



Livelihoods and Food Security Fund



LIFT Call for Proposals

Nutrition and decent work programmes benefitting vulnerable households in IDP camps and host communities in Kachin and northern Shan States

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Duration:	Three years

1. Background

The Livelihoods and Food Security Fund (LIFT) is a multi-donor fund established in 2010 to address food insecurity and income poverty in Myanmar. LIFT has received funding from 14 donors – the United Kingdom, the European Union, Australia, Switzerland, Denmark, the United States, the Netherlands, Sweden, France, Luxembourg, Italy, New Zealand, Ireland and Mitsubishi Corporation. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is the Fund Manager to administer the funds and provide monitoring and oversight.

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 people in Myanmar by promoting resilient livelihoods and food security. LIFT's purpose-level outcomes are improvements in income, resilience, nutrition, and pro-poor policy developments. LIFT works with implementing partners that include international and national non-government organisations, United Nations agencies, the Government of Myanmar, private sector organisations, and academic and research institutions.

LIFT is active in the four main agro-ecological zones of Myanmar: the Ayeyarwady Delta, Rakhine State, the central Dry Zone (including Mandalay, Magway and the southern Sagaing Region), and the Upland areas (including Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin and Shan States and Tanintharyi Region).

So far, LIFT has reached more than 9.2 million people or roughly 26 per cent of rural Myanmar's population; and is active in two-thirds of the country's townships.

In 2018, LIFT's Fund Management Office and Fund Board have been working on refreshing the strategy for the next five-year period beginning in 2019.

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The next phase for LIFT has at its heart **'leaving no one behind'** in Myanmar's rural transition with a greater focus on inclusion and social cohesion, increased support to areas affected by conflict, bringing displaced people into LIFT's development programmes and working with Government at all levels on targeted policies that achieve gains in these areas.

LIFT will continue to focus on assisting:

- Households with land, labour or commercial potential to **'step up'** through increases in labour and land productivity and enhanced capacity to market production
- Rural households or individuals to **'step out'** of agriculture into the local non-farm economy or to take advantage of opportunities further afield
- Highly vulnerable households to **'hang in'** and use agriculture as a safety net, improve their food security and nutrition outcomes while building their capacity to move out over time

Programmes will increasingly focus on strengthening the resilience and sustainable livelihoods of women, people with disabilities, smallholders and landless, internally displaced people and migrants, those vulnerable to trafficking and forced labour and those living in conflict-affected areas and border states. LIFT will prioritise improving nutrition for women, children and vulnerable groups, promoting decent work and safe and productive labour mobility, supporting agriculture and market development and increasing access to financial services.

For more details visit www.lift-fund.org.



2. Objective of the call for proposals

LIFT is seeking proposals from qualified organisations and entities that focus on reducing poverty and vulnerability of IDPs and host communities affected by conflict in Kachin and northern Shan States. These outcomes will be achieved through improved nutrition, enhanced skills and access to productive assets (including land) as well as to financial services that support increased livelihood options and future human productivity. As emphasised in LIFT's refreshed strategy for 2019-2023:

- LIFT will focus on inclusion and social cohesion in the next five years, with a strengthened emphasis on people with disabilities, women, and those vulnerable to trafficking.
- LIFT will have an increased geographical focus on the ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas in order to support more sustainable and predictable approaches to poverty and hunger reduction for communities in protracted crises, conflict-affected and marginal areas.
- LIFT will bring refugees and displaced people into the core of its development programmes by supporting the humanitarian to development transition and assisting displaced persons secure decent jobs and income.
- LIFT will work with the Government of Myanmar at different levels on targeted policies and policy reform to contribute directly to poverty reduction, inclusion and peace, women's empowerment, government accountability, and to give great voice and control to oppressed minorities.

2.1 Background to the call

Kachin State and northern Shan State are rich in natural resources, including minerals, hydropower, and timber in addition to vast areas of productive agricultural and agro-forestry land. However, the history of intensive, long-standing conflict between the Government of Myanmar and Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs), as well as among EAOs and the presence of a multitude of militias, coupled with large scale illegal production of opium and heroin as well as other illegal activities (gambling, smuggling...), have adversely affected socio-economic development in the states despite their tremendous potential. Kachin has higher than average poverty levels (28.6 per cent compared to the national level of 25.6 per cent); and poverty in Shan State is even higher with 37.4 per cent of the population categorised as living below the poverty line.¹

Protracted conflicts have impeded economic development and caused large displacement of populations. Over 109,000 people remain displaced and continue to require humanitarian assistance and protection, with 98,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kachin State, of which 59,000 are in government-controlled areas (GCA) and approximately 38,000 are in areas controlled by armed groups.² More than 60,000 were temporarily displaced by conflict in 24 townships between January 2017 and May 2018. In most cases this was short-term displacement, with people returning to their places of origin within weeks or months³. In addition to conflict, in recent years, land grabbing by agribusinesses to produce rubber and Chinese banana tissue culture plantations has created further displacement and is also taking a toll on the environment. Experiences of displacement are traumatic, often involving people fleeing into the jungle, losing livelihoods and property, and being subject to violence and discrimination. Protracted displacement perpetuates existing trauma and

¹ MIMU website, accessed in October 2018

² Myanmar: Humanitarian access in Kachin and northern Shan (July 2018), OCHA

³ Myanmar: Civilians displaced by fighting in Kachin/Shan 2017-18 (as of 31 May 2018), OCHA



hardship, and emerging issues exacerbate these realities, such as widespread fear among IDPs of losing their land of origin.⁴

As of January 2018, there were 165 sites for internally displaced persons (IDP) in Kachin and northern Shan State, with a total of 99,700 IDPs in camps, and an estimated 10,000 staying with host communities outside camps.⁵ Attempts have been made by the state governments to resettle IDPs when landmines are cleared, and land and construction materials become available. However, a further seven new camps have been opened in Myitkyinar and Nammatee (between Myitkyina and Moegoung townships) in April, 2018 to cope with a new influx of IDPs. This brings the total of currently operating IDP camps to 172 sites. Although new camps have recently been opened, the Department for Social Welfare (DSW) has piloted camp closure interventions that are planned for expansion in the near future in Kachin. There are concerns that this action may be premature due to on-going fighting and other severe threats to the personal safety for those currently in the camps.

The Durable Peace Programme (DPP)'s end line assessment⁶ reinforces the desire of IDPs surveyed to return to their places of origin and identified that barriers preventing their return are directly linked to the failure of the peace process in Kachin where the situation remains highly volatile and unpredictable. Through an extensive survey detailing IDPs' perceptions, the DPP report establishes that the three main barriers to return reported by IDPs are the presence of armed actors, the presence of landmines and active armed conflict.⁷ Hope for the future and the desire for better economic opportunities remain the strongest reasons for wanting to return. There is a high level of uncertainty among IDPs over the timeframe for resettlement and low expectations of better economic opportunities.

Communities displaced by the conflict in Kachin and Shan States face serious risks of death and injury due to landmines and unexploded ordinance (UXOs) when they return to their place of origin. Due to intensive landmine and ordinance use in these regions since 2011, the return of IDPs to their places of origin is deemed to be unsafe.

Adults account for 80 per cent of landmine victims, followed by adolescents and young children. Most of them are farmers, labourers or students. Landmine accidents cause extreme livelihood hardship for the extended family, particularly in cases of severe injuries or death of the victim, since 80 per cent of the adult victims have children⁸.

The DPP end line survey highlighted a worsening cross-sectoral situation for IDPs, with increased vulnerability on a number of fronts, which included a loss of income and livelihoods, in addition to a significant decline in nutritional diversity with associated long-term implications for health and wellbeing. The armed conflict has adversely affected communities in the region and the results of the DPP survey indicate that IDPs have borne the brunt of the impact when compared to non-IDP communities.

To date, the co-existence of IDPs and host communities has been generally amicable and supportive. However, as the period of displacement continues without signs of abating, competition and sharing

⁴ Displaced and Dispossessed – conflict –affected communities and their land of origin in Kachin State, Durable Peace Programme, May 2018

⁵ OCHA, march 2018

⁶ Durable Peace Programme in Kachin, funded by the European Union, is implemented by a consortium of seven national and international NGOs, and a further 17 partner organisations, to complement the existing humanitarian response in Kachin through providing support for peace, reconciliation, rehabilitation and development

⁷ DPP end line survey, May 2018

⁸ Epidemiological Study of Landmines/ERW Accidents and Victims in Kachin, Kayah and Shan States, Myanmar, DRC DDG July 2017



of limited resource has become a contentious issue. Access and sharing of often-limited resources such as water and/or firewood has become a critical issue, and one that risks straining relationships, especially as funding and assistance for humanitarian support is withdrawn. Tensions are also likely to arise due to labour competition and the overcrowding of an already precarious job market, possibly lowering wages for all.⁹

Increased drug production due to the conflict is fuelling existing drug abuse problems across Kachin society. While opium addiction is an increasing source of concern in poppy growing areas, high rates of heroin addiction are the main problem in urban centres, as well as in mining areas.

Methamphetamine is also an increasing problem in trading areas and along transport routes. The Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT) investigation in 2015 found half of all youth in some Kachin regions use drugs, primarily heroin.¹⁰ Widespread drug use and addiction resulted in a wide range of negative health, social and economic consequences. Women and children in particular suffer when the family breadwinners become addicted and lose their jobs.

Nutrition

In Kachin State, 36 per cent¹¹ of children under five years old are stunted, an indicator of chronic undernutrition. The figure is considered to be high by the World Health Organization (WHO). In northern Shan State, where the prevalence of stunting is 47.6 per cent this is classified as an emergency. The rates of wasting are relatively low in both government controlled areas (GCA) and non-government controlled areas (NGCA) with only 4 per cent of children aged below five affected by acute malnutrition in Kachin State. However, malnutrition is a clustered phenomenon and there may be pockets across both Kachin and northern Shan where communities are experiencing higher rates of malnutrition than the state-wide figure indicates. The Demographic Health Survey, which was carried out in 2015-16, excluded many areas in NGCAs as they were not accessible due to security concerns. More comprehensive data is needed to give a more nuanced assessment of the situation.

