East Asia and Pacific Gender Innovation Lab

Call for Expressions of Interest:

Seeking organizations and project teams working to improve economic opportunities for men and women in East Asia

Release Date: September 22, 2016
Deadline to apply: November 28, 2016

If your organization or team has been wanting to have a rigorous impact evaluation of your work and/or develop interventions that improve economic opportunities equitably for men and women, this opportunity is for you.

This call for expressions of interest (EOIs) is for organizations and project implementation teams who would like to work with the East Asia and Pacific Gender Innovation Lab (EAPGIL) on impact evaluations of their projects.

Our focus is on improving economic opportunities for women, notably in the areas of i) agricultural productivity; ii) entrepreneurship; iii) skills development; and iv) balancing domestic and market roles.

For this call for expressions of interest, only projects in the following countries are eligible to apply: Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam.

This call for expressions of interest will seek to identify and select up to 6 project teams to work with EAPGIL to design and carry out an impact evaluation of their project and to develop interventions that improve economic opportunities for men and women. In addition to technical assistance, EAPGIL will also provide financial support for part or all of the impact evaluation’s data collection costs and dissemination. Teams may also apply for funding to support the implementation of an additional, small innovative intervention targeting gender issues and qualitative research to complement the quantitative evaluation.

The deadline for the call for expressions of interest is:

5pm US Eastern Standard Time, November 28, 2016

Please feel free to circulate this call for expressions of interest widely. Please contact Elizaveta Perova (eperova@worldbank.org) and Helle Buchhave (hbuchhave@worldbank.org) with any questions related to the call for Expressions of Interest.
Background

The World Bank Group’s Gender Equality Strategy charts an ambitious path toward closing key economic gaps between women and men, girls and boys. It calls for a stronger emphasis on outcomes and results by strengthening and building on the evidence base of what works (and what does not work) and scaling up effective approaches and partnerships across a range of sectors. In East Asia, considerable evidence exists for countries on the disparities between women and men and between girls and boys. We also know that many of these gaps, especially in the economic domain do not automatically narrow as countries get wealthier and more developed. Also, we know that these persistent inequalities matter for development both for intrinsic reasons as well as for the pace of economic growth. However, we know relatively little about the most effective ways in which governments should address the underlying causes of gender inequality in various parts of East Asia, especially in the area of economic opportunities.

Responding to this, the East Asia and Pacific Gender Innovation Lab (EAPGIL) aims to enable project teams and policy makers to better integrate an evidence-based gender perspective into programs and policies. We do this in two main ways:

1) Generating evidence on what works to close gender gaps and how closing gender gaps can help achieve other development outcomes
2) Promoting uptake of effective gender policies and programs

Our work is focused on ways to improve economic opportunities for women, notably related to agricultural productivity, entrepreneurship, skills development and balancing domestic and market roles.

Conducting rigorous impact evaluations of projects that have potential to increase women’s economic opportunities is the cornerstone of EAPGIL’s work. We design gender-innovative interventions, evaluate how effectively these interventions reduce gender gaps, and understand the mechanisms that drive changes. To do so we partner with units across the World Bank, other development partners, governments, non-governmental organizations, private sector firms and researchers. This new evidence will deepen capacity for gender-informed policy-making. It will also help guide investments and policymaking towards supporting effective programs and policies that promote women’s economic and social empowerment.

The existing body of evidence does a good job of laying out women’s underlying and primary constraints. Following on this, the next step is to develop and test practical interventions and policy solutions for alleviating these constraints. This can involve tweaking existing interventions to enhance their effectiveness, testing whether interventions successful in one setting are similarly successful when replicated in a new setting, establishing the comparative cost effectiveness of competing interventions, and, when needed, coming up with new interventions. EAPGIL’s work places a particular focus on the underlying causes of “sticky” domains of gender inequality. Such “sticky” constraints persist even in the presence of economic growth and limit women’s achievement in terms of economic opportunities, agency, and endowments.

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1 Projects working with EAPGIL do not necessarily need to target women: for example, road rehabilitation projects can improve women’s (and men’s) economic opportunities through increased access to markets.
All EAPGIL impact evaluations are collaborations between project teams that have a project they would like to test, and EAPGIL staff who have significant impact evaluation, sectoral, regional, and gender expertise. For some impact evaluations, external researchers who are interested in the research question may also participate. Evaluations supported by the EAPGIL will align with priorities identified in Country Gender Action Plans.

