

## Inviting organizations to submit proposals on generating evidence for what works to improve women’s economic empowerment

<b>Location:</b>	New Delhi, India
<b>Application Deadline:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> August 2019
<b>Type of Contract:</b>	Organisation/Institution
<b>Languages Required:</b>	English
<b>Duration of Contract:</b>	Subject to proposed activities

### I. About IWWAGE

The Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE) aims at supporting solutions and policies through a multi-stakeholder platform using evidence and research to ensure economic empowerment for women in India. The motivation for this initiative stems from the growing understanding that women’s economic empowerment will lead to sustainable economic growth and gender equity. While a lot has been done, there continues to be a need to identify existing challenges along with refining the existing and presenting innovative/alternative approaches in the policy discourse.

IWWAGE is housed at IFMR LEAD and funded by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

### II. Background

The question of women’s declining engagement in the labourforce is currently one of the most important issues for policymakers focussed on improving women’s status in the labour markets in India. The female labourforce participation (FLFP) declined by 11.4 percentage points from 42.6 per cent to 31.2 per cent between 1993-2012 (NSSO, EUS various years)<sup>1,2</sup>. These figures are one of the lowest among the emerging economies, despite India ranking above most others in terms of their rate of growth of GDP.

The labour market indicators in India clearly highlight the disadvantages faced by women workers in India. While a lot of these inequalities are a consequence of the existing gender division of labour based on stringent social norms and patriarchal attitudes, a large part of these are also driven by the existing policies or the lack of it. These policies in turn have considerable impact on macroeconomic indicators such as the labourforce participation rates, distribution of employment, occupational segregations, and distribution of income, assets and wealth. It also has its implications on women’s overall well-being.

The apparent indicators of women and work in India reveal few stark points,

- Women’s work participation rates have remained historically low albeit marked by regional variations

<sup>1</sup> Sander, F. G., D. Jain, and S. Seth. "India development update: unlocking women’s potential. New Delhi: World Bank, 2017. 6 Balarajan Y, Selvaraj S, Subramanian S." Health care and equity in India. Lancet 377 (2011): 505-15.

<sup>2</sup> Andres, Luis A., et al. Precarious drop: Reassessing patterns of female labor force participation in India. The World Bank, 2017.

- Sectoral and occupational patterns of women’s work in India do not reflect diversification/transformation
- Gender wage differences have been reducing, yet remains substantial, especially in casual work of women
- High incidence of self-employment and informal work among women workers
- Limited access to quality skill development, financial inclusion, technology, credit and other instruments for improving economic empowerment of women
- Low levels of asset ownership in terms of property, land and other forms of physical assets and lack of opportunities for creating these within existing engagements
- Low access/provisioning of basic services (such as access to health, education, housing, water, sanitation and so on) have reflected in lowered capabilities in women that has resulted in creating barriers for accessing the labour markets.
- Lack of recognition to women’s unpaid work within the broader policy framework
- Lack of gender sensitive social protection policies that often result in disincentives for women’s engagement in productive activities

The official estimates on employment and unemployment provide gender disaggregated information for a range of labour market differentials. However, the official estimates have their own limitations and thus provide evidence for a restricted set of indicators. While the labourforce surveys do not account for time allocations of work, they do provide estimates of number of individuals both men and women, performing domestic and other unpaid activities, albeit to an extent limited by definitions of ‘work’. For example, the National Sample Service Office (NSSO) does not make any conceptual distinction between “own account workers” and “worked as helper in a household enterprise (unpaid family worker)”. The instruction manuals for the survey list these categories without providing any explanation for how these are supposed to be distinguished creating issues of ‘recognition’ of workers.<sup>3</sup>

Apart from these, the time use survey which accounts for time poverty of women, was officially conducted for the first time in 1998 and has not been followed up. In terms of wages and earnings, none of the government databases, including the existing National Sample Surveys (NSS) on employment and unemployment, does not collect information on incomes received from self-employment.

With regard to estimating the time-use of women, India conducted standalone small scale survey in 1998-1999 followed by a two state pilot in 2013 but did not cover the whole country. These surveys were designed to capture women’s time use patterns and engagements in unpaid and paid work, are being used to somewhat unpack unpaid care work. Another round of the survey has been recently rolled out in January 2019, with a sample of 140,000 households across the country.

