



# Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund



## Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT)

### Support to the Seed Sector development in Ayeyarwady Delta

### Call for Proposals (CfP)

**Ref no:** CfP/LIFT/2017/3/Delta 3

**Release date:** 31 May 2017

**Deadline:** 30 June 2017, noon (12H00)

**Title:** Support to Rice Seed Sector Development in Ayeyarwady Delta, Myanmar

**Duration:** Period of grant August 2017 to June 2019

## 1. Background LIFT

UNOPS is the Fund Manager for the multi-donor Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT), which was established in 2009 to address food insecurity and income poverty in Myanmar. LIFT's donors are Australia, Denmark, the European Union, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. From the private sector, the Mitsubishi Corporation is a donor.

The overall goal of LIFT is to sustainably reduce the number of people living in poverty and hunger in Myanmar. LIFT's purpose is to improve the incomes and nutrition status of poor rural people by promoting resilient livelihoods and food security. Its designated outcomes are improvements in income, resilience, nutrition, and pro-poor policy developments.

LIFT works with implementing partners (IPs), such as international NGOs, national NGOs, United Nations agencies, international organisations, academic and research institutions and the Government of Myanmar. LIFT is currently funding projects at the Union level and in the Ayeyarwady Delta, the Dry Zone, Myanmar's Uplands and Rakhine State.

So far, LIFT has reached over 7.2 million people, or roughly 20 per cent of Myanmar's population, and is active in just under half of the country's townships. The Fund is expected to continue operations until the end of 2018.

For more details, please go to [www.lift-fund.org](http://www.lift-fund.org)

## 2. Purpose of the call for proposals – Delta Seed Sector Support, Delta 3 Programme

LIFT launched the Delta 3 Programme in March 2015 and as today consists of nine different projects. The Delta 3 Programme contributes to the LIFT strategy and to its high level outputs in terms of income, resilience, nutrition and pro-poor policy influence. It proposes more targeted approaches to smallholders with commercial potential (step up), those looking for



opportunities beyond agricultural production (step out), and households needing subsistence security (hanging in).

LIFT is currently seeking proposals from qualified organisations<sup>1</sup> to support to the development of the rice seed sector in the Ayeyarwady Delta with focus on formal public and private seed systems. Please refer to Annex 1 for the scope and expected outcomes of the CfP.

### 3. Proposal submission:

Please note the following requirements for submissions:

- Proposals must be prepared in the English language according to the format requirement presented in Annex 1
- The Curriculum Vitae for key personnel (national and international) should be provided with proposals.
- Proposals must be received by email at the following address: (lift.proposals.mmoh@unops.org) on or before 12.00 PM Yangon time (GMT+6:30) on **30<sup>th</sup> June 2017**.
- Please do not submit your documents to any email address other than the secure email address provided above or your proposals will be considered invalid. The size of individual e-mails, including e-mail text and attachments, must not exceed 5 MB.
- Please note that the cost of preparing a proposal and of negotiating a grant agreement, including any related travel, is not reimbursable nor can it be included as a direct cost of the assignment.

Any requests for clarification should be referred to [lift@unops.org](mailto:lift@unops.org).

Also note that successful applicants will be expected to conform to LIFT's Operational Guidelines, which are available at <http://www.lift-fund.org/guidelines>. The guidelines specify LIFT's rules in relation to inter alia reporting, procurement, inventory management, record management and visibility.

The applicant will have to show how the proposed intervention will be aligned with LIFT strategic outcomes and outputs as defined in the LIFT Strategy (<http://www.liftfund.org/strategy>).

Other LIFT guidance should be addressed as appropriate. Note in particular the LIFT gender strategy (<http://www.lift-fund.org/guidelines>) and the LIFT accountability framework (<http://www.lift-fund.org/publications>).

All submissions received after the deadline will be rejected.

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<sup>1</sup> Eligible implementing partners include the Government of Myanmar, international and national non-governmental organisations, United Nations agencies, other international organisations, academic or research institutions and private sector companies.



#### 4. Schedule of Events

Except for the final date for proposal submission to LIFT, the dates provided below are only indicative. The TEC may follow a quicker or a longer timeframe for the appraisal of proposals.

<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>
Call for Proposals release date	31 May 2017
Deadline for receipt of written inquiries	9 June 2017
Written responses distributed	16 June 2017
Proposal due date	30 June 2017, 12.00 Myanmar time (GMT+6:30)
Evaluation Period (Shortlisting)	3 July 2017 to 30 July 2017
Grant agreement negotiation	From 1 <sup>st</sup> of August 2017 to 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2019

After scoring the proposals, the evaluation team may determine that one or more proposals require further clarification and possible revision. Discussions with submitting organisations are only conducted with regard to proposals determined to be acceptable.

