



L i v e l i h o o d s a n d F o o d S e c u r i t y F u n d



Managed by  UNOPS

Livelihoods and Food Security Fund (LIFT)

South East Myanmar Programme

Call for Concept notes

Ref no:	CfP/LIFT/2019/1/SE
Release date:	Tuesday, 5th November 2019
Deadline:	Monday, 16 December 2019, 13.00
Title:	South East Programme
Budget:	USD 28 Million
Duration:	Maximum 36 months, not starting later than June 2020

1. Background

The Livelihoods and Food Security (LIFT) Fund is a multi-donor fund established in 2009 to address food insecurity and income poverty in Myanmar. LIFT 2019-2023 is funded by seven donors – the United Kingdom, the European Union, Australia, Switzerland, the United States, Canada and Ireland. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is the Fund Manager for LIFT, administering the funds and providing monitoring and oversight services.

The overall goal of the LIFT Fund is to achieve a sustained reduction in the number of people living in hunger and poverty in Myanmar. LIFT strengthens the resilience and livelihoods of poor and vulnerable populations through interventions to raise income, decrease vulnerability, improve nutrition and support pro-poor policy development.

LIFT works with a broad range of implementing partners, including non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, the Government of Myanmar, the private sector, civil society, academic and research institutions. The Fund is active in the four main agro-ecological zones of Myanmar and to date has reached more than 11.6 million people or roughly 26 per cent of rural Myanmar's population; and is active in two-thirds of the country's townships.

[LIFT's refreshed strategy for 2019-23](#) has at its heart 'leaving no one behind' in Myanmar's rural transition, with a greater focus on inclusion and social cohesion, intensified commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, increased geographical focus on ethnic/border states and conflict-affected areas, enhanced efforts to bring displaced persons and returnees into LIFT's development programmes, expanded support for underserved urban and peri-urban areas and broader engagement with Government at all levels on targeted policies that achieve gains in these areas.

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At the same time, LIFT will continue to support a diversity of livelihood strategies that assist:

- 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.

LIFT will work toward the achievement of these outcomes through innovation, piloting and the generation of evidence-based interventions organised into four thematic programmes: Nutrition; Financial Inclusion; Agriculture, Markets and Food Systems; and Decent Work and Labour Mobility. For more details visit www.lift-fund.org.

2. Objectives of the Call for Concept Notes

LIFT's programming in the South East is guided by the LIFT strategy 2019-2023. LIFT's purpose is to **strengthen the resilience and sustainable livelihoods of poor and vulnerable groups in Myanmar**, particularly women, internally displaced people and returnees, migrants, smallholder farmers, landless people, people with disabilities and those vulnerable to trafficking and forced labour.

LIFT seeks to contribute to this purpose through three impact-level outcomes:

- **Improved nutrition status, particularly for women and children**
- **Increased household income and assets, with greater control by women**
- **Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks**

The South East region of Myanmar has significant diversity in terms of ethnic groups, conflict dynamics, agro-ecological zones, market development, government services and the resulting challenges and opportunities these present for inclusive development. Following over five decades of conflict between various Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) operating in the region and the Government of Myanmar, a number of the EAOs operating in the region - most notably the Karen National Union (KNU) and the New Mon State Party (NMSP) - became signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). Over the years, a large section of the population has been affected by conflict, with many migrating to Thailand (and some staying in camps there) while others faced internal displacement as a result of military and economic activity.

The limited development of local livelihood opportunities, linked to the protracted conflict, continues to push a large number of people to migrate, often through irregular channels, in search of better incomes and working conditions. Thus, while greater stability in recent years has led to increased investment by private companies and international actors, the region can be characterised by its persistent conflict dynamics, low levels of trust, limited capacity (strategic, technical, regulatory, budgetary) of both the state and Ethnic Service Providers¹ (ESPs), poor coordination across conflict lines, challenging topographical conditions, exposure to climate shocks and stresses, contested land rights regimes and limited economic opportunities. These factors converge to create unsustainable and

¹ Ethnic Service Providers are organisations that are closely affiliated with Ethnic Armed Organisations and that are mandated to play a service delivery role in areas under their jurisdiction. Further details can be found in the annexes accompanying the programme framework.



exclusionary patterns of development that leave the poorest and most-vulnerable groups and individuals behind.

Operating within the **interim arrangements** in a **conflict sensitive manner**, LIFT's programme in the South East of Myanmar aims **to lay the groundwork for and catalyse, where possible, inclusive, climate-resilient² and sustainable development in the region that addresses food, nutrition and livelihood security of the most vulnerable**. This includes a specific focus on Internally Displaced People (IDPs), returnees, women, youth and those at risk of labour exploitation.

