

Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

The World Bank's newly established Middle East and North Africa Gender Innovation Lab (MNAGIL) is launching its first call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) to conduct rigorous impact evaluations to generate innovative solutions on how best to close key gender gaps in the MNA region, and especially among the displaced. The theme of this EOI is **“Investing in Women to Boost Economic Growth in the MNA Region.”**

Timeline

- Call release date: **Wednesday, May 15, 2019**
- Application submission deadline: **Monday, June 24, 2019, at 5:00 PM (EST)**
- Submission: Application form should be submitted by email to mnagil@worldbank.org
- Applications will be evaluated by the MNAGIL's Steering Committee, and teams can expect to receive decisions by **July 31, 2019**

About the World Bank's Middle East and North Africa Gender Innovation Lab

Launched on March 6, 2019, the Middle East and North Africa Gender Innovation Lab ([MNAGIL](#)) is the World Bank's "Evidence for Policy Research Hub." The Lab leverages evidence to promote the uptake of effective gender policies throughout the MNA region and conducts impact evaluation research, workshops and other capacity-building activities to enable researchers and practitioners to contribute to, and better interpret, knowledge-based results. The Lab partners with regional policy makers and development practitioners to advance policy interventions aimed at empowering women, especially among refugees and displaced women.

Support provided by the Lab will vary by the requirements of each impact evaluation (IE) and includes a combination of financial and technical assistance. Teams can expect to receive feedback on IE proposals, assistance to identify strong researchers as well as technical support for design and implementation of the selected IEs. Teams can seek a combination of financial and technical support up to \$200,000. Priority will be granted to activities that have access to (or the potential to mobilize) additional sources of funding.

Focus Areas

The focus of this EOI is on **exploring innovative solutions and effectively use evidence for policy design and implementation** in the following key areas (i) Accelerating women's employability, digital inclusion, and skills-building; (ii) Advancing women's entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and property rights; and (iii) Advancing women's agency and voice. **Possible topics include:** Female labor force participation; skills development, science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers, gender discrimination in labor market; financial and digital inclusion; entrepreneurship; assets ownership; and breaking social barriers to women's economic participation; including cultural beliefs; stereotypes and social norms (men's behavior); legal protection; mobility constraints; and gender-based violence, fragility and displacement. Applications on other topics will be considered if they align with the World Bank's Middle East and North Africa regional strategy and MNAGIL's strategic priorities, as articulated by [MNAGIL](#).

To learn more about MNAGIL, visit [World Bank Middle East and North Africa Gender Innovation Lab](#)

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is an IE?

The term IE refers to research establishing causality with rigorous counterfactual analysis. In other words, research assessing the changes in outcomes that can be attributed to a particular intervention.

2. What does an IE involve?

IE typically involves identifying an adequate IE team, agreeing on a suitable design (specific to the project context and research questions), generating government/country buy-in, substantial data collection and implementation monitoring efforts, and various data analyses.

3. Why would I consider an IE for my project/program?

IE may not be the right tool for every project/program. It is not just about evaluating a project, but instead, it is about running experiments to inform decisions related to the project/program.

Incorporating IEs is worthwhile. It has been shown that World Bank Group (WBG) projects with IE perform better ([WPS 7157, Jan 2015](#)). IE provides rigorous estimates of impacts, an in-depth understanding of underlying mechanisms driving the results, the potential to test different variations of interventions to find the most effective project design, and the opportunity for additional capacity building in client countries.

4. Can I submit an EOI if the project/program has not started?

Yes. This is a good time to start discussing with government clients the possibility of incorporating an IE to inform decisions about the program.

5. Can I submit an EOI if the project/program already started and is under implementation?

Possibly. If the program is at an early stage of implementation, or implementation of the component to be evaluated has not yet begun, it is possible to incorporate an IE. There is a need for flexibility regarding some implementation arrangements.

6. Can I submit an EOI if the project/program has been completed/closed?

No. Through this call for proposals, we are looking to support 'prospective' IE. If the project or program has been completed, you may be able to conduct a non-experimental IE if there is sufficient administrative data of strong quality and the assumptions for non-experimental methods can be sustained. However, this type of IE does not need the support we are offering through the current call for proposals. Instead, you need good data and an economist to conduct this analysis.

7. What type of projects can incorporate IE?

Both lending and non-lending projects can be strong candidates for incorporating IE. It is essential to think through the expected results chain of the country program to see if there are any potentially testable interventions.

8. Can I submit the Expression of Interest (EOI) for a study or an analytical paper?

No. Through this call for proposals, we are looking to support 'prospective' experimental IE, unless there is evidence that the study or analytical paper incorporates an experimental IE where the results of interventions could inform decisions or policies to address gender gaps in the region.

9. How can I fund an IE?

IEs that require survey data collection are typically costly and funded with a combination of sources. World Bank Group initiatives that support IE include the ComPEL under EFI, the Impact Evaluation to Development Impact (i2i) initiative under DIME, and the Gender Innovation Lab in the regions. In addition, external initiatives, such as JPAL, PEDL, and 3ie, periodically carry out open calls for proposals.

10. Can external researchers apply?

Yes. The call for EOI is open to external researchers. But the applicants will have to connect to a WBG staff (GF or above) who will serve as the Task Team Leader (TTL) of the impact evaluation and identify together the benefits that the IE will bring to the MNA region as well as the World Bank's MNA Vice Presidency and MNA Chief Economist Office.

11. Do I need to have a World Bank or IFC project to submit an EOI?

No. You need to have a project in the World Bank or IFC either in the pipeline or recently approved or a country client interested in evaluating a particular program.

