you confirm that an annual budget of 7.5 to 8 million euros is sufficient for the eligibility of the consortium lead NGO? Can you clarify the average annual budget required for the lead CSO?

**Answer 3**: The call for proposals file, in its latest version posted online on May 16, 2022, specifies the minimum annual budget required for the lead CSO: "the average annual budget of the lead organization over the last three years should therefore be equal to or greater than €3.5M.”

**Question 4**: Is it possible to present a project in only one country?

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**Answer 4:** No, it is not possible to present a project in only one country. You can refer to page 5 of the call for proposals which specifies: “It is expected that projects target between 4 and 8 countries maximum in order to guarantee a demonstrative effect”.

**Question 5:** Is there a minimum number of local feminist CSOs required to receive funding?

**Answer 5:** There is no minimum or maximum number of women’s CSOs to receive funding. However, 50% of the total amount of the project, i.e. 5M€, should be allocated to the first component of the project, i.e. the provision of funding to local feminist CSOs (see page 50 of the call for proposals).

**Question 6:** You indicate in the report on the consultation meeting that the date for submitting proposals, initially indicated as May 23, has been postponed. What is the current date?

**Answer 6:** The final date for submitting proposals is indicated in the call for proposals that can be downloaded from the AFD website and is set for June 27, 2022 at noon, Paris time.

**Question 7:** Can you send us the form to respond to this call for proposals?

**Answer 7:** The application form for this call for proposals is included in the call for proposals itself (Sections III to XI). The call for proposals can be downloaded from the AFD website: Support Fund for Feminist Organizations | AFD - Agence Française de Développement

**Question 8:** Is the call for proposals available in English?

**Answer 8:** Yes, via this link: Support Fund for Feminist Organizations | AFD - Agence Française de Développement

**Question 9:** Must there be at least one of the African countries you mentioned? If so, should the retrocession of funds to this country represent 65%? How flexible is the 65/35 ratio for the shares of funding to be paid in Africa/rest of the world?

**Answer 9:** We expect the proposals to target the countries on the list provided. We refer you to page 5 of the call for proposals which states: “Proposals may include countries that are not on the list. However, for the reasons of complementarity mentioned above, it is expected that the majority of proposals will focus on the countries on the list. If other countries are chosen, this choice must be explained and justified. 65% of total project funding must be directed to the African continent (including North Africa). This ratio will have to be justified on the totality of the financing - and not only on the component 1. A proposal for a breakdown of costs by geographical area including capacity building should be made or, at a minimum, a commitment by the consortium to ensure that the budget is distributed during implementation.

**Question 10:** Should the consortium be led by a French CSO or include at least one French CSO? Is this a selection criterion?
**Answer 10:** There are no nationality criteria for the lead CSO or its members. The only constraint is that the consortium must be able to interact and produce project documents in French in its relations with AFD project managers.

**Question 11:** Should government entities be targeted as partners or final beneficiaries of the project in one or more countries? Is this a requirement? If not, can they be involved as partners in this project?

**Answer 11:** The consortium must be composed exclusively of Civil Society Organizations (see definition at the bottom of the page1), which does not allow a government entity to be a member of the consortium. Governmental entities cannot be final beneficiaries of the project either, the latter being the women’s organizations of the partner countries. If the consortium wishes to contract a paid service to a governmental entity (provided that the consortium’s statutes allow it), it will be possible for the consortium to contract with service providers, provided that the responsibility for the expenses is borne by the consortium. Any contracting between the consortium and implementing structures in beneficiary countries outside of the consortium will be considered as service delivery and will be subject to AFD’s Guidelines for Procurement in Foreign States. In addition, non-financial partnerships between the consortium and the governmental organization are allowed under this call.

**Question 12:** You mention that the lead organization must demonstrate a presence in at least one Southern country within the geographies of the scope and that the other consortium members must be present in the other geographies of interventions chosen by the project. What is your definition of “presence in a country”?

**Answer 12:** In-country presence is understood to mean that each consortium member has demonstrated activities in the target countries and a good knowledge of the local ecosystem. Demonstration of the CSO’s current involvement in this ecosystem will be appreciated (e.g., by participating in a network of local organizations). This does not necessarily require a physical presence (office and staff on site, legal registration, etc.).