Full details of the scope of the call for concept notes, including objectives, target groups, geographies and components, can be found in Annex 1.

LIFT has provided a more detailed analysis of the context of the South East and its approach for the region in the [LIFT Southeast Programme Framework](#).

3. Partnerships

LIFT encourages (but does not require) partnership and consortium projects that aim to address the dynamic nature of southeast Myanmar by using innovative and integrated approaches to achieving results across the objectives and expected outcomes of this call. This includes initiatives that engage the private sector, CSOs, government and Ethnic Service providers working across sectors/components and geographies to benefit the most vulnerable. 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 knowledge of local institutional structures 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. A due diligence process will be in place for all projects, with particular attention to risks related to the conflict sensitive environment.

LIFT aims, as far as possible, to award 20% of the total budget in direct funding to local organisations. National NGOs and civil society organisations are therefore encouraged to apply. Please note that LIFT also reserves the right to reach out directly, particularly to government departments (and ESPs) to address specific elements of the programme where relevant gaps have been identified.

International organisations with no presence in the target areas, but with relevant and demonstrated expertise in one of more of the programme components and/or type of interventions are encouraged, but not limited, to consider capacity building initiatives and technical backstopping for other partners operating in the field.

² Climate resilience can be generally defined as the capacity for a socio-ecological system to: (1) absorb stresses and maintain function in the face of external stresses imposed upon it by climate change and (2) adapt, reorganize, and evolve into more desirable configurations that improve the sustainability of the system, leaving it better prepared for future climate change impacts.



4. Budget Allocation

The provisional allocation for LIFT's work in South East Myanmar is set **up to USD 28 million**.

Please note that these amounts include research and policy engagement related initiatives.

5. Requirements for the concept note submission

Key documents for the preparation of submissions are:

- a) Annex 1: Scope of the Call for Concept Notes (including target population and components summary description)
- b) Annex 2: Format and requirements for concept notes
- c) Annex 3: Selection criteria to be used by LIFT

Please note the following requirements for submissions:

- Concept notes must be prepared in the English language according to the format requirement presented in Annex 2.
- Concept notes must be received by email at the following address: (lift.proposals.mmoc@unops.org) on or before **13.00 Yangon time (GMT+6:30) on 16 December 2019**. Please do not submit your documents to any email address other than the secure email address provided above or your concept note will be considered invalid. The size of individual emails, including email text and attachments, must not exceed 5 MB.
- Please note that the cost of preparing a concept note, a subsequent proposal and of negotiating a grant agreement, including any related travel, is not reimbursable nor can it be included as a direct cost of the assignment.

Any requests for clarification should be referred to lift@unops.org as per the schedule of events outlined in section 7 below. Clarifications will be provided on the following websites:

- <http://lift-fund.org>;
- <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, inventory management, record management and visibility.

6. Concept notes selection and appraisal procedures

An Evaluation Committee (EC) will complete a technical and organisational capacity assessment of each concept note. As a part of its appraisal process, LIFT may elect to discuss technical, cost, or other aspects of the concept notes with applicants. The EC will proceed to the selection of the concept notes through two stages:

1. Short listing:



- The EC will appraise each concept note using all the criteria listed in Annex 3. Concept notes that do not align sufficiently with the LIFT strategy, the components set out in this call and/or the Southeast Programme Framework, or which have shortcomings regarding the criteria outlined in Annex 3, will not be shortlisted.
- The appraisal of the shortlisted concept notes will be submitted to the LIFT Fund Board³, with a summary of recommendations from the Fund Management Office.
- At this stage, LIFT will consult with an advisory group⁴ composed of government and EAO actors to provide feedback on the shortlisted proposals, with particular attention given to ensure that these stakeholders endorse LIFT's selection, to review risks that they may present and to identify how these can be addressed.

2. LIFT Fund Board decision:

- The Fund Board will review and make final decisions on the selected concept notes to be developed into full proposals and advise on the set of recommendations to be provided to the applicants by the FMO.

3. Full Proposal Development

- If the number of concept notes selected to shortlist and advance to full proposal is high (and higher than the number of projects likely to be awarded) then LIFT will launch a closed Call for Proposals for the final stage. If the number of shortlisted concept notes is smaller and all those shortlisted are likely to be awarded, then LIFT will work with applicants to develop together (co-create) the final proposal for recommendation to the Fund Board.
- A representative from the EC will meet with the selected applicants to discuss their concept note and the recommendations of the Fund Board.

Successful proposals will be implemented under a Grant Agreement with UNOPS as the LIFT Fund Manager. Unsuccessful applicants can request feedback from the FMO on their submission.

