Scope of Work –

Gender Specialist for Female Inclusion Learning Assessment

April 2025

Context

The GSMA Innovation Fund accelerates mobile tech solutions addressing key global challenges for vulnerable communities in low- and middle-income countries. Through grant funding and tailored technical assistance, we position innovative organisations in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) to scale operations and amplify social and environmental impact.

The GSMA Innovation Fund sits within the GSMA's donor-funded **Mobile for Development (M4D)** unit. Singularly positioned at the intersection of the mobile ecosystem and the development sector, M4D stimulates digital innovation to deliver both sustainable business and large-scale socio-economic impact for the underserved.

The GSMA Innovation Fund is seeking a supplier with gender expertise to conduct a learning assessment on female inclusion within the previous rounds of the programme. The supplier would conduct a review of the portfolio of grantees from 2020-2025 to understand efforts made and progress achieved on female inclusion working with the Innovation Fund to map this against internal goals. This portfolio includes around 45 grantees across Africa and Asia.

The supplier would also be tasked with utilizing the findings from this review to identify:

- What was successful in increasing the number of female-led start-ups funded and where there is room for improvement,
- What was successful in increasing the number female beneficiaries impacted and where there is room for improvement
- What was successful in strengthening the capacity of enterprises to address gender barriers, including internal and external barriers, and where this is room for improvement.

This includes actions taken by the Innovation Fund to increase female inclusion, as well as actions taken by individual grantees. Recommendations should be practical and consider the constraints faced by the organization and its grantees.

Lastly, using the actionable insights from the study and leveraging their existing knowledge on gender mainstreaming initiatives for start-ups in LMICs, the supplier would develop a framework for *Gender Action Plans* for future grantees and apply this framework to each new grantee of the upcoming round.

Suppliers should suggest their own methodology for this study and for the Gender Action Plans, the latter can be further refined after the findings are identified.

For Gender Action Plans, suppliers are welcome to build on existing models, like the 2X Criteria, if it is the best fit. They should also consider grantee sectors and the themes of GSMA funding rounds, capacity building and associated challenges, communication requirements, data frameworks, and representation of women at multiple levels within the organisation, including governance.

These plans must take into consideration the unique contextual barriers grantees face in their respective industries and regions and the cost that any recommendations will require to implement. They should also provide a mechanism for continued monitoring of progress after their grant with the GSMA ends (15-18 months after contracting, which is estimated to start in Oct-Nov 2025).

Objectives

The work is envisioned to take place across five key phases; these are outlined below.

Phase	Key activities	Timeline
1 - Inception phase	 Key activities: Kick off call with GSMA team to agree on project scope and work plan Meet with the GSMA Innovation Fund to discuss activities and goals for female inclusion. Review previous evaluations, research, and project documents relevant to the scope of work. Deliverables: Updated project proposal if needed, updated timeline, and risk mitigation plan. 	Contract signing + 3 weeks
2 – Research plan	 Key activities: Finalise a detailed research plan based on the updated project proposal and timeline. Conduct literature review for best practices to assess and achieve female inclusion among similar initiatives. Deliverable: Refined workplan with clear steps for conducting the learning assessment and ensuring all findings can be collected in the suggested timeline - comparing the assessment with findings from the literature review. 	Contract signing + 5 weeks
3 – Findings	 Key activities: Sensemaking workshop before report is drafted to discuss findings and align direction Draft final report and share with GSMA. Minor feedback may require an additional draft. Deliverable: Final report incorporating feedback in English and in editable format (Word doc, PPT, etc) 	Contract signing + 14 weeks
4 – Gender Action Plan Framework	 Key activities: Sensemaking workshop before template is drafted to discuss and align on direction. Draft Gender Action Plan draft template and instructions for implementing with grantees and share with GSMA. Minor feedback may require an additional draft. 	Contract signing + 18 weeks

	Final template and instructions incorporating feedback from GSMA, in English and in editable format (Word doc, PPT, etc)	
5 – Gender Action Plans	 Key activities: Review the projects for each grantee and meet with the grantee and their manager to understand their contextualised needs. Develop Gender Action Plans for each grantee. Deliverable: Final Gender Action Plan is drafted for each new grantee of the Innovation Fund (no more than 15) during the contracting stage of their grant (Oct-Nov 2025) 	Contract signing + 24 weeks

Firm and proposal requirements

Required experience

Essential:

- Demonstrable track record of completing similar assignments on female inclusion for other impact investors, public funders, and/or economic development NGOs.
- Experience in gender mainstreaming projects
- Expertise working with the private sector in low- and middle-income countries.
- Full working proficiency in English.

The successful supplier is expected to:

- 1. Provide all deliverables in English.
- 2. Provide a named key point of contact who will work closely with the GSMA team.
- 3. Respond to emails from GSMA within two working days.
- 4. Organize regular status calls/meeting to report on project progress throughout the assessment.
- 5. Inform GSMA about delays and complications in a timely manner.

Proposals should include a separate technical and financial proposal:

Technical proposal

- 1. A short (1 page) statement of suitability, highlighting recent relevant experience and a proposed methodology for data collection.
- 2. Details of relevant project experience.
- 3. Examples of previous work.
- 4. CVs and location of team member(s).

Financial proposal

- 5. Level of effort (person-day) by activity.
- 6. Fee rates (per day in GBP).
- 7. Total project cost (GBP), inclusive of all applicable taxes

Proposal assessment and selection Process

Selection will be made on a quality-cost based assessment based on a 70:30 weighting for the technical and financial respectively.

The technical component will be scored on the following set of criteria:

- Track record of completing similar assignments.
- Previous experience.

The financial will be assessed by value for money.

- Clarification questions can be sent to cmckevitt@gsma.com and uvikram@gsma.com
- Proposals are to be submitted no later than May 16, 2025 to cmckevitt@gsma.com and uvikram@gsma.com
- Shortlisted consultants will be contacted for an interview by May 23, 2025.
- Consultants will be notified of the final selection by the May 30, 2025.

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