Why apply?
Benefits to organizations and project teams that partner with EAPGIL include:

- Gaining important insight through a scientifically sound quantitative assessment of how your program or project is working and why.
- Gaining valuable experience conducting rigorous impact evaluations using mixed quantitative and qualitative methods.
- Receiving tailored, evidence-based policy recommendations to improve current and future project and policy design related to gender and economic opportunities.
- Being matched with highly skilled and experienced EAPGIL and external researchers who will on a pro bono basis:
  - Work with you to identify the questions your organization/team would like to answer through impact evaluation
  - Work with you to develop a strong and viable impact evaluation design for your program
  - Work with you to strengthen your project’s design towards more effectively serving women and men, using existing evidence
  - Carry out an impact evaluation of your project (including design, implementation and analysis)

The Gender Innovation Lab has funding to support costs associated with:
- The impact evaluation design stage, aka “concept note development”
- All or part of the data collection costs
- Analysis, presentation and dissemination of results
- Capacity building on impact evaluation methods of the project team and other relevant stakeholders

Projects may also apply for funding for:
- The implementation of an additional small innovative intervention that targets gender issues (innovation grants)
- Qualitative research to complement the quantitative analysis during either the design of the interventions to be evaluated or the analysis of results

Timeline and next steps for engaging with EAPGIL
1) Interested project teams should submit their expression of interest (EOI), answering all of the questions included in the EOI form below. EOIs should be submitted as a word document by email, to Elizaveta Perova (eperova@worldbank.org) and Helle Buchhave (hbuchhave@worldbank.org). The deadline for EOIs is 5pm US Eastern Standard Time on November 28, 2016. We ask that EOIs be no longer than 15 pages overall.
2) From amongst the submissions to the EOI, EAPGIL’s steering committee will select approximately 6 projects (depending on cost-sharing arrangements). This will take place in January 2017.

3) For each of the selected projects, an EAPGIL team member and the project team will collaborate on the creation of an “evaluation team.” All evaluation teams will include at least one member of the EAPGIL team. Additional members will depend on the context and the project and may include members of the operational project team (depending on their availability, interest and skills), research collaborators with relevant expertise inside or outside of the World Bank, and/or members of the implementing agencies or partners.

4) Each project team and evaluation team pair will work together to come up with a design for an impact evaluation, as well as any innovative interventions targeting gender issues that the project team would be interested in carrying out. This design will be described in an impact evaluation concept note.\(^3\)

5) EAPGIL will assemble a Technical Review Panel for each of the projects. The TRP will review the concept notes for technical rigor, feasibility of implementation and potential to fill priority knowledge gaps and generate public knowledge goods. The concept notes will also go through the standard World Bank review and approval processes.

6) After approval of the concept note, EAPGIL will start the implementation of the IE in collaboration with the project team.

Given our experience with how long the impact evaluation design stage typically takes, we expect baseline surveys would take place in early 2017. Fast tracking of projects whose designs are already well-advanced may be possible after projects have been selected.

**Selection criteria for Expressions of Interest**

- **Geographical fit:** Projects must take place in an eligible country (Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam).

- **Sectoral fit:** EAPGIL’s work focuses on how to improve economic opportunities for women, notably related to agricultural productivity, entrepreneurship, skills development and the balance between domestic and market roles. Eligible projects must be aligned with these areas of focus.

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\(^3\) In addition to a more refined and detailed version of the information contained in the initial expression of interest, the concept note must include the central questions the evaluation will address, the key indicators to be used, the identification strategy, the source(s) of data, links to national, sectoral or WBG strategic priorities, any necessary institutional review board approvals, the initial evaluation team members and their responsibilities, the timeline for activities, and a budget.
• **Potential to create public knowledge goods:** EAPGIL seeks to conduct impact evaluations that have a high likelihood of influencing project design and policy-formulation beyond the scope of a specific project. The Steering Committee will not only seek to select strong individual projects, but a collection of projects that work together to fill in important and priority knowledge gaps on what works to advance economic empowerment of women (priorities as expressed in e.g. national or sectoral strategies, WBG Country Strategic Diagnostics and/or Country Gender Action Plans)

