**Call for Proposal (CFP) for Responsible Parties**

**to provide increased access to business skills development and business support opportunities in Moldova for Ukrainian refugees**

**Section 1**

**CFP No.** **UNW-ECA-MDA-CFP-2023-006**

1. **CFP letter for Responsible Parties**

UN Women plans to engage Responsible Parties as defined in accordance with these documents. UN Women now invites sealed proposals from qualified proponents for providing the requirements as defined in the UN Women Terms of Reference.

Proposals must be received by UN Women at the address specified not later than 21:00 (Moldova time) on **24 March 2023.**

**The total budget available for this call for proposal is of up to USD 95,000.00.**

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| **This UN Women Call for Proposals consists of Two sections:** | **Annexes to be completed by proponents and returned with their proposal (mandatory)** |
| **Section 1**  | **Annex B-1** Mandatory requirements/pre-qualification criteria |
| 1. CFP letter for Responsible Parties
2. Proposal data sheet for Responsible Parties
3. UN Women Terms of Reference

**Annex B-1** Mandatory requirements/pre-qualification criteria | **Annex B-2** Template for proposal submission**Annex B-3** Format of resume for proposed staff**Annex B-4** Capacity Assessment minimum Documents |
| **Section 2** |  |
| 1. Instructions to proponents
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|  **Annex B-2** Template for proposal submission |  |
|  **Annex B-3** Format of resume for proposed staff **Annex B-4** Capacity Assessment minimum Documents  |  |

Interested proponents may obtain further information by contacting this email address **natalia.manea@unwomen.org**

1. **Proposal data sheet for Responsible Parties**

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| **Programme/Project: “Strengthening Socio-Economic Resilience of Women and Girls Affected by the Ukraine Refugee Crisis in Moldova”**  | **Requests for clarifications due:** |
|  | **Date: 06 March 2023** | **Time: 18:00 Moldova Time** |
| **Program official’s name: Natalia Manea** | **(via e-mail:** **natalia.manea@unwomen.org****)** |
|  |  |
| **Email:** **natalia.manea@unwomen.org** | **UN Women clarifications to proponents due (via e-mail): [if applicable]** |
|  | Date: 10 March 2023 | Time: 18:00 Moldova Time |
|  |  |
|  | **Proposal due:** |
| **Issue date: 17 February 2023** | Date: 24 March 2023 | Time: 12:00 PM Moldova Time |
|  |  |
|  | **Planned award date:** |  |
|  | Date: 07 April 2023 |  |
|  | **Information Session:** |  |
|  | Date: 01.03.2023  | Time: 11:00 Moldova Time |
|  | **Planned contract start-date / delivery date: April 2023** |
|  | April 2023 – December 2023 (9 months) |

**c. UN Women Terms of Reference**

**Call for Proposal (CFP) for Responsible Parties**

**Civil Society Organisation/Consortium to provide increased access increased access to business skills development and business support opportunities in Moldova for Ukrainian refugees**

**CFP No. UNW-ECA-MDA-CFP-2023-006**

1. **Introduction**

The war in Ukraine has become a regional crisis, changing the economic and social landscape of the neighbouring countries and the region as a whole. Moldova is one of the countries most affected: its border, migration and asylum management capacities are under significant strain, and the additional demands on institutions and basic services have exceeded local coping capacities and have intensified existing social and economic vulnerabilities and risks. The refugee crisis has furthermore compounded pre-existing challenges facing the country including the aftermath of the COVID pandemic with massive trade and supply chain disruptions, a severe energy crisis, and growing food and fuel insecurity.

It is widely acknowledged that war and crises have a differential impact of the different groups of population and that it exacerbates and deepen vulnerabilities and pre-existing inequalities. The diversity of the demographic landscape of the Ukrainian population, suggests a critical need for a tailored response considering the diverse needs of the affected populations. Based on preliminary data collection (a series of UN Women surveys) and meetings that UN Women held with women-led organizations in Moldova, the ongoing crisis is creating and exacerbating gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities and is resulting in higher scale of humanitarian needs among women, girls, men and boys[[1]](#footnote-2) as well as a call for additional coping capacities for the promotion of socio-economic resilience and integration among refugee communities and vulnerable host populations in Moldova. The conflict has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities among individuals, including gender-specific ones. UNHCR estimates that 90% of refugees in Moldova are women and children and 21% are elderly men and women.[[2]](#footnote-3) This has increased the care burden on many single female heads of households, who may face barriers to finding employment, including lack of childcare support or language barriers. They tend to be more dependent on cash assistance and social benefits compared to male headed households. The same applies to women business owners who have lost their businesses in Ukraine due to the crisis.

Savings have remained a consistent source of livelihood for the majority of refugees. According to the 2022 Moldova Multi-sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) almost eight out of ten families (76%) reported having spent their savings in order to cover their main needs in the 30 days prior to data collection. However, in the face of a protracted crisis, savings may run out and the vulnerability of Ukrainian families in Moldova may increase. According to UN Women survey data[[3]](#footnote-4), 60% of refugee women were employed before fleeing Ukraine and 38% of women refugees expressed interest in finding a job in Moldova. Some 3% have already started working[[4]](#footnote-5). In this situation, entrepreneurship is becoming an option for women refugees to integrate into the labour market as self-employment in order to secure their livelihood and also creating jobs for other women.