#### 5. Proposal selection and appraisal procedures

An Evaluation Committee (EC) will complete a technical, organisational capacity and indicative financial appraisal of each proposal. As a part of its appraisal process, LIFT may elect to discuss technical, cost, or other aspects of proposals with applicants.

Successful proposals will be implemented under a Grant Agreement with UNOPS as the LIFT Fund Manager. Unsuccessful applications will not be returned to the applicant.



## Annex 1: Scope and outcomes expected from the Call of Proposals

### Background:

The agriculture sector is dynamic in the Delta with increasing investments in value chain development, such as some large investment in the milling and agricultural input sector, but also investments through small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Farmers are mostly rice-based with a limited level of diversification. The Ayeyarwady Region in the Delta, the rice bowl of Myanmar, covers 35,032 square kilometres (Driel and Nauta 2013, MoAI 2013). Most areas are favourable for rice cultivation while some are prone to flooding in the monsoon and salinity intrusion toward the end of monsoon and during the summer season.

The Myanmar Rice Sector Development Strategy (MOALI-IRRI 2015) and National Export Strategy (Ministry of Commerce, 2015) indicate the use of quality seeds of superior varieties as one of the weaknesses in the rice value chain, with poor understanding of farmers of seed quality and unavailability of quality seed.

The availability of quality seed at planting time is estimated to be well below the farmers' requirements: to rapidly increase the volume of available seeds, it is imperative to revive and extend seed networks to strengthen seed certification services and marketing and further integrating the public, commercial and informal seed systems

### LIFT's support to the seed sector development in Ayeyarwady Delta

Myanmar has made significant progress over the last three years in the development and establishment of the national seed policy and regulatory frameworks. A new national seed policy was approved in 2016; the existing Seed law enacted in 2011, was amended in 2015; the national seed regulations were approved in 2016; and the Plant Variety Protection law was approved by the end of 2015. Moreover, based on the above mentioned policy framework and other strategic documents, in 2016 a Seed Road Map has been developed and approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

The **Road Map for Myanmar Seed Sector**<sup>2</sup> has developed a joint strategic agenda for the period 2017 – 2020. It describes the steps needed to transform the current sector into a vibrant, competitive seed sector, which is able to cater for the diverse needs of Myanmar's farmers. The main priorities focus on enforcement and building the capacity for the government's implementation of seed policy and related laws, with particular attention on strengthening the systems of variety release, variety protection, quality assurance and import/export regulations; development of strong local seed business, investment in infrastructure; Public-Private Collaboration & Seed Sector Coordination.

During the last quarter of 2016, LIFT commissioned the Study "The Rice Seed Supply and Demand System in the Ayeyarwady Delta Myanmar" which was finalized in February 2017 and shared with regional stakeholders in Ayeyarwady region in March<sup>3</sup>.

The study analyses the rice seed sector in the Ayeyarwady Delta and documents use, demand and supply for seeds. The study provides recommendations for possible future investments for improving the rice seed sector performance in an integrated and sustainable

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<sup>2</sup> Endorsed by MOALI in December 2016

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.lift-fund.org/lift-seed-study>



way, in order to enhance farmers' access to quality seeds of superior varieties and to contribute to food security and economic development.

The study finds that only 4 percent of the cultivated rice acreage in the region is sown with high quality seed of improved varieties. Main challenges in relation to seeds include:

- Improved high yielding varieties do not reach farmers, and farmers continue to grow local varieties with low productivity;
- Government farms neither produce early generation seeds of farmers demanded varieties nor do they produce sufficient quantities,
- The seed value chain is very fragmented, due to limited communication and collaboration between different government institutions,
- Limited private investment and public private partnership with few private companies supplying certified and good quality seeds.

Through its various partners, LIFT is one of the development organisations involved in the seed sector development in the Delta. LIFT partners include IRRI, Radanar Ayar Rural Development Association, Metta Development Foundation, Welthungerhilfe/GRET consortium and Mercy Corps. Beside these JICA, ACIAR and FAO, in complementarity to LIFT investment, have been involved in supporting seed production and dissemination projects. Most of the interventions focused on the intermediary seed system where several NGOs supported seed growers organized in different ways in the production of quality seeds. In comparison, few interventions have been targeting the formal public-private seed system.