7. Schedule of Events

Except for the final date for concept note submission to LIFT, the dates provided below are only indicative. The EC may follow a quicker or a longer timeframe for the appraisal of the concept notes. The schedule for the process after the selection of concept notes by the Fund Board is tentative only and will be refined in the closed Call for Proposals. It is provided here for the applicants understanding of the overall contracting process.

Event	Date
Call for Concept Notes release date	Tuesday 5th November 2019

³ Fund Board will be provided with complete concept notes for all applicants.

⁴ LIFT will constitute a consultation group composed of government and EAO representatives to act as a sounding board, provide advice on key decisions, identify potential issues and risks before they arise and suggest appropriate courses of action to manage and mitigate risks.



Information session in Hpa An and Loikaw (with State Government)	TBD second/third week of November
Deadline for receipt of written inquiries	Tuesday 12 November 2019
Last written responses distributed	Friday 15 November 2019
Concept Note due date	Monday 16 December 2019, at 13.00
Appraisal and Concept Note selection	Friday 14 February 2020
Closed Call for Proposals or initiation of co-creation with selected applicants	Monday 17 February 2020
Full proposal submission	Friday 27 March 2020, at noon
Appraisal and Fund Board decision	Tuesday 14 April 2020
Grant agreement negotiation	May 2020 and July 2020



Annex 1: Scope of Call for Concept Notes

The applicant will have to show how the proposed intervention will be aligned with LIFT's overall purpose and outcomes as defined in the [LIFT 2019-2023 Strategy](#) and in the [South East Programme Framework document](#).

Other LIFT guidance should be addressed as appropriate. Note in particular the LIFT gender strategy (www.lift-fund.org/guidelines), the LIFT accountability framework (www.lift-fund.org/publications) and the [LIFT Conflict Sensitivity Principles](#).

Objectives

Operating within the **interim arrangements** in a **conflict sensitive manner**, LIFT's programme in the South East of Myanmar aims to **lay the groundwork for and catalyse, where possible, inclusive, climate-resilient⁵ and sustainable development in the region that addresses food, nutrition and livelihood security of the most vulnerable**. This includes a specific focus on Internally Displaced People (IDPs), returnees, women, youth and those at risk of labour exploitation (further details are provided in Annex 1).

Work within the framework of key policies,⁶ LIFT's objectives for South East Myanmar are to:

- Contribute to pro-poor and inclusive policy/legislative changes and implementation, particularly related to land rights, climate resilience, nutrition, migration and exploitative labour conditions and access to services
- Develop inclusive on and off-farm economic activities which connect diverse actors across geographies and socio-economic levels leading to integrated and inclusive market solutions
- Build cooperative partnerships between the government, Ethnic Armed Organisations⁷ (EAOs) and Ethnic Service Providers (ESPs) and increase their capacity and accountability to reach the most vulnerable
- Advance a social inclusion and empowerment agenda across all sectors, with a particular focus on gender equality, youth engagement and people with disabilities
- Strengthen the voice and capacity of communities and Civil Society Organisations to increase transparency and promote accountability.
- Demonstrate sustainable and/or scalable models and approaches within the framework of the humanitarian-development-peace 'nexus'⁸ by working across conflict lines to secure rights,

⁵ Climate resilience can be generally defined as the capacity for a socio-ecological system to: (1) absorb stresses and maintain function in the face of external stresses imposed upon it by climate change and (2) adapt, reorganize, and evolve into more desirable configurations that improve the sustainability of the system, leaving it better prepared for future climate change impacts.

⁶ These include the Multi Sector-National Plan of Action for Nutrition (MS-NPAN), the Agricultural Development Strategy (ADS), the National Social Protection Strategic Plan (NSPSP), the National Plan of Action on the Management of Labour Migration (NPA-MLM), the Myanmar Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (MCCSAP), and the interim arrangements of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)

⁷ LIFT will only work with the EAOs that are signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)

⁸ The term 'nexus' is increasingly being used to refer to 'the work needed to coherently address people's vulnerability before, during and after crises.' It is concerned with the intersection of humanitarian, peace and development initiatives, which have traditionally operated in a fragmented/uncoordinated manner, resulting in results that are widely recognised to be unsatisfactory. For further details refer to:

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/dp-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus-260619-en_0.pdf



improve livelihoods and increase access to services for IDPs returnees and conflict affected people.