High rates of stunting, a result of poor nutrition, inadequate diet diversity and/or meal frequency; poor maternal nutrition; repeated infection, and inadequate psycho-social stimulation during the first 1,000 days is known to impact on development delays and suboptimal growth. This impacts on school performance, earning potential as an adult and contributes to the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition.

An infant and young child feeding assessment carried out by Plan International in 2015¹² identified poor infant feeding practices and poor access to health and information services as major drivers of the poor nutrition outcomes. Despite almost all (97 per cent) of mothers starting to breastfeed, only 40 per cent of babies under 6 months were found to be exclusively breastfed (DHS 2015/16 found 51.2 per cent) and only 21 per cent were breastfed until two years as per the international recommendations.

A key access point for information about infant feeding is through antenatal, child health and nutrition services, yet only 40 per cent of mothers receive four or more antenatal care (ANC) visits. ANC visits are when women receive essential maternal pregnancy care, nutrition advice and iron folate supplementation. Where women receive nutrition and health support from is varied. Almost half of all women in the IDP camps included in the Plan International survey delivered at home and were not receiving infant feeding advice around the time of delivery from a Ministry of Health and

9 Joint Strategy Team. 2015. Assessment on Internally Displaced Persons' Needs and Perspectives.

¹⁰ Silent Offensive-How Burma Army strategies are fueling the Kachin drug crisis, KWAT 2015

¹¹ Reflected by height for age

¹² ProPAN Assessment of Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices in IDP Camps in Kachin State January 2015, Plan Myanmar



Sports (MoHS) or Ethnic Health Organisation (EHO) frontline health worker. Other sources indicate that the number of women relying on traditional birth attendants is declining. There are also anecdotal reports of increases in unregulated advertising of breastmilk substitutes from China, which undermine efforts to promote and protect breastfeeding.

The availability of health care assistance is described as patchy, partial and insufficient¹³ in a study conducted by the Gender Equality Network (GEN), with services delivered by CSOs, NGOs, Women's groups, and church groups. Access is reported to be more difficult among camp populations in NGCA as a result of geographical isolation, weakness in the health infrastructure and overall weakness of governance.¹⁴ The Access to Health Fund is supporting the MoHS and EHOs to increase coverage of, and access to, integrated nutrition, maternal, newborn and child health services in Kachin and northern Shan State; however there are still barriers to ensuring equitable access.

Diet adequacy during the first 1,000 days for adolescent girls and the wider population is challenging to achieve within IDP and host communities in Kachin and northern Shan as a result of poverty, lack of income, rapid price rises and limited access to markets. Only 20 per cent of children in Kachin aged 6-23 months received a diet that was adequate in both diversity and frequency. Reducing meal size and frequency is a coping strategy that is used by between 10 and 15 per cent of households in both IDP and host communities.¹⁵

In IDP camps that have been exposed to nutrition-related interventions there are reports of high knowledge but converting that into practices is hampered by lack of money and no opportunity to purchase the diverse foods recommended. IDPs report facing intimidation and discrimination when trying to move freely to access markets outside the camp and the flow of goods into the camps is also restricted.

According to the Durable Peace Programme end line survey, nutritional diversity has decreased with non-IDPs needing to borrow food more often, and more IDPs report having to reduce the size and number of their meals as well as borrow food.¹⁶

When women were asked to prioritise their concerns, nutritious food was listed as the third concern, after clean water and electricity.¹⁷

Women report having a high burden of voluntary work or unpaid work to maintain the camps: construction, cooking for nurseries, distributing non-food items, volunteering on camp committees etc. Opportunities for employment, especially for women with children who need to stay close to home, are limited.

In terms of the water, sanitation and hygiene, the greatest gaps in Kachin camps are related to hygiene promotion, access to handwashing stations and menstrual hygiene.¹⁸ There are still gaps in coverage of water points and access to latrines, but far fewer than before. There are still concerns of the risk of violence that women and girls face when using the facilities.¹⁹ The DHS survey found that 20 per cent of children under five had diarrhoea in the previous two weeks, which is double the national prevalence.

¹³ Women's needs assessment in IDP camps in Kachin State, GEN, 2013.

¹⁴ Multi-Sector Early Recovery Assessment of Kachin and northern Shan State, UNDP & KMSS, Dec 2015

¹⁵ Durable Peace Programme, Myanmar, 2018

¹⁶ Durable Peace Programme, Myanmar, 2018

¹⁷ Women's needs assessment in IDP camps in Kachin State, GEN, 2013.

¹⁸ WaSH Cluster Dashboard, 2017

¹⁹ Women's needs assessment in IDP camps in Kachin State, GEN, 2013.



Conflict, poverty, lack of employment opportunities, discrimination, gender disparity and a lack of women's empowerment are factors that are known to contribute to the high prevalence of chronic malnutrition in children aged under five, and poor nutrition-related practices.

A combination of the lack of meaningful occupations, lack of privacy, and prolonged stay in camps is affecting the psychological wellbeing of the population as a whole.²⁰ The mental health of the household and especially the mother is an essential part of being able to provide appropriate nutrition and care practices and to avoid or overcome infant feeding challenges.

Poor nutrition, stigma and discrimination, poverty and economic stress are all psychosocial stressors²¹ and can be associated with an increase in violence and the risk of trafficking.²²

In addition to the afore mentioned Access to Health Fund programmes, nutrition interventions to date have centred on the IDP camps, providing infant and young child (IYCF) nutrition education and cooking demonstrations, distribution of micronutrient powders (Sprinkles), food aid and cash transfers linked to livelihoods and emergency relief.

MSN PAN is the national plan which will be used as the guiding framework, working with Government of the Union of Myanmar, EHO and CSOs. The initial focus of the MoHS for Kachin is the roll-out of the Community IYCF package to be delivered by basic health staff.

Livelihoods and access to decent job opportunities

The employment and income opportunities for IDPs are dependent on where they are located, the economic situation of host communities, and resources available, especially land for agriculture. Prior to displacement, the majority of men and women conducted farming activities: cultivating crops, fruit trees, nuts and spices. Some men worked in pig and chicken farms in China and developed skills associated with intensive livestock production systems. The traditional farming systems were based on shifting cultivation especially in remote mountainous areas. Men also undertook off-farm activities that included working in the mining sector (i.e. gold and jade mines) and as traders, drivers, managing rice mills, raising livestock and oil seed production. Women also participated in farming activities: raising and selling small farm animals (i.e. pigs, chickens and small ruminants etc.), producing edible oil and liquid soap, and selling vegetables, dry food and clothes within their villages.²³

In early 2017, the Joint Strategy Team (JST) assessment in areas affected by recent displacement found that 76 per cent of non-government controlled areas (NGCA) and 62 per cent of government controlled areas (GCA) IDPs reported that conflict affected their livelihoods in the two months preceding the survey. Overall, 70 per cent of IDPs are unable to meet their daily needs due to financial constraints. Only 9 per cent of NGCA and 40 per cent of GCA IDPs reported access to functioning markets, with lack of security being the major barrier.²⁴

In general, livelihoods in Kachin are characterised by seasonal casual employment. People from host villages are equally affected by the difficult labour market characteristics, although lower levels of economic vulnerability are experienced when they have land and productive assets to fall back on.

²⁰ Multi-Sector Early Recovery Assessment of Kachin and northern Shan State, UNDP & KMSS, Dec 2015

²¹ Mental health and psychosocial problems among conflict-affected children in Kachin State, Myanmar: a qualitative study, Lee et al. *Conflict and Health* (2018) 12:39

²² Women's needs assessment in IDP camps in Kachin State, GEN, 2013

²³ Market research and alternative livelihoods options for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kachin and Northern Shan State, DRC 2017

²⁴ Joint Strategy Team. April 2017. Rapid Assessment Findings



While many women are involved in income-generating activities, few men in IDP camps have regular daily work in spite of efforts to seek opportunities in surrounding host areas. Many have no marketable skills beyond manual labour. When work is obtained, IDPs are often paid a lower wage than the host communities.²⁵

According to UNDP research conducted in Kachin in 2017, more than two-thirds of the IDP households surveyed had less than MMK 100,000 (USD 74) income per month, including over one-quarter with less than MMK 50,000 (USD 37) per month. Less than one-quarter had a household income of between MMK 100,000 and MMK 200,000 (USD 74-USD 148) per month. There was a much higher proportion of IDP households at the lowest household income levels than non-IDP households. The primary sources of IDP respondents' household income were casual labour (45 per cent), daily wages (22 per cent) and agriculture (10 per cent).²⁶ The DPP end line survey found that the economic situation of IDPs had substantially deteriorated over the past three years, and there was acute inequality between IDPs, highlighting the extreme vulnerability of the poorest IDPs. This is particularly evident when considering a breakdown of income, food savings and monetary savings. Female IDPs are worse off than male IDPs.

The current situation may in part be the consequence of a range of drivers that include:

- the impacts of the escalating conflict
- restrictions in the delivery of humanitarian assistance
- a suppressed cash economy for IDPs in NGCAs, and
- economic disruption for non-IDPs and IDPs in GCAs, including difficulties in the movement of goods, and labour market saturation.

The lack and loss of livelihoods exacerbates broader social problems, specifically drug abuse, domestic violence, human trafficking and forced and early marriage. Without appropriate safe means to generate incomes, women are unable to meet their family's basic needs or protect themselves against shocks, illness, death, natural disaster or conflict. Women often face a trade-off between their protection and livelihoods needs as they face risks of trafficking while actively seeking employment.

In most families, women bear the major responsibility for taking care of family members, including children, elderly people and sick people, and often report feeling overwhelmed by their situation.

Most women interviewed in one survey were deeply worried about interruptions to school education and the lack of possibilities for their children to develop during their stay in the camps²⁷.

Women perceive different livelihood opportunities for unmarried women, who are able to work outside the camp, and for married women with children, who need flexibility to coordinate a livelihood with housework and the care of children. Income is needed to provide tuition for their children²⁸.