However, if no WBG project, you need to identify WBG staff (GF or above) that will be involved in the IE.

12. What is considered good interventions to be evaluated?

In this context, interventions refer to actions and not necessarily to a project or product. Your proposed interventions should have the following three attributes:

- **Alignment with MNA strategy priorities and MNAGIL three strategic areas.** For example, the proposed intervention should answer two research questions:
 1. How can an innovative intervention increase women's participation in the labor market?
 2. What is the impact of the proposed intervention on economic growth and jobs in the country?
- **Areas with knowledge gaps,** where the mechanisms of impact are not fully known. In these cases, IE can provide evidence supporting the causal impacts at different stages of the theory of change and be designed to compare the cost-effectiveness of various mechanisms aiming at affecting certain outcomes.
- **Specific.** An intervention should be described by using an action verb that indicates what is provided to whom. For instance, "provide information and training to women in businesses" is more specific than "information." When listing outcomes include indicators covering the different levels of the theory of change.

- 13. What countries are considered under this call for EOI?** MNA World Bank geographic region: Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, West Bank & Gaza, and Yemen with priority given to fragile, conflict, rural and remote areas. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries will be considered under this Call for EOI.

APPLICATION FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO CONDUCT IMPACT EVALUATION

Middle East and North Africa Gender Innovation Lab (MNAGIL)
Middle East and North Africa Vice Presidency

Section I: Project/ program information¹

| | |
|--|--|
| a) Project/program title | |
| b) Project ID (if there is a World Bank Group (WBG) project associated with this program) | |
| c) Project/ program objective <i>Please provide a summary of the proposed activity and its development objective and results</i> | |
| d) Country ² | |
| e) If this is not a new activity. Please specify the activity and provide current p-code | |
| f) Indicate whether this proposal is an addition to an existing project | |
| g) Proposed commencement date(s) | |
| h) Completion date(s) | |
| i) WBG project TTL or WBG main contact for program | |
| j) Main IE contact(s) | |
| k) Practice Manager and CMU contact(s) who have endorsed this proposal Proposals without the PM and CMU endorsements are not considered under this call for EOI. | |

¹ Please note that for this round of IEs, the IE design is expected to be completed in FY20 and the baseline (if applicable) in FY20-21. After baseline, IEs typically start an implementation period of at least one year. This implementation period is typically followed by one or more, follow up surveys.

² The intervention must be carried out within the World Bank's MNA geographic region: Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, West Bank & Gaza, and Yemen with priority given to fragile, conflict, rural and remote areas. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries will be considered under this Call for EOI.

Section 2: Intervention(s) to be evaluated

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|---|
| a) Describe the intervention(s) you propose to pilot rigorously to solve the problem (max 100 words) |
| |
| b) What impact evaluation method ³ are you planning to employ? (max 100 words) |
| |
| c) What data sources do you plan on using? (max 50 words) |
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| d) Who will be the recipients of the intervention? Specify if you are targeting a specific group and why (max 100 words) |
| |
| e) Approximately how many recipients are you targeting? (1 line) |
| |
| f) What are the outcomes expected to be affected? (3 lines) |
| Short term: |
| Medium term: |
| Long term: |
| g) Indicate the status of implementation arrangements for the intervention(s) to be tested (if completed and agreed, under negotiation, or under preparation) |
| |

³ Randomization is MNAGIL's preferred evaluation method. Please describe briefly your willingness to build a randomization approach into the evaluation.

Section 3: Alignment with focus area(s)

| Focus Area | Mark with an X the area that best fits your proposal (only one) | Mark with an XX any secondary area(s) that may be relevant |
|---|---|--|
| a) Accelerating women’s employability, digital inclusion, and skills | | |
| b) Advancing women’s entrepreneurship, access to finance, and property rights | | |
| c) Advancing women’s agency and voice | | |

Section 4: Policy relevance

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| <p>a) Relevance for project/program: Please describe key project/program decisions that will be based on IE findings (e.g., continuation, design, targeting, scale up, funding) (max 100 words)</p> |
| <p>b) Relevance for other programs/policy dialogue in the project country: Please describe how the findings from the IE will be used in the country policy dialogue or other operational engagement in the project country (max 100 words)</p> |
| <p>c) Relevance for other countries/global practice: Please describe other projects or engagements (beyond the project country) where findings will be relevant. If you are aware, list specific projects (max 100 words)</p> |

Section 5: Gender policy impact on the economy

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|---|
| <p>(a) Describe the extent to which the project targets men and/or women, boys and/or girls and why (3 lines)</p> |
| <p>(b) Please describe if you think that an impact evaluation of this intervention may be able to help address the MNAGIL’s priority (“the 3As” strategy) or the challenges of the anemic growth and low youth employment in the country(ies) (3 lines)</p> |

Section 6: IE funding

Please list any sources of funds for the IE, including any potential contribution from the government or the WBG project

| Purpose | Source | Secured or planned? | Period | Amount (USD) |
|---|--------|---------------------|--------|--------------|
| a) Interventions under the project or program | | | | |
| b) IE data collection | | | | |
| c) IE team (time) | | | | |
| d) IE team (travel) | | | | |
| e) Workshops and dissemination | | | | |

Section 7: 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 (max 100 words)

Section 8: Other additional information

If there is any other information that you would like us to know, please include (max 100 words)

Please attach any supplementary information, such as a concept note or additional information on technical design

Please send your applications by email to mnagil@worldbank.org

To learn more about MNAGIL, visit our website at [World Bank MNA Gender Innovation Lab](#)