Target populations

Overall, LIFT's strategy emphasises targeting of the most vulnerable households and individuals. Given the context of the southeast this includes:

- IDPs and returnees
- Internal and international migrants
- Conflict affected people
- Small scale producers and landless people
- Migrant-sending households having only very elderly and very young members
- People with disabilities
- Women and women headed households
- Youth and in particular adolescent girls⁹
- Women and children within the 1000 day period

Geographic focus

LIFT's southeast programme focuses on Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and Tanintharyi Region. While there are no exclusions, successful applications will need to:

- Target the most vulnerable groups;
- Demonstrate that they are not duplicating other interventions and investments in the region¹⁰ (though complementarities and synergies are strongly encouraged)

Additional details are provided along with the description of the components in the following section.

Conflict sensitivity, coordination and sequencing

Ensuring that LIFT's investments in the South East are conflict sensitive is of critical importance. This has implications for various strategic, technical and operational considerations. It is essential that applicants refer to the relevant sections of the programme framework in this regard, including the situation analysis and sections on conflict sensitivity, coordination mechanisms and sequencing for further details.

Components and Interventions

Based on the scoping mission and consultations carried out by LIFT, four programme components have been defined for the southeast. These are:

⁹ Youth refers to people aged 15 to 35 years, while adolescent girls fall in the range 10 to 24 years.

¹⁰ A table summarising some of the larger investments in the region can be found in the Programme Framework



1. Support Maternal and Child Cash Transfer (MCCT) with Social Behaviour Change (SBC) for Nutrition approaches in Kayah and Kayin¹¹
2. Uplands: promoting resilient livelihoods for food and nutrition security
3. Lowlands: accelerating inclusive market development for economic growth and poverty reduction
4. Ending labour exploitation and trafficking in key sectors: focus on marine capture fisheries

As LIFT is seeking to expand the evidence base on South East Myanmar to inform policy contribution/advocacy and shape ongoing interventions, a selection of research topics are presented alongside each component. These are not exhaustive but are indicative of LIFT's priorities. Where possible research topics should be integrated into project implementation.

Component 1. Support MCCT with SBC for Nutrition in Kayah and Kayin¹²

The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) is currently rolling out Maternal and Child Cash Transfers (MCCTs) in Kayah and Kayin states with the aim of improving nutrition outcomes. The DSW programme is working in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sports and Ethnic Health Organisations¹³ (EHOs) and aims to achieve universal coverage of women and children within the first 1000 days.

Objective and outcomes

The overall objective of this component is **to achieve policy change and budget allocation for enhanced effectiveness of the MCCT programme.** This is expected to contribute to **LIFT Outcome 1: Improved nutritional status, particularly of women and children.**

Approach

This will be achieved by ensuring that context-appropriate SBC approaches and community feedback/complaints mechanisms are integrated into the government's roll-out of MCCTs by strengthening relationships, accountability and capacity of government and EHOs' to jointly implement MCCT with a Nutrition SBC component in Kayah and Kayin. This will include a focus on increasing access to health/nutrition services and other nutrition sensitive interventions.

Interventions

Specific areas of work should include:

- Working with relevant government ministries and departments (MoSWRR/DSW and MoHS/DoPH), EAOs and Ethnic Health Organisations to develop context-appropriate approaches to Nutrition SBC as an integral part of the MCCTs being rolled out by the DSW and MoHS with the support of EHOs.
- Utilise existing evidence on MCCTs from previous studies and baselines to inform intervention design and policy contribution efforts

¹¹ Please note that LIFT reserves the right to pursue this component through negotiation

¹² Please note that LIFT reserves the right to pursue this component through negotiation

¹³ The term Ethnic Health Organisations (EHOs) refers to a specific subset of Ethnic Service Providers involved in the provision of health related services.



- Providing technical support to MoSWRR (DSW) and MoHS (NNC, HLP, DPH) for the rollout of the MCCTs, including on the development and use of M&E and community feedback/complaints mechanisms
- Building institutional and implementation capacity of government and EHOs on nutrition (including SBC)
- Work with relevant stakeholders and departments of MoSWRR and MoHS to support the operationalisation of MS-NPAN (Multi Sectoral National Plan of Action on Nutrition) and their respective contributions

In addition, this component should seek integration with Components 2 and 3 in Kayin and Kayah (e.g. through WASH infrastructure and linkages with food production and women's empowerment initiatives)

Evidence for policy and practice

- Generating an evidence base on the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and scalability of the proposed approaches to SBC and community complaints mechanisms

Component 2. Uplands: promoting resilient livelihoods for food and nutrition security

The 'uplands' refers to the hilly and mostly forested belt stretching from Kayin along the border with Thailand all the way to Tanintharyi in the southeast. These areas are characterised by comparatively high rates of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition; limited road connectivity and market development; a concentration of Internationally Displaced People (IDPs); a fragile natural resource base that is increasingly degraded and susceptibility to various natural disasters. EAOs tend to have greater influence, legitimacy and control in these areas.