• **Organizational commitment to learning:** Partnering with researchers for a rigorous impact evaluation requires a sustained and deep-seated commitment, including buy-in from the project partner’s senior leadership, program managers, and sometimes, key stakeholders, including donors. It also requires a true interest in learning how one’s programs are working and to let this information become publicly available when the results of the impact evaluation are published and presented. Finally, the organization and project implementation team must be willing to work constructively on an impact evaluation, including potential changes to implementation plans.

• **Project partner’s capacity and risk factors:** Does the project partner have proven capacity to successfully carry out the type and scale of project that it is proposing? Does the project partner have funding already secured to carry out the project? Is the environment going to be sufficiently secure within the timeframe of the project so as to not present a danger to the research team?

• **Feasibility for conducting an impact evaluation:** While the full details of the impact evaluation will be developed during the concept note phase, an initial assessment of the feasibility for an impact evaluation will be done using the information available at the time of the EOI.
  - Is the targeted population well-defined and accessible?
  - Is there at least one potential viable comparison group that will allow for credible impact evaluation results?
  - Are there enough expected beneficiaries of the program to enable an impact evaluation to statistically detect the anticipated impacts?
  - Are outcome indicators of the intervention achievable and measurable?
  - May some impacts be achieved within a reasonable time frame?
  - Financial contribution of the project team to evaluation costs. While full funding for evaluations is available from EAPGIL, partial cost coverage (e.g. for data collection) will allow us to engage in a greater number of evaluations. Hence, matching funds from the partner organization will be a factor in the steering committee decisions.

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4 EAPGIL impact evaluation results are published in policy briefs that are made openly and freely available; as academic working papers and journal articles; and within synthesis papers summarizing evidence across multiple impact evaluations. EAPGIL presents results to relevant World Bank Group project teams, partners, government counterparts, and decision-makers at development agencies, both at EAP Regional and international fora and in the countries where EAPGIL is working.

5 For example, in order to establish a valid comparison group for the evaluation, the project and evaluation team may discuss modifications to the way in which specific individuals are selected from a target group of beneficiaries or to randomly decide the order in which the different areas or beneficiaries will receive the intervention(s).
Expression of Interest Application Form

We ask that EOIs be no longer than 15 pages overall.\(^6\)

1. **Project Name**
   
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2. **Project Team**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>If World Bank project:</th>
<th>If non-World Bank project:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project p-code:</strong></td>
<td>Name of organization/institution responsible for implementing the project to be evaluated:</td>
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<td><strong>Name of TTL and any co-TTLs:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Name of Country Gender PL:</strong></td>
<td>Name of unit or division within the organization that is responsible for the project and how it fits into the overall structure of the organization/institution:</td>
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<td><strong>GP or CCSA to which the project is mapped. If multiple, please list all.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Name of Practice Manager(s) responsible for the project:</strong></td>
<td>Name of project team leader. If multiple, please list all and explain the respective roles of each:</td>
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<td><strong>Line Ministry or government agency responsible for implementation of project to be evaluated:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Funding source for project implementation (IBRD, IDA, TF) and status of project development (CN preparation, PAD preparation, negotiations, board approved, effective...):</strong></td>
<td>Funding source(s) for the project implementation, amount, and status of funding for project implementation:</td>
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3. **Contact information**

   Please include the contact information of the person we should contact for questions about this EOI, particularly questions that include the activities of the project.

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\(^6\) If you need extra space, please attach additional content as an appendix.
4. Project description

What “interventions” is the project made up of? Please briefly note all components/interventions that the project includes.

Of all of the components/interventions that the project includes, which interventions are you particularly interested in evaluating? The rest of this EOI should focus on these interventions.

Describe the intensity, duration, timing, and number of expected beneficiaries of each of the interventions you’re interested in evaluating.\(^7\)

If the project is comprised of multiple interventions bundled together, are you willing to deliver the interventions separately?\(^8\)

Would the project team and the government be willing to experiment with implementation arrangements, interventions, and/or target groups in order to create a comparison group?