Local NGOs have begun several programmes to address the lack of livelihoods, including skills training in carpentry, mechanics, and sewing, establishing standing gardens (stacked in bamboo shelves that take up less space), and greenhouse projects that can supplement, if not fulfill, food needs. Other smaller projects are teaching IDPs basket weaving, soap making, and wine making. These efforts are, at times, promising but have been unable to reach the scale needed to fill the

²⁵ Interviews with IDPs during LIFT scoping mission

²⁶ UNDP Access to Justice and Informal Justice Systems Research KACHIN STATE, 2017

²⁷ Life on hold: Experiences of women displaced by conflict in Kachin State, Myanmar, Trocaire Oxfam, 2017

²⁸ Market research and alternative livelihoods options for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kachin and Northern Shan State, DRC-DGG



significant gap in livelihood opportunities.²⁹ Almost none of these had an impact on employment or creation of sustainable businesses, mainly due to the lack of complementary initiatives such as market assessments, skills training, start-up kits, cash for business investments, financial literacy and business planning training.³⁰ Other reasons for the limited impact are that the trainings are too basic, recipients are not sufficiently skilled to compete with existing market actors, and lack an understanding of market demands. There is a need for stronger and more effective vocational trainings, especially for youth. Considering the current opportunities and constraints in most camps, there is a need for a strong focus on building human capital through skills/vocational training to facilitate the transition from subsistence livelihood strategies to sustainable livelihood strategies and rebuild household asset holdings.

A pilot apprenticeship programme implemented by Solidarités International in Bhamo Township has shown high employability of participants. Youth were supported for four to five months with skills training in businesses and provided with transport, lunch allowances and monthly monitoring from the organisation.

The Governmental Technical High Schools (GTHS) of Bhamo and Myitkyina townships have recently facilitated short skills development courses for IDPs at night and during holiday periods so adult IDPs can learn while they maintain their day jobs.³¹

Access to financial resources

Financial service providers remain very limited in Kachin and northern Shan, although the situation keeps evolving rapidly with new providers (in particular for electronic transfers) continuing to widen their network of agents. Access to microfinance institutions (MFIs) for IDPs is also limited in Kachin with the exception of VisionFund Myanmar, supported by LIFT. MFIs can play an important role in rebuilding and restarting local economies disrupted due to disasters, conflict and violence. Customising existing financial services, including digital financial services for women to meet the demands of IDPs is an important component of LIFT's Financial Inclusion Programme. LIFT expects that projects under the Access to Finance call for proposals will collaborate closely with the technical assistance provided from this call for proposals.

Migration and human trafficking

The 2014 National Census found that Kachin State had the third highest net positive migration in the country after Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw, meaning that Kachin State has gained about 140,000 people through internal migration. The census counted nearly 240,000 internal migrants who have moved to Kachin, the majority of whom came from Sagaing, Mandalay and Shan. Kachin overall gained more male population than female through migration at the ratio of 54:46. However, the male-female ratios vary between different migration corridors. For instance, more men from Rakhine migrated to Kachin than women, while more women migrated from Shan to Kachin than men.

Of approximately 100,000 persons from Kachin who migrated to elsewhere in the country, the majority migrated to Mandalay, Yangon and Sagaing. Contrary to in-migrants, more women migrated out of Kachin to other parts of Myanmar than men at the male-female ratio of 40:60.

²⁹ Suffering in Shadows: Aid Restrictions and Reductions Endanger Displaced Person in Northern Myanmar, refugees International field report, December 2017

³⁰ Market research and alternative livelihoods options for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kachin and Northern Shan State, DRC 2017

³¹ Market research and alternative livelihoods options for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kachin and Northern Shan State, DRC 2017



The main reasons for migration are to follow family and find employment, which is consistent with migrants from other states and regions. However, migrants from Kachin were more likely to migrate for education (6 per cent compared to 2 per cent nationally) and conflict (5 per cent as opposed to 1 per cent nationally).

The data suggests that migration can be one of the main reasons why Kachin State is the only state/region in Myanmar where there are more men than women at the ratio of 52:48.

International migration

From the census data, out-migration from Kachin does not appear to be significant in numbers – it comprises only 1 per cent of the total Myanmar nationals living abroad. Of those, 43 per cent are in Thailand, followed by China (29 per cent) and Malaysia (13 per cent). However, the census was not able to reach 97 villages affected by conflict. These villages were located in Mansi, Lwegel and Momauk Townships. These townships are in Bhamo District from where 69 per cent of reported international migrants are in China (as opposed to 29 per cent for all reported international migrants from Kachin), and it is suspected that that migration of people from Kachin to China is underrepresented in the census data.³²

The other notable finding from the census report is that among international migrants to China, 55 per cent of them had migrated in the last 15 months, compared to 30 per cent of migrants to all destinations. This suggests that migration to China is a more recent trend.

Due to limited reliable employment, many youth in Kachin migrate to other places, especially China and the jade mines. This results in a temporary decline in labour supply for local production as well as remittances for source families. Most have to accept unskilled jobs in agriculture, mining, construction and plantations.³³ Labour exploitation, including underpaying, or refusing to pay IDP labourers, is frequently noted. Labour migration to gold and jade mining areas has become a key source of cash income for many households, including among the displaced population. Addiction to drugs including heroin and opium, which are cheap and produced in the area, is common among mine workers.

In the Joint Strategy Team's protection and needs assessment of current displacement in Kachin, IDPs expressed their concerns regarding human trafficking, recruitment of child soldiers, violence against women and children.³⁴ NGO workers who focus on women cite a high risk of human trafficking for women who seek work in China.³⁵ In the case of human trafficking to China, victims tend to be from Kachin and northern Shan. Most of the victims are women, who are usually trafficked to the Yunnan Province in China as sex workers or as 'brides for sale'. These 'brides' are sold to unmarried men in Chinese rural areas and are often forcibly married and subjected to domestic violence and exploitation (Blanchard, 2007).³⁶ Focus group discussion³⁷ with women's organisations in Kachin highlighted that, some internally displaced girls and young women were trafficked, but there were no data available on the extent. Some of them work at night as

³² IOM analysis of Census data. LIFT and IOM consultations in preparation of the CfP.

³³ *Suffering in Shadows: Aid Restrictions and Reductions Endanger Displaced Person in Northern Myanmar*, refugees International field report, December 2017

³⁴ Joint Strategy Team, April 2017

³⁵ *Suffering in Shadows: Aid Restrictions and Reductions Endanger Displaced Person in Northern Myanmar*, refugees International field report, December 2017

³⁶ *Human trafficking and ethnic minority problems in Myanmar, Policy recommendations for Myanmar and neighbouring states*. Seunghyun Han, 2017

³⁷ LIFT field visit in Kachin, September 2018



entertainment workers in karaoke bars³⁸ and can be trafficked into sex work. The Chinese market for girls and women is reported to have grown in recent years as a result of the gender disparity resulting from China's one-child policy.³⁹

Research by the Freedom Fund identifies that as many as 15 per cent of girls who seek work in China, and hence make themselves vulnerable to trafficking for forced marriage, do so in order to obtain cash to continue their schooling.⁴⁰ Additionally, community groups in Kachin suggest that the impoverishment of families in the IDP camps is a major cause of families trafficking their own daughters.

Restrictions on international access to non-government controlled areas prevent further protection-specific expertise working on these challenges. Local NGOs are teaching awareness of trafficking risks in IDP camps and villages, and have set up at least one safe house for trafficked women. But greater support for such efforts is needed as trafficking remains a too common risk.⁴¹

Migration and human trafficking is identified by informants as one of the issues that affects IDPs and host communities alike; however there is limited safe migration support or access to information on trafficking and migration issues.⁴²

Land-tenure security

Resource management and rights to natural resources including land, forests, fish stocks, and minerals are fundamental to rural livelihoods and food security, and to the economy of Kachin and Shan States. They are also a key aspect of the ongoing peace processes given the close links between local-level conflict tensions and natural resources in many conflict-affected parts of Myanmar. The vast majority of people from rural communities across Kachin engage in agriculture, including shifting cultivation and community forestry. While formal titling of farmland is progressing, much land, including that forcibly abandoned by IDPs, is not titled but under customary land tenure arrangements. Land in some part of the state is under the administrative control of the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), but most is formally under the control of, and administered by, the Government of Myanmar within the national legal framework.⁴³

Myanmar's current legislative framework on land, including the *Farmland Law* and the *Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Land Law*, came into force in 2012. It is said to have facilitated land grabs by large-scale agribusinesses rather than protecting small farmers, as it only recognises formal land rights and not customary tenure. The Durable Peace Programme (DPP) baseline survey found that among non-IDPs in Kachin, the fear of losing land and resources is a concern that requires a concerted response. Respondents viewed companies and illegal logging as the primary sources of this threat. This will likely be a major issue for IDPs when/if they start returning home⁴⁴. Kachin has been subject to several waves of large scale acquisition in recent years, with actors motivated by its mineral and forest resources, as well as its strong agricultural potential and proximity to the Chinese market.

³⁸ Karaoke TV Bars

³⁹ Frontier Myanmar, December 2017

⁴⁰ Myanmar Child and Forced Marriage Hotspot Program Strategy, The Freedom Fund, Feb 2016

⁴¹ *Suffering in Shadows: Aid Restrictions and Reductions Endanger Displaced Person in Northern Myanmar*, refugees International field report, December 2017

⁴² LIFT Consultation in Kachin, September 2018

⁴³ *Displaced and Dispossessed – conflict –affected communities and their land of origin in Kachin State*, Durable Peace Programme, May 2018

⁴⁴ Durable Peace Programme Consortium. 2016. *In Brief: Baseline Findings. Durable Peace Programme in Kachin*, June/July 2016.



The growing agribusiness industry competes for arable land, often dispossessing farmers and resulting in a shift to mono-cropping of cash crops, especially the Chinese tissue banana. The widespread use of agricultural inputs and chemicals has led to high yields, but also increased soil erosion and the incidence of pesticide poisoning. The State's Department of Agriculture recognises work safety, appropriate use of chemicals, and safe water use as issues in the Kachin agriculture sector emerging from land grabbing that need to be addressed in a larger legal and regulatory framework.

Safeguarding customary land rights is a critical issue in Kachin and northern Shan States, and land reallocation and appropriation are relevant contributors to grievance and conflict. In these regions, land is far more than an economic asset. Land has social and cultural significance and is a key source of identity⁴⁵. There are many instances of IDPs' land of origin being appropriated for extraction of natural resources, small- and large-scale agriculture, civilian habitation and other purposes. Loss of land seems common, but the full extent of the problem is difficult to assess due to access restrictions preventing more thorough investigation.