Objective and outcomes

The overall objective of this component is **to develop climate resilient and sustainable solutions to addressing food, nutrition and livelihood security for IDPs, returnees and conflict affected populations, with particular attention to women, youth and people with disabilities.** This is expected to contribute to **LIFT Outcome 1: Improved nutritional status of women and children, Outcome 2: Increased household income and assets, with greater control by women, and Outcome 3: Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks.**

Approach

This will be achieved by working with and strengthening the capacity of and relationships amongst ethnic service providers, government departments, local CSOs and the private sector to develop and provide appropriate solutions and services for the target beneficiaries and their communities. The component as a whole will address land tenure security; climate resilient and regenerative agricultural and natural resource development; access to, production and consumption of nutritious foods; disaster risk reduction; market development/integration; off-farm employment ('stepping out') in the rural economy and through safe migration; nutrition; WASH; and financial inclusion.



Interventions

Specific areas of work should include:

- Strengthening the institutional and technical capacity of EAOs and ESPs on inclusive livelihoods, regenerative agriculture and natural resource development, nutrition sensitive approaches, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction, safe employment/migration, and enhancing communication, coordination and collaboration with government counterparts
- Comprehensive assessment of climate risks and the development of integrated Disaster Risk Reduction and livelihood development responses that address key environmental issues and promotes livelihood, food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable. This includes a particular focus on increasing production, availability and consumption of nutritious foods.
- Promoting market integration through climate smart value chain interventions and expanding access to key agricultural inputs and services (inputs, energy, machinery, transportation, processing)
- Working with government, EAOs and CSOs on land tenure security and land administration reform through research, advocacy and legal support, especially for returnees, IDPs and women/Women Headed Households
- Strengthening women's economic empowerment in agricultural and off-farm activities
- Delivering market-oriented and sustainable skills development training with supplementary support¹⁴ through capacity building of ESPs and government providers, particularly for women, IDPs, returnees, youth and people with disabilities
- Providing information on safe and rewarding migration and expanding access to legal assistance for migrants experiencing exploitation/claiming social protection benefits through EAOs/ESP, CSOs and cross-border networking of service providers.
- Incorporating targeted, context-appropriate scaleable nutrition and WASH related SBC approaches into integrated interventions.
- Facilitate WASH infrastructure development through innovative financing models and leveraging resources from public and private sources
- Ensuring access to responsible and affordable finance for vulnerable groups, particularly graduates of skills development programmes and those seeking to set up their own enterprises.

Evidence for policy and practice

LIFT is seeking to expand the evidence base on South East Myanmar in order to inform policy contribution/advocacy and shape ongoing interventions. Key topics related to this component include:

- Patterns and impacts of borrowing on vulnerable households in the Southeast uplands
- Customary land tenure practices and access to and management of increasingly scarce water and forest resources.
- Impact of VFV land law and amendments on land tenure, including complaint mechanisms
- Lessons learned re community-based forest management.

¹⁴ This includes provision of soft skills and language training, networking, skills certification and transitional support.



- Survey of disability types, including but not limited to landmines
- Research to map the process and assess the utilization, effectiveness and efficiency of regular and irregular migration pathways in the Southeast, including the MOU process and labour brokerage systems.
- Understanding causal factors of malnutrition in Thanintharyi, specifically in relation to identifying nutrition sensitive solutions.

Component 3. Lowlands: accelerating inclusive market development for economic growth and poverty reduction

The 'lowlands' refers to the intermediate, lowland and coastal plains found in Kayah, Kayin, Mon and Tanintharyi. These areas are characterised by comparatively by lower rates of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition than the uplands, though with pockets of high vulnerability. malnutrition and poor development outcomes; more developed markets and infrastructure; high dependence on food and other commodities from Thailand; high levels of out- and in-migration; and susceptibility to flooding. These areas are more likely to be under Government or mixed control.

Objective and outcomes

The overall objective of this component is **to accelerate inclusive market development for food, nutrition and livelihood security**. This is expected to contribute to **LIFT Outcome 1: Improved nutritional status of women and children, Outcome 2: Increased household income and assets, with greater control by women, and Outcome 3: Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks.**

Approach

This will be achieved by working with and strengthening the capacity of and relationships amongst government departments, the private sector, ethnic service providers and local CSOs to develop and provide appropriate solutions and services for the target beneficiaries and their communities. The component as a whole will focus on land tenure security; climate smart and nutrition sensitive agricultural value chains¹⁵; natural resource management and disaster risk reduction; women's economic empowerment; the development and expansion of agricultural factor markets; off-farm employment ('stepping out'); safe migration and return; livelihood support for deported irregular migrants; nutrition and WASH SBC; and financial inclusion.