But there are many challenges in this regard for refugees: uncertainty of the new environment, lack of knowledge regarding the legal and fiscal provisions in force in the host country, lack of business skills and knowledge regarding accessible business support programmes, uncertainty regarding the legal status of refugees, lack of financial resources or difficulty in accessing them, etc.

Within its leadership role, UN Women will ensure that refugee response programming is gender responsive, promote accountability for gender equality and women’s empowerment, and takes into account and meets the specific needs of refugees and those affected by crisis. Over the next period UN Women will contribute to the realization of one overarching Outcome (major strategic result): women and girls in all their diversity, both refugee and local, especially the most vulnerable and affected by the crisis, have increased resilience and agency due to access to gender-responsive humanitarian assistance and tailored livelihood programs and benefit from integrated gender responsive, localized and women-cantered protection and development opportunities.

In this context, during 2023, UN Women is implementing the project “Strengthening Socio-Economic Resilience of Women and Girls Affected by the Ukraine Refugee Crisis in Moldova” in 5 selected districts, funded by Embassy of Japan in the Republic of Moldova. Under the project, responsible partners, civil society organizations will be selected to support the implementation of the project in collaboration including with private sector.

1. **Description of expected results/outputs**

With the respect to “leaving no one behind” approach, the responsible party, will contribute to providing increased access to business skills development and business support opportunities for at least 100 women and girls, both Moldovan citizens and Ukrainian refugees (at least 30 % of women - beneficiaries).

Interventions will be carried out in five locations around Moldova, in areas with limited coverage of such services and economic opportunities and will **target women refugees and local women and girls from underrepresented groups** including but not limited to minority women, female single-headed households, women with disabilities, women leaving with HIV, GBV (Gender - based Violence) survivors, LGBTQUIA+, expectant and nursing mothers, elderly women.

**Project OUTCOME:** Women and girls in all their diversity, both refugee and local, especially the most vulnerable and affected by the crisis, have increased resilience and agency due to access to gender-responsive humanitarian assistance and tailored livelihood programs and benefit from integrated gender-responsive, localized and women-centred protection and development opportunities.

**Project OUTPUT:** Women and girls, both refugee and local, have increased access to business skills development and business support opportunities.

Through this Call for Proposal, UN Women Moldova is seeking to contract an organization (Civil Society Organization, registered in Moldova) or a Consortium of organizations to fulfil the following suggested activities, but not limited to:

1. **Conduct beneficiary mapping and a rapid needs assessment to select the beneficiaries of the business support in up to 5 districts in Moldova with the focus on women refugees and local from underrepresented groups.**

The needs assessment will outline women beneficiaries’ profile considering the type of vulnerability, age, locality and background/intention to develop/create a business, in order to provide tailored business support for female entrepreneurs.

1. **Develop and implement business support programs (including voucher support component) based on co-creation with involvement of right holders and duty bearers, to directly support skills and business development.**

The indicative activities include the following: (NOTE: the applicant is encouraged to suggest additional activities deemed necessary)

The participants in the Programme should be supported to develop and assess the feasibility of their business idea, get familiar with the local regulatory and administrative requirements related to starting and running a business, with opportunities to scale their ventures, based on market dynamics, access to finance etc. Mentoring, business simulation (gamification) and networking could be used as interactive instruments to better assimilate and put into practice the acquired knowledge and facilitate the exchange of experience between local and Ukrainian entrepreneurs, to develop soft skills and to improve self-confidence.

The training curricula will contain a strong imprint of refugee inclusion, providing specific useful information and tools to integrate them into business activities.

A focus will be put on childcare services, STEM startups and social entrepreneurship by educating and empowering them to develop, validate and grow their business ideas.

The existing e-learning platform (https://xy.md/ro/academy/) will be considered as an additional tool for improvement and to be used for trainings by the applicants. Innovative formats for conducting training sessions with the use of the most effective techniques of instructional design will be encouraged.

Successful proposals will feature competition and reward mechanisms to the most motivated and promising participants. Financial assistance in the form of vouchers will cover costs for procurement of services or/and equipment for eligible start-ups for launching and running a business.

The size of the financial support (vouchers), the number of beneficiaries, the eligibility criteria, the methodology of awarding vouchers will be established according to the budget and the Programme developed by the Responsible Party and is a subject to UN Women’s approval prior implementation. The applications developed in teams created by Ukrainians and Moldovan entrepreneurs will be prioritized.