Despite these challenges around improving labour force participation as well as improving the quality of statistics, lack of recognition of unpaid work, and limited understanding of women’s time-use, evidence

---

<sup>3</sup> Rawal, Vikas, and Partha Saha. "Women’s Employment in India: What Do Recent NSS Surveys of Employment and Unemployment Show." *Statistics on Indian Economy and Society* 28 (2015).

from developing countries including India suggest that women remain interested in entering the labour market.

### III. Objective

In this context IWWAGE aims to engage suitable individuals/organization(s) with potential and expertise in generating evidence around work of women in paid, unpaid, care work and improvement of labour force statistics. There is a need to improve the evidence base around these issues in the context of women's economic empowerment, both to capture the burden of unpaid work as well as to enable unpaid work concerns of women, which has significant impact on overall economic growth. IWWAGE aims at supporting this and prioritizing the generation of evidence for enablers of WEE; policies, strategies, best practices, and identification of 'what works'. The RFP is designed with the objective of supplementing government efforts at generating data as well as promote evidence for policy uptake around important determinants of WEE.

The RFP would thus focus on,

1. Primary evidence generation women's work by different segments of women in India (state and sub-state level) spread across demographic, geographical and /or sectoral categories through field based methods;
2. Assessing gender inequalities in the distribution of resources, responsibilities and the opportunity cost of non-asset building responsibilities and activities;
3. Measuring/Evaluating the impact of the government initiatives for WEE
4. Identifying the enablers of unpaid work, especially care work, including a systematic review of relevant social protection/cash transfer/maternity benefit programmes in the country.

### IV. Scope of Work

We are seeking proposals from experienced research and policy organizations to meet the aforementioned objectives. The scope of work will involve undertaking primary level research with the aim of creating an enabling environment for achieving WEE. This can include but is not limited to:

1. Policy deep dive on the current space for policy action, identifying opportunities to promote policy that would positively influence WEE;
2. Rigorous analysis of barriers for women's access to the labour force;
3. Gender-based assessment of macro-economic schemes and social protection programmes;
4. Creating methods for improving national labourforce statistics

The proposed methodology should include undertaking primary level research at the state and sub-state levels). The proposal may be a review of potential solutions (government, public-private partnership models) and/or mapping and assessing state specific instruments and measures to improve female labour force participation by reducing associated barriers around unpaid work. The proposer will be expected to provide a rigorous rationale of why the sample geography/population has been selected.

## V. Required Skills and Experience

### Qualifications

- At least 10 years of organizational experience in undertaking gender based research/policy research preferably in the area of analysing women’s labour and related issues
- A team with senior members with at least 10 years of prior work experience in the field of women and labour, behavioural economics, policy research etc.

### Technical Proposal

The technical proposal<sup>4</sup> should include:

- Building the context through rigorous framing of the hypothesis using existing evidence
- Detailed methodology and conceptual framework with expected deliverables and timelines;
- Profile of the firm/organization indicating why they are suitable for undertaking the assignment and demonstrating suitable experience;
- Recent and detailed CVs of proposed team.

### Financial Proposal

- The financial proposal<sup>5</sup> shall be submitted indicating breakup of all proposed activities.
- The narrative and the deliverables sheet should indicate clearly the payment linked outputs along with the expected percentage of payment to be disbursed.<sup>6</sup>

## VI. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
<b>Technical Approach</b> i. Proposes a sound design and methodology ii. Presents a clear work plan with clear roles, responsibilities and timelines iii. Demonstrates contextual and subject knowledge	60
<b>Research Team</b> i. Academic qualifications of the team ii. Principal Investigator’s qualifications and experience iii. Experience with conducting evaluations with women’s collectives iv. Experience with conducting evaluations on gender issues	30
<b>Cost Effectiveness and Budget</b>	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	100

<sup>4</sup> Proposal format shared separately

<sup>5</sup> Financial proposal and budget narrative format attached

<sup>6</sup> This will be re-visited during the contracting phase

## VII. Submission

Interested organisations should submit the required documents by 30 July, 2019. All the documents should be mailed at [info@iwwage.org](mailto:info@iwwage.org). You may address queries to the email id provided.