IDPs say they have a distinct lack of access to land-related information and justice mechanisms. This is partly because of their isolation in camps, and partly because the majority of displacement in Kachin occurred in 2011, before the land laws were enacted. In camps, IDPs report that they have limited exposure to the details of the land laws and it is difficult to access relevant legal information and engage with local authorities. When disputes or complaints arise, IDPs indicate they often do not know who to turn to or do not have the resources to assert their land rights.⁴⁶ Despite many farmers being vocal about what has happened in their communities and presenting their land claims and documentation⁴⁷ of the issues to the relevant authorities, there is still a lack of concrete action in Kachin.

Many stories of internally displaced women centre on the loss of their land, property and other assets they had before the conflict reignited in 2011.⁴⁸

The current land laws and government land registration procedures do not consider sufficiently the rights of women to land: regressive attitudes towards land ownership and titling often mean that women do not share the same ownership over land or property as men, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities created by a deteriorating humanitarian context.⁴⁹ There is a need to build mechanisms that are supportive of women's access to land and broader women's involvement in local decision making processes regarding natural resource management.

Women's situation

Women's participation in decision making and management within IDP settings is limited. Although there is some representation on the camp management committees it is reported that men mainly lead decision making. The end line survey of DPP suggested there was a marginal increase in joint decision making but this was not accompanied by a reduction in 'men only' decision making. As part of a women's needs assessment in 14 camps in Kachin, women identified a number of high priority practical needs such as sanitary wear, clean water, electricity and nutritious foods. There were also a number of mental health concerns raised such as 'shame' at being an IDP and not being able to carry

⁴⁵ Displaced and Dispossessed – conflict –affected communities and their land of origin in Kachin State, Durable Peace Programme, May 2018

⁴⁶ Displaced and Dispossessed – conflict –affected communities and their land of origin in Kachin State, Durable Peace Programme, May 2018

⁴⁷ Waimaw township, documentation of 10,000 acres under Chinese banana tissue culture plantations, Metta

⁴⁸ Life on hold Experiences of women displaced by conflict in Kachin State, Myanmar, Trocaire Oxfam, 2017

⁴⁹ Trócaire and Oxfam (2017). Life on Hold: Experiences of women displaced by conflict in Kachin State, Myanmar.



out their responsibilities as a wife and mother, sadness at what had been left behind and fear of violence and trafficking. Shame and sadness were two attributes the male respondents also reported. Women identified three occasions when they felt the threat of violence was increased: 1) when they were in their dwelling; this was perceived to be as a result of alcohol consumption, overcrowding or being left alone while parents worked; 2) while visiting the toilet or bathrooms that were unlit with no separation between men's and women's, and 3) when travelling outside the camp, which limits them accessing work and training opportunities. Domestic violence, and acceptance of domestic violence, appears to have increased, according to the DPP report; however, it is not clear to what extent this may be due to increased awareness and reporting.

Women in the camps report carrying out a lot of unpaid work, aside from reproductive and household responsibilities. This includes cleaning toilets, camp administration, distribution of aid and vegetable growing for camp consumption. In non-government controlled area (NGCA) camps 16 per cent of women reported having volunteer jobs. Income generation activities are generally casual, daily labour on nearby banana, sugar cane, coffee or corn plantations, which are seasonal and unpredictable. In host communities, around 14 per cent of women are employed in the agriculture sector compared to 6 per cent in NGCA and 7 per cent in GCA camps. In host villages, 44 per cent of women had no income for the past 12 months compared to 29 per cent in NGCA and 21 per cent in government controlled area (GCA) camps. For men, women and youth the lack of employment opportunities can contribute to poor psycho-social wellbeing and are risk factors for depression, negative child care practices, violence within the family and trafficking.

LIFT is strongly committed to contributing to greater gender equality and women's empowerment through all its projects and programmes. Gender sensitivity means that in each action and process, gender norms and roles, and the impact gender has on access to, and control over, resources are considered and addressed. **See Annex 3: LIFT Guidelines on gender sensitivity for proposals**

2.2 Interventions

The programme will seek to reduce poverty and vulnerabilities identified by three levels of intervention:

- a) **At household level**, LIFT will seek to empower women and children in both displaced and host communities in Kachin and northern Shan States through improved nutrition, skills and financial services to increase and diversify their livelihood options and future productivity;
- b) **At community level**, LIFT will seek to build positive relationships between displaced and host communities by consistent inclusion of the two groups in programming and by bringing different communities together over shared resources and interests, reducing inequalities in incomes and livelihood opportunities thereby enhancing social cohesion;
- c) **At a systemic/policy level**, LIFT will apply lessons and generate evidence on relevant policy issues such as land, migration, human trafficking, development programming and inclusiveness, in conflict-affected areas, to inform the development of improved policies and public expenditure decisions of the Government of Myanmar and non-state actors, in these states.

The programme will support a humanitarian to development transition by backing durable solutions in support of longer term economic development and nutrition. In design of projects, strong consideration of conflict sensitivity, social cohesion and advances in nutritional status of women and children is needed. The programme prioritises four main components:

- 1) Improved nutritional status, particularly of women and children, in both camps and host communities



- 2) Enhanced opportunities for skills development and job matching services for IDPs in camps and all members of host communities
- 3) Safe migration and anti-trafficking support, particularly for women and girls being trafficked for forced marriage
- 4) Equitable and safe land access and tenure rights

LIFT's Financial Inclusion Programme, will support the programme by expanding the provision of financial services in the states, including customised financial services for IDPs. Services delivered to internally displaced people will also be available to the host communities to ensure that trust is built and social cohesion fostered.

Proposals can include interventions for one or more of the components.

In addition, all proposals should support the implementation of LIFT's four cross-cutting strategies: gender equality and women's empowerment, private sector engagement, supporting people with disability and conflict sensitivity.

The context analysis above is based on available data and partners will need to conduct further context analysis, specific to conflict-affected areas, to inform project design.

Component 1: Nutrition

The main barriers to improved nutrition outcomes for mothers and children relate to income, knowledge and awareness, access and availability. A lack of access to services prohibits early detection of acute malnutrition amongst the most vulnerable and limits antenatal care - essential actions to improving nutrition outcomes in the first 1,000 days and reducing stunting. Interventions that support increased knowledge and practice through social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) need to be designed along with components that address issues of income under the components 2 (livelihoods) and 3 (safe migration). Women's empowerment interventions to address some of the underlying causes of poor nutrition outcomes should be included in order to challenge norms and misconceptions, improve control over assets and the decision-making roles of women.

Linkages between nutrition activities and other components of this call should be made.

Activities may include:

- **Social and Behaviour Change Communication** approaches to improve access to, and engagement with, information on nutrition and hygiene practices, targeting mothers and key influencers, and linking with existing and imminent services and programmes supported as part of the MS-NPAN.
 - Nutrition – M-IYCF
 - Psychosocial support
 - Hygiene promotion
 - Support for adolescent girls including nutrition, menstrual health and women's empowerment
- Improve **linkages to services** in hard-to-reach areas and support demand generation for nutrition-related services, including community-based approaches to increasing access to treatment of **acute malnutrition**, specifically with households affected by disability. Work with the Access to Health Fund, maternal and new-born child health/sexual reproductive



health and rights/harm reduction organisations to address specific nutrition-related needs of adolescents, the excluded and vulnerable.

- **Fortified foods:** the exploration and feasibility of using locally fortified foods to respond to specific micronutrient gaps in vulnerable populations.
- **Women's empowerment and youth engagement** working with progressive and innovative women's organisations and partners, ensuring both men and women are targeted, to improve women's decision making, control of assets, and reducing risk of gender-based violence and trafficking.

Component 2: Livelihoods and access to decent job opportunities

The level of education and training among the displaced populations limits their access to employment opportunities and their ability to develop new businesses to serve their own and host communities. There is a need to equip these communities with life and livelihood skills through effective vocational training. The development of these skills needs to be substantive and, when possible, based on certification processes acknowledged by government. The component should be designed with a mid- to long-term outlook in order to facilitate the transition from subsistence livelihood strategies to sustainable livelihood strategies. The type of skills or activities should be based on the local conditions and contexts for each camp e.g. urban skills in case of protracted displacement in camps located in towns, with a focus on the integration of young people into employment; and skills transferrable to rural areas. Interventions should take into consideration the specific needs of people with disabilities/landmine victims.

Activities may include:

- **Diagnosis** of the skills and jobs demanded in the targeted areas (local and migrant employment), and of the business and livelihood opportunities. The identification of job opportunities must take into consideration and disaggregate specific needs, and the condition of, women, men, youth, migrants and persons with disability/landmine victims.
- **Development of new skills** and vocational training offerings for camp residents and host communities that will provide trainees with sufficient marketable skills to obtain a job or start a business. Integral parts of skills development are **job matching services** with private sector employers to support job placement in conditions of decent work.
- **Collaboration** with government-related technical and education institutions with specific attention to inclusion of IDPs. This collaboration should result in the official acknowledgement of the training certificates by government. Skills development activities should support plans of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) to resettle IDPs with appropriate vocational skills.
- **Linkages with financial inclusion:** Selected projects from this call need to collaborate and share information with LIFT-funded financial inclusion projects. This is particularly important for the work with displaced people and women/girls at risk of trafficking. The support from the financial inclusion partners includes loans for business development, mother-daughter's financial products, as well as relevant training for the microfinance institutions' loans officers.

Component 3: Safe migration and anti-trafficking

The reality of unsafe migration, labour exploitation and trafficking, particularly of girls and young women in Kachin and northern Shan States, requires specific attention to diminish the risks. Hence LIFT will support programmes and projects that expand access to information, services and peer support.