*The above activities only indicate the directions and do not represent the final concept of the programme. The Proposer can describe their own approach if it demonstrates a positive impact and achievement of the expected results.*

The activity should contribute **to the project output indicators**:

**A**. Number of activities/services implemented for business support opportunities targeting women and girls affected by the Ukrainian refugee crisis

Expected result under this activity: at least 3 activities/ services implemented for business support opportunities

**B**. Number of girls/women participating in business support opportunities (by age, rural/urban, minority group, refugee status)

Expected result under this activity: at least 20 girls/women participating in business support opportunities (vouchers’ beneficiaries)

**C**. Share of women participating in the business support program, operating new businesses (by age, rural/urban, minority group, refugee status, experience in business)

Expected result under this activity: 60 % of women participating in the program, operating new businesses, including at least 50 new business established

1. **Carry out awareness raising activities targeting women and girls in all their diversity, especially the most vulnerable, on available business support opportunities in the selected communities.**

Awareness raising activities on existing programmes and available business support opportunities will be carried out in the selected communities, by involving local relevant stakeholders and networks, keeping in mind the profile of targeted groups.

All awareness raising activities will be carried out in accordance with a detailed communication and visibility plan to be developed by the Responsible Party who will be in charge to:

* Ensure wide and effective promotion of the program and communication on the activities and their impact/ results.
* Ensure timely and efficient visibility of the program, UN Women, and its partners (elaboration of communication and visibility materials and products, social media and/or TV promotion campaigns, e ensure media presence and manage media relations, etc.).
* Ensure that all developed products are tailored to the target audience and use a variety of communication channels.

All activities will be coordinated with other responsible partners to be selected under the project in order to ensure synergetic approach towards the overall intervention.

1. **Specific requirements to the proposal**
* The proponent as a Responsible Party is expected to make substantial contribution to achievement of but not limited to the activities for which it is putting an offer;
* Proponents are highly encouraged to propose interventions that explore innovative ideas, including use of digital tools and existing digital platforms;
* The cooperation with Japanese experts, companies, NGOs will be considered an advantage at the evaluation stage.
* The proposed intervention size and budget request is for up to equivalent in MDL of USD 95,000.00. The proposal amounts shall be quoted in Moldovan Lei. All currency exchanges will be calculated using the UN Operational Exchange Rate as per the date of submission of proposal;
* UN Women will sign a contract with applicant organisations and disburse funds to the applicant organizations only. Results based budget should be prepared using zero VAT rate;
* Partners and sub-contractors will benefit from respective fiscal arrangements upon signature of Partnership Agreement with UN Women Moldova. The proponent shall follow the [UN Women Branding Guidelines and Identity Standards](https://www.ungm.org/UNUser/Documents/DownloadPublicDocument?docId=340359) throughout the implementation process;
* The budget of the proposal shall include communication and visibility actions. Examples of communication and visibility actions may be but not limited to: success stories, video spots, informative sessions, online campaigns, awareness campaigns etc.
1. **Timeframe:**

The proposals are expected to start from April 2023 and be implemented within a period of 9 months and to be completed not later than end of December 2023.

1. **Competencies:**

Proponents must meet all mandatory requirements/pre-qualification criteria as set out in Annex B-1.

Proponents will receive a pass/fail rating on this section. UN WOMEN reserves the right to verify any information contained in proponent’s response or to request additional information after the proposal is received. Incomplete or inadequate responses, lack of response or misrepresentation in responding to any questions will result in disqualification.

1. **Technical/functional competencies required:**
* Knowledge and experience of for at least 3 years in implementing business development support activities. Experience in managing and implementing business financing instruments (vouchers, grants, seed capital, etc.), will be considered an advantage;
* Team of experts (team leader, business development specialists, trainers, consultants, coachers, and/or other relevant staff) with at least two years of experience in the areas of expertise for which they were contracted;
* Proven in-house experience in inclusion and economic empowerment Programmes of women/girls in all their diversity will be considered an advantage;
* Experience of supporting refugees, migrants, vulnerable and/or underrepresented groups will be considered an advantage;
* Presence in the region and/or experience of working at local and community level, in partnership with community-based organisations from different regions of the country for at least 2 years;
1. **Other competencies, which while not required, can be an asset for the performance of services:**
* Previous experience managing grants/partner agreements from UN agencies, INGOs or international organizations.

Proposers are requested to accept the terms and conditions outlined in the Partner Agreement template or indicate their reservation or objections thereto.

Submission of reservations or objections does not mean that UN Women will automatically accept them should the proposer be selected as a Partner.

UN Women will evaluate any reservation or objection during the evaluation of the proposal and may accept or reject any such reservation or objection.

1. Definition according to IASC Gender in Humanitarian Action Handbook “refer to women and men of: (a) different ages, understanding that gender roles and responsibilities change across the life cycle; (b) diverse backgrounds, understanding that sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, disability, belief, civil or economic status, norms and cultural and traditional practices etc. can be barriers or enablers, depending on context; and (c) different experiences, understanding that experiences of marginalization are heterogeneous. Marginalization derives from multiple and intersecting factors”. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. In Ukraine, men aged 18-60 were required to stay behind under martial law which led to a high number of female-headed households amongst those crossing borders. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Brief analysis on the gendered impacts of the crisis in Ukraine: a focus on Moldova <https://moldova.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/07/brief-analysis-on-the-gendered-impacts-of-the-crisis-in-ukraine-a-focus-on-moldova> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The expressed willingness varies significantly among different age groups, with the highest rate for women aged 30 to 49 and the lowest for elderly women. Also, 40 per cent of women with children, who are the majority among refugees, are considering working while staying in Moldova. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)