Interventions

Specific areas of work should include:

- Strengthening the capacity of government on climate smart agriculture, disaster risk reduction and safe employment/migration and enhancing communication, coordination and collaboration between government and Ethnic Service Provider counterparts
- Catalysing the development of inclusive, nutrition sensitive and climate smart agricultural value chains that generate on/off-farm employment, income and livelihood security for small

¹⁵ I.e. value chains that are focused on the production of nutritious food products, including fish, livestock, pulses, beans, fruits and vegetables amongst others.



scale producers, particularly women, youth and the most vulnerable groups (including landless, IDPs, returnees).

- Establishing sustainable and scalable mechanisms for delivering relevant agricultural services and inputs to small scale producers through government/ESP services providers, public private partnerships and finance/de-risking to MSME agribusinesses.
- Working with government, EAOs and CSOs on land tenure security and land administration reform through research, advocacy and legal support, especially for returnees, IDPs and women/Women Headed Households
- Improving policy and implementation of assistance services for deported migrants, including establishing reception centres to meet their immediate service needs and linking them to support for secure livelihoods through vocational training and safe migration information.
- Making migration safer and more rewarding by expanding access to information and services (in partnership with CSOs and labour exchange offices) and through decentralisation of the MOU process.
- Empowering women to pursue non-traditional forms of employment, including in agricultural value chains and non-agricultural sectors, through certified vocational training programmes (where relevant), women-only spaces for networking, job matching services and access to finance (including digital finance)
- Incorporating targeted, context-appropriate scaleable nutrition and WASH related SBC approaches into integrated interventions.
- Facilitating WASH infrastructure development through innovative financing models and leveraging resources from public and private sources

Evidence for policy and practice

- Research to understand key issues related to food safety and cross-border trade and their implications for agricultural development in the South East
- Role of agriculture sector development in generating employment
- High value nutrition sensitive value chains
- Research to map the process and assess the utilization, effectiveness and efficiency of regular and Irregular migration pathways in the Southeast, including the MOU process and labour brokerage systems.
- Labour market assessment to determine the supply and demand for labour and skills within the Southeast, including in government and non-government controlled areas.

Component 4. Ending labour exploitation and trafficking in key sectors: focus on marine capture fisheries

Labour exploitation, including unsafe working conditions, trafficking, wage theft and debt bondage exist in various sectors across the South East of Myanmar marine fisheries, oil palm and rubber plantations and mining. The marine capture fishing sector is amongst the most prominent of these with ineffective regulation contributing to declining fishery resources and exploitative working conditions within the industry. It is also a major contributor to the economy and food security of the



Southeast, with port areas in Tanintharyi Region and Mon State providing employment to tens of thousands of women and men, many of whom are internal migrants from other parts of Myanmar.

Objective and outcomes

The overall objective of this component is **to reduce exploitative labour conditions in the marine capture fisheries sector**. This is expected to contribute to **Outcome 3: Reduced vulnerability of households and individuals to shocks, stresses and risks**.

This will be achieved by working with and strengthening the capacity of and relationships amongst government departments, the private sector, local CSOs and trade unions to create an enabling policy, legal and business environment and to provide services and support to workers in the sector.

Interventions

Specific areas of work should include:

- Amending labour laws to better regulate working conditions in the fisheries sector and ratify Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188) and the Forced Labour Protocol (No. 29) to align them with international labour standards
- Build the capacity of government to regulate employment in the sector in conjunction with ongoing efforts to regulate fishing practices, support co-management and develop bilateral cooperation.
- Support labour organizations to organize workers in the fisheries sector to improve working conditions and prevent exploitation.
- Engage the private sector on development and independent monitoring of ethical codes of conduct, in cooperation with worker and buyer representatives.
- Develop payment systems and practices to end wage theft via increased regulation and transparency, including through electronic transfer of wages.
- Deliver services to fishing and seafood processing workers through CSOs and labour organizations, including skills development, awareness of labour rights and assistance in cases of exploitation.

Evidence for policy and practice

- Studies of working conditions in labour intensive employment sectors (including forced labour, child labour and human trafficking), potentially including fishing, mining and plantations.

Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning

LIFT places a high priority on the generation of evidence to demonstrate effectiveness, inform improved practice and contribute to policy processes. To achieve this, LIFT relies on commissioned research, project and programme evaluations and evidence generated by implementing partners through their own research and MEAL Plans.