Activities may include:

- **Research**, including sectoral research into working conditions and forced labour in mining and sex work, migration profiles for Kachin State and international migration to China for work and marriage
- Information access and **service development** on safe migration, labour rights and options for legal assistance in cases of abuse and human trafficking.
- **Capacity development**, particularly for civil society (community-based organisations as well as township or state based organisations) on safe migration and promotion of the rights of women and children, among the host community and displaced populations.
- **Cooperation**, build cross-border cooperation and linked services for migrants and survivors of trafficking between Myanmar and China.
- **Advocacy** support to civil society, labour organisations, women's groups and other networks to engage locally, regionally and nationally on migration and trafficking policy issues that affect them, including with parliamentarians.

Component 4: Equitable and safe land access and tenure rights

From the perspective of small-scale farming in Kachin and northern Shan State, the programme will seek to promote better resource management and dispute resolution at the local level and in policy formulation. The programme is supportive of activities developing formal recognition for local customary law and the protection of individual household and community livelihood assets.

Activities may include:

- **Research** to better understand the dynamics of land tenure in Kachin and northern Shan, including quantitative analysis, examination of customary tenure systems, and work with landless, migrants, IDPs.
- **Capacity development**, particularly for civil society and community-based organisations and local administrations, on land tenure security and promotion of land rights with a focus on women's access to land and broader involvement of women in local decision making processes regarding natural resource management.
- **Support** to actors providing legal services, and awareness on land issues to individuals and communities affected by loss of land due to conflict.
- **Encouraging women's empowerment**, including by directly supporting women paralegals to represent women's interest in land disputes.
- **Cooperation** and engagement in building meaningful cross-border cooperation and dialogue with private and public sector entities to ensure that agricultural development and transformation in the target areas is undertaken in a transparent, ethical and environmentally-sustainable manner. This should be in compliance with Myanmar's governance structures and aligned with the Equator Principles and corporate social responsibility agendas.
- **Advocacy**, support to the development of capacity of local agencies, community groups and networks to engage locally, regionally and nationally on land issues, including with parliamentarians and authorities.

2.3 Target groups and geographical distribution

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and host communities in Kachin and northern Shan are the main target for the programme: IDPs may be either inside or outside of camps. IDPs include persons, households and communities who face a history of regular displacement (either permanent or temporary) and who seek the security necessary to stabilise and improve their wellbeing. The



programme also targets the receiving communities to help them to manage the influx of new villagers, to support the development of the host communities and expand villages' services and facilitate the newcomers' integration.

A key factor for selecting interventions will be the partner's legitimacy to operate in the area rather than a specific location.

The programme will target areas where IDPs are currently located in number, and access is allowed for LIFT operation. In Kachin, most IDPs have been living in camps for over five years. The camps are mostly located around Myitkyina and Bahmo, Mansi Momauk and Waingmau townships. In northern Shan, camps are located mostly in the Kutkai region. In the Palaung area, IDPs have taken refuge with families in more secure villages rather than in camps.⁵⁰

LIFT will ensure the programme design and interventions contribute to improving the livelihoods and nutrition outcomes of people in conflict-affected areas, while taking precaution not to contribute unintended negative impacts on society. In both Kachin and northern Shan, dialogue at local level between ethnic groups and governments is still limited and does not follow the pace of the discussions at union level. Trust building will need to be the priority in establishing project activities in these areas. **See Annex 5: LIFT Conflict sensitivity Principles**

3. Data collection

Proposals must demonstrate a firm commitment to disaggregated data collection to allow the projects and programme to be analysed in line with the requirements in LIFT's Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework [here](#).

4. Partnerships

Partnership quality will be a key consideration during the evaluation of the proposals. Applicants should demonstrate that their organisation and proposed partners have relevant expertise and a proven approach based on evidence from the field.

Given the high conflict sensitivity of the context, LIFT will favour partners that can demonstrate sufficient contextual understanding, including of the local institutional structure and key government departments, Non-State Armed Groups and Civil Society stakeholders. Identified partners should have already built trusted relationships with relevant local stakeholders and have interventions that are supportive of local institutions, whether formal or informal.

Note that there is no obligation to submit a proposal in partnership with other organisations, however LIFT encourages applicants to identify synergies in the services they provide and form partnerships where appropriate. LIFT acknowledges that local level partnerships are likely to be an advantage in the context given the diverse and often sensitive stakeholder environment involved.

International organisations with no presence in the target areas, but with relevant and demonstrated expertise in one of more of the programme components are encouraged to consider capacity building initiatives and technical backstopping for other partners operating in the field.

5. Funding allocation

The provisional allocation for LIFT's work in Kachin and northern Shan States is set up to USD 9 million.

The allocations detailed below are estimates and could change as the programme takes shape

⁵⁰ Sources: CCCM cluster partners, UNHCR, other humanitarian organizations & MIMU. January 2018



Programme component	Allocation
Component 1: Nutrition	USD 3 million
Component 2: Livelihood/decent work	USD 4 million
Component 3: Safe migration and anti-trafficking	USD 1 million
Component 4: Land tenure security	USD 1 million
Total	USD 9 million

6. Requirements for proposal submission

Key documents shared as part of this document for the preparation of submissions are:

- a) Annex 1: Format and requirements for proposals
- b) Annex 2: Evaluation criteria to be used by the evaluation committee
- c) Annex 3: Guidelines on gender sensitivity for proposals
- d) Annex 4: Guidelines on Value for Money
- e) Annex 5: Conflict sensitivity principles

Please note the following requirements for submissions:

- Proposals must be prepared in the English language according to the format requirement presented in Annex 1.
- Proposals must include a technical proposal and a financial proposal.
- Proposals must be received by email at the following address:

lift.proposals.mmoh@unops.org on the date and time indicated below. Please do not submit your proposal to any email address other than the email address provided above or your proposal may be at risk of not being considered. 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.

Clarifications: Any requests for clarification should be sent to lift@unops.org. The deadline for request for clarifications is 21 November 2018. Clarifications will be provided on the LIFT website: <http://lift-fund.org/> and the UN Global Marketplace website: <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice>.

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, asset management, record management and visibility

7. Proposal appraisal and selection procedures

An Evaluation Committee will complete a technical, financial and organisational capacity assessment of each proposal. As a part of its appraisal process, LIFT may elect to discuss technical, cost, or other aspects of the proposals with applicants. The selection of the proposals is carried out through two stages:

1. Appraisal by the evaluation committee:

The Evaluation Committee will appraise each proposal using all the criteria listed in this section. Proposals that do not align sufficiently with the LIFT strategy, the LIFT Gender Strategy and the thematic requirements of this call, or which have shortcomings regarding the criteria outlined in this section, will be rejected. The full appraisal and documentation of the shortlisted proposals are submitted to the LIFT Fund Board with recommendations.



2. LIFT Fund Board review:

The Fund Board will review the appraisals and provide its recommendations for endorsement and conditions of endorsement.

The endorsement of the proposal by the Fund Board is not a guarantee to receive funding until the conditions attached to the endorsement have been fulfilled and the grant support agreement is signed. LIFT reserves the right to reject a proposal after Fund Board approval if it cannot reach an agreement with the applicant for contracting. Unsuccessful applications will not be returned to the applicant.

Successful proposals will be implemented under a Grant Support Agreement for NGOs and inter-agency agreements with UN organisations with UNOPS as the LIFT Fund Manager. Please refer to the LIFT website for the template including the general terms and conditions (<https://www.lift-fund.org/guidelines>). The expected contract duration is for a maximum of three years.

8. Schedule of Events

The dates provided below are only indicative. The Evaluation Committee may follow a quicker or a longer timeframe for the appraisal of the proposals.

<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>
Call for Proposals release date	13 November 2018
Deadline for receipt of written inquiries	21 November 2018
Written responses distributed	23 November 2018
Proposal due date	15 January 2019 by 13:00 PM (Myanmar local time GMT+6.30)
Grant agreement negotiation / contracting	February 2019



ANNEX 1: Format and requirements for the proposal submission

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

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

Electronic submissions must not exceed 5MB in size.

The proposal must not exceed 25 pages (12 point Calibri 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 30 pages.

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 necessary for all applications. There is no obligation to follow the order of the sections below, and applicants are encouraged to make their proposal reader friendly and to avoid repetition.

Proposals must consist of the following:

Title page

Project title, name and contact of the applicant, partners, geographical area, expected project duration, start and finish dates and total budget. Note that the title page is *not* counted in the proposal page limitation.

Preamble

Include a table of contents, a list of abbreviations, a map and an executive summary. Note that these pages are *not* counted in the proposal page limitation.

Project background and rationale

Outline the origin of the concept, problem definition/rationale and context for the project. Outline how the proposed project aligns with the LIFT strategy (available on LIFT website www.lift-fund.org) and the thematic components of this call and explains how lessons from previous experiences and studies inform the design of the project.

Explain how the project aligns with the development plans/priorities of the Government of the Union of Myanmar (if not, why not), and other development partners working in the same field and/or area. Identify any gaps in the available knowledge.

Outline the results of key discussions that have taken place in preparation of the proposal, including:

- who was consulted (e.g. other development partners, government departments, NGOs, etc.)
- any issues raised pertinent to the project's rationale and design approach
- a summary of the views of other key stakeholders

Target area and stakeholder analysis

This section should describe the targeted geographical areas of the project and number of direct and indirect beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex). The distinction between direct and indirect beneficiaries should be clear.



A *project stakeholder analysis* should be included to review the key direct and indirect beneficiaries, and the organisations and individuals involved and who 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 non- state actors, 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

Project Theory of Change

A clear Theory of Change (TOC) should be presented in diagrammatic form and explained in a narrative. An actor-centred TOC is most suitable and preferred. There should be a specific statement of what the project will accomplish and what the key results are in terms of project level outcomes and outputs in a summary form.

Outcomes, outputs, activities, technical approach, methodologies and scope

The activity and methodology description needs to be sufficient to identify **what** will be done, **how** it will be done, and **where** it will be done. It should indicate **who** will do what at a broad level to explain stakeholder roles. The structure of the proposal needs to align with the workplan and budget to allow tracking analysis and value for money assessments.

This section should include consideration of relevant cross-cutting issues (gender, nutrition, human rights and the environment). The gender issues the project intends to address should be reflected in the activities and the project TOC.

A work plan should be presented in graphical (spreadsheet or table, preferably in 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 months for each step and key deliverables. Provide as much detail as necessary to understand the implementation process. The work plan should align with the ToC and budget and 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.