**Question 13:** Can you clarify whether interventions should focus only on formal education? Can they also address informal education?

**Answer 13:** Activities related to non-formal education are eligible, we refer you to page 48 of the call which specifies: “Moreover, all forms of education are concerned by this call for projects. Therefore, proposals may include formal education activities (general, technical or vocational) but also non-formal education activities”.

**Question 14:** You ask to display the costs in VAT, is there a VAT?

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1 A Civil Society Organization (CSO) is any organization of public interest that is not under the control of a State or an international institution. AFD considers several criteria to be constitutive of a CSO: 1) the private origin of its constitution, 2) its financial independence (membership fees, donations, etc.), 3) its political independence, 4) the non-profit nature of its activities (often characterized by its status as an association under the Law of 1901 for French CSOs), 5) the consideration of the notion of public interest in its activities, and 6) close ties with local civil society. International and national NGOs are included in this category.
**Answer 14:** If the consortium is exempt from VAT in certain countries, you can establish your budget taking into account this exemption. If this is not the case, the budget should be designed taking into account the different taxes applicable in the countries of intervention. AFD funding may cover taxes if they cannot be recovered by the consortium.

**Question 15:** What are the expectations in terms of screening?


**Question 16:** Can a university respond to this call for proposals?

**Answer 16:** The eligibility criteria are as follows: “A Civil Society Organization (CSO) is any public interest organization that is not affiliated with a State or an international institution. The AFD considers several criteria to constitute a CSO: 1) the private origin of its constitution, 2) its financial independence (membership fees, donations, etc.), 3) its political independence, 4) the non-profit nature of its activities (often characterized by its status as an association under the Law of 1901 for French CSOs), 5) the consideration of the notion of public interest in its activities, and 6) close ties with local civil society. International and national NGOs are included in this category.

**Question 17:** Can you provide a contact in some countries?

**Answer 17:** We cannot directly connect CSOs with local CSOs or locally based AFD agencies.

**Question 18:** Can an organization respond to this call for proposals even if it is not specialized in feminist activities?

**Answer 18:** A consortium that does not have experience in girls’ and women’s rights activities is not eligible for this call for proposals. Please refer to the selection criteria on page 49 of the Call for Proposals for the full selection criteria for the CSO consortium.

**Question 19:** Should the consortium seek to have its strategy/working methods adopted by the women’s CSOs receiving the funds? What expectations do you have regarding feminist CSOs and their impact on education in countries beyond those mentioned in the call for proposals?

**Answer 19:** The consortium should not seek to have its activities/strategy adopted by the beneficiary feminist CSOs, but rather select them for the relevance of their current actions. Nevertheless, the project should allow for capacity building of these structures that will benefit from the experience of the consortium (see page 50 of the call for proposals c. Project structuring).

Expectations concerning the financing and support of feminist CSOs and the impact on girls’ education are mentioned in the call for proposals.

**Question 20:** What is the definition of a feminist CSO? Does the lead CSO have to be a feminist CSO?
**Answer 20:** The definition of a feminist CSO for this call is as follows: "The FSOF is open to feminist civil society organizations in all their diversity, whether formally constituted or not, whose objective is to work for gender equality and sustainable transformation of gender-based social relations, and particularly those whose primary mission is the defense and promotion of the effective rights and empowerment of women and girls.

The lead CSO and other CSOs in the consortium must collectively demonstrate expertise in defending the rights of women and girls.

**Question 21:** Can an organization that works on education issues with a gender approach be considered a feminist CSO?

**Answer 21:** You should demonstrate in your proposal that the consortium of CSOs you are proposing has the competencies requested in the call for proposals in terms of defending women’s rights.

**Question 22:** Are cash transfer activities eligible?

**Answer 22:** They are if they respect AFD’s doctrine on the screening of cash transfer beneficiaries [see https://www.afd.fr/sites/afd/files/2022-05-01-56-43/fsaf-egalite-genre-education-fiche-outil.pdf]

**Question 23:** Do the criteria in section 1.1 have to be met by the consortium as a whole or by each of the CSOs in the consortium?

**Answer 23:** The criteria must be met by the entire consortium