The overall programme MEAL approach will be developed in collaboration with Implementing Partners and relevant stakeholders during the course of proposal development and the programme/project inception phase. This will include:

- Co-constructed Programme Level Theory of Change:
- M&E Stakeholders Analysis
- Measurement framework (in alignment with the LIFT results framework and including additional context-specific and conflict-related indicators).
- Evaluation design and Evaluation and Learning Questions (ELQs)
- Reporting requirements
- Processes and mechanisms to support knowledge management and policy influence

Indicative Evaluation and Learning Questions

- To what extent has LIFT ensured the expansion of accountable public (government and ESP) services to reach the poorest/most marginal?
- To what extent has LIFT secured sustainable on/off-farm (diversified) livelihoods for the most vulnerable groups?
- To what extent has LIFT succeeded in stimulating off-farm employment in the agricultural sector?
- To what extent has LIFT contributed to land administration reform and ensured land tenure security for the most vulnerable groups?
- To what extent has LIFT enhanced food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable groups in the southeast?
- To what extent has LIFT enhanced the resilience of the most vulnerable groups in the southeast to climate-related and other types of shocks and stresses?
- To what extent has LIFT fostered improved communication, coordination, collaboration across conflict lines?
- To what extent has LIFT been delivered in an integrated manner and tapped into synergies and complementarities across themes, geographies, actors and other ongoing investments and development interventions.
- To what extent has LIFT demonstrated effective solutions and new ways of working on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus?

Further information can be found in the MEAL section of the programme framework.

Annex 2: Format and structure of the concept notes

The concept note must be complete and conform to the format requirements presented below. Submissions must be made electronically as outlined in the main part of this call for concept notes. The concept note must not exceed 14 pages plus title page and preamble (12 point Times New Roman Font and a minimum of 1 inch margins all around). Pages should be numbered.

The concept note may include annexes with additional details regarding approach, methodologies, references, maps, etc. Annexes must not exceed 10 pages. Electronic submissions must not exceed 5MB in size. LIFT will consider only applications conforming to the above format and page limitations.



Any other information submitted will not be evaluated. Applicants should include all information that they consider necessary for LIFT to adequately understand and evaluate the project being proposed. The remainder of this section describes the information that LIFT considers essential for all applications.

LIFT calls for concept notes that respond to the components set out in this Call for Concept Notes. Applicants can apply to respond to a whole component, a part of a component or one or more elements that cut across multiple components. Concept notes should be in alignment with the overall Southeast Programme Framework and the LIFT Strategy. In addition, concept notes should:

- Adhere to [LIFT's conflict sensitivity principles](#)
- Target the most vulnerable
- Be gender, youth and disability responsive and address women's empowerment
- Strengthen relations and joint efforts between government and ethnic service providers
- Demonstrate integration, complementarities and synergies across sectors and actors
- Build on a track record of establishing relationships of trust and confidence with key actors
- Indicate the roles of CSOs and/or private sector
- Leave a legacy of enhanced capacity and accountability for inclusive and conflict sensitive development in the region

Note that LIFT aims as far as possible to award 20% of the total budget in direct funding to local organisations. National NGOs and civil society organisations are therefore encouraged to apply.

Concept notes must not exceed 14 pages in length and should be structured according to the following headings (indicative page lengths are presented in parentheses):

1. Title page

Project title, name and contact of the applicant, partners, geographical area, expected project duration, start and finish dates, selected component(s) that the concept note responds to, and estimated total budget. Note that the title page is not counted in the concept note page limitation.

2. Brief description of intervention focus and rationale. What will it achieve and for whom? Where will it be implemented and with which actors? How will it work? (5 pages)

This section should clearly describe the outcomes that the intervention expects to contribute to, in which target geographies (being as specific as possible) and for which specific target groups (including target numbers of beneficiaries reached). It should also clarify how these changes will be brought about, the key actors that the project seeks to influence/engage with and their roles and the key types of activities, intervention strategies, methodologies and technical approaches that will be used to achieve this. While a detailed breakdown of activities is not required, this section should clearly justify how the proposed activities are a viable means of achieving the intended outcomes. Whether or not the concept note is responding to a single element within a component, a full component or elements that cut across a component, this section should outline how integration will be achieved.



3. Nature of existing presence and relationships in the area. (1 page)

Applicants should demonstrate that they have the experience, capacity, and existing relationships required to implement their proposed project successfully. This section should provide a short background to the organisation and its approach/focus and describe the history of involvement and activities in the target geographies, nature and extent of relationships with key local actors (including government, ESPs, CSOs and the private sector).