Risks and mitigation

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/operational 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. Include key assumptions on which the proposal is based.

Cross-cutting issues (gender, nutrition, environment, do-no-harm)

Cross-cutting issues like gender, nutrition, do-no-harm need to be considered in the proposal. The gender issues that the project intends to address should be reflected in the activities and the project TOC. See annex 3 for details about inclusion of gender considerations in the proposal.

Nutrition (especially the reduction of stunting in children through a focus on the first 1,000 days window) is an important cross-cutting issue for LIFT that needs to be included in project implementation. For more information about what LIFT is doing to reduce stunting and improve nutrition see the LIFT website.



The proposal has to show that the proposed interventions do not harm the target group or any other stakeholders to the project.

Monitoring and evaluation for accountability and learning (MEAL) management

This section should follow the guidelines provided in LIFT's MEAL guidelines <https://www.lift-fund.org/monitoring-and-evaluation-learning-and-accountability-meal-guidelines-ips-upcoming-proposals-and>. During the inception period all projects need to provide a complete MEAL Framework including three main components: (1) a project Theory of Change; (2) project evaluation and learning questions; and (3) a project Measurement Plan⁵¹. For the proposal submission only the project Theory of Change and the Measurement Plan are required.

Projects need to establish an appropriate project baseline and conduct an endline survey to support the final evaluation.

Organisational background of the applying organisations

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 community-based organisation, national NGO, international NGO, research or training institution?
- Organisational approach (philosophy), purpose and core activities of the organisation, and relevant experience.
- Length of existence and legal status. The applying organisation and partners should have the appropriate authority to carry out the project in Myanmar.
- Expertise mobilised from within and outside the organisation.
- A description of partnerships, how long they have been in place and for what purpose.
- An explanation of previous or existing activities in the target area and what working relationships are in place with government and non-state actors.

Staffing

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).

How the expertise required for project implementation will be made available should be explained (i.e. from within the organisation, through external consultancy, and partnerships) along with a description of implementation roles. LIFT encourages gender balance in the project team composition.

⁵¹ A measurement plan replaces LIFT's previous use of project logframes and identifies the project outcomes, outputs, indicators, targets, milestones and means of verification. A template is available in the MEAL Guideline, which is on the LIFT website.



Partnerships

Explain who the partners are, how they have been identified, what their specific expertise is, what their contribution is to be and how the relationships between the partners will be managed throughout the project. The section should explain what the governance and coordination arrangements are, and how the project will maximise local ownership. The lead applicant should provide a brief assessment of the institutional, organisational and technical capacities of partners and how the project will strengthen their capacities, including:

- institutional, organisational and technical support to, and capacity building of, local partners
- identify budget allocation between partners, including for indirect costs (see below)
- contractual relationships and coordination/decision-making systems
- organisational chart including links between partners

If a partner is not full time on the project, please provide a schedule for their inputs.

The lead applicant should submit in an annex to the proposal a letter signed by the proposed partners stating that they have contributed to the project design, are willing to collaborate with the applicant and that they agree to enter into an agreement if the proposal is successful.

Project budget and value for money

A realistic budget is an important part of developing and implementing a successful project. The proposal budget should include a detailed breakdown of costs. The budget template available on the LIFT website must be used <https://www.lift-fund.org/budget-initial>. The budget breakdown should clarify the total allocated budget for each component that the project will contribute to. The budget breakdown should align with the ToC and the workplan.

The following important principles should be kept in mind in preparing a project budget:

- Include only costs that directly relate to efficiently carrying out the activities and producing the outputs and outcomes, which are set out 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 gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation.
- Indirect costs are allowable up to six per cent 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.). The narrative detailed assumptions should not repeat the budget figures but explain your assumptions when calculating the figures in the budget.
- Costs incurred at headquarters outside Myanmar will be only considered in exceptional cases and if directly related to the project.



Financial and technical proposals should be sufficiently linked with the ToC and work plan to conduct value-for-money (VfM) assessments of the project during implementation. A lot of the value for money assessments during the implementation will depend on realistic planning and well managed implementation.

Proposals that demonstrate that LIFT's funds will leverage other funds, as well as proposals that demonstrate multiplier effects or clear progress towards financial sustainability, are encouraged.

For more guidance on value for money see annex 4.



ANNEX 2: Evaluation criteria

An Evaluation Committee will appraise applications in accordance with the selection 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. If there are ambiguities/unclear explanations, or further need for details, the LIFT Evaluation Committee will seek clarification from the submitting organisation if the proposal otherwise meets the main criteria.

The Evaluation Committee will assess the following questions to justify their final appraisal:

- **Completeness:** Is the information provided in the proposal complete and sufficient for the appraisal?
- **Relevance:** Is the problem definition and rationale for the project clear and does it address a critical issue relevant to LIFT strategy?
- **Context analysis:** Is the project based on a good understanding of the context in the respective project site?
- **Stakeholder analysis:** Is there a stakeholder analysis and a clear definition of target groups? To what extent is participation of, and ownership by, key stakeholders in planning and design evident? Is it clear how the project will work with the government, non-state actors and the private sector?
- **Coherence of the design:** Is there clear outcome logic? Are the project's expected results well defined and aligned with the identified problem/needs?
- **Approach and methods:** Is the project approach and methodology innovative, feasible and appropriate? Are the methodologies based on previous experience and evidence-based knowledge? Is the idea technically feasible and likely to achieve the stated results? Does it embody good development practice and lessons?
- **Operating principles:** Is the proposed project in line with the LIFT Operational and MEAL Guidelines? How specifically does the project propose to monitor continuous alignment with the principles?
- **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?
- **Cross cutting issues:** Are relevant gender, nutrition, migration, and environment issues considered?
- **Gender sensitivity:** Does the proposal demonstrate awareness and understanding of concrete gender-related/gender-specific challenges in the project context? To what extent does the proposal strive to include women as both, equal participants and as equal beneficiaries? To what extent does the proposal plan to contribute to greater gender equality and women's empowerment? What concrete measures are proposed to address gender issues? Is gender equality/women's empowerment reflected in the proposal's TOC? Does the project plan to conduct a gender analysis at the beginning of project? Will the project collect sex-disaggregated data? Are gender-sensitive and/or gender-specific criteria integrated in monitoring and reporting systems? Refer to Annex 1 for specific guidelines and evaluation criteria for gender sensitivity. See annex 3 for more guidance.
- **Risks:** Has the proposal sufficiently considered major internal and external risks and indicated risk mitigation measures to be developed?



- **Monitoring and evaluation for accountability and learning:** Is a ToC and measurement framework provided and are they appropriate to the type and scale of the project?
- **Learning and policy dialogue:** Does the project give scope to contribute to evidence-based knowledge and policy dialogue?
- **Capacity:** Does the proposed implementing organisation and its partners have the necessary technical expertise, experience and capacity to implement the project?
- **Partnership:** What partnerships are foreseen in the proposal? Is the partnership built on long-term trust relationships? Is the governance and coordination system between stakeholders and partners appropriate? Is the role and involvement of the sub-partners clear and sound? Are the local partners likely to increase institutional, organisational and technical capacities through project implementation?

Partnership quality will be a key consideration during the evaluation of the proposals. Applicants should demonstrate that their organisation and proposed partners have relevant expertise. It is fundamental at the proposal stage that all partners involved in the project are aware of the proposal, its content and their specific responsibilities and agree on an initial agreement (financial and technical). Please also take into consideration that according to the LIFT Operational Guidelines applicants are expected to share indirect costs with their sub-partners. LIFT will favour partners that can demonstrate sufficient contextual understanding, including of the local institutional structure and key government, non-state armed groups and civil society stakeholders. Identified partners should have already built trusted relationships with relevant local stakeholders and have interventions that are supportive of local institutions, whether formal or informal. Gender-sensitivity of the partner organisations is desirable regarding both their organisational policy and their operational approach.

- **Budget:** Does the budget demonstrate value for money for the project, in particular in relation to the expected results? Is it adequate to deliver the outputs? Is there a sufficient budget dedicated to M&E, learning and capacity building? Is the budget aligned with the workplan and the ToC? Do local partners receive their share of the indirect costs? See Annex 4 for VfM guidance.



ANNEX 3: Guidelines on gender sensitivity

Why do LIFT's proposals have to be gender sensitive?

LIFT is strongly committed to contributing to greater gender equality and women's empowerment through all its projects and programmes. LIFT strives to achieve the following four outcomes related to gender:

- Increases in women's access to, and control over, resources
- Increases in women's participation in decision-making
- Increases in women's knowledge and skills
- Improved focus on gender within livelihood and food security policies⁵²

An important step to achieving these goals is to ensure gender sensitivity is considered in the formulation and planning of projects.

What does gender sensitivity mean for LIFT?

Gender sensitivity means that in each action and process, gender norms and roles, and the impact gender has on access to, and control over, resources are considered and addressed. Suggested guiding questions for assessing gender sensitivity are:

- How does the proposal attempt to address existing gender inequalities?
- How does the proposal strive to include women as both equal participants and as equal beneficiaries of the planned interventions?

Projects should not only propose equal numeric participation of female/male participants but also strive for equal quality of their participation. The latter is more difficult to assess than merely counting numbers, and often requires supportive actions to empower women e.g. gender-sensitive activities that includes men/boys to ensure that women's decision-making capacity is sustained beyond the project.

Where do LIFT's proposals have to be gender sensitive?

Gender sensitivity should be woven into all stages of projects and programmes. Every project proposal includes a mandatory section on gender where the project is required to answer the question: *"How is gender considered in the project...?"* Here, the proposal outlines the gender sensitivity, and the alignment with LIFT's gender strategy and how the proposed intervention contributes to LIFT's four gender programme outcomes stated above.

Gender should also appear explicitly in the project's ToC to reflect gender-related goals and outcomes of the project.

⁵² LIFT's Gender Strategy https://www.lift-fund.org/sites/lift-fund.org/files/uploads/Guidelines/LIFTGenderStrategy_Jan2017_FINAL.pdf



ANNEX 4: Guidance on value for money

VfM in the proposal

Value for money (VfM) begins with programme design. Project proposals should include an overall value for money statement (why the chosen interventions are better value for money than alternative approaches to address the same problem). For example, the VfM statement could include a cost-effectiveness assessment of two or more alternatives, unit-cost benchmarks, or local or international evidence that supports the chosen intervention, and the reasoning for the proposed approach in this context.