### Areas of intervention / components

LIFT is seeking partners to support the government and private sector, that are able to deliver sustainable results for all or selected components listed below: (outcomes/ outputs and activities are intended as a guide and it is expected that the interested implementing partners, while preparing submissions and in subsequent shaping of their respective detailed work plans, will bring their own expertise to the project.)

The four areas of intervention (components) are interrelated within the framework of an integrated model of sustainable sector development and should contribute at once to the transformation of the seed sector in the Delta. The nature of the interventions should be complementary and efficient coordination will be a key success of the overall investment. The four areas of intervention are:

#### **1) Support to Department of Agricultural Research (DAR) and Department of Agriculture (DOA) for seed farm management and investment**

Expected outcomes: increased production and supply of high quality EGS to certified seed producers

The DAR and DOA seed farm are providing a key public function in supplying EGS to certified seed producers in the Ayeyarwady region. The study highlighted that seed farms face challenges in efficiency due to broken or only partially functioning equipment. The trend of increasing labour shortages and climate changes are putting seed farms under pressure to meet the growing demand of EGS.



#### Possible activities:

- Develop and operationalise an EGS demand forecasting system for government seed farms;
- Detailed study reviewing the current status of equipment of selected seed farms and design of a related investment plan to bring the seed farms to industry standards. The study should also review the labour skills needed to operate seed farm equipment;
- Building management capacities of seed farm staff.

### **2) Support to private sector and seed business development**

Expected outcome: increased amount of professional and entrepreneurial seed producers providing quality seeds of farmers preferred varieties in the region

The system of seed growers and contract farmers has been well established in Myanmar, but has difficulties in delivering sufficient quantity and quality of seeds. The Road map proposes to develop strong “Local Seed Business” which can be groups of farmers, larger individual growers, and small and medium sized domestic seed companies.

#### Possible activities:

- Identification of promising private seed growers or domestic seed companies with a serious interest in scaling their seed production in the Delta;
- Training and coaching on technical aspects (variety choice, quality seed production) and seed business management (production planning, forecasting, financial planning);
- Training specialized seed producers on seed promotion and marketing;
- Facilitating private sector branding, marketing and distribution;
- Creation of strategic linkages of specialized seed producers/companies with millers, traders and agribusiness sector;
- Design incentives mechanisms for private sector, based on sound business plans with focus on improving quality development and marketing capacity.

### **3) Support to quality assurance system**

Outcome: strengthened decentralized seed quality assurance system for effective and efficient seed quality assurance service provision to seed producers.

At the moment the quality assurance system has difficulties reaching all seed producers, both geographically as well as at the different stages of seed production.

The government’s implementation and enforcement capacities are limited. This relates to all regulatory functions from field inspections to seed testing, and from variety release to variety registration. Though sufficient human resources seem to be available, the staff would benefit from (refresher) trainings to enable them to carry out their tasks. In addition, some form of cost recovery, e.g. a service based fee system, could be considered to ensure sufficient funding for the seed regulatory functions. At the same time there is a need to critically look at the development of alternative quality assurance systems such as quality declared seed and truthfully labelled for local seed production.



Possible activities:

- Support to the newly established Pathein seed testing facilities including design of investment plan, their operation and management;
- Development of decentralised township level seed quality assurance units for effective and efficient seed quality assurance service provision to seed producers;
- Upgrading the required capacities of proposed seed staff to provide high quality services to seed producers.

**4) Support to establishment of regional seed sector platform**

Expected outcomes: improved coordination and collaboration in the seed sector in the Ayeyarwady region

Improved seed chain coordination, including the monitoring, demand forecasting and planning of seed production, can benefit the overall performance of the public-private seed system. The main aim of the seed sector platform is to stimulate dialogue between public, private sector and development partners on key issues of the seed sector. In particular the platform will try to give practical hands and feet to the Seed Sector Road Map and to come up with seed chain planning for the upcoming seasons. Platform meeting can discuss issues on the regulatory environment, EGS requirements according to demand forecasts, sharing successful innovations and exploring opportunities of scaling, alternative models for quality assurance, discuss alignment of investment and activities.

Possible activities:

- Initial support to establish a functioning platform at regional level with Ayeyarwady regional government playing the coordination role;
- Development of joint vision and strategy for strengthening rice seed sector in the region;
- Strengthening dialogue and communication among stakeholders;
- Organization of meetings, events, trainings building up capacities to stakeholders.