4. Strategy and approach to working within the interim arrangements and across conflict lines. (2 pages)

This section should provide an analysis of the operating context and drivers of conflict, what population the project will target and the effect of conflict on this population, key stakeholders and the power relations between them. Based on this analysis it should describe how the project will work across conflict lines

5. How will the project support the most vulnerable and support their empowerment? (max 1 page)

This section should indicate the key vulnerable groups that the project is targeting, and describe their key characteristics, highlighting the factors that drive their vulnerability, exclusion and/or disempowerment. It should also clarify how the project will ensure that these target groups are reached and that key barriers to their participation and attainment of desired outcomes will be addressed. Particular attention should be given to how empowerment of target vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth, will be addressed¹⁶.

6. How will the project seek synergies and complementarities with past, ongoing and proposed initiatives in the region? (1 page)

This section should outline how the project seeks to build on previous investments in the target geographies, leverage resources developed or made available through other ongoing or proposed projects, agencies and investments in the region and strengthen integration between different actors and sectors. This section should clearly demonstrate the applicant's knowledge of opportunities for integration and willingness to operate in a collaborative manner to enhance collective impact.

7. What is innovative in the approach? What learning will be generated, or models and approaches demonstrated? (1 page)

This section should highlight how the project will introduce innovative approaches to address issues and develop solutions. Innovations may be related to new ways of working (partnerships, involvement of private sector, institutional arrangements), new models or approaches to addressing persistent issues, or initiatives that are addressing new issues that have not received attention to date. The applicant should also indicate how the project will

¹⁶ Note that a full gender analysis will be required as part of project implementation.



ensure a systematic approach to generating evidence on the proposed models and how this will be used.

8. How will sustainability and/or scalability be addressed from the outset? What will the legacy be? (1 page)

Sustainability and scalability are key concerns for LIFT. Applicants should demonstrate how the sustainability and/or scalability of key outcomes and approaches will be addressed from the outset. Specific attention should be given to articulating how project dependency will be avoided by developing the required capacities, engaging with markets, and/or creating more enabling operating environments (policies, budgets, incentives, etc.).

9. What are the key risks associated with the project and how will they be managed/mitigated? (1 page)

Strong risk management will be a central feature of successful projects in the South East. Applicants should provide an overview of the major risks related to their proposal (refer to the Programme Risk Assessment Matrix as presented in the Programme Framework for more information on types of risks) and describe in brief how they intend to manage and mitigate these risks.

10. Estimated budget and VFM (1 page)

The concept note budget should include best estimates and provide a provisional breakdown of costs at sub-heading level (see budget template on the LIFT website)

Concept notes that demonstrate how LIFT's funds will leverage other funds, as well as concept notes that demonstrate clear progress towards financial sustainability, are encouraged. The concept note should demonstrate good Value-for-Money. Some questions to consider may include:

- Have partners and communities been involved in identifying which outcomes have the greatest value to them, and where savings can be made?
- Can contributions be leveraged from other sources?
- Is the proposed concept providing value for money per beneficiary or target group?
- What options are there for achieving more value for the same/less resources?
- Are there multiplier effects from the intervention, or benefits from replication or scaling, that strengthen the value for money of the intervention?



Annex 3: Selection criteria to be used by LIFT

An Evaluation Committee (EC) 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 concept note otherwise meets the main criteria.

Evaluation criteria

The evaluation committee will have to answer the following questions to justify their final appraisal:

- **Completeness:** Is the information provided in the concept note complete and sufficient for the appraisal?
- **Relevance:** Is the problem definition and rationale for the project clear and does it address critical issues and target groups relevant to the LIFT strategy and the South East Myanmar Programme Framework?
- **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?
- **Stakeholder analysis:** have the relevant stakeholders been identified and have clear and realistic roles been identified for them? Is it clear how the project will work with communities, government, non-state actors (ESPs, CSOs) and the private sector?
- **Context analysis and conflict sensitivity:** Is the project based on a good understanding of the context in the South East and in particular the target area proposed? Will the project operate in a conflict sensitive area? Does the concept note provide confidence that the applicant has sufficient knowledge of its operational environment and any conflict dynamics relevant? Will the project be managed according to a sound conflict-sensitive strategy?
- **Gender, inclusion and empowerment:** Does the project include a clear explanation of how it will reach and support the most vulnerable? Is there a clear, ambitious yet realistic approach to women's empowerment? Are mechanisms for increasing citizen voice given due consideration?
- **Sustainability and/or scalability:** Does the project demonstrate a good case for sustainability and/or scalability of the proposed approaches, outcomes and impacts beyond the funding period?
- **Risk management:** What risks might adversely affect the activities, and what mitigation factors will be taken to avoid them?
- **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 and capacity to implement the project?



- **Partnership:** Are partnership relationships with any or all of the local government, NSA and CSO organisations 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?
- **Budget:** Does the budget demonstrate value for money for the project, in particular in relation to the expected results?