How the project will manage VfM during implementation

This guidance provides a high-level overview of VfM in the project cycle (Figure 1); a description of how the programme components are assessed for VfM (Table 1); and how the assessment of programme components is linked to the four VfM factors: economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity (Table 2).

Projects begin with inputs (grants) that are translated into goods and services necessary to implement the project. The allocation of funds for staff, equipment, services, administration, and contracting with partners for project delivery are often analysed in planning and during implementation.

Translating inputs into delivery for beneficiaries involves processes and activities that lead to outputs. VfM analysis generates evidence to manage and maintain efficient operations at this project stage. Beneficiary measurements assessing the equitable spread of outputs are also analysed. For such measures cost efficiency, unit costs, and regional variations are often analysed.

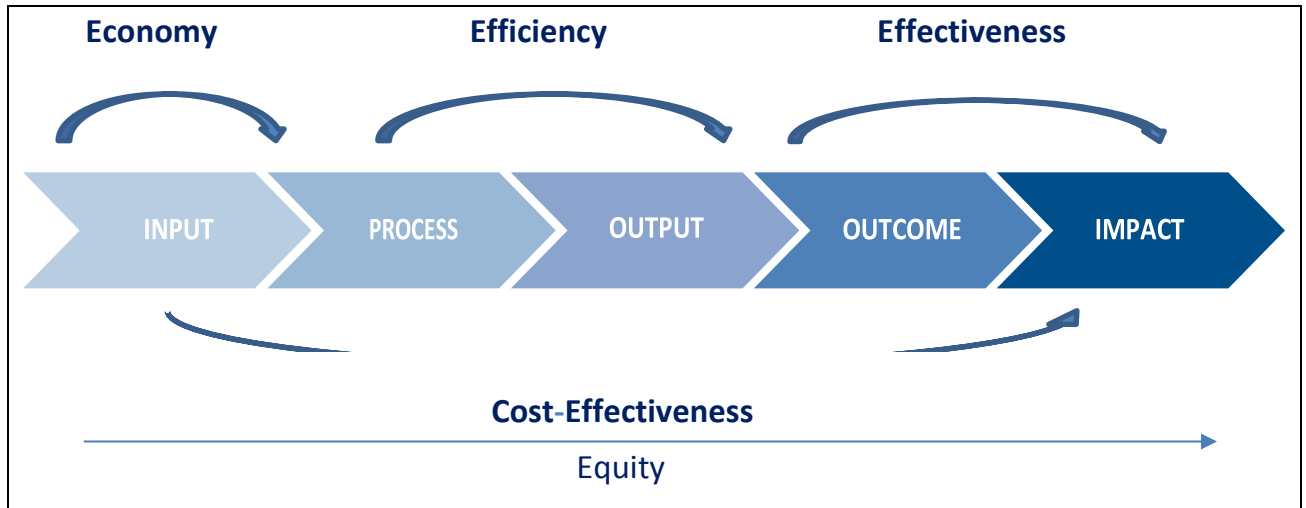
When outputs are sustained, and when there is evidence of adoption of planned results by beneficiaries, effectiveness is assessed. Effectiveness may be assessed by cost-benefit analysis of sustained results, unit-costs of outcomes, value lost or gained vs. plan, sustainability, and ultimate impact to improve the lives of beneficiaries. It should be noted that effectiveness measures are often less possible in the early stage of programming when there is less evidence of adoption and sustained results.

Equity is measured across the stages of planning and implementation. Clear plans for quantifying beneficiaries should be defined including gender disaggregation, displaced persons, disabled persons, and persons in conflict affected areas.

Figure 1, following, presents the Value for Money Project Cycle.



Figure 1: Value for money project cycle



The project cycle consists of various programme components illustrated below in Table 1 .

Table 1. Programme components

Input:	Process:	Output:	Outcome:	Impact:
HR, procurement of goods and services to accomplish project objectives, contracted deliverables. e.g. vaccines procured, contracting methods	How are inputs used for beneficiaries; strategy to accomplish project objectives; partner management e.g. plans to deliver and monitor use of vaccines	The planned results delivered for beneficiaries e.g. Number of children vaccinated	The sustained use, adoption, or benefit received by beneficiaries. e.g. children less susceptible to major childhood diseases	Long-term transformative change e.g. poverty reduced

The evaluation committee will review the project’s VfM approach for a clear plan indicating how the VfM factors (Table 2) will be measured and managed across programme components during project implementation.

Table 2. Value for money factors

Economy:	Efficiency:	Effectiveness:	Equity:
<p>What is the evidence that the purchase and contracting for goods and services is the best quality at the best price?</p> <p>What are the processes to ensure economy for the project duration?</p>	<p>What is the relationship between planned and actual results and expenditures?</p> <p>Are output targets achieved at or below budget? How will the project manage efficiency during implementation?</p>	<p>How will the project measure if the interventions are effective?</p> <p>How will the project assess the likelihood of sustainability or the needed for additional support? How will beneficiary adoption of results, and potential impact be estimated or measured? What is the exit plan when the project ends?</p>	<p>How will the project measure the equitable spread of benefits across gender, disabled persons, displaced persons, and persons in conflict areas?</p> <p>Justify whether beneficiary disaggregation will be assumed, estimated, or counted? Has the project considered the possible costs to ensure equity?</p>



To demonstrate an understanding of VfM, it may be useful to propose a limited number of measures that will be reported on regularly, the data that will be used for VfM reporting and calculations and link each measure to one (or more) VfM factor(s).

The evaluation will review how the proposed project will include VFM analysis in its strategy and planning and how the project will manage VfM during implementation. It is not necessary to propose all possible VFM metrics, though it is helpful for the project to suggest one or more metrics that will provide evidence of economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity.

Indicative approaches to VfM management for proposals

Table 3 describes some indicative appraisal criteria that LIFT’s Fund Management Office (FMO) uses for assessing VfM in proposals. If a proposal is advanced for further consideration, the VfM metrics may be further defined or revised in consultation between LIFT and the implementing partner.

Table 3. Indicative approaches to VfM in proposals

<p>Describing the VfM plan</p>	<p>The project proposal should describe how it aims to achieve or represents VfM or what the expected returns on investment are (overall or for specific project components).</p> <p><i>What are the proposed VfM metrics to address each VfM factor (economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equity)? Will the project conduct, cost performance ratio, cost-benefit analysis? Will there be transparent procurement procedures in place? How will project unit costs compare to unit costs for the same outputs in similar projects (here or globally)? Has cost bench-marking or cost-effectiveness data been presented to make the case for the project?</i></p>
<p>Alternative project approaches</p>	<p>The project approach should offer better VfM compared to other approaches (consider benchmarks where possible).</p> <p><i>Are alternative approaches offered or clear justifications outlined why specific approaches are selected? Have the expected results and financial costs of alternative approaches been considered?</i></p>
<p>Robust design</p>	<p>The proposal should outline a well-thought out design to achieve the project objectives.</p> <p><i>For example, this may include a thorough analysis of the project context and strategies for effective delivery, innovative approaches for promoting uptake or dissemination, promising technologies or delivery models, etc. What are the key aspects of the design that warranted the project’s selection? How will the project address displaced persons, persons in conflict areas, disabled persons, gender, etc.</i></p>
<p>Budget Alignment</p>	<p>The project budgets and results indicators are aligned to allow easy VfM activity/output/outcome assessment.</p> <p><i>Budget templates should be designed in a manner that enables proper alignment to the programme components on the basis of which standard VfM calculations will be performed (e.g. by 'programme outcome'). Is the budget presented to a level of detail that will allow expenditure monitoring by component, if desired?</i></p>
<p>Data collection (M&E)</p>	<p>The project M&E system (indicators and data collection plans) is set up to allow for assessment project results vs. expenditures. The M&E system should also allow VfM analysis at the project level and regional (township, state) levels and for multi-region projects. The project level VfM analysis should align with the LIFT logframe and the regional and project TOCs/results frameworks.</p> <p><i>Is it possible to determine the budgeted costs of the outputs and the activities that contribute to outputs? Does the project define data collection plans and have measurable indicators that allow for VfM assessments of outcomes? Is it possible to determine the budgeted costs of the outputs and the activities that contribute to outputs?</i></p>



Long-term benefits and sustainability	<p>What are the opportunities and challenges for long-term sustainability of the project or key project outputs/outcomes. Is the project likely to be sustainable, replicable and/or scalable (or to have significant impact on policy)?</p> <p><i>How will the project address long term sustainability? Is private sector involvement possible? Will the project seek to influence increased government funding; if so, how will this be measured by the project? Is other funding likely to follow the current project? What is the exit plan at project end?</i></p> <p><i>For example, are cost-recovery mechanisms in place? Are adequate documentation processes outlined for possible replication? Is there a plan for influencing policy? Projects that are sustainable (e.g. activities continue once funding ceases) will continue to generate benefits even though they may not be captured in a VfM assessment. Similarly, projects that are replicable or scalable will also have the potential to generate greater benefits if they inform the design of other projects or are able to have a wider reach.</i></p>
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ANNEX 5: Conflict sensitive principles

LIFT is willing to engage in conflict-affected areas or areas emerging from conflict, and in particular to support displaced people. LIFT will be intervening in new areas with a legacy of ethnic conflict, division, state failure and mistrust between stakeholders, including armed groups. LIFT will need to navigate within very complex social-political settings. In doing so, LIFT wants to adhere to the international best practices related to ‘Do No Harm’.

LIFT would like to ensure the programme design and interventions contribute to improving the livelihoods and food security and situation of people in conflict-affected areas, while taking precaution not to contribute unintended negative impacts on society. The following set of conflict sensitive principles are outlined as a basic guideline to raise awareness and guide programme and project design and implementation.

Principle 1: Understand the conflict

LIFT programme areas may be complex, and area specific analysis will be useful to understand how a community ‘works’ and to identify key stakeholders (their power and influence) and how each relates to one another and to the LIFT programme.