5. Geography and beneficiaries

In which country(s), region(s), district(s), province(s), town(s), etc. will this project take place? If certain regions or geographical zones are targeted within a country, why were these areas chosen?

To what extent is the geographical focus of the project fixed or flexible?

Beyond geography, are there specific eligibility criteria for the selection of beneficiaries? If so, please describe what the eligibility criteria are and at what level they are applied (district, village, household, individual, etc.).

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\(^7\) For example, a project may include a classroom-based vocational training component, a cash transfer component, and a mentorship component. Each of these is an “intervention”.

\(^8\) An example is “A one 3-hour class per week for 16 consecutive weeks”. Another example is “A $100 cash transfer upon completion of the training course”.

\(^9\) For example, if the project offers training and cash transfers to beneficiaries, is it necessary for all beneficiaries to receive both training and cash transfers? This would be a bundled intervention. Alternatively, may some receive only training, others receive only cash transfers, and others receive both? This would be separate delivery, which would enable the identification of the relative effectiveness of the different interventions.
In addition to the groups defined by geography and/or eligibility criteria, does the project target any specific population groups? If so, what targeting mechanisms are used?

### 6. Impacts

**What are the main things you are hoping to change through this project/intervention?**

**What specific indicators would you propose to track whether the project is having an impact? If you haven’t identified specific indicators, please describe any challenges you have faced in trying to identify them.**

**How much impact would you expect the project to have on these outcomes? (think % change / how big the impact would be) How long would you expect it to take before the project would produce these impacts? How would you expect the impacts to vary over time after the project?**

### 7. Policy questions and relevance

**What questions do you hope to answer through an impact evaluation? / What do you hope to learn from the impact evaluation?**

### 8. Timing considerations

| Administrative start date of the project (for World Bank projects, the expected effectiveness date) |
| Expected start date of intervention implementation |
| Expected end date of intervention implementation |
| Administrative closing date of the project |

The timing of the project may be influenced by factors such as commitments made to donors, agricultural cycles, the rainy season, political cycles, etc. Please describe any such considerations pertaining to this project.

If there are any plans for phased roll-out, please describe.

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10 For example, some projects may have impacts right away that fade over time, others may take a while to have an impact but then the impacts could be increasing etc.
### 9. Gender

*Describe the extent to which the project targets men and/or women.*

*Describe any ideas you have about how the program may work differently for men and women.*

*If applicable, describe any measures or innovations taken to tailor the project to better meet men’s and women’s specific needs and/or to address gender related issues.*

*Would the project team be interested in or willing to make changes to program design to better address gender specific constraints? Are there any gender-specific constraints that the team has identified but that are not currently being addressed under the project?*

### 10. Comparison Group

*Impact evaluations compare a “treatment group” of program beneficiaries to a comparison group of non-beneficiaries. Have you already identified how you might create treatment and comparison groups for an impact evaluation of your project? If yes, briefly describe. If no, is the project team willing to roll out the project in a way to allow for such a comparison group to be identified? (If the team has not done or planned for this, this will be a critical part of the early work of EAPGIL with the project team).*

### 11. Risk factors

*Describe any organizational, environmental, political, or other threats that may keep the project from starting; from going as planned; or from finishing. Please also describe your plans for protecting the project from these threats.*

### 12. Organizational commitment to learning and to a potential partnership

*Describe who on the project team, at the project team’s organization, and with the government knows about and supports this EOI.*

*Is the project team and the project team’s organization willing to publicly share the results of the evaluation?*
If World Bank funded project, please attach e-mails from the relevant managers from both the global practice(s) and the country management units that demonstrate their support for this EOI.

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<th>13. Cost sharing</th>
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<tr>
<td>The major cost of an impact evaluation is for data collection (i.e. baseline and end-line surveys). Has the project team already identified and/or secured funding for part or all of these data collection costs? If yes, describe. If no, just indicate.</td>
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<th>14. Preferences to work with specific researchers (optional)</th>
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<td>If you already have specific researchers in mind with whom you would like to work on the impact evaluation, please list their names and institutions here.</td>
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<th>15. Any other thing (optional)</th>
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<td>If there is any other thing that you would like us to know, please include it here.</td>
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