**Target area**

The intervention target area is the - Ayeyarwady Region.

The project will need to have a strong collaboration with the regional DOA and the office will need to be based in Pathein with possible location in DOA Regional office. Specific activities in support to certified seed production and marketing should focus on the southern part of the Ayeyarwady region.

**Funding allocation:**

The provisional allocation for LIFT's work on seed sector development in Ayeyarwady region is currently set at up to USD 3 million. Applicants can apply for one or more of the four components. LIFT reserves the right to select qualified applicants for all or only some of the four components.

**Project Timeframe**





Planned start date of the project is August 2017 not going beyond June 2019.

### Expertise required

The selected Implementing Partners must have proven experience and success administering international development projects related to seed sector interventions.

Collectively, for the four components, partners must have solid experience in the key aspects of seed sector development, including seed production, seed processing, sales & marketing, seed business, and quality assurance, seed value chain, seed regulatory framework.





## **ANNEX 2: Submission of Proposals - Requirements**

The proposal must be complete and conform to the format requirements presented below.

Submissions must be made both electronically and in hard copy as outlined in the main part of this call for proposals.

The proposal must not exceed 30 pages (11 point Times New Roman Font and a minimum of 1 inch margins all around). Pages should be numbered. The proposal may include annexes with additional details regarding approach, methodologies, references, maps, etc. Annexes must not exceed 20 pages.

Electronic submissions must not exceed 5MB in size.

LIFT will consider only applications conforming to the above format and page limitations. Any other information submitted will not be evaluated.

Applicants should include all information that they consider necessary for LIFT to adequately understand and evaluate the project being proposed. The remainder of this section describes the information that LIFT considers essential for all applications.

The proposal will be structured as follows:

### **Title page**

Project title, name and contact of the applicant, partners, geographical area, expected project duration, component addressed, start and finish dates and total budget.

Following pages may include a table of contents, a list of abbreviations, and possibly a map

### **Project background and rationale**

Outline the rationale and context for the project and explain how lessons from previous experiences and **studies** inform the proposed activities. Identify any gaps in the available knowledge.

### **Project Theory of Change**

A clear Theory of Change should be presented in diagrammatic form and explained.

Theory of Change should make it clear how the project aligns with the LIFT results framework (refer LIFT Strategy) and Delta 3 Programme framework. There should be a specific statement of what the project will accomplish and specification of the project outcomes and outputs.

A measurement framework should be provided in an annex to the proposal, using indicators from LIFT's log frame where appropriate. For guidance on the ToC and measurement framework please see the MEAL guidance for IPs on the LIFT website

### **Activities, technical approach, methodology and scope**

This section should describe the activities and expected results. An activity and methodology description needs to be sufficient to identify what will be done, how it will be done, who will do it, when it will be done, and where it will be done. This should include a clear description of what will be done to produce the expected results along with explanation of the technical approach and methodology. A clear and direct linkage between the activities and the relevant LIFT outcomes should be evident, i.e. the technical approach and methodology should clearly



demonstrate that the activities are a viable means of delivering the results and getting to the intended outcomes.

A stakeholder analysis should be provided describing the key direct and indirect beneficiaries, and the organisations and individuals involved and which have an interest - along with any vested interests they may have. The following are also important:

- A clear description of how the project will cooperate with the government and engage with the private sector.
- A description of the role of all local institutions involved and any support or intention to establish new institutions clearly detailed and justified.
- Where new or improved institutional arrangements are to be enduring, explanation should be provided on the sustainability provisions included.

A Work Plan should be presented in graphical (table, preferably LIFT template) form and can be attached as an Annex. It should indicate the sequence of all major activities and implementation milestones, including targeted beginning and ending dates for each step and key deliverables. Provide as much detail as necessary. The work plan should show a logical flow of implementation steps, indicating that all the things that must happen have been carefully thought through from the start to the end of the grant project. It should consider seasonality and/or other major constraints. Please include in the work plan all required milestone reports and monitoring reviews.

### **Value for Money**

Please include a rough cost benefit calculation for the project and explain the assumptions of your calculation.

### **Organisational background of the applying organisation, staffing, governance/ coordination and partnerships**

It should be clearly demonstrated that the proposing organisation has the experience, capacity, and commitment to implement the proposed project successfully. The following should be covered:

- Type of organisation – Is it a national NGO, international NGO, research, private institution, or training institution?
- Organisational approach (philosophy), purpose and core activities of the organisation, and relevant experience.
- Organisational and governance structure
- Length of existence and legal status – registration with government approved authority.
- If available, latest audit reports.
- Expertise mobilised from within and outside the organisation.
- A description of partnerships, how long they have been in place and for what purpose.