LIFT partners should conduct stakeholder analysis and conflict context analysis in order to understand the underlying political and socio-economic drivers of the conflict. The analysis should attempt, at a minimum, to identify key conflict drivers, conflict dynamics, capacities for tension (and violence) and for peace, and; ‘map out’ key stakeholders to determine the power relations between them (see *sample table below*).

Groups/Stakeholders	Position/Interests	Relationship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the key stakeholders/ groups present in the programme operation area? • Group based on (social, economic, religious, ethnic, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the underlying interests of key groups and individuals? • What are their hopes, concerns and fears? • Do they represent the community? • Who do they make the decisions for? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the relationships between the stakeholder groups? • What divides these groups in the area of conflict? • What brings them together? • How tensions currently are expressed?

In these analyses, the potential impact and consequences of LIFT-supported interventions on the conflict dynamics should be appraised to ensure they do no harm. It is important to keep progress in the peace process in view, and avoid pushing interventions ahead of the peace process or presuming outcomes that have not been realised.

The understanding of the context and conflict dynamic will help ensure that the livelihood programme is developing a strategy to minimise conflict impacts and maximise positive efforts across all areas, and at all levels (local, state/region, and national), of programme implementation.

Principle 2: Meaningful consultation with all local stakeholders

All key conflict stakeholders in the area should be properly consulted prior to the design and delivery of any interventions, and on-going, routine consultation with stakeholders should be effected throughout the programme lifecycle.



The definition of stakeholders needs to include not only local authority representatives from relevant government agencies and non-state armed groups, but all the actors who represent other aid and development service providers, political parties, business and civil society organisations (eg religious leaders, women, farmers and different social and ethnic groups at different levels). They should be consulted about where, how, if, and what kind of interventions are best to take place. This includes obtaining prior consent from representatives of non-state armed groups to operate in areas where they are present and/or have relevant influence.

The stakeholder consultation has to be ‘meaningful consultation’ and foster participation in decision-making processes, as well as promoting a sense of ownership. More inclusive, informal, and empowering channels of communication are required, especially where there are power imbalances between stakeholders.

Principle 3: Engage with power holders

There are different types of administration and governance practices in areas emerging from conflict⁵³. The programme needs to engage with key power holders that may include both government and non-state armed groups. Balancing between ‘too close to’ or ‘too remote from’ one over the other, and the ability to manage these kind of relationships is essential. The programme should ensure that the engagements will not substitute their responsibilities, and rather set a good example in dealing with power holders in order to support peace.

Principle 4: Encourage cooperation across conflict lines

A long-term goal of inclusion among the different communities and conflict parties needs to be maintained as part of the process of conflict resolution. Experience continues to warn that development and humanitarian aid in different parts of the country can become regarded as divisive rather than equitable and inclusive. Thus strategies of cooperation and coordination need to be delivered, including target working groups, implementing partner meetings, and regular programme assessments. The initiatives should aim to strengthen and improve development structures of the local government administration as well as of non-state armed groups, and ensure not to create unnecessary burdens and bureaucratic layers.

The programme should facilitate co-operation on interventions between government and non-government entities where feasible and opportune. The programme should also work with civil society organisations, faith-based and community-based organisations that have a significant role in crossing and bridging conflict actors, and sometimes facilitate the connectivity and relationships of those actors.

Often, local structures that cross conflict lines are not formally constituted. It may be that households, communities, or traditional structures are without formal ‘institutional’ representation and therefore, might be overlooked in partnering decisions. The programme and implementing partners must be able to identify and empower existing local and traditional structures or actors in the community that have roles to address community livelihood and development. Empowerment should include developing their capacity, particularly institutional capacity, so they become competent to perform their roles effectively.

Where there is opportunity, encourage partners representing different groups to work together around common activities for community livelihoods and food security (i.e. do not force

⁵³ Three different types of administration and governance: i) areas administered by the government, ii) areas administered by non-state armed groups, iii) areas where both the government and non-state armed groups administer in parallel or in mixed arrangements.



partnerships). This will be an important measure in contributing to confidence and ensuring an up-to-date shared understanding of the progress of activities.

Principle 5: Transparency and coordination

The programme should operate in a way that builds collaboration with and among development actors. Collaboration should help minimise duplication in each other's work and build synergies and trust.

At all stages of intervention, it is important to ensure the objectives, activities, implementing partners, and availability of programmes and services are transparent. A lack of transparency could create fertile ground for rumours about inequitable assistance, and enable manipulation to generate animosity among stakeholders (e.g. conflict actors). Information dissemination is vital to building community and stakeholder trust, as well as successful programme delivery. The mechanism for communicating and sharing information openly needs to develop during the programme design.

However, information security needs to be considered also, particularly if related to people's stories and security in the area, to ensure the voices of people are heard without jeopardising personal safety.

Principle 6: Meaningful involvement and participation of local and national civil society organisations

Civil society organisations in Myanmar (including faith-based and community-based organisations) are gaining momentum and are active from the local community to national levels at influencing policy and giving voice to the needs and concerns of people with policy makers and decision-making bodies. They also have established working relationships with conflict actors in conflict-affected areas and have access to most places, including restricted areas, through their networks. They are often organised by local groups from these restricted areas. This all means that CSOs and CBOs have a developed understanding of the community (including culture and language) and its dynamics to contribute to all stages of the project cycle, including decisions on the choice of programme strategies and intervention.

Principle 7: Meet the priority needs of conflict-affected populations

Misunderstandings on the intervention objectives of projects may arise if the support provided ignores key issues affecting the livelihoods of the local population, or bypasses important on-going processes, e.g. on natural resource management. This may also affect the capacity to achieve results and induce long-term changes.

Prioritisation of the programme must be based on the needs for stable livelihoods, sustainable communities and recognition of the fundamental rights of all people, including vulnerable groups who may have been denied access to resources, forced to leave from their homes, or dispossessed from legitimate claims to land, etc. It is important to engage the community in discussing the relevance of interventions and acknowledge the project limitations, what it can and cannot do. A wide range of stakeholders – and especially the affected populations – should be included in the process of identifying, prioritising and achieving programme outcomes and outputs.

Principle 8: Inclusion and non-discrimination

Intervention programmes should adhere to the principles of inclusion and non-discrimination, and ensure that services are provided equally to all population groups, regardless of ethnicity, language, religion, gender and age.



Under most circumstances, representatives of all groups, sub-groups and stakeholders in conflict should be included in: a) programming decisions; b) among beneficiaries; and c) among partners. Excluded/marginalised groups should be empowered and participate. Their inclusion will assist stability, sustainability, and bridge gaps that reduce divisions and create space for effective collaboration between stakeholders.

In a conflict and ethnically-divided context, it is vital to recruit staff from all population groups. Staff and projects need to be sensitive to local ethnic, linguistic, faith and cultural realities and, at the same time, not become socially or ethnically exclusive. Inclusion rather than separation should be the goal.

This will also contribute to the local human resource development and ensure that there are clear and easy communication channels between beneficiaries and project staff who share a common language and culture.

Principle 9: Pragmatism and flexibility

The situation in conflict-affected areas is often fluid and subject to change. Different regions may need different intervention approaches. A localised understanding of the conflict transformation challenges involved is necessary. Standard and rigid approaches in conflict zones are risky. The programme and its projects therefore, need to be flexible and provide for pragmatic responses to changeable situations. These situations may require urgent meetings with conflict actors, immediate discussions with community members, management of unexpected security concerns, and the ability to pause implementation while operations, and potentially design, are reviewed.

Standards and policies should be determined by implementing partners with key stakeholders and have a measure of flexibility in their application. Financial allocation for this flexibility and changes should be provided for in the programme budget.

Flexibility is also important to achieve results and sustainability. Design and implementation approaches need to be adaptable and based on experience and real time learning. This can be supported by process-oriented M&E systems that provide for reflection on lessons, best practice, and discussion with partners. Opportunity should be taken for upwards feedback of this learning to the state/region and national levels, also linking it in with current initiatives on conflict resolution by others.

Principle 10: Establish feedback, accountability and grievance mechanisms

Feedback, grievance and accountability mechanisms are an essential part of ensuring positive relationships with communities and different stakeholders. The mechanisms should be neutral, open to all, and enable good programming that could help to reduce potential for tension and conflict to escalate. The principle of accountability is central to conflict sensitivity, as it touches upon issues of power in agency, partner and stakeholder relationships, and informs the roles and type of power/influence each brings.

For partner guidance, LIFT has developed an Accountability Framework⁵⁴ which includes a clear mechanism for responding to complaints, concerns and suggestions. Partners are expected to set up a similar mechanism which is locally adapted and practical in their intervention areas.

⁵⁴ Available in English and Myanmar languages here: www.lift-fund.org/guidelines



Principle 11: Develop a project exit strategy

Tension can arise at the end of a programme, particularly if the stakeholders and community do not understand the reasons why the programme is ending or an organisation is leaving. It is important to have a well-considered and agreed exit strategy well in advance of a programme or project coming to a close. Ideally the strategy will be designed at project inception in consultation with community, key stakeholders and partners, and with a conflict sensitive perspective.

Resource allocation issues should be carefully considered, especially where there is potential for conflict, including what, who and how they are allocated. Measures should be drawn up to mitigate the risk of exacerbating tensions.

The ownership arrangements for project benefits should be agreed, and any newly established local organisations and groups should be strengthened and brought to a point where they can be independent and able to operate without project support. Avoid setting up structures that are pushed by the project; rather engage stakeholders and community members to build their understanding and participation gradually with consent and ownership. Structures established by projects do not last long if they do not effectively serve the purpose and interests of the community. Structures that help bring conflict parties and others together and prove relevant to addressing community issues will be more likely to endure.

Principle 12: Operationalise the principles throughout the programme lifecycle

The guidance provided by these principles should be built into design to ensure effect throughout the whole life cycle of programme and project execution. The initial analysis of conflict dynamics can become quickly outdated and so will not be useful if not operationalised through a strategy for engagement throughout implementation. In some cases issues not identified by early analysis may unexpectedly appear when activities commence. It is important therefore, that projects have mechanisms to regularly review and update design and operational strategies.