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| --- | --- | --- |
| Principal Investigator(s) and Institutional Affiliation(s) | | |
|  | | |
| Title of Proposal | | Country (of Project) |
|  | |  |
| Partner(s) | Contact Name/Email | |
|  |  | |

**Please submit this application to** [**sme-fund@poverty-action.org**](mailto:sme-fund@poverty-action.org)**, subject line “WWES Proposal Submission.”**

1. Project Summary (max 2 pages)

*Please share a short project summary that clearly addresses the following details:*

* *Motivation*
* *Research questions*
* *Research design*
* *Intervention (if any)*
* *Sample description (including power calculations, sample size, selection, and representativeness)*
* *Outcomes of interest*
* *Current status of project*

1. How can the study address the WWES Initiative’s research questions? (250 words)

*Please consult the appendix with detailed research questions and explain whether and how your proposed study will contribute to answering some of them.*

1. What is the relevance of the study to COVID-19 policymaking, especially in informing and promoting gender-intentional programming? (300 words)

*Please tell us more about the specific policy partner for the project and what they expect to do with the results of your research study when they are ready. Please comment on any information you have on where the partner is with respect to decision-making on policies and how they plan to use the results from your study within their policymaking timeline. Policy engagement and impact is a core focus of the initiative and we’re interested in projects that have a clear policy partner willing and able to apply the results of the study to their decision-making.*

1. If this is an evaluation, please tell us more about the intervention being evaluated (500 words)

*Please comment especially on whether the intervention is gender-intentional in design and how it can help reduce the negative impacts of COVID-19 for women and girls.*

1. If no interventions are currently being evaluated, have you been discussing any interventions with the policy partner to support COVID-19 recovery for women workers, entrepreneurs, and/or young girls? (250 words)

*It’s fine if these are early-stage discussions.*

1. Project team (250 words)

*Please provide information on the different people/institutions involved in the implementation of this project and their roles.*

1. Project timeline and funding requested

*Please provide a rough timeline of activities and break down the funding requested by individual activities (e.g., data collection, data analysis, drafting dissemination products, etc.). Please also indicate which activities are the highest priority for funding. Please let us know how quickly you expect to have actionable information and/or preliminary results to share with policy partners. Please note that we have an open access policy for funded projects and expect results to be public and shared in a reasonable time period.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # | **Activity** | **Output** | **Target Date** | | **Funding requested** |
| Start | End |
| 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  |  |  |
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***Please also attach a detailed budget*** *to your application. Please note that all budgets must be approved by the corresponding IPA country office.*

1. Are there other donors for this study?  If so, what is their contribution to project funding?
2. Are there any additional documents that you would like to share? (optional)

*Please attach with your submission any relevant additional documents that you would like to share with the selection committee. It could be questionnaires, detailed research proposal, any findings thus far of relevance, donor agreements funding project activities, etc.*

**Appendix**

**Driving Research Questions**

The list below illustrates the type of questions the WWES Initiative is hoping to address through this call. It is not an exhaustive list: any technically sound and policy-relevant project that addresses the key themes of the WWES Initiative (women’s work, entrepreneurship, and skilling) will be considered.

**Women’s Work, Entrepreneurship, and Time Use**

***Diagnostic***

* What are the differential impacts of COVID-19 on women’s work and businesses *vis à vis* men’s? To what extent are female labor or women-led enterprises disproportionately affected by COVID-19 due to:
  + the type of businesses they work for/operate (e.g., sectoral choice, legal status, etc.);
  + increased family responsibilities (e.g., domestic work activities, family care, etc.);
  + decreased mobility and ability to access markets and services; and
  + limited safety nets, lack of access to digital platforms or restrictions in access to financial services?
* What are the main channels through which the COVID-19 crisis has impacted women-led businesses?
* How are women-led enterprises responding and adjusting their business models to comply with social distancing and other restrictions imposed by governments to contain the spread of COVID-19? Which adaptations prove most successful in preventing business contraction and loss of income?
* How are female workers affected by the negative shock on economic activity? To what extent has it led to salary cuts, unemployment, migration, overindebtedness, using savings to cover living expenses, etc.?
* How has female workers’ productivity been affected (compared to male workers) due to increased family care responsibilities and remote work?
* What policy responses do female workers and entrepreneurs believe could help them navigate the crisis and beyond? What challenges do women-led businesses report in accessing government programs?
* How do changes in women’s income and work situation on account of COVID-19 affect household consumption and welfare, intra-household bargaining and decision-making, and women’s health and well-being?

***Evaluative:***

* What COVID-19 recovery policies can governments and other agencies undertake and how effective are they to:
  + mitigate the adverse impact on the viability and profitability of women’s work and enterprise (e.g., flexible/subsidized credit, shift to remote services, tax deferral/forgiveness, loans and loan deferrals, wage subsidization, facilitating participation in e-commerce programs, bargaining programs for female entrepreneurs; special assistance for female migrants; digital coaching and networking programs)
  + reduce and distribute added and unequal care burdens between women and men (and girls and boys) (e.g., childcare facilities and services, couples counselling/messaging campaigns)?
* Which previous interventions have prepared women-led businesses and female workers to navigate the challenges posed by this unexpected economic shock? Do psychology-based interventions like soft skills training and stress management techniques make women-led businesses more resilient and able to adapt to unexpected shocks? Does prior exposure to training and mentoring programs help?

**Youth Skilling and the School-to-Work Transition**

***Diagnostic:***

* How do COVID-19 restrictions / lockdowns and subsequent decreases in employment opportunities affect the ability of youth to make the school-to-work transition (STW) and how can these be mitigated?
* What new barriers are introduced into this transition period (e.g., inability to participate in internships and additional skills-training; lack of access to information, services, and resources to facilitate starting new businesses; inability to fully leverage networks to search for employment opportunities, etc.)
* How does access to information and technology differ between male and female youth and what role does it play in increasing agency, connecting to the labor market, and being able to develop employable skills?
* Does the crisis disproportionately affect young women’s and girls’ agency, self-efficacy, and emotional well-being, including psychological stress, mental health, and future aspirations?

***Evaluative:***

* What STW program adaptations are most successful to help mitigate the impacts of these barriers and promote youth employment and entrepreneurship (e.g., providing adequate resources to allow for remote internships and jobs, developing remote modules for soft skills and leadership development, provision of remote mentorship, etc.)?
* What youth programs are able to increase women and girls’ resilience during the COVID-19 recovery period?
* How have increases in agency, self-efficacy, emotional well-being and socio-emotional skills as a result of past programs increased women and girls’ resilience, ability to cope, and leverage additional opportunities during the COVID-19 crises? Are the returns greater for female youth than for male youth?
* How effective are demand-side government policies such as wage subsidies and financial incentives for employers at promoting greater employment and on-the-job skilling for young women?
* As governments switch to remote education strategies, could the introduction of SWT skills modules and opportunities (e.g., remote mentorship, soft-skills development techniques, business skills-training, etc.) help prepare students for a more successful transition into the labor force?

In addition to the two priority themes of women’s work and youth skilling, the initiative will also explore cross-cutting themes of **gender norms**, **agency and self-efficacy**, and **intra-household dynamics**. Finally, we will give particular attention to the measurement of concepts within each theme, leveraging commonalities in questionnaire design and (where appropriate) indicator harmonization to better aggregate cross-portfolio learning.