An overview of the organisational structure of the project should be provided, including the CVs of key personnel (national and international), (e.g. chief of party, project director, senior technical advisor and chief financial officer).

It should be explained

- how the expertise required for project implementation will be made available (i.e. from within the organisation, through external consultancy, and partnerships) along with a description of implementation roles.
- who the partners are,
- how they have been identified and what their contribution is to be
- what the governance and coordination arrangements are,
- how the project will maximise local ownership.

### **Cross-cutting issues**

The section should outline the key cross-cutting issues and how they may impact on the project and will be addressed. A special emphasis needs to be given to gender mainstreaming and how the project contributes to gender equality.

### **Risks to successful implementation**

Identify and list major risk factors that could result from project activities and/or the project not producing the expected results. These should include both internal factors (e.g. the technology involved fails to work as projected) and external factors (e.g. government policy changes).

Outline mitigation strategies and/or how risk will be identified and assessed in the design.

Separate from the risk table include key assumptions on which the proposal is based.

### **M&E and knowledge management**

This section should follow the guidelines provided in LIFT's MEAL guidance for IPs (refer to the LIFT website). All proposals need to provide 3 main components: (1) a project Theory of Change; (2) the project evaluation and learning questions; and (3) a project measurement plan.

### **Project budget breakdown**

The budget template available on the LIFT website must be used. The following important principles should be kept in mind in preparing a project budget:

- Include only costs which directly relate to efficiently carrying out the activities and producing the outcomes which are set forth in the proposal. Other associated costs should be funded from other sources. Refer to the LIFT operational guidelines on what LIFT can and cannot fund.
- The budget should be realistic.
- The budget should include all costs associated with managing and administering the grant project. In particular, include the cost of monitoring and evaluation.
- Indirect costs are allowable up to six percent of the total direct costs, not including investment capital funded by LIFT.



- The budget line items in the budget template are general categories intended to assist in thinking through where money will be spent. If a planned expenditure does not appear to fit in any of the standard line item categories, list the item under other costs, and state what the money is to be used for.
- The figures contained in the budget sheet should agree with those on the proposal header and text.
- The budget needs to be accompanied by detailed assumptions on costs (e.g. how many computers are required for how many staff, how per diems are calculated, etc.).

### **Annex 3: Selection criteria to be used by LIFT**

An Evaluation Committee (EC) will review applications. Proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria identified below.

Applicants should note that these criteria serve to: a) identify the significant issues that applicants should address in their applications; and, b) to set standards against which all applications will be evaluated.

#### **Evaluation criteria**

The evaluation committee will base the final appraisal on:

- **Completeness:** Is the information provided in the proposal complete and sufficient for the appraisal?
- **Relevance:** Is the project based on a good understanding of the rice seed sector context?
- **Coherence of the design:** Does the proposal formulate a clear Theory of Change? Are the activities technically feasible and likely to achieve the stated results? Do they embody good development practice and lessons?
- **Approach and methods:** Is the project approach and methodology feasible and appropriate? Are the methodologies based on previous experience and evidence based knowledge?
- **Stakeholder analysis:** Is there a stakeholder analysis and a clear definition of target groups? To what extent is participation (and ownership) of key stakeholders in planning and design evident? Is it clear how the project will work with government and the private sector?
- **Sustainability:** Does the project demonstrate a good case for sustainability of the proposed outcomes and impacts beyond the funding period? Has an exit strategy been considered?
- **Capacity:** Does the proposed implementing organisation and its partners have the necessary technical expertise and capacity to implement the project?
- **Partnership:** Is the governance and coordination system between stakeholders and partners appropriate? Is the role and involvement of the partners clear and sound?
- **Gender:** Does the proposal show sufficient focus on gender equality and gender mainstreaming?



- Risks: has the proposal sufficiently considered major risks and provided a risk management plan?
- Monitoring and evaluation: Is an MEAL plan provided and is it appropriate to the type and scale of the project? Does it align with the LIFT Logical Framework?
- Policy dialogue: Does the project give scope to, and demonstrate ability to, contribute to policy dialogue and change?
- Budget: Does the budget demonstrate cost efficiency and value for money for the project? Is it adequate to deliver the outputs? Is there a sufficient budget dedicated to M&E, learning